

BANKING DCA_JANUARY 2025

Banking Current Affairs



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1. To strengthen the state-owned Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI), the Indian government has authorized a capital infusion of how many crores?

A Rs.100 crores

B Rs.200 crores

C Rs.300 crores

D Rs.500 crores

E Rs.1000 crores

Solution

- The Indian government has approved a capital infusion of Rs 500 crore into the state-owned Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) to improve its financial health.
- The infusion is part of a restructuring and consolidation plan for IFCI.
- Government Stake Increase: As a result of the capital infusion, the government's holding in IFCI is expected to rise from the current 71.72% as of September 2024.

- Previous Capital Raise by IFCI: Earlier in the year, IFCI raised Rs 500 crore by issuing equity shares to the government.
- History and Purpose of IFCI: IFCI, established on July 1, 1948, is the first development financial institution in India. It was set up by the government to provide long-term finance for the industrial sector.

2. How many esteemed UK universities have applied to open international campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City, carrying on India's trend of expanding its educational system internationally?

A 2

B 5

C 4

D 3

E 6

Solution

- Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University, two prestigious UK institutions, have applied to set up international campuses at Gujarat's GIFT City, continuing the trend of global educational expansion in India.
- Programs: Initial focus on postgraduate programs with plans to expand into research and undergraduate courses.
- Reputation: Nearly 200 years of history and ranked as one of the top UK universities with expertise in sustainability and global impact.

- **Indian Presence:** Over 1,000 Indian students already enrolled in its programs.

3. **The 45th PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who emphasized the significance of prompt project execution and effective grievance resolution. How many important infrastructure projects from various sectors were reviewed in this session?**

A 6

B 5

C 8

D 2

E 4

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi presided over the 45th PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) meeting emphasizing the importance of efficient grievance resolution and timely project execution.
- This session reviewed eight critical infrastructure projects across sectors, with a combined investment exceeding ₹1 lakh crore.

4. **On Good Governance Day, Dr. Jitendra Singh launches the “Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi” initiative. Which of the following campaign includes this program?**

A Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur

B Swasth Dhara Toh Khet Hara

C Samvidhan Divas

D Hamara Samman

E Pariksha Pe Charcha

Solution

- On Good Governance Day, Dr. Jitendra Singh introduced the ‘Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi’ initiative, which aims to empower Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to decentralize governance effectively.
- This program, part of the ‘Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur’ campaign, focuses on strengthening grassroots governance through modern tools, capacity building, and sustainable practices.
- Target States: Odisha, Assam, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh.

5. Which IIT professor, Viren Menezes of the Department of Aerospace Engineering, has created a method for administering drugs via shock syringe without the need for a needle?

A IIT Madras

B IIT Bombay

C IIT Delhi

D IIT Kanpur

E IIT Mandi

Solution

- Researchers at IIT Bombay, led by Prof. Viren Menezes from the Department of Aerospace Engineering, have developed a needle-free solution for drug delivery: the shock syringe.
- This breakthrough aims to make medical injections painless and more efficient, addressing common challenges associated with traditional needles.
- Technology: The shock syringe utilizes high-energy shock waves, traveling faster than the speed of sound, to deliver drugs without a needle.

- **Micro Shock Tube System:** Powered by pressurized nitrogen gas, the device generates a microjet of liquid that penetrates the skin at speeds twice as fast as a commercial airplane during takeoff.
- **Size & Design:** The shock syringe is about the size of a ballpoint pen, making it compact and easy to use.

6. **With notable increases in both defense exports and domestic production, India reached a significant milestone in the defense sector during the fiscal year 2023–2024. Which year did Rajnath Singh set the goal of Rs 50,000 crore in defense exports?**

A 2026

B 2027

C 2028

D 2029

E 2030

Solution

- India achieved a major milestone in its defence sector during the fiscal year 2023-24, with significant growth in both defence exports and indigenous production.
- This success reflects India's increasing self-reliance and its strengthened capabilities in the defence industry.
- Total Value: Rs 21,083 crore (approx. USD 2.63 billion)
- Growth: A 32.5% increase compared to the previous year (Rs 15,920 crore in FY 2022-23).

- Long-Term Growth: Defence exports have increased by 31 times since FY 2013-14.

7. Which nation will implement an electronic visa system for Indian nationals beginning in January 2025?

A Maldives

B Indonesia

C Thailand

D Singapore

E Australia

Solution

- The Royal Thai Embassy in New Delhi has officially announced the launch of Thailand's Electronic Visa (e-Visa) system for Indian nationals, set to roll out on January 1, 2025.
- This new system is designed to simplify the visa application process for Indian travellers, making it more convenient and efficient.
- Under the new system, applicants will be required to submit their visa applications exclusively through the official Thai e-Visa portal, thaievisa.go.th.
- For Indian travellers holding ordinary passports, the Embassy has assured that the existing 60-day visa exemption for tourism and

short business trips will remain in effect until further notice.

8. **During the ongoing e-KYC verification for the Public Distribution System (PDS), more than 40 lakh ghost beneficiaries have been identified in which state?**

A Sikkim

B Rajasthan

C Haryana

D Odisha

E Bihar

Solution

- Over 40 lakh ghost beneficiaries have been detected in Odisha during the ongoing e-KYC verification for the Public Distribution System (PDS).
- The detection process revealed that 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh ghost beneficiaries were found in each district.
- The verification is still in progress, with the Aadhaar-based e-KYC process being conducted to bring transparency and improve the accuracy of beneficiary lists.

- **Government's Measures:**The Mohan Majhi government is working to eliminate ghost beneficiaries, a practice that allegedly persisted for the past 24 years.
- The government is also linking Aadhaar numbers with e-POS (Point of Sale) machines for better verification.

9. **As per the report, China's Brahmaputra Mega-Dam Causes Strategic and Environmental Concerns. With an estimated cost of how many billion dollars, this ambitious project is poised to outstrip the Three Gorges Dam in size.**

A \$137 billion

B \$127 billion

C \$147 billion

D \$157 billion

E \$117 billion

Solution

- China has approved the construction of the world's largest hydropower dam on the YarlungZangbo River (Brahmaputra) in Tibet, near the Indian border. With an estimated cost of \$137 billion, this ambitious project is poised to surpass the Three Gorges Dam in scale.
- Water Flow Control: The dam positions China to potentially regulate or divert the river's flow, affecting water availability in India and Bangladesh.

- **Flood Risk:** The dam could amplify risks of water release during hostile situations, creating security concerns for Indian border regions.
- **Countermeasure Dam:** India is constructing a dam on the Brahmaputra in Arunachal Pradesh to mitigate potential impacts of Chinese control.

10. According to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has given the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) an extra three years to reach what percentage of the public market?

A 5%

B 10%

C 15%

D 12%

E 18%

Solution

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has granted an additional three years of time to the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to achieve 10% public shareholding.
- Under Rule 19(2)(b)(iv) of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, a company must have a 10% public shareholding in 5 years from the date of listing.
- Accordingly, with SEBI's extension, the revised timeline for the insurance corporation to achieve 10% public shareholding is on or before May 16, 2027.

- The central government has earlier granted a one-time exemption to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to achieve 25 per cent Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) within 10 years since its listing on the exchanges.

11. Which Bank recently launched its international education solutions, providing free loans and transfers for NRIs and HNIs?

A HDFC bank

B DBS bank

C IDFC bank

D ICICI bank

E YES bank

Solution

- DBS Bank India launched the 'DBS Study Abroad Total Assist' program for NRIs and HNIs, aimed at assisting with overseas education challenges.
- The program is designed for DBS Treasures customers.
- Target Audience: The program is specifically for non-resident Indians (NRIs) and high-net-worth individuals (HNIs).
- Indian Students Abroad: Over 1.3 million Indian students are pursuing higher education abroad in 2024, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

- **Coverage:** The program offers coverage up to \$1 million against unexpected events like illness, lost baggage, or accidents, providing financial protection during studies abroad.

12. Who did Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar recently meet, who is set to assume the role of US National Security Advisor in January after Donald Trump becomes the 47th US President?

A Lloyd Austin

B Antony Blinken

C Michael Waltz

D John Kerry

E Jake Sullivan

Solution

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar recently concluded a significant visit to the United States, marked by high-level meetings with US leaders and key diplomatic engagements.
- The visit underscored the growing strategic partnership between India and the US while addressing pressing global and bilateral issues.
- Jaishankar met Michael Waltz, who will assume the role of US National Security Advisor in January after Donald Trump becomes the 47th US President.

13. **By March 31, 2025, all 36 states and Union Territories (UTs) must complete and pre-publish the harmonized draft rules for the four main labor codes, according to a deadline set by the Union Ministry of Labor and Employment. How many current labor laws are intended to be consolidated into a single framework by the four main labor codes that were introduced between 2019 and 2020?**

A 29

B 21

C 26

D 32

E 24

Solution

- The Union Ministry of Labor and Employment has set a deadline for all 36 states and Union Territories (UTs) to finalize and pre-publish the harmonized draft rules for the four major labor codes by March 31, 2025.
- These labor codes aim to overhaul and modernize India's labor law framework, simplifying compliance and enhancing protection for

workers.

- As of December 28, 2024, all but five states and UTs have completed the pre-publication process for the draft rules.
- Regional Meetings: Between August and October 2024, six regional meetings were held to bring together stakeholders, address challenges, and accelerate the drafting and harmonization process of the rules.

14. On December 26, 2024, the coastal districts of Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, and Karaikal in Tamil Nadu commemorated the \ (textit{_____}) anniversary of the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami.

A 19th

B 20th

C 21st

D 22nd

E 18th

Solution

- On December 26, 2024, the 20th anniversary of the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was commemorated across the coastal districts of Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, and Karaikal in Tamil Nadu.
- The events paid tribute to the victims, recognized the resilience of survivors, and reflected on two decades of rebuilding efforts.

15. In the fiscal year 2022–2023, contributions to the PM CARES Fund, which was created in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, fell precipitously. Donations dropped from the record Rs 7,184 crore in 2020–21 to how much crore?

A Rs 912 crore

B Rs 918 crore

C Rs 911 crore

D Rs 910 crore

E Rs 915 crore

Solution

- The PM CARES Fund, established in March 2020 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, witnessed a sharp decline in contributions in the financial year 2022-23.
- Donations fell significantly to Rs 912 crore, down from the record Rs 7,184 crore in 2020-21.
- Foreign Donations: Also surged to Rs 495 crore.
- 2021-22: Voluntary contributions dropped to Rs 1,938 crore, reflecting a decrease in the urgency as the pandemic situation eased.

- The total expenditure for 2022-23 was approximately Rs 439 crore.
- PM Cares for Children: Rs 346 crore was allocated to support children who lost their parents or guardians due to COVID-19.

16. Recently(Dec'24), two red pandas have been transported to Darjeeling's Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNZP) from Rotterdam Zoo, Netherlands, for breeding and conservation purposes. Which airport welcomed a flight carrying the two red pandas?

A Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport

B Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport

C Bagdogra Airport

D Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport

E Indira Gandhi International Airport

Solution

- Two red pandas from Rotterdam Zoo, Netherlands, are being brought to Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNZP) in Darjeeling for conservation breeding purposes.
- Arrival and Health Check:A flight carrying the two red pandas landed at Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport.

- **Current Red Panda Population at PNZP:**PNZP currently houses 7 male and 12 female red pandas, along with 2 cubs (sex of cubs not yet determined).
- **Conservation Significance:**The red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) is an endangered species native to the eastern Himalayas and southwestern China, with a population of less than 10,000.
- The species is listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

17. In December 2024, How many lakhs has the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined four cooperative banks in Madhya Pradesh (MP) and one in Mumbai, Maharashtra, for failing to follow the banking regulator's instructions?

A Rs 22.60 lakh

B Rs 22.40 lakh

C Rs 22.50 lakh

D Rs 22.20 lakh

E Rs 22.80 lakh

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 22.60 lakh on 4 cooperative banks from Madhya Pradesh (MP) and one from Mumbai, Maharashtra for non-compliance with the directions issued by the banking regulator.

The penalties were distributed as follows:

- Bharat Cooperative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd: ₹15 lakh

- Indore Paraspar Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Madhya Pradesh: ₹4.50 lakh
- Raj Rajeshwari Mahila Nagrik Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Madhya Pradesh: ₹1.10 lakh
- Shri Vaibhav Lakshmi Mahila Nagrik Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Madhya Pradesh: ₹1 lakh
- Guna Nagarik Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Madhya Pradesh: ₹1 lakh

18. Recently (Dec 2024), How many lakhs has the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined five Gujarati cooperative banks for failing to follow the banking regulator's instructions?

A Rs12.10 lakh

B Rs12.20 lakh

C Rs12.30 lakh

D Rs12.40 lakh

E Rs12.50 lakh

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a total penalty of Rs12.10 lakh on 5 cooperative banks from Gujarat for non-compliance with the directions issued by the banking regulator.
- The penalties were imposed due to various regulatory compliance deficiencies, including issues related to loans and advances to directors, their relatives, and associated firms, as well as non-compliance with Know Your Customer (KYC) norms.

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19. In December 2024, Which state's four cooperative banks were fined ₹5.5 lakh by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for failing to follow its instructions?

A Sikkim

B Maharashtra

C Madhya Pradesh

D Gujarat

E Karnataka

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of ₹5.5 lakh on four cooperative banks in Karnataka for not complying with its directions.

The penalties were distributed as follows:

- Bharat Cooperative Bank Ltd, Bengaluru: ₹3 lakh
- Sri Basaveshwara Pattana Sahakara Bank Niyamit: ₹1 lakh
- Swami Vivekanand Sahakari Bank Niyamit: ₹1 lakh
- Manjra Mahila Urban Cooperative Bank Ltd: ₹50,000

These penalties were imposed due to various regulatory compliance deficiencies, including failures related to supervisory action framework guidelines, exposure norms, and Know Your Customer (KYC) requirements.

20. In an effort to increase the effectiveness, security, and transparency of the banking system, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) plans to make how many different kinds of bank accounts inactive starting on January 1, 2025?

A 6

B 4

C 5

D 3

E 7

Solution

- Starting January 1, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will make three types of bank accounts non-operative as part of a move to improve the banking system's efficiency, safety, and transparency.
- Types of Accounts Becoming Non-Operative: Dormant Accounts: Accounts that have not had any transactions for two years.
- Inactive Accounts: Accounts with no activity for a fixed period, often one year.

- **Zero Balance Accounts:** Accounts with no money deposited for a long time and a zero balance.

21. How much money did India's tech startups raise in 2024, reviving them after a two-year "funding winter"?

A \$11.3 billion

B \$12.3 billion

C \$13.3 billion

D \$14.3 billion

E \$15.3 billion

Solution

- India's tech startups secured \$11.3 billion in funding in 2024, marking a recovery from the two-year 'funding winter.'
- Global Standing: Ranked as the third-most funded country globally, after the US and the UK.
- Understanding Funding Winter: The term refers to a period of reduced investment due to various factors such as market instability, reduced investor confidence, or global economic conditions.
- 2024 Recovery: Reports confirmed that Indian startups raised \$11.3 billion in funding in 2024. This figure was publicly highlighted as a sign of recovery after the funding drought.

22. Which company has moved forward with its plans to build a greenfield integrated refining and petrochemical complex in Andhra Pradesh?

A HPCL

B BPCL

C IOCL

D GAIL

E ONGC

Solution

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) has moved forward with its plans to set up a greenfield integrated refining and petrochemical complex in Andhra Pradesh, located on India's southeastern coast.
- BPCL's board approved an initial investment of Rs 6100 crore (approximately \$716.3 million) to kickstart the proposed project's development.
- This initial investment will support several key activities, including: Feasibility studies, Land acquisition, Environmental impact assessments and Basic engineering and design.

23. To improve social security, streamline services, and modernize labor laws, the Union Ministry of Labor and the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) have launched a number of initiatives. What percentage of the interest rate for FY 2023–2024 has been credited to subscribers' accounts?

A 8.1%

B 8.0%

C 8.2%

D 8.3%

E 8.5%

Solution

- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and the Union Ministry of Labour have introduced several initiatives to enhance social security, streamline services, and modernize labour laws.
- Accessibility: Starting next month, 77 lakh EPS subscribers can withdraw pensions from any bank or branch across India.

- **Bank Empanelment Simplification:** All RBI-listed agency banks are now included.
- **Scheduled Commercial Banks** with 0.2% of total EPFO collections are eligible, reduced from the previous 0.5% slab.

24. What is the name of the new wholly owned subsidiary established by Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) to advance its clean energy initiatives?

A Adani Green Energy Sixty Seven Limited (AGE67L)

B Adani Renewable Energy Ventures Limited (AREVL)

C Adani Green Energy Sixty Eight Limited (AGE68L)

D Adani Clean Energy Solutions Limited (ACESL)

E Adani Green Future Limited (AGFL)

Solution

- Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL), a leader in India's renewable energy sector, has announced the establishment of a new wholly owned subsidiary, Adani Green Energy Sixty Eight Limited (AGE68L), to further its clean energy initiatives.
- Formation of AGE68L
- Incorporation Date: December 28, 2024.
- Registered Location: Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.
- Parent Company: Adani Renewable Energy Holding Nine Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of AGEL.

- Develop and operate renewable energy projects, including solar, wind, and other green energy technologies.

25. According to Deloitte India, robust domestic consumption, infrastructure development, and digitization will propel the Indian economy's growth from 6.5% to what percentage in FY2025?

A 6.6%

B 6.7%

C 6.8%

D 6.9%

E 7.0%

Solution

- According to Deloitte India, the Indian economy is expected to grow at 6.5-6.8% in FY2025, driven by strong domestic consumption, infrastructure development, and digitisation.
- Economic growth is projected to increase further to 6.7-7.3% in FY2026.
- While challenges such as geopolitical tensions, trade disputes, and global liquidity constraints pose risks to the long-term outlook, India's resilience in key sectors is likely to mitigate some of these challenges.

- Boosted by enhanced agricultural incomes, targeted subsidies, and government welfare programs, both rural and urban demand are expected to rise, supporting consumption-driven growth.

26. In order to conduct experiments on living biological materials in space, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is getting ready to launch its PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-4 (POEM-4) mission. How many payloads will POEM-4 be able to carry?

A 24

B 22

C 27

D 21

E 20

Solution

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing to launch its PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-4 (POEM-4) mission, which includes experiments on living biological materials in space.
- Biological Experiments: The mission will send spinach, cowpea, and gut bacteria into space for scientific experiments on growth and adaptation in space conditions.
- Amity University's APEMS: Amity University, Mumbai, will launch spinach cells aboard ISRO's Spadex mission for the Amity Plant

Experimental Module in Space (APEMS) experiment.

- This aims to study how plant cells adapt to space conditions.
- Cowpea Experiment: ISRO will study the growth of eight cowpea seeds in space, from germination to the two-leaf stage.

27. Which nation's space startups have teamed up with India to investigate the use of satellites equipped with lasers to remove space debris?

A USA

B China

C Japan

D Russia

E France

Solution

- Space startups from Japan and India have partnered to study the use of laser-equipped satellites to remove space debris.
- The initiative addresses the problem of orbital congestion and aims to offer solutions for debris removal in space.
- Demonstration Plans: The laser system is set to be demonstrated in space, with plans to supply it to satellite operators after 2027.
- Space Cooperation between Japan and India: This project adds to the growing collaboration between Japan and India in space exploration,

particularly the Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) mission, planned for launch around 2026.

- Funding: Orbital Lasers has raised ¥900 million (\$5.8 million) since its establishment in January.

28. The first undergraduate minor program in quantum technologies is introduced in India. There are _____ verticals which make up the curriculum.

A 5

B 4

C 2

D 7

E 3

Solution

- The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) collaborated with the National Quantum Mission (NQM) under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to launch the first Undergraduate (UG) Minor Programme in Quantum Technologies in India.
- Purpose of the Initiative: The program aims to prepare India's workforce for the upcoming quantum revolution and position India as a global leader in quantum innovation.

29. **Due to security concerns, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs has reintroduced Protected Area Permits (PAP) in Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram. The PAP generally allows foreign nationals to stay for how many days, with the option to extend?**

A 10

B 18

C 12

D 15

E 8

Solution

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has reinstated the Protected Area Permit (PAP) in Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram due to security concerns arising from the influx of individuals from neighboring countries.
- Foreign nationals visiting these states now need to secure the necessary PAP under the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958.
- Definition of PAP: The Protected Area Permit (PAP) is required by foreign nationals to visit certain sensitive areas in India located near

international borders.

- These areas are deemed sensitive due to their proximity to international boundaries.
- Purpose of PAP:PAP ensures control over foreign nationals entering areas considered sensitive for security reasons.

30. Which state has more than 10,000 startups registered with the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)?

A Kerala

B Karnataka

C Uttar Pradesh

D West Bengal

E Tamil Nadu

Solution

- Tamil Nadu has registered over 10,000 startups with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The state's initiative, StartupTN, has been instrumental in supporting the startup ecosystem through funding programs, mentorship, and other support measures.
- Tamil Nadu is ranked as the most economically free state in the Economic Freedom Rankings for the States of India.

- The state has introduced the Startup and Innovation Policy 2023, aimed at fostering a supportive environment for startups and encouraging business growth.
- StartupTN Mission Director and CEO Shivaraja Ramanathan.

31. The market cap deadline for UPI apps has been extended by NPCI for a further years.

A Two

B Three

C Four

D Five

E Six

Solution

- The market cap deadline for UPI apps has been extended by NPCI for a further two years, until 2026.
- The NPCI has given third-party Unified Payments Interface (UPI) apps an additional two years until December 31, 2026, to adopt a 30% volume cap.
- The NPCI has delayed the deadline for the third time.
- According to NPCI, the deadline for compliance for current third-party application providers (TPAPs) that exceed the volume cap has been extended by two years, or until December 2026.

- In November 2020, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) first proposed capping the number of transactions that UPI apps could handle at 30%.
- The current players were given two years by NPCI to comply with the volume cap.
- Major TPAPs like PhonePe and Google Pay currently account for 80% of UPI transactions.

32. A working group has been formed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for revision of the base year for the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from to 2022-23.

A 2008-09

B 2009-10

C 2010-11

D 2011-12

E 2007-08

Solution

- A working group has been formed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for revision of the base year for the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from 2011-12 to 2022-23.
- The working group has 18-members. It is chaired by Prof. Ramesh Chand, member, NITI Aayog.
- It includes representatives from various government departments, economic advisory bodies, and non-official experts.
- Some non-official members of the group are economist Dr Surjit Bhalla, Dr Shamika Ravi, member, Economic Advisory Council to

PM, and Crisil's chief economist Dr Dharmakirti Joshi.

- The working group will revise the commodity basket of WPI and Producer Price Index (PPI) in light of structural changes in the economy.
- It will also review the current system of price collection and recommend changes for improvement.
- It will also decide on the computational methodology to be adopted by WPI or PPI.
- It will suggest improvement in compilation and presentation and recommend roadmap for switchover from WPI to PPI.

33. As per revised norms for deposit-taking housing finance companies (HFCs), these companies are required to maintain liquid assets equal to of their outstanding deposits as of January 1, 2025.

A 16%

B 12%

C 13%

D 14%

E 15%

Solution

- Revised norms for deposit-taking housing finance companies (HFCs) have been implemented by the RBI.
- These norms require deposit-taking HFCs to maintain higher levels of liquid assets against their deposits.
- These companies are required to maintain liquid assets equal to 14% of their outstanding deposits as of January 1, 2025.
- As a percentage of public deposits, this comprises 8% of unencumbered approved securities.

- By July 1, 2025, the RBI has mandated that the need for total liquid assets rise to 15%, with 10% of that amount being unencumbered approved securities.
- Previously, HFCs that accepted deposits had to keep 13% of their public deposits in liquid assets.

34. Manish Singhal has been appointed Secretary General of which of the following?

A SEBI

B FICCI

C ASSOCHAM

D NCLT

E IBBI

Solution

- Manish Singhal has been appointed Secretary General of ASSOCHAM.
- Manish Singhal succeeds Deepak Sood. Deepak Sood recently resigned to pursue other interests.
- Singhal has 35 years of experience in Chamber and Corporate India.
- He had earlier worked as Deputy Secretary General of The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) is an apex business chamber.

35. Cabinet approved the extension of PM Fasal Bima Yojana, a weather-based crop insurance scheme till 2025-26. In which year was this scheme launched?

A 2013

B 2014

C 2015

D 2016

E 2017

Solution

- Cabinet approved the extension of PM Fasal Bima Yojana, a weather-based crop insurance scheme till 2025-26.
- Government has decided to extend the timeline of the PM Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26.
- The overall outlay of the scheme has been increased to 69 thousand 515 crore rupees.
- Under this scheme, 88 per cent of insured farmers are small and marginal farmers. 57 per cent of insured farmers are from OBC, SC,

and ST.

- PM Fasal Bima Yojana was launched on 18 February 2016.

36. Who took over as the CEO of the Unique Identification Authority of India?

A Bhuvnesh Kumar

B Mohit Sharma

C Amit Agarwal

D V. Ramasubramanian

E Arun Kumar Mishra

Solution

- Bhuvnesh Kumar took charge as CEO of UIDAI.
- On January 1, 2025, IAS officer Bhuvnesh Kumar took over as the CEO of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which administers Aadhaar.
- Mr. Kumar is Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and will continue to hold the same position after this appointment.
- Mr Kumar replaced Amit Agarwal.
- On December 25, Mr Agarwal was appointed secretary of the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemicals and

Fertilizers as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle.

37. Which of the following became the first state to link the forest ecosystem to green GDP?

A Andhra Pradesh

B Himachal Pradesh

C Uttar Pradesh

D Chhattisgarh

E Madhya Pradesh

Solution

- Chhattisgarh became the first state to link the forest ecosystem to green GDP.
- The state of Chhattisgarh has for the first time launched an innovative scheme that links ecosystem services of its forests to Green Gross Domestic Product (Green GDP).
- These measures were aimed at highlighting the direct link between the vital environmental contributions of forests, such as clean air, water conservation, biodiversity, and the economic progress of the state.

- The action plan is designed to ensure that economic development is achieved while preserving the pristine environment for future generations.
- The new approach assesses the often-overlooked benefits that forests provide, such as regulating climate, enriching soil quality, purifying water, absorbing carbon dioxide, etc.

38. Rural poverty has significantly decreased, according to economic research department (ERD) of _____.

A SBI

B RBI

C PNB

D SEBI

E Finance Ministry

Solution

- Rural poverty has significantly decreased, according to SBI's economic research department (ERD).
- Higher consumption growth in the lowest 0–5% decile is the reason for the significant drop in the rural poverty ratio.
- With very few cases of extreme poverty, India's poverty rates could currently be between 4 and 4.5 percent.
- ERD economists noted that the poverty line estimate was ₹1000 in urban areas and ₹816 in rural areas as of 2011–12.
- Accordingly, the revised estimated poverty line for 2023–2024 is Rs 1944 in urban areas and Rs1632 in rural areas.

- SBI Economists said that the difference between rural and urban monthly per capita consumption expenditure (MPCE) to rural MPCE is now at 69.7 per cent.

39. Which city hosted Koneru Humpy's victory at the 2024 Women's World Rapid Chess Championship?

A Tokyo

B New York

C Washington DC

D Florida

E Beijing

Solution

- Indian chess legend Koneru Humpy achieved another monumental feat by winning her second Women's World Rapid Chess Championship title in New York at the age of 37.
- Humpy's journey is an inspiring tale of balancing motherhood, family support, and a demanding professional chess career.
- Indian Women's Results in the Championship
- Divya Deshmukh: 21st place with 7 points
- Padmini Rout: 26th place with 6.5 points
- R. Vaishali: 52nd place with 5.5 points
- Vantika Agrawal: 67th place with 5 points

40. **Who was Warren Upton, who passed away on December 25, 2024, at the age of 105?**

- A** A decorated World War II fighter pilot
- B** The oldest known survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack
- C** A renowned civil rights activist and veteran
- D** A celebrated author and historian of World War II
- E** A pioneering naval engineer during World War II

Solution

- Warren Upton, the oldest known survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack, passed away on December 25, 2024, at the age of 105 in Los Gatos, California, following pneumonia.
- Upton was 22 years old during the attack on Pearl Harbor and served aboard the USS Utah.
- The USS Utah, a battleship, was one of the targets of the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941, which led to the U.S. entry into World War II.
- Upton was preparing to shave when the first torpedo struck the ship, followed by a second torpedo that caused the ship to sink.

41. Which bank has authorized the issuance of long-term bonds worth up to ₹10,000 crore to fund affordable housing and infrastructure projects?

A YES bank

B IDBI bank

C HDFC bank

D ICICI bank

E Axis bank

Solution

- IDBI Bank has approved the issuance of Long-Term Bonds to finance Infrastructure and Affordable Housing projects, raising up to ₹10,000 crore.
- The bond issuance will occur in tranches, with ₹5,000 crore expected to be raised by March 31, 2025, and the balance during FY 2025-26.
- Purpose of Bonds: The funds raised through these bonds will be used for financing infrastructure and affordable housing projects.

42. In FY25, which bank wants to keep its net interest margin (NIM) at 3.4%, with a potential variance of $\pm 10-15$ basis points?

A Indian Bank

B Bank of India

C Indian Overseas Bank

D Bank of Baroda

E Punjab National Bank

Solution

- Indian Bank aims to maintain a 3.4% net interest margin (NIM) in FY25, with a possible variation of $\pm 10-15$ basis points.
- Factors Supporting NIM Maintenance: Loans linked to external benchmarks will reprice immediately when interest rates decline, helping to manage interest income.
- Around 55-60% of the bank's loans are linked to the Marginal Cost of Funds Based Lending Rate (MCLR), providing a hedge.
- The bank has a strong investment portfolio with yields over 7%, which will support its margin.

43. When compared to June 2024, India's external debt increased by what percentage to \$711.8 billion in September 2024. This is \$29.6 billion more than the level at the end of June 2024?

A 4.1%

B 4.2%

C 4.3%

D 4.4%

E 4.5%

Solution

- India's external debt reached \$711.8 billion in September 2024, a rise of 4.3% compared to June 2024. This represents an increase of \$29.6 billion over the June-end 2024 level.
- In September 2023, external debt was \$637.1 billion, showing a significant year-on-year increase in 2024.
- The ratio stood at 19.4% in September 2024, up from 18.8% in June 2024.
- Currency Composition of Debt: The major components of external debt were:

- US Dollar-denominated debt: 53.4%

44. With a value of ₹23.25 trillion, UPI transactions reached a record high of how many billion in December?

A 16.73 billion

B 16.72 billion

C 16.71 billion

D 16.75 billion

E 16.78 billion

Solution

- According to the latest data by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), In December 2024, Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transactions reached an all-time high of 16.73 billion, surpassing the previous record of 16.58 billion in October 2024.
- Month-on-Month Increase: UPI transactions increased month-on-month, rising from 15.48 billion in November to 16.73 billion in December 2024.
- Value of Transactions: The total value of UPI transactions in December 2024 was ₹23.25 trillion, showing a significant recovery from ₹21.55 trillion in November.

45. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India released guidelines for lenders regarding their involvement in the government's DRS program. In DRS, what does "R" stand for?

A Relief

B Reserve

C Recover

D Report

E Return

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued guidelines for lenders participating in Government Debt Relief Schemes (DRS), focusing on the sacrifice of interest, principal, and loan account status.
- These schemes target specific segments of borrowers, such as farmers.
- Model Operating Procedure (MOP): RBI has shared a Model Operating Procedure (MOP) with State Governments, which includes steps for consultation with State Level Bankers' Committee

(SLBC) and District Level Consultative Committee (DCC), and guidelines for the scheme's design and funding.

- **Applicability of Guidelines:** These guidelines apply to all Commercial Banks (including Regional Rural Banks and Local Area Banks), Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks, State and Central Co-operative Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Housing Finance Companies, and All-India Financial Institutions.

46. Which minister addressed caste-based discrimination in prisons by amending the Model Prison Manual, 2016 and the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023?

A Minister of Labour

B Minister of Home Affairs

C Minister of Minority Affairs

D Minister of Tribal

E Minister of Housing

Solution

- The Union Home Ministry has amended the Model Prison Manual, 2016, and the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023, to address caste-based discrimination in prisons.
- Supreme Court Ruling: The changes follow the October 3, 2024 order from the Supreme Court, which highlighted concerns about caste-based discrimination in prisons.
- Changes in the Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act:
- Prohibition of Caste-Based Discrimination: A new provision titled 'Prohibition of caste-based discrimination in Prisons and

Correctional Institutions’ has been added as Section 55(A).

47. Which airline has started offering Wi-Fi internet connectivity on some of its fleet's domestic and international flights?

A Vistara

B AirIndia

C AirAaksa

D Indigo

E Spicejet

Solution

- Tata group airline Air India has rolled out Wi-Fi internet connectivity services on board domestic and international flights operated by select aircraft in its fleet.
- With the rollout of this service, Air India has become the first Indian airline to offer internet connectivity on domestic flights.
- Wi-Fi on Domestic Flights: Air India becomes the first Indian airline to offer internet connectivity on domestic flights.
- Introductory Offer: Free Wi-Fi service is available on select domestic flights for a limited period, with no specified end date.

- Aircraft with Wi-Fi: Available on Air India’s Airbus A350, Boeing 787-9, and select Airbus A321neo aircraft.

48. How many rupees per tonne of Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) special subsidy has the Center extended for another year, from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025?

A Rs,1500

B Rs,2500

C Rs,3500

D Rs,4500

E Rs,5500

Solution

- The Centre has extended the special subsidy of ₹3,500 per tonne on Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) for another year, from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025.
- This move aims to prevent a rise in the farmgate price of DAP, the second most-consumed fertilizer in India, amid pressure from the depreciating rupee against the US dollar.
- Maximum Retail Price (MRP) Control: Despite the decontrol of non-urea fertilizers on paper, the government has effectively frozen

the MRP of DAP and other non-urea fertilizers, keeping them below the actual cost of importation.

- The government caps DAP MRP at ₹1,350 per 50-kg bag, translating to ₹27,000 per tonne.

49. Recently, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection fell to ₹1.76 lakh crore in December 2024, a three-month low, but what percentage increase was there from ₹1.65 lakh crore in December 2023?

A 5%

B 9%

C 7%

D 4%

E 8%

Solution

- Collection from Goods & Services Tax (GST) dipped to a 3-month low in December to ₹1.76 lakh crore.
- However, this marks an increase of nearly 7 per cent from ₹1.65 lakh crore collected in the same month 2023.
- Total GST Collection: ₹1.76 lakh crore in December 2024, a 3-month low, but a 7% increase from ₹1.65 lakh crore in December 2023.
- Impact of Post-Festival Slump: December's collection reflects reduced consumption during the post-festival period, with a typical

slowdown in goods consumption and services availed in November.

50. Recently, Who chaired the Finance Ministry meeting urging public sector banks (PSBs) and insurance firms to expedite the resolution of public grievances?

A Nirmala Sitharaman

B M Nagaraju

C Tapan Deka

D Shaktikanta Das

E Pushpak Bhattacharyya

Solution

- The Finance Ministry urged public sector banks (PSBs) and insurance firms to speed up the resolution of public grievances.
- The meeting was chaired by Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju and included complainants, PSBs, public sector insurance companies (PSICs), and regulators.
- Assessment of Grievance Quality: 20 randomly selected grievances were reviewed to assess the quality of their resolution.
- Prime Minister's Direction: The Secretary reiterated the Prime Minister's instruction from the Pragati meeting (December 26),

asking senior officers (Chairman/MD/ED of PSBs/PSICs) to review at least 20 cases every month for monitoring resolution quality.

51. As per the report, the three important fleet assets—Nilgiri, Surat, and Vagsheer—will be put into service by the Indian Navy. Which company has designed and built all three platforms from scratch?

A Goa Shipyard Company

B Hindustan limited

C Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited

D Cochin Shipyard limited

E Garden Reach Shipbuilders limited

Solution

- On 15 January 2025 is set to become a landmark day in India's history as the Indian Navy prepares to commission three frontline combatants – Nilgiri, the lead ship of the Project 17A stealth frigate class; Surat, the fourth and final ship of the Project 15B stealth destroyer class; and Vaghsheer, the sixth and final submarine of the Scorpene-class project – together at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.
- All three platforms have been designed and constructed entirely at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, a testament

to India’s growing self-reliance in the critical domain of defense production.

52. In order to modernize India's military and get them ready for new challenges, the Ministry of Defense has designated 2025 as the _____.

A Year of Modern Technology

B Year of Reforms

C Path to Pride

D Unity in Diversity

E Year of Self-Reliant

Solution

- The Ministry of Defence has declared 2025 as the “Year of Reforms” to modernize India's armed forces and prepare them for future challenges.
- Reforms will enhance Jointness and Integration initiatives, aiming for the establishment of Integrated Theatre Commands.
- The reforms will prioritize new domains like Cyber and Space, as well as emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Hypersonics, and Robotics.

- The development of associated Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) will be essential to win future wars.

53. Who has been named the Unique Identification Authority of India's (UIDAI) Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?

A Rajesh Kumar

B Suresh Kumar

C Bhuvnesh Kumar

D Arul Kumar

E Vinoth Kumar

Solution

- Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
- Along with being the CEO of UIDAI, he serves as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.
- He is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the 1995 batch, Uttar Pradesh cadre.
- Graduate and gold medalist from the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Kurukshetra.

- Earlier, he has also served as the Joint Secretary in MeitY.

54. Who assumed command of the Indian Air Force's Western Air Command on 1st January 2025?

A Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari

B Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra

C Air Marshal Raghunath Nambiar

D Air Marshal Sandeep Singh

E Air Marshal Harjit Singh Arora

Solution

- Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra assumed command of the Indian Air Force's Western Air Command on 1st January 2025.
- Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra succeeds Air Marshal Pankaj Mohan Sinha who superannuated on 31 December 2024 after putting in more than 39 years of distinguished service in the IAF.
- The Air Marshal was commissioned into the Indian Air Force as a fighter pilot on 06 December 1986.
- He is an alumnus of National Defence Academy Pune, Air Force Test Pilots School, Bangalore, Air Command and Staff College, USA and Royal College of Defence Studies, UK. A Fighter Combat

Leader and an experimental Test Pilot, Air Marshal Mishra has more than 3000 hours of flying experience.

55. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has appointed industry expert Manish Singhal as its new Secretary General. Who did Manish Singhal succeed as the Secretary General of ASSOCHAM?

A Deepak Sood

B Vitul Kumar

C Rajnesh Singh

D Harish Venkat

E Suriya Kanth

Solution

- Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) announced the appointment of industry expert Manish Singhal as its new Secretary General.
- Singhal takes over from Deepak Sood, who successfully led the organization for the past five years and has now stepped down to pursue other opportunities.
- Singhal previously served as the Deputy Secretary General at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)

and has extensive experience working with global companies, including Tata Motors, Eicher (Volvo), Tata AutoComp Systems, Moser Baer India, and BEML, among others.

56. Recently, Kaamya Karthikeyan, a 17-year-old student from Navy Children School in Mumbai, became the youngest female in the world to conquer the _____ summits.

A 9

B 5

C 11

D 7

E 2

Solution

- At just 17 years old, Kaamya Karthikeyan, a student from Navy Children School in Mumbai, achieved the remarkable feat of becoming the youngest female in the world to conquer the Seven Summits, a challenge involving scaling the highest peaks on all seven continents.
- Completed the challenge by summiting Mount Vinson on December 24, 2024, at 17:20 Chilean Standard Time.

57. Recently, K S Manilal, the renowned botanist who introduced ‘Hortus Malabaricus’ to the modern world, died. In what year was he awarded the Officer of the Order of Orange-Nassau by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands?

A 2011

B 2012

C 2010

D 2013

E 2014

Solution

- Dr. K.S. Manilal, an esteemed botanist, passed away on January 1, 2025, at the age of 86 after battling illness.
- Dr. Manilal is renowned for translating and annotating Hortus Malabaricus, a 17th-century botanical manuscript.
- His work made this ancient document accessible to modern researchers and the public, reviving interest in Kerala’s medicinal plants.

- Academic and Research Career:Former head of the Botany Department at Calicut University.

58. Recently, Hemanth Muddappa, hailed as the “Drag King” of Indian motorsport, made history by winning three titles. How many national titles did he win overall as a result of this accomplishment, making him the most decorated motorsport athlete in India?

A 12

B 15

C 18

D 14

E 22

Solution

- Hemanth Muddappa, celebrated as the “Drag King” of Indian motorsport, etched his name in history by achieving a triple crown during the final round of the MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Drag Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit (MIC).
- With this feat, he reached a total of 15 National titles, becoming India’s most decorated motorsport athlete.

59. Who achieved an outstanding achievement by winning a bronze medal in the World Blitz Championship in New York?

A R Vaishali

B Koneru Humpy

C Vantika Agrawal

D Divya Deshmukh

E Arjun Erigaisi

Solution

- R Vaishali, a rising star in Indian chess, ended 2024 with an outstanding achievement by winning a bronze medal at the World Blitz Championship in New York.
- Championship Results: In the men's section, Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi shared the title after both players drew three tie-break games.
- A Year of Milestones for Indian Chess
- Koneru Humpy's Success: Earlier in the year, Koneru Humpy won the World Rapid Championship, continuing India's dominance in the chess world.

60. The 2024 Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award winners have been revealed by the Indian government. Which athlete has been not included on the list?

A Manu Bhaker

B D Gukesh

C Harmanpreet Singh

D Kaamya Karthikeyan

E Praveen Kumar

Solution

- The Indian government has announced the recipients of the prestigious Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award for 2024, honouring athletes who have made exceptional contributions to sports in the country.
- This esteemed award recognizes outstanding performances and achievements in various disciplines.
- Manu Bhaker (Shooting): Made history at the Paris 2024 Olympics by becoming the first Indian athlete post-Independence to win two medals in a single edition of the Games.

- Harmanpreet Singh (Hockey): As the captain of the Indian men's hockey team, led them to a second consecutive Olympic bronze medal in Paris.

61. The MicroFinance Institutions Network (MFIN) extends the maximum three lenders per borrower rule by three months. The MFIN has prohibited lending to borrowers who have past-due loans that are more than sixty days past due and whose outstanding balance exceeds what amount?

A greater than Rs 2,500

B greater than Rs 3,000

C greater than Rs 2,000

D greater than Rs 3,200

E None of these

Solution

- Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN) extended the deadline for compliance with the “maximum three-lenders per borrower” rule by three months, now applying until the end of March 2025.
- Background of Rule: The rule aims to address the microfinance sector’s asset quality stress by limiting borrowers to loans from a maximum of three lenders, reducing excessive indebtedness.

- MFIN had previously set a cap of four lenders per borrower, which has now been reduced.
- Stricter Lending Principles: MFIN introduced stricter lending norms in late November 2024, including capping a borrower's total outstanding loans at Rs 2 lakh, which includes both microfinance and unsecured retail loans.
- Delinquent Borrowers: MFIN has imposed a restriction on lending to borrowers with overdue loans for more than 60 days and an outstanding amount greater than Rs 3,000.

62. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India enforced stricter liquidity standards for housing finance companies that accept deposits. What percentage of their outstanding deposits must these companies have in liquid assets as of January 1, 2025?

A 10%

B 12%

C 14%

D 15%

E 18%

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has implemented revised norms requiring deposit-taking housing finance companies (HFCs) to maintain higher levels of liquid assets against their deposits.
- Effective January 1, 2025, these companies must hold liquid assets equivalent to 14% of their outstanding deposits.
- This includes 8% in unencumbered approved securities, calculated as a percentage of public deposits.

- Furthermore, the RBI has mandated that by July 1, 2025, the total liquid assets requirement will increase to 15%, including 10% in unencumbered approved securities.

63. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India updated housing finance regulations and requires complete emergency withdrawals from NBFC deposits. How many days ahead of time must NBFCs inform depositors of their deposit's maturity, as required by the RBI, which has shortened the notice period from two months?

A 10 days

B 12 days

C 14 days

D 15 days

E 18 days

Solution

- Starting January 1, 2025, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) are required to return the full deposit amount to depositors within three months in case of an emergency withdrawal, though such withdrawals will not accrue any interest.
- Critical Illness: If a depositor faces critical illness, as defined by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI),

they can withdraw 100% of their deposit within three months without interest.

- **Non-Emergency Withdrawals:** For non-emergency withdrawals within three months, NBFCs can return up to 50% of the deposit amount (maximum Rs 5 lakh) without paying interest.

64. As per the report, the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) is authorized by the Reserve Bank of India to function as an All-India Financial Institution in the financial markets. When was the NaBFID Act established?

A 2019

B 2018

C 2021

D 2020

E 2022

Solution

- On January 1, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a circular allowing the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) to participate as an All-India Financial Institution (AIFI) in financial markets.
- The decision aligns with the RBI's earlier notifications and master directions governing AIFIs under the RBI Act, 1934.
- Credit Default Swaps and Repo Transactions: NaBFID is now permitted to undertake credit default swaps and repurchase (repo)

transactions, in line with the Master Directions on Credit Derivatives (2022) and Repo Transactions (2018).

- **NaBFID's Establishment:** NaBFID was established under the NaBFID Act, 2021, as the primary institution for infrastructure financing in India.

65. Recently, the Federal Bank, one of India's largest private sector banks, has launched FedOne, a new digital transaction banking platform. What company powers the platform?

A Aviz Networks

B Juniper Networks

C PieSoft Networks

D Nucleus Software

E LME Services

Solution

- Federal Bank, one of India's largest private sector banks, launched FedOne, a new digital transaction banking platform.
- The platform is powered by Nucleus Software's FinnAxia solution.
- Implementation Timeline: The platform was implemented after a 10-month collaboration between Federal Bank and Nucleus Software.
- Purpose of FedOne: The platform aims to modernize the bank's corporate banking services and streamline treasury operations.
- Features of FedOne: It is designed to enhance working capital management capabilities and provide faster service delivery for

corporate customers.

- **Nucleus Software:** Nucleus Software, the technology partner, supports over 200 financial institutions in 50 countries.

66. Which bank has implemented TAB-based digital onboarding for NRI and NRE account opening?

A Canara Bank

B State Bank of India

C Punjab National Bank

D Indian Bank

E Bank of Baroda

Solution

- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a TAB-based digital onboarding process for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to facilitate the opening of NRE (Non-Resident External) and NRO (Non-Resident Ordinary) accounts.
- Purpose and Availability: The initiative aims to streamline the account opening process, offering it across SBI branches in India and select foreign offices.
- Paperless and Efficient: The process eliminates the need for physical paperwork, utilizing digital tools to verify documents and speed up the account opening.

- **Account Types for NRIs:** NRIs can open accounts denominated in Indian Rupees (NRE/NRO) or Foreign Currency, including FCNR (B) accounts in USD, EURO, GBP, CAD, JPY, and AUD.

67. When will the Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) launch its updated software system, EPFO 3.0, as announced by Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya?

A January 2025

B March 2025

C April 2025

D June 2025

E May 2025

Solution

- Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya announced that the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) will introduce its revamped software system, EPFO 3.0, by June 2025.
- The initiative aims to modernize the organisation's operations, enhance user experience, and bring it on par with India's advanced banking systems.

68. In which state/UT did Prime Minister Narendra Modi launch a number of revolutionary infrastructure and redevelopment projects?

A Gujarat

B Maharashtra

C Delhi

D Ladakh

E Odisha

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a series of transformative infrastructure and redevelopment projects in Delhi.
- The initiatives focus on urban renewal, affordable housing, and educational advancements, emphasizing the government's commitment to improving the Ease of Living for Delhi residents.
- Urban Redevelopment Projects
 - World Trade Centre (WTC), Nauroji Nagar
 - A significant urban renewal project aimed at boosting commercial infrastructure.
 - GPRA Type-II Quarters, Sarojini Nagar

- Residential accommodations for government employees, enhancing their quality of life.

69. Recently, the construction of three new greenfield airports in Puri (Odisha), Kota (Rajasthan), and Parandur (Tamil Nadu) is almost approved by the central government. Including both brownfield and greenfield projects, how many airports are currently in operation in India?

A 159

B 155

C 152

D 158

E 153

Solution

- The Central Government is nearing approval for the construction of three new greenfield airports in Parandur (Tamil Nadu), Kota (Rajasthan), and Puri (Odisha).
- These projects, which are at the second stage of approval under the Greenfield Airports (GFA) Policy, will significantly enhance regional connectivity and economic development.

- Projects have cleared the “site clearance” stage and await “in-principle” approval to initiate land acquisition and other groundwork.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) is coordinating with the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), Home Ministry, and Defence Ministry for the final nod.
- Since the GFA policy’s inception, 21 greenfield airport projects have been approved, with 12 already operational.

70. In December 2024, for the first time since June 2024, the banking system experienced a liquidity deficit. How many lakh crores were injected despite the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) being loosened?

A Rs.1.16 lakh crore

B Rs.1.12 lakh crore

C Rs.1.14 lakh crore

D Rs.1.15 lakh crore

E Rs.1.18 lakh crore

Solution

- The banking system slipped into a liquidity deficit in December 2024, marking the first such occurrence since June 2024.
- This was despite the infusion of ₹1.16 lakh crore through the easing of the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR).
- CRR Easing: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reduced the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) from 4.5% to 4% in two tranches (December 14 and December 28, 2024).
- Call Rate and Repo Rate: Despite the deficit, RBI successfully managed to keep the overnight borrowing costs close to the policy

repo rate through fine-tuning Variable Rate Repo (VRR) auctions.

- The average call rate for December stood at 6.55%, just five basis points above the repo rate.

71. During the 50th-anniversary celebrations of the Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HIPA), Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announced that the institute would be renamed after which leader?

A Jawaharlal Nehru

B P. V. Narasimha Rao

C Manmohan Singh

D H. D. Deve Gowda

E Morarji Desai

Solution

- Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) will be renamed in honor of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, as announced by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu during the institute's 50th-anniversary celebrations.
- The renaming serves as a tribute to Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, 2024, at the age of 92.
- Manmohan Singh served as India's Prime Minister for two terms, from 2004 to 2014.

- Manmohan Singh retired from active politics in April 2024 after completing his term in the Rajya Sabha.
- A coffee-table book, published by HIPA, was launched by CM Sukhu during the 50th-anniversary event.

72. An ethnobotanical garden called “Mahabharata Vatika” has been established by the Uttarakhand Forest Department on an acre of land in Haldwani. How many plant species are featured in the garden that are mentioned in the 18 Mahabharata sections?

A 35

B 37

C 31

D 34

E 39

Solution

- The Uttarakhand Forest Department has developed an ethnobotanical garden, named “Mahabharata Vatika”, in Haldwani, spread over one acre of land.
- The garden showcases 37 plant species mentioned in 18 sections of the Mahabharata, emphasizing its ecological and environmental knowledge.
- The epic contains hymns on the importance of planting trees, creating water bodies, and protecting tigers, reflecting ancient

environmental awareness.

- In addition to the “Mahabharata Vatika,” the forest department has also set up a “Ramayana Vatika” in Haldwani, focusing on plant species mentioned in the Ramayana.
- Chief Conservator of Forests, Sanjeev Chaturvedi, is overseeing these initiatives to blend environmental education with cultural heritage.

73. Which state has made history by introducing a plan that links the Green GDP to the ecosystem services that its forests provide?

A Haryana

B Chhattisgarh

C Odisha

D Punjab

E Bihar

Solution

- Chhattisgarh has introduced a plan that connects the ecosystem services provided by its forests to the Green Gross Domestic Product (Green GDP), marking a first in the state.
- Purpose: The initiative aims to highlight the direct link between the environmental contributions of forests (clean air, water conservation, biodiversity) and the state's economic progress.
- Forests' Significance: 44% of Chhattisgarh's land is covered by forests, making its natural resources vital to the livelihoods of millions.

- Forest products like tendu leaves, lac, honey, and medicinal plants significantly contribute to the rural economy.

74. Recently, Blinkit, a quick-commerce platform, now offers a 10-minute ambulance service in select Gurgaon locations. How many ambulances are currently operational, and the service still in its pilot stage?

A 2

B 7

C 5

D 3

E 8

Solution

- Blinkit, a quick-commerce platform, has introduced a 10-minute ambulance service in select areas of Gurgaon.
- Testing Phase: Currently operational with five ambulances, the service is in its pilot stage.
- Affordable and Non-Profit Model: CEO Albinder Dhindsa emphasized that the initiative aims to solve a critical problem, with profit not being the focus.

- **Equipped Ambulances:** The ambulances are outfitted with basic medical equipment to address immediate healthcare needs.
- **Expansion Plans:** Blinkit aims to scale the service nationwide over the next two years, targeting all major cities.

75. In order to update the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) base year from 2011–12 to 2022–23, the government established a working group of how many members?

A 18

B 12

C 15

D 11

E 13

Solution

- The government has constituted an 18-member working group, led by NITI Aayog Member Ramesh Chand, to revise the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23.
- This update is part of a regular revision process to reflect changes in the economy and ensure a realistic representation of price trends.
- Propose a new commodity basket for WPI and Producer Price Index (PPI) considering structural economic changes.
- Evaluate and recommend improvements to the price collection process.

- Determine the best methodology for compiling WPI and PPI.
- Recommend a roadmap for transitioning from WPI to PPI for better price tracking.

76. How many people, including members of the congressional committee that looked into the Capitol attack on January 6, 2021, have received the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian honor in the US, from President Joe Biden?

A 15

B 26

C 20

D 22

E 18

Solution

- President Joe Biden has awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian honour in the United States, to 20 individuals, including members of the congressional committee that investigated the January 6, 2021, Capitol attack.
- The awards were presented during a ceremony at the White House.
- Bennie Thompson (Democrat, Louisiana): Chair of the January 6 Committee, recognized for his ‘lifelong dedication to safeguarding the Constitution.’

- Liz Cheney (Former Republican Representative, Wyoming): Vice Chair of the Committee, applauded for prioritizing the American people over party politics.

77. Recently, the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Power, has signed a significant green loan agreement with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation. This facility is denominated in which currency, for an equivalent of \$200 million, with an additional green shoe option of \$150 million?

A Euro

B Yen

C Peso

D Pound

E Franc

Solution

- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a ‘Maharatna’ PSU under the Ministry of Power, has signed a significant green loan agreement with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC).
- The agreement was finalized, at GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, marking a pivotal step in India’s renewable energy journey.

- Amount: Equivalent to \$200 million, with an additional green shoe option of \$150 million.
- Development of renewable energy infrastructure, including evacuation and integration into the national grid.
- Enhancing grid reliability while adhering to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.

78. In order to encourage tourism in the state's border regions, which government entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)?

A Rajasthan

B Chhattisgarh

C Odisha

D Uttarakhand

E Madhya Pradesh

Solution

- Uttarakhand government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) to promote tourism in the border areas of the state.
- This agreement allows the use of ITBP's helipads for tourism-related activities, enhancing accessibility to otherwise hard-to-reach locations.
- The agreement was signed by officials from the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board and ITBP.

- The initiative will expand heli-services to border areas where tourist destinations, such as Adi Kailash, Om Parvat, and Timmarsain Mahadev, are located.
- These religious sites, situated on the Uttarakhand border, have inaccessible roads, making heli-services crucial for attracting tourists.

79. The _____ Governor of Bihar, Arif Mohammad Khan, took the oath of office after Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar was named Governor of Kerala.

A 41st

B 42nd

C 43rd

D 44th

E 40th

Solution

- Arif Mohammad Khan was sworn in as the 42nd Governor of Bihar, succeeding Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who was appointed Kerala Governor.
- The oath of office was administered by Patna High Court Chief Justice K. Vinod Chandran at the Raj Bhawan in Patna.
- The ceremony was attended by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Deputy CM Samrat Chaudhary, and other key political figures, including Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav.

- Khan takes charge of Bihar’s Raj Bhawan at a critical time, with the state assembly elections expected in October or November 2024.

80. After January 1, 2025, which country's new tourist tax replaced the old resort fee?

A China

B Russia

C Japan

D Singapore

E Germany

Solution

- The new tourist tax in Russia came into effect on January 1, 2025, replacing the previous resort fee.
- Tax Rate: Initial tax rate: 1% of lodging costs in 2025.
- Gradual increase: 3% by 2027.
- Minimum daily charge: 100 rubles (approx. \$0.9).
- Purpose: The tax aims to bolster regional tourism infrastructure as part of amendments to the Russian Tax Code introduced in July 2024, under the new chapter titled "Tourist Tax."
- Regional Implementation: The tax is a local levy at the discretion of regional authorities. Many regions, particularly those with strong

tourism sectors, have adopted it.

81. Which bank intends to introduce an instant loan program with a maximum loan amount of ₹25 lakh for Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)?

A Canara bank

B State Bank of India

C Punjab National Bank

D Bank of Baroda

E Punjab & Sind bank

Solution

- Punjab & Sind Bank plans to launch an instant loan scheme for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), with loans up to ₹25 lakh.
- The scheme will be rolled out this month as part of the bank's initiative to digitally push credit.
- The bank has already introduced digital home loan and vehicle loan schemes, where in-principle approval is granted within 15 minutes.
- These schemes operate on a Straight Through Process (STP), running on a pre-defined Business Rule Engine (BRE), which

automates the loan processing and sanctioning stages.

- **Automated Loan Process:**The automated approach eliminates manual intervention, improving the speed, efficiency, and customer experience in processing loans.

82. Recently, the World Bank is set to approve a \$20 billion indicative lending package for Pakistan under how many years initiative known as the Pakistan Country Partnership Framework?

A 5 years

B 10 years

C 15 years

D 20 years

E 25 years

Solution

- The World Bank is set to approve a \$20 billion indicative lending package for Pakistan under a 10-year initiative called the Pakistan Country Partnership Framework 2025-35.
- This funding package aims to safeguard funded projects from political transitions and focus on six key areas to improve social indicators in Pakistan.

83. To create a new district called Vav-Tharad, with its headquarters located in Tharad, the Gujarat government has chosen to divide the Banaskantha district in half. How many districts will there be in Gujarat overall?

A 34

B 56

C 12

D 89

E 44

Solution

- The Gujarat government has decided to split Banaskantha district into two parts, creating a new district named Vav-Tharad, with its headquarters at Tharad.
- With the creation of Vav-Tharad, the total number of districts in Gujarat will increase to 34.
- Banaskantha was the largest district in Gujarat in terms of talukas and the second-largest in terms of area.

- Banaskantha had 14 talukas, and 8 talukas (Vav, Bhabhar, Tharad, Dhanera, Suigam, Lakhni, Diodar, and Kankrej) will now be part of the new Vav-Tharad district.
- The formation of the new district is expected to lead to increased funds and government grants, resulting in better infrastructure and human development services for the region.

84. How many million dollars in cash prizes were recently announced by the Tamil Nadu chief minister for the individuals or organizations that were able to decipher the script of the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)?

A \$1.0 million

B \$1.5 million

C \$2.0 million

D \$2.5 million

E \$0.5 million

Solution

- MK Stalin, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, announced a \$1 million cash prize for individuals or organizations that successfully decipher the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) script.
- Despite over 100 years of efforts, the script of the IVC, discovered by Sir John Marshall in 1924, remains a mystery.
- Stalin made this announcement during the Centenary Year celebrations of the IVC discovery in Chennai.

- Iravatham Mahadevan Research Chair: Tamil Nadu allocated ₹2 crore to establish a research chair in the name of Iravatham Mahadevan, a noted epigraphist, to promote archaeological research.
- An annual award will be given to two scholars to encourage archaeological studies.

85. In partnership with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Lok Sabha Secretariat, the National Commission for Women (NCW) launched “Panchayat Se Parliament 2.0” at Samvidhan Sadan’s Central Hall. How many women from Scheduled Tribes were elected to represent them in the 22 states and Union Territories?

A 509

B 502

C 500

D 507

E 503

Solution

- The National Commission for Women (NCW), in collaboration with the Lok Sabha Secretariat and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, inaugurated ‘Panchayat Se Parliament 2.0’ at the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan.
- This initiative commemorates the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, a revered tribal leader and freedom fighter.
- Inaugurated by: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

- Date: January 2025.
- Purpose: Educating 500+ women representatives from Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) on the Constitution and parliamentary procedures.

86. How many minutes is the new Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) between Delhi and Meerut, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated, a significant reduction in travel time?

A 20min

B 30min

C 60min

D 15min

E 40min

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) connecting Delhi and Meerut, drastically reducing travel time to just 40 minutes.
- The RRTS is seen as a game-changer for Delhi-Meerut connectivity, marking a significant leap in regional travel and infrastructure improvement.
- The newly inaugurated Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar section is 13 km long, including an underground stretch of 6 km.

- Anand Vihar station in Delhi connects to the Delhi Metro's Blue and Pink Lines, integrating with existing railway and bus terminals.
- The full RRTS corridor spans 55 km, from New Ashok Nagar to Meerut South, with 11 stations along the way.

87. In which year was the Ministry of Cooperation established to promote the cooperative sector, and what did Prime Minister Narendra Modi advocate for regarding cooperatives like Amul?

A 2019; Establishing more cooperatives for better government subsidies

B 2020; Establishing more cooperatives for international trade

C 2021; Establishing five to six more cooperatives like Amul to ensure better prices for farmers' produce

D 2022; Establishing new agricultural research institutes to support cooperatives

E None of these

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for establishing five to six more cooperatives like Amul to ensure better prices for farmers' produce and enhance their income.
- He emphasized the success of Amul and its model of ensuring that 80% of every rupee spent by consumers reaches dairy farmers.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman mentioned that banks have undertaken a saturation drive for 16 government schemes like PM

Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Mudra, and PM SVANidhi, supporting financial inclusion and rural development.

88. In FY 2024, how much percent of rural poverty has been reduced from 25.7% in 2011-12?

A 4.86%

B 4.82%

C 4.84%

D 4.85%

E 4.88%

Solution

- Rural poverty has sharply reduced to 4.86% in FY 2024 from 25.7% in 2011-12.
- This decline is primarily driven by government support programs and higher consumption growth in the lowest 0-5% decile.
- Urban poverty has also decreased to 4.09% in FY 2024, down from 13.7% in 2011-12.
- It is expected that urban poverty may decline further, and overall poverty rates in India could be in the range of 4-4.5%, with minimal extreme poverty.

- The research highlights that food prices significantly impact overall expenditures, especially in rural areas, where food inflation reduces consumption demand more in lower-income states than in higher-income ones.
- According to the latest Household Consumption Expenditure Survey, consumption inequality has decreased in both rural and urban areas from the previous year.

89. How many individuals received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Joe Biden in recognition of their contributions to sports, entertainment, activism, and diplomacy?

A 11

B 19

C 25

D 14

E 21

Solution

- President Joe Biden awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 19 honorees, recognizing their contributions to entertainment, sports, activism, and diplomacy.
- Notable Honorees: Among the recipients were Bono (singer and activist), Earvin “Magic” Johnson (basketball legend), Lionel Messi (soccer superstar), Denzel Washington and Michael J. Fox (actors), and Ralph Lauren (fashion designer).
- Jane Goodall (primate researcher) and Hillary Clinton (former First Lady, senator, and US secretary of state) were also recognized.

90. According to the report, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasizes banks' role in boosting rural growth through collateral-free loans. Which of the following areas does not fall under Grameen Bharat Mahotsav (GBM 2025)?

A GI Tags

B Natural farming

C Women Empowerment

D Youth Affairs

E Tribal Welfare

Solution

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the crucial role of public sector banks (PSBs) in driving rural empowerment by providing collateral-free loans to small businesses and artisans through various Central Government schemes.
- Rural development has been a top priority for the Modi-led government since 2014.

- Key focus areas include uplifting the poor, youth, farmers, and women through financial support from PSBs.
- Schemes Highlighted by Sitharaman: PM MUDRA Yojana: Provides collateral-free loans to micro and small businesses.
- PM Awas Yojana: Supports affordable housing for the rural poor.
- SVANidhi Yojana: Aims at providing street vendors with affordable working capital.
- Credit Saturation Drives: PSBs are conducting drives to ensure credit saturation in priority sectors, contributing significantly to rural empowerment.

91. Recently, Kevan Parekh, an executive of Indian descent, became Apple's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) on January 1, 2025. Since which year has Parekh been employed by Apple?

A 2011

B 2012

C 2013

D 2010

E 2014

Solution

- Indian-origin executive Kevan Parekh has assumed the role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Apple, effective January 1, 2025.
- Parekh replaces Luca Maestri, who had been Apple's CFO since 2014.
- Role and Responsibilities: As CFO, Parekh will oversee key functions at Apple, including accounting, business support, financial planning and analysis, treasury, investor relations, internal audit, and tax functions.

- Parekh has been with Apple since 2013, contributing to the company's financial and business planning, as well as product developme.

92. Who has been appointed as the Nasscom Foundation's new CEO with immediate effect following the departure of Nidhi Bhasin?

A Jyoti Sharma

B Akash Tripathi

C Vinay Kumar

D Kamal Kishore Soan

E Shubha Thakur

Solution

- Jyoti Sharma has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nasscom Foundation, effective immediately, replacing Nidhi Bhasin.
- Sharma brings over 20 years of experience in driving social impact, program development, resource mobilization, and stakeholder engagement.
- She has held leadership positions at several organizations, including Organic Cotton Accelerator, the European Commission, World Resources Institute, Magic Bus India Foundation, Action Aid, and Save the Children.

93. On January 3, 2025, how many Indian Americans were sworn into the U.S. House of Representatives, making it the largest number of Indian-American representatives in American history at the time?

A 6

B 3

C 2

D 7

E 5

Solution

- A historic event as 6 Indian Americans were sworn in as members of the U.S. House of Representatives on January 3, 2025, marking the largest number of Indian-American representatives in U.S. history.
- An informal group of the six Indian-American lawmakers coined by Raja Krishnamoorthi.
- Historical Background: Dalip Singh Saund was the first Indian American elected to the House of Representatives in 1957.

94. According to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) automatically approved Avenue-Mavco's acquisition of MHM Holding GmbH via the Green Channel route. When was the Green Channel route formed?

A 2021

B 2017

C 2019

D 2020

E 2018

Solution

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) granted automatic approval for the Avenue-Mavco acquisition of MHM Holding GmbH under the Green Channel route.
- The Green Channel route is a fast-track approval process used for transactions with no significant competition concerns or overlaps in the Indian market.
- Avenue India Emergence Private. Limited. (Avenue) and Mavco Investments Private Ltd. (Mavco) will jointly acquire 100%

ownership of MHM Holding GmbH, the parent company of Hubergroup.

- In order to lessen regulatory burden and encourage an open and accountable merger review process, the Green Channel Route was implemented in 2019.

95. Which bank's plan to purchase a combined 9.5% stake in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank, and Capital Small Finance Bank has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?

A ICICI bank

B **HDFC bank**

C Axis bank

D Karnataka bank

E Federal bank

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved HDFC Bank's plan to acquire an aggregate stake of up to 9.5% in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank, and Capital Small Finance Bank.
- The RBI's approval is valid until January 2, 2026.
- HDFC Bank and its group entities (including HDFC Mutual Fund, HDFC Life Insurance, HDFC ERGO General Insurance, and HDFC Pension Fund) are restricted to an aggregate holding of 9.5% of the share capital or voting rights in the three banks.

- **HDFC Bank needs to ensure that its group entities’ combined holding does not exceed the 9.5% cap.**

96. Which organization has teamed up with top venture capital firm Stride Ventures to help Indian startups grow and reach a wider audience worldwide?

A SEBI

B SIDBI

C NABARD

D DPIIT

E CCI

Solution

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has partnered with Stride Ventures, a leading venture debt firm, to catalyze the growth of Indian startups and expand their global reach.
- This collaboration will provide financial support, strategic mentorship, and market access, driving the growth of startups and contributing to India's economic agenda of fostering innovation and entrepreneurship for overall growth.

- The partnership supports the Make in India and Make for the World strategies, focusing on sectors like manufacturing, consumer goods, B2B, and cleantech to boost entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment.
- Stride Ventures will curate dedicated programs and engage in initiatives like the Bharat Grand Challenge, offering targeted support to startups with high growth potential.

97. In 2024 Logistics Index categorizes India's logistical performance by states and union territories. Which of the following pairs is incorrect?

A Punjab – Fast Movers

B Maharashtra – Achievers

C Kerala – Aspirers

D All the above correct

E All the above incorrect

Solution

- 13 states and Union Territories have been categorized as “Achievers” in the Logistics Index 2024.
- This category represents regions with high efficiency in logistics, crucial for promoting exports and economic growth.
- These states include Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi, among others.
- Other “Achievers” in 2024: Chandigarh, Haryana, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Uttarakhand, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh are also in the “Achievers” category.

98. According to the CloudSEKThreat Landscape Report 2024, India is ranked second globally for cyberattacks in 2024. How many entities were targeted in data theft incidents?

A 91

B 96

C 92

D 99

E 95

Solution

- India ranked second globally for cyberattacks in 2024, with 95 entities targeted in data theft incidents, according to the CloudSEKThreatLandscape Report 2024.
- The United States led with 140 attacks, while Israel came third with 57 incidents due to geopolitical tensions.
- Finance and banking sectors suffered the most, with 20 victims.
- Other affected sectors included: Government (13 victims), Telecommunications (12 victims), Healthcare, Pharma, and Education (10 and 9 victims, respectively).

- The report highlighted some major breaches:
- 850 million records of Indian citizen data were leaked from Hi-Tek Group.
- Star Health and Allied Insurance customer data was compromised.
- 2 TB of data was stolen from Telecommunications Consultants India.

99. Which edition of the Lakshya Cup event in Mumbai saw Navy's Kiran Jadhav win the 10m air rifle event, earning his first gold medal after reaching the finals every year since 2018?

A 14th

B 15th

C 16th

D 19th

E 18th

Solution

- Kiran Jadhav of the Navy emerged victorious in the 10m air rifle event at the 15th Lakshya Cup held in Mumbai, securing his first gold medal after consistently making finals since 2018.
- Gold Winner: Kiran Jadhav clinched gold with a score of 251.7 points, marking a major milestone in his shooting career.
- He surpassed Gajanan Khandagale (250.9 points) and Mohit Gowda (229.3 points), both from Maharashtra, who secured second and third places, respectively.

- Top Qualifiers: Mohit Gowda led the qualifiers with 630.5 points, but he couldn’t maintain momentum in the finals.

100. **Recently, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has named Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, an IAS officer from the Madhya Pradesh cadre, as its new director general. He succeeds_____.**

A Ashutosh Agnihotri

B Akash Tripathi

C **D.C. Sharma**

D Kamal Kishore Soan

E Shubha Thakur

Solution

- Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, an IAS officer from the Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).
- He succeeds D.C. Sharma, who is retiring at the end of the month.
- Ashutosh Agnihotri, an IAS officer, has been appointed as the Chairman & Managing Director of the Food Corporation of India (FCI), in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary to the Government of India.

- Agnihotri was serving as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Home, Ministry of Home Affairs.

101. **Exim Bank of India has raised _____ through a 10-year USD-denominated bond.**

A \$1 billion

B \$2 billion

C \$3 billion

D \$4 billion

E \$5 billion

Solution

- Exim Bank of India has raised \$1 billion through a 10-year USD-denominated bond.
- Exim Bank achieved the lowest-ever spread of 100 basis points over 10-year US treasuries for a BBB-rated issuer in Asia.
- This sets benchmark for Indian issuers in 2025. This also shows increased foreign investor interest in Indian debt.
- Exim Bank is rated BBB-(stable) by Fitch, BBB-(positive) by S&P and Baa3 (stable) by Moody's.
- Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) was established in 1982. Its headquarters are located in Mumbai.

- It provides loans to Indian exporters and foreign governments for infrastructure projects
- It is wholly owned by the government of India and was set up to finance, facilitate and promote India's international trade.

102. Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) has invested _____ in GMR Group.

A ₹6,100 crore

B ₹6,200 crore

C ₹6,300 crore

D ₹6,400 crore

E ₹6,500 crore

Solution

- Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) has invested ₹6,300 crore in GMR Group.
- This funding will assist GMR Group in lowering the debt of promoter group entity GMR Enterprises Pvt Ltd (GEPL).
- On January 7, GMR Infra Enterprises Pvt Ltd (GIEPL) received the funds for the issuance of Optionally Convertible Debentures (OCDs).
- The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of GEPL.
- GMR Group operates three airports in India (Delhi, Hyderabad and Goa). It operates two airports in the Philippines and Indonesia.

103. How many Judicial and Technical Members have been appointed to the NCLT's Principal Bench in New Delhi?

A 25

B 23

C 21

D 28

E 24

Solution

- 24 Judicial and Technical Members have been appointed to the NCLT's Principal Bench in New Delhi.
- Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has made the announcement about their appointment on 7 January.
- 24 members include 11 Judicial Members and 13 Technical Members.
- They will serve a five-year tenure or until they reach the age of 65, whichever comes first.
- The Judicial Members include Justice Jyotsna Sharma, Sunil Kumar Aggarwal, and others.

- The Technical Members include Reena Sinha Puri, Siddharth Mishra, and others.
- The appointments will reduce pendency and fast-track resolutions.

104. RBI has mandated that credit bureau records must be updated by all lenders every 15 days.

A 5 days

B 7 days

C 10 days

D 12 days

E 15 days

Solution

- RBI has mandated that credit bureau records must be updated by all lenders every 15 days.
- This rule has become effective from 1 January, 2025. Its aim is to provide a more accurate and timely representation of borrowers' financial activities.
- Earlier, credit bureaus received updates from lenders only once a month.
- This earlier rule led to delays in reflecting borrowers' repayment behavior. This could adversely affect their credit scores.

- The RBI's directive permits lenders and credit bureaus a transition period to upgrade their systems.
- Under the earlier system, defaults took up to 40 days to appear on credit report of a borrower.

105. As per the Ministry of Statistics, gross domestic product (GDP) growth has been estimated at _____ for the financial year 2024-25.

A 6.2%

B 6.3%

C 6.4%

D 6.5%

E 6.6%

Solution

- India's GDP will likely to grow 6.4% in 2024-25.
- As per the Ministry of Statistics, gross domestic product (GDP) growth has been estimated at 6.4 per cent for the financial year 2024-25.
- It is lower than the 8.2 per cent GDP growth registered in the financial year 2023-24.
- Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9.7 per cent in FY 2024-25.
- The agriculture and allied sector showed improvement with a Real GVA growth estimated at 3.8 per cent in FY25. It is more than the

the 1.4 per cent of the last year.

- The construction sector's Real GVA is projected to rise by 8.6 per cent.
- The financial, real estate and professional services sector is expected to grow by 7.3 per cent.

106. A \$3 billion investment in India announced by which of the following?

A Microsoft

B Alphabet

C Amazon

D Apple

E Meta

Solution

- A \$3 billion investment in India announced by Microsoft, along with plans to train 10 million individuals in AI skills.
- On January 7, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella announced a \$3 billion investment to enhance the company's cloud and AI infrastructure in India.
- He said the company has made its biggest expansion ever by investing an additional \$3 billion to expand its Azure capabilities in India.
- Microsoft is an American multinational technology conglomerate. Microsoft was founded by Bill Gates and Paul Allen. Satya Nadella

took over as CEO in 2014.

107. HSBC final India Services Purchasing Managers' Index increased from 58.4 in November to ____ in December.

A 57.1

B 58.6

C 59.3

D 60.9

E 61.2

Solution

- From 58.4 in November to 59.3 in December, the HSBC final India Services Purchasing Managers' Index increased.
- Although it was lower than an initial estimate of 60.8, this was its highest level since August.
- For over three years, the services sector has been showing expansionary activity.
- For the first time in four months, the new business sub-index increased at the fastest rate.
- Increased capacity and strong demand kept optimism for the next year.

- Businesses kept hiring at one of the fastest rates ever since the survey's started in 2005.
- However, it decelerated from its 19-year high of November.

108. **RBI became the second biggest central bank gold buyer globally till _____ 2024.**

A August

B September

C October

D November

E December

Solution

- RBI became the second biggest central bank gold buyer globally till November 2024.
- RBI purchased eight tonnes of gold in November and continued accumulation for reserves in 2024.
- On the whole, RBI bought 73 tonnes between January and November 2024 and became 2nd largest buyer after the National Bank of Poland.
- As of November-end 2024, RBI's total holdings of gold have been estimated at 876 tonnes.

- In November, National Bank of Poland increased its gold reserves by 21 tonnes.
- One feature of November purchases was resumption of gold buying by the People Bank of China.
- In November, National Bank of Kazakhstan turned the net buyer for the first time in 2024.

109. **The 17-year-old Luke Littler defeated Michael van Gerwen 7-3 in the final at Alexandra Palace in London to become the youngest-ever World Darts Champion. Littler received a _____ prize for his triumph.**

A £500,000

B £200,000

C £300,000

D £400,000

E £100,000

Solution

- Luke Littler, 17, became the youngest-ever World Darts Champion after defeating Michael van Gerwen 7-3 in the final at Alexandra Palace, London.
- Littler entered the tournament as the pre-tournament favourite after securing 10 trophies in the season leading up to the championship.
- He had lost in last year's final but claimed the title this time with confidence.

- Littler’s victory earned him a £500,000 prize, marking a significant achievement in his career at such a young age.

110. Recently (Jan'25), Costas Simitis, a former Greek prime minister and socialist leader, has died. In which year did he publish the book “Derailment”?

A 2011

B 2010

C 2012

D 2013

E 2014

Solution

- Former Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis, who ushered the country into the European Union’s single currency in 2001, passed away at the age of 88.
- Born on June 23, 1936, was involved in the left-leaning resistance during the German occupation, and his mother, Fani, was an active feminist.
- Co-founder of the Socialist PASOK party in 1974.
- Key Achievements: Secured the 2004 Olympic Games for Athens and oversaw large-scale infrastructure projects, including a new

airport and two subway lines.

- **Publications and Criticism:** In 2012, he published the book “Derailment”, where he criticized the handling of the Greek debt crisis by Greek politicians and the European Union.

111. **The second meeting of Inland Waterways Development Council (IWDC) announced investments of over _____ in next five years.**

A ₹10,000 crore

B ₹20,000 crore

C ₹30,000 crore

D ₹40,000 crore

E ₹50,000 crore

Solution

- Over ₹3000 crore will be invested for development of NW2, NW16 and the Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR) by 2030.
- The second meeting of Inland Waterways Development Council (IWDC) announced investments of over ₹50,000 crore in next five years.
- New initiatives across 21 Inland Waterway States were announced worth over ₹1400 crore.
- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal presided over the meeting.

- He said the Ministry has aimed at launching 1000 Green vessels.
- He said success of Kochi's Water Metro Project will be expanded to 15 cities of India including Guwahati.

112. Recently, KredX became the ____ RBI-regulated Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform in India.

A 3rd

B 4th

C 5th

D 6th

E 7th

Solution

- KredX has got final approval from the RBI to commercially launch its TReDS platform.
- It has received approval under the brand name DTX (Domestic Trade Exchange).
- With this approval, KredX became the 5th RBI-regulated Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform in India.
- KredX is a supply chain finance platform. It was founded in 2015 as India's first supply chain finance platform.
- It was one of the first companies to receive the International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) licence.

113. Which state has received the highest allocation of ₹31,039.84 crore out of ₹1,73,030 crore disbursed by centre to the state governments under tax devolution?

A Punjab

B Haryana

C Madhya Pradesh

D Bihar

E Uttar Pradesh

Solution

- Centre has disbursed ₹1,73,030 crore to state governments under tax devolution.
- This is an increase from the ₹89,086 crore distributed in December 2024.
- The increased devolution will support states in increasing capital spending.
- Uttar Pradesh got the highest allocation of ₹31,039.84 crore.
- UP was followed by Bihar with ₹17,403.36 crore and West Bengal with ₹13,017.06 crore.

- Maharashtra and Rajasthan got ₹10,930.31 crore and ₹10,426.78 crore respectively.
- Goa and Sikkim were allocated ₹667.91 crore and ₹671.35 crore.
- Tax devolution is the distribution tax revenues between the central and state governments.

114. A growth of 5.2% has been recorded in India's Index of Industrial Production in November 2024. This is the highest growth rate in the past ____ months.

A Five

B Six

C Six

D Seven

E Eight

Solution

- A growth of 5.2% has been recorded in India's Index of Industrial Production in November 2024.
- This is the highest growth rate in the past six months. In October 2024, the growth rate was 3.5%.
- In November 2023, 2.5% growth was recorded in IIP.
- In November 2024, a growth of 5.8% was recorded in manufacturing sector, as against 4.1% in October.
- The manufacturing sector constitutes the largest share of the IIP.

- In comparison to November 2023, 18 out of 23 industry groups within the manufacturing sector showed growth in November 2024.

115. According to AMFI, SIP inflows surpassed _____ for the first time in December.

A Rs 26,000 crore

B Rs 27,000 crore

C Rs 28,000 crore

D Rs 29,000 crore

E Rs 30,000 crore

Solution

- According to AMFI, SIP inflows surpassed Rs 26,000 crore for the first time in December.
- For the first time, the amount invested in systematic investment plans (SIPs) surpassed 26,000 crore rupees.
- In November, SIPs received 25,320 crore rupees, whereas in December, SIPs received 26,459 crore rupees.
- The Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) reports that inflows into open-ended equity mutual funds rose to around 41,156 crore rupees in December.

- Higher investments in small-cap and sectoral or thematic funds were the main drivers of this.

116. Which of the following states has launched 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' in January 2025?

A Punjab

B Goa

C Bihar

D West Bengal

E Himachal Pradesh

Solution

- 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' has been launched by the Government of Goa.
- Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant launched the 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' to provide insurance to all.
- Goa became the second state after Haryana to launch this flagship scheme.
- Bima Sakhi Yojana is an initiative launched by the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- It has been designed to empower women aged 18-70 years, who are Class X pass.

- Under this scheme, women will receive specialized training and a stipend for the first three years to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.
- They can work as LIC agents and the graduate Bima Sakhis could become development officer in L.I.C.

117. Who has been appointed as revenue secretary?

A V Narayanan

B V Ramasubramnian

C Devanshu Chaturvedi

D Tuhin Kanta Pandey

E Arunish Chawla

Solution

- Tuhin Kanta Pandey has been appointed as revenue secretary.
- Tuhin Kanta Pandey became revenue secretary by replacing Arunish Chawla.
- Arunish Chawla has been appointed as the secretary in the department of investment and public asset management (DIPAM).
- Seniormost secretary in the ministry of finance become finance secretary.
- Tuhin Kanta Pandey is associated with the finance ministry since August 28, 2016.

118. The Supreme Court stayed the implementation of showcause notices of _____ against online gambling companies that were issued as part of GST proceedings.

A ₹1.12 lakh crore

B ₹2.41 lakh crore

C ₹3.89 lakh crore

D ₹4.33 lakh crore

E ₹5.76 lakh crore

Solution

- GST notices of ₹1.12 lakh crore sent to online gaming companies have been stayed by Supreme Court.
- The Supreme Court stayed the implementation of showcause notices of ₹1.12 lakh crore against online gambling companies that were issued as part of GST proceedings.
- In separate petitions submitted by 49 online gaming companies, a bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan issued the ruling.

- The interpretation of GST's applicability to online gambling was the main point of contention in the case.
- The government contended that the entire contest entrance fee must be subject to 28% GST, so taxing the entire prize fund.
- Gaming companies argued that since many of these games require ability rather than luck, GST should only be applied to their platform fees or commission.

119. According to the HSBC India Services Business Activity Index (Services PMI) increased to 59.3 in December, the highest growth rate in four months, indicating that India's services sector concluded 2024 on a high note. For the _____ consecutive month, new business inflows rose to their highest level since August 2024.

A 40th

B 41st

C 42nd

D 43rd

E 44th

Solution

- India's services sector ended 2024 on a high note, with the HSBC India Services Business Activity Index (Services PMI) rising to 59.3 in December, marking the strongest rate of expansion in four months.
- This growth was driven by sustained demand, higher new business inflows, and increased recruitment.

- December PMI: 59.3, up from 58.4 in November, signaling continued expansion.
- New Business: New business inflows increased for the 41st consecutive month, reaching their highest level since August 2024.
- Employment: Companies hired more workers, with employment growth softening from November but still among the strongest since December 2005.

120. On January 6, 2024, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren gave 56.61 lakh women ₹1,415.44 crore as part of the Maiya Samman Yojana. For women between 18 and 50, the program increased the monthly transfer from ₹1,000 to how many rupees?

A Rs.1500

B Rs.2000

C Rs.2500

D Rs.3000

E Rs.5000

Solution

- Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren transferred ₹1,415.44 crore to 56.61 lakh women under the Maiya Samman Yojana on January 6, 2024.
- The scheme was a key promise made by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led INDIA bloc ahead of the Assembly elections.
- The scheme increased the monthly transfer to women from ₹1,000 to ₹2,500 for women aged between 18 to 50 years.

- The December instalment of ₹2,500 was transferred, and the January instalment would be transferred later.
- ₹30,000 annually is provided to women under the scheme.
- Direct Transfer Impact: Direct monthly cash transfers of ₹2,500 were aimed at boosting household income, especially in rural areas, improving women's financial autonomy.

121. To provide a three-in-one account solution, Bajaj Broking, a division of Bajaj Finance Limited, has teamed up with Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB). Where is TMB's headquarters?

A Chennai

B Thoothukudi

C Trichy

D Madurai

E Coimbatore

Solution

- Bajaj Broking, a subsidiary of Bajaj Finance Limited., has partnered with Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB) to offer a 3-in-1 account solution.
- The 3-in-1 account combines banking, broking, and investment services, enabling seamless access to all three functions for customers.
- Managing Director of Bajaj Broking : Manish Jain
- About Tamilnad Mercantile Bank :
 - Founded : 11 May 1921

- Headquarters : Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, India
- MD & CEO : Salee Sukumaran Nair

122. According to the first advance estimates released by the National Statistics Office (NSO), real GDP growth is expected to slow sharply to what percentage in the current fiscal year (FY25), down from 8.2% in FY24?

A 6.7%

B 6.3%

C 6.4%

D 6.5%

E 6.8%

Solution

- According to the first advance estimates released by the National Statistics Office (NSO), Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth is estimated to have slowed sharply to 6.4% in the current financial year (FY25) from 8.2% expansion in FY24.
- Despite the slowdown in GDP growth, the fiscal deficit for FY25 is expected to stay within target due to a lower-than-budgeted nominal GDP growth of 9.7%.

- Real GVA of Agriculture and allied sector has been estimated to grow by 3.8% during 2024-25 as compared to the growth of 1.4% witnessed during the last year, i.e., 2023-24.
- Nominal GDP Growth Assumption : The Budget had assumed nominal GDP growth of 10.5% for FY25.

123. An important turning point in Exim Bank of India's global fundraising efforts was reached when the bank raised \$1 billion through a 10-year USD-denominated bond. What percentage was the bond's price?

A 5.61%

B 5.62%

C 5.63%

D 5.64%

E 5.65%

Solution

- Exim Bank of India raised \$1 billion via a 10-year USD-denominated bond, marking a significant milestone in its international fundraising efforts.
- The bond achieved the lowest-ever spread of 100 basis points over 10-year US treasuries for a BBB-rated issuer in Asia.
- Pricing of the Bond: The bond was priced at 5.63%, showcasing favorable investor confidence.

- **Strong Global Confidence:** This issuance reflects the strong confidence of global investors in India's economic prospects and sets a positive outlook for Indian issuers in international capital markets in 2025.

124. The most recent significant bank to leave the climate-finance alliance is JPMorgan Chase, the biggest bank in the United States by assets, which has left the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA). How many Indian banks are part of the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA) at the moment?

A 5

B 0

C 4

D 3

E 2

Solution

- JPMorgan Chase, the largest U.S. bank by assets, has left the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA), the latest major bank to exit the climate-finance alliance.
- Recent Exits from NZBA: December 2024: Citigroup, Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, and Wells Fargo also departed from the NZBA.

- **Purpose of NZBA:**The Net-Zero Banking Alliance is a UN-convened, bank-led group of global banks committed to aligning their lending, investment, and capital markets activities with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- It serves as a climate accelerator for the UNEP Financial Initiative's Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB).
- **Indian Banks:** No Indian banks are currently members of the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA).

125. As of January 1, 2025, all lenders are required by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to update credit bureau records every _____ days.

A 15

B 12

C 18

D 11

E 14

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that all lenders must update credit bureau records every 15 days, effective January 1, 2025.
- Objective of the Regulation: The new rule aims to provide more accurate and timely representation of borrowers' financial activities, improving the calculation and publication of credit scores.
- Transition Period: The mandate was issued in August 2024, with a transition period allowing lenders and credit bureaus to upgrade their systems by January 1, 2025.

- **Frequency of Updates:**The shift from a monthly to a 15-day update cycle ensures that financial institutions report borrowers' activities more frequently, offering a clearer picture of creditworthiness.

126. How many crores were unclaimed with life insurers at the start of FY24, according to the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai)?

A Rs 22,237 crore

B Rs 21,237 crore

C Rs 23,237 crore

D Rs 24,237 crore

E Rs 25,237 crore

Solution

- At the beginning of FY24, Rs 22,237 crore lay unclaimed with life insurers, as reported by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai).
- A six-month initiative (June-November 2023) reduced this figure by Rs 1,018 crore, underscoring the need for better estate planning and nominee management, particularly for non-relatives.
- Lack of awareness among nominees.
- Changes in family situations, such as divorces or deaths.
- Outdated contact and banking details of policyholders or nominees.

- Insurers are cautious about registering non-relatives as nominees due to concerns over moral hazards and insurable interest.

127. According to officials with knowledge of the development, the Indian government plans to start exploring lithium in how many more blocks within the federally administered region of Jammu and Kashmir?

A 5

B 7

C 2

D 1

E 3

Solution

- The Indian government is set to begin lithium exploration in two additional blocks within the federally administered region of Jammu and Kashmir, according to officials familiar with the development.
- Estimated reserves for these blocks will be determined by October 2025.
- This initiative follows the earlier discovery of significant 5.9 million metric tonnes of lithium reserves in the region, marking a major step in India's efforts toward self-reliance in critical minerals.

128. Which state has become the first in India to abolish its long-standing tender system?

A West Bengal

B Uttar Pradesh

C Karnataka

D Madhya Pradesh

E Gujarat

Solution

- Uttar Pradesh (UP) has become the first state in India to abolish its longstanding tendering system.
- The state has fully integrated its procurement process with the Centre's Govt e-Marketplace (GeM).
- The integration requires all service providers—from basic stationery suppliers to those providing SUVs for official use—to adhere to central government regulations.
- On 26th November 2024, a comprehensive government order was issued, annulling over 33 previous procurement-related directives.

- This step simplifies and centralizes procurement processes under GeM.

129. To make conducting business easier, the Securities and Exchange Board of India is changing the rules governing credit rating agencies. How many working days are the credit rating agencies (CRAs) now required to publish press releases on rating actions?

A 5

B 7

C 11

D 4

E 8

Solution

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has updated the timelines for credit rating agencies (CRAs), shifting from “days” to “working days” to improve ease of doing business and standardize processes.
- Changes in Rating Action Press Release: CRAs are now required to publish press releases on rating actions within seven working days instead of the previous seven calendar days.

- **Rating Review for Debt Servicing Delays:** The timeline for reviewing ratings in cases of debt servicing delays has been extended to two working days from the earlier two calendar days.

130. With immediate effect, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has removed the limitations placed on Delhi-based DMI Finance and Chennai-based Asirvad Micro Finance. How many non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) were sanctioned by the RBI in October 2024?

A 4

B 8

C 2

D 5

E 9

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lifted the restrictions on Chennai-based Asirvad Micro Finance and Delhi-based DMI Finance, effective immediately.
- Reason for Lifting Restrictions: The RBI was satisfied with the companies' actions to comply with regulatory guidelines, including revamped processes and systems, and their commitment to ensure

adherence to regulations, particularly regarding fairness in loan pricing.

- Initial Sanctions: The RBI had imposed sanctions on four non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) in October 2024, which included Asirvad Microfinance, Arohan Financial Services, DMI Finance, and Navi Finserv (owned by Flipkart co-founder Sachin Bansal), for charging excessive interest rates.

131. In 2024–25, which bank will host its first cybersecurity hackathon with the theme “Code Against Malware”?

A Canara Bank

B Punjab & National Bank

C State Bank of India

D Indian Bank

E Bank of Baroda

Solution

- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched its first Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25, with the theme “Code Against Malware”.
- The hackathon aims to address the rising threat of malware and enhance the nation’s cybersecurity defences.
- Participation Details: Open to students, researchers, and academicians from academic institutions, research organizations, and the tech community.

132. The lender category most negatively impacted was Small Finance Banks (SFBs), which reported the highest percentage of loans past due by 31 to 180 days and a portfolio at risk (PAR) of what percentage?

A 5.2%

B 5.3%

C 5.4%

D 5.5%

E 5.6%

Solution

- The microfinance portfolio stood at ₹4.1 lakh crore as of September 2024. This showed:
- A quarter-on-quarter decline of 4.3% compared to June 2024.
- A year-on-year growth of 7.6%.
- Delinquency Rates: Delinquency rates on microfinance loans (instalments overdue by 30 to 180 days) increased to 4.3% in September 2024, up from 2% in the previous year.

- **Sector Stress:** Small Finance Banks (SFBs) were the worst-affected lender category, reporting the highest proportion of loans overdue by 31 to 180 days, with a PAR (portfolio at risk) of 5.4%.
- NBFCs reported the lowest PAR (2.3%) for loans overdue by 31-180 days.

133. In which state does Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi introduce the Pravasi Bharatiya Express to link Indian heritage with the diaspora?

A Gujarat

B Maharashtra

C Kerala

D West Bengal

E Odisha

Solution

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi flagged off the Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a state-of-the-art tourist train designed under the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY).
- This initiative aims to strengthen the bond between the Indian diaspora and India's rich cultural and religious heritage.
- The launch marks the 110th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa in 1915.

134. As India approaches its centenary in 2047, the country is investing in its youth to build a Viksit Bharat (Developed India). How many languages were used for the Viksit Bharat Quiz, which assessed knowledge of India's progress?

A 12

B 18

C 10

D 14

E 17

Solution

- As India marches towards its centenary of Independence in 2047, the nation is investing in its youth as the architects of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India).
- Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of engaging one lakh youth in politics without prior political backgrounds, the National Youth Festival has transformed into the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025.

- The National Youth Festival, traditionally a symbol of cultural exchange, was revamped to emphasize leadership, innovation, and nation-building.

135. A significant milestone under the National Green Hydrogen Mission was reached when Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for a Green Hydrogen Hub project at Pudimadaka, close to Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. How many gigawatts of renewable energy projects have been developed?

A 10GW

B 20GW

C 25GW

D 15GW

E 30GW

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for a Green Hydrogen Hub project at Pudimadaka near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, marking a major milestone under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL), the renewable arm of NTPC Ltd.
- New & Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh (NREDCAP), the state's renewable energy agency.

- **Scale:** First Green Hydrogen Hub under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- **Renewable Energy:** Development of 20 GW of renewable energy projects.

136. How many population groups did India's ground-breaking GenomeIndia Project sequence the genomes of 10,000 Indians, or roughly 2% of the 4,600 population groups in the country?

A 87

B 83

C 85

D 89

E 80

Solution

- India has completed the GenomeIndia Project, a groundbreaking initiative that sequenced the genomes of 10,000 Indians from 83 population groups, representing about 2% of the country's 4,600 population groups.
- This data is a valuable resource for global researchers to explore disease mechanisms, drug therapies, and genetic diversity.
- The project is a five-year effort initiated in 2018, with contributions from over 20 leading research institutions, including IISc, IITs, CSIR, and BRIC.

- Despite challenges like COVID-19, the project successfully completed its objective of creating a Diverse Genetic Resource for India.
- The compiled data is housed at the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC) in Faridabad, Haryana.

137. What is the estimated cost of the Z-Morh tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh highway in Kashmir, which Prime Minister Modi is likely to inaugurate?

A Rs 2,400 crore

B Rs 2,200 crore

C Rs 2,300 crore

D Rs 2,500 crore

E Rs 2,600 crore

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the Rs 2,400 crore Z-Morh Tunnel.
- This 6.5 km tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway is a key infrastructure project that will ensure year-round accessibility to the Ladakh region.
- The tunnel is vital for national defence and connectivity to Ladakh, providing uninterrupted road access to the region.
- It will help strengthen defence logistics and enable smoother military mobility in the Ladakh region, especially in harsh winter

months when roads are often closed.

- Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah highlighted that the tunnel will act as a game changer for tourism, particularly winter tourism in the Sonamarg area.

138. The new book “Thiruvallikeni ¼ Divine Abode of Lord Parthasarathy” was published by The Hindu Group Publishing Private Limited as part of The Hindu Group’s Shrine Series. Who was the chairperson of the company?

A Anil Kumar

B VK Saraswat

C Krishna Ella

D **Nirmala Lakshman**

E S. Kris Gopalakrishnan

Solution

- Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson of The Hindu Group Publishing Private Limited, released a new book titled “Thiruvallikeni ¼ Divine Abode of Lord Parthasarathy” as part of The Hindu Group’s Shrine Series.
- The book delves into the rich history and spiritual significance of the Sri Parthasarathy Perumal Temple in Triplicane, Chennai.
- The book features well-researched articles covering the history of the temple, puranic accounts, and detailed explanations of its

spiritual heritage.

- The temple's rich cultural and architectural beauty is captured in vivid photographs, many of which have been taken over the years by The Hindus photographers.

139. Recently, DGP Shatrujeet Kapur plans to enact three new criminal laws in Haryana on February 28. Which union territory (UT) was the first to enact these laws?

A Chandigarh

B Ladakh

C Delhi

D Lakshadweep

E Jammu & Kashmir

Solution

- Haryana is set to become the first state to implement the new criminal laws in their entirety, following Chandigarh, the first union territory to do so.
- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS): Replaces the Indian Penal Code, 1860.
- Bharatiya Sakshya Sanhita (BSS): Replaces the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.
- Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS): Replaces the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898.

140. According to the report, how many loan accounts are involved in the Rs 11,500 crore sale of non-performing assets (NPAs) to asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) by Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) as part of the bank's attempt to improve the quality of its assets?

A 48

B 56

C 46

D 50

E 42

Solution

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) is selling Rs 11,500 crore worth of non-performing assets (NPAs) to asset reconstruction companies (ARCs).
- The sale involves 46 loan accounts and is part of the bank's effort to enhance its asset quality.
- The portfolio includes accounts that were financed under a consortium arrangement, with some admitted under the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

141. What is the price reduction per tonne for lump and fine iron ore that the state-owned miner NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) announced will take effect on January 9, 2025?

A ₹350 per tonne

B ₹150 per tonne

C ₹250 per tonne

D ₹300 per tonne

E ₹200 per tonne

Solution

- State-owned miner NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) has announced a price reduction of ₹350 per tonne for both lump and fine iron ore, effective January 9, 2025.
- Lump Ore (10-40 mm, Fe content 67%): New Price: ₹6,000 per tonne
- Fines (less than 10 mm, Fe content 64%): New Price: ₹5,060 per tonne
- These prices apply to ore sourced from NMDC's Baila Mine and are Freight on Road/Rail (FOR) rates.

142. How many crores will the Indian government give to state-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) as a subsidy to make up for losses brought on by the controlled pricing of domestic LPG?

A ₹35,000 crore

B ₹25,000 crore

C ₹15,000 crore

D ₹30,000 crore

E ₹45,000 crore

Solution

- The Indian government is set to provide a ₹35,000 crore subsidy to state-owned fuel retailers—Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL)—to offset losses incurred due to regulated pricing of domestic LPG.
- Price Freeze and Under-Recoveries: Domestic LPG prices have remained fixed at ₹803 per 14.2-kg cylinder since March 2024,

despite rising input costs.

- This has led to an estimated under-recovery of ₹40,500 crore for the fiscal year 2024-25.

143. **Recently (Jan 25), Former Supreme Court Justice B.N. Srikrishna was named chair of Equal's Advisory Board, a platform for data sharing and ID verification. He had previously served as the head of the ____ Pay Commission.**

A 8th

B 4th

C 5th

D 6th

E 7th

Solution

- Retired Supreme Court Justice B.N. Srikrishna has been appointed to chair the Advisory Board of Equal, an ID verification and data-sharing platform.
- This appointment comes as the government finalizes the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, to implement the DPDP Act, 2023.
- He headed the Sixth Pay Commission.

144. As per Jan'25 report, Joseph Aoun is elected president by the Lebanese parliament, breaking a two-year impasse. How many times have there been unsuccessful attempts to elect a successor, but there are signs that the commander of the Lebanese army, Joseph Aoun, might win the presidency in the next election?

A 12

B 16

C 11

D 15

E 10

Solution

- Lebanon's parliament is making another attempt to elect a president, aiming to fill a presidential vacancy that has lasted over two years since Michel Aoun's term ended in October 2022. 12 previous attempts have failed to elect a successor, but there are indications that Joseph Aoun, the Lebanese army commander, may be elected as president in the upcoming vote.

- **Leading Presidential Candidate:** Joseph Aoun is seen as the leading candidate for president and is backed by the United States and Saudi Arabia.
- The longest presidential vacancy prior to this occurred between May 2014 and October 2016, lasting nearly 2 1/2 years, before Michel Aoun was elected president.

145. The National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) and Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL) are to merge, according to a proposal from the Union Steel Ministry. In which state did KIOCL's failure to begin mining operations lead to the proposed merger?

A Uttar Pradesh

B Madhya Pradesh

C Uttarakhand

D Andhra Pradesh

E Karnataka

Solution

- The Steel Ministry of India has proposed the merger of NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) with Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL).
- The merger proposal follows KIOCL's inability to start mining operations at Devadiri in Karnataka.
- Approval Process: The merger proposal has been submitted to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) under the Ministry of

Finance for approval.

- Further details of the merger will be available after the Finance Ministry's approval.
- Regulatory approvals are also required for the merger to proceed.
- Strategic Benefits of the Merger: The merger will provide NMDC (valued at ₹22,000 crore) access to KIOCL's 4 million tonne per annum (mtpa) plant, which already has export clearances in place.

146. As part of the IndiaAI Mission, Microsoft is collaborating with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). How many billions of dollars will Microsoft invest over the course of two years to improve India's cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure?

A \$1billion

B \$2billion

C \$3billion

D \$4billion

E \$5billion

Solution

- Satya Nadella, Chairman and CEO of Microsoft, announced cloud and AI-led strategic partnerships with the Indian government and industry leaders across key sectors of the Indian economy.
- Investment in AI and Cloud Infrastructure: Microsoft announced a \$3 billion investment over two years to boost cloud and AI infrastructure in India.

- **AI Productivity Labs:**Microsoft will establish AI Productivity Labs in 20 National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs)/NIELIT centres across 10 states to train 20,000 educators in foundational AI courses.

147. Recently(Jan'25), P Jayachandran, a well-known playback singer known as 'Bhava Gayakan', passed away. In which state was he born?

A Karnataka

B Kerala

C Tamil Nadu

D Andhra Pradesh

E Telangana

Solution

- Renowned playback singer P Jayachandran, affectionately called 'Bhava Gayakan' passed away at the age of 81.
- Jayachandran was born on March 3, 1944, in Ernakulam, Kerala.
- He recorded over 16,000 songs in multiple languages: Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Hindi.
- He is widely recognized for his contribution to Indian music, particularly as a playback singer.
- He started his musical journey in high school, learning to play the mridangam and singing light classical music.

148. Which of the following pairs is incorrectly matched?

A

Priyanka Ingle – Captain of the Indian Women’s team in the Kho Kho World Cup

B

Pratik Waikar – Captain of the Indian men’s team in the Kho Kho World Cup

C

Mo Farah – International Event Ambassador for the 19th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon

D

England Hockey – Introduces Policy Restricting Transgender Women from Female Category

E

All are correct

Solution

- Pratik Waikar, a 32-year-old kho kho player from Pune, is set to captain the Indian men’s team in the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup, marking a significant milestone in his journey with this indigenous sport. The Inaugural Kho Kho World Cup:
 - Dates: January 13 □ 19, 2025.
 - Venue: Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi.
 - Opening Match: India vs. Nepal.

- Pakistan will not participate due to visa issues.
- Women's Team Leadership: Captain: Priyanka Ingle, a 24-year-old from Pune.

149. Which state will host the Flamingo Festival from January 18–20, 2025, after a five-year break?

A Uttar Pradesh

B Madhya Pradesh

C Uttarakhand

D Andhra Pradesh

E Rajasthan

Solution

- The Flamingo Festival will be held after a gap of five years in Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh, from January 18 to 20, 2025.
- Over 200 varieties of birds are expected to migrate to this region during the festival season.
- The Flamingo Festival is scheduled to take place in Andhra Pradesh from January 18 to 20, 2025, after a five-year hiatus.
- This event will be held across five locations in the Tirupati district: Nelapattu, B.V. Palem, Atakanithippa, Sri City, and Sullurpeta.
- Activities planned for the festival include eco-friendly biodiversity sessions, birdwatching opportunities, boating facilities, cultural

programs, and stalls at the Government Junior College campus in Sullurpeta.

150. Ranthambore Tiger Reserve lies at the junction of which two mountain ranges?

A Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats

B Satpura and Vindhya

C Aravallis and Vindhya

D Himalayas and Shivaliks

E None

Solution

- A flagship river-link irrigation project in Rajasthan will submerge 37 sq. km of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (RTR), dividing it into two sections. It is situated at the junction of the Aravallis and Vindhya ranges in Rajasthan.
- It was once a royal hunting ground for Jaipur's Maharajas and is now one of northern India's largest tiger reserves. The reserve is ideal for tiger monitoring due to its unique climate and vegetation.
- It is bordered by the Chambal River in the south and the Banas River in the north. The Ranthambore Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies within the reserve.

151. India's M&A activity declined to a four-year low in deal value in 2024 at _____.

A \$40.5 billion

B \$50.5 billion

C \$60.5 billion

D \$70.5 billion

E \$80.5 billion

Solution

- India's M&A activity declined to a four-year low in deal value in 2024 at \$ 80.5 billion.
- The activity declined 11.4% from a year ago, according to latest data from LSEG Deals Intelligence.
- As per latest data from LSEG Deals Intelligence, more deals were done in small-to-mid market sizes.
- In 2024, deal making activity involving India saw the busiest year on record.
- The deal count has grown steadily each year from 2020 to 2024.

- In 2024, target India M&A activity reached \$ 71.5 billion. This was down 13.6% as against the previous year.
- Domestic M&A increased 14.4% year-on-year (y-oy) by deal count. This is a 27.5% decline from the last year.

152. On January 16, the government will conduct an auction to buy back five securities with a total face value of _____.

A ₹10,000 crore

B ₹20,000 crore

C ₹30,000 crore

D ₹40,000 crore

E ₹50,000 crore

Solution

- On January 16, the government will conduct an auction to buy back five securities with a total face value of ₹30,000 crore.
- Through the buyback, funds will be infused into the banking system.
- The banking system is experiencing a massive liquidity shortfall.
- On January 9, the deficit was approximated to be around ₹2 lakh crore.
- The causes of the deficit are the RBI's actions in the foreign exchange market to avert a steep decline in the value of the Rupee and sluggish government expenditure.

- At the upcoming auction, four of the five Government Securities that will be repurchased mature in 2025, and one matures in 2026.

153. RBI has raised the monetary ceiling of gold loans under Bullet Repayment Scheme from two lakh rupees to _____ for Urban Co-operative Banks.

A Four lakh rupees

B Five lakh rupees

C Six lakh rupees

D Seven lakh rupees

E Eight lakh rupees

Solution

- RBI has raised the monetary ceiling of gold loans under Bullet Repayment Scheme.
- Earlier limit was two lakh rupees. New limit is four lakh rupees for Urban Co-operative Banks.
- According to the Union Cooperation Ministry, this will eliminate the challenges that the Urban Co-operative Banks are now facing.
- Additionally, this will assist in reaching the designated Priority Sector Lending goal.

- The government is dedicated to bolstering cooperatives and treating them similarly to other types of businesses.

154. India joined the _____ Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics.

A UN

B IMF

C WTO

D EU

E ASEAN

Solution

- India joined the UN committee on big data for official statistics.
- India joined the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics (UN-CEBD).
- The UN-CEBD was formed to investigate the benefits and challenges of Big Data including the potential for monitoring and reporting on sustainable development goals.
- India will contribute to shaping global standards and practices in harnessing Big Data and data science for official statistical purposes.
- Big Data and advanced data science techniques will revolutionize the production and dissemination of official statistics.

- India aims to modernize its statistical processes by integrating non-traditional data sources such as IoT, satellite imagery, and private sector data streams.

155. Who has been conferred Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2025?

A V Narayanan

B V Subramanayan

C **Dr. Syed Anwar Khursheed**

D Arun K Mishra

E Dr Saswad Ali Khan

Solution

- Dr. Syed Anwar Khursheed received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2025.
- Dr Syed Anwar Khursheed has been conferred Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, the highest recognition for overseas Indians by the Government of India.
- This award has been given to Syed Anwar Khursheed for his remarkable contributions to healthcare, community welfare, and strengthening ties between India and Saudi Arabia.
- Dr. Khursheed has served in key roles, including three decades at King Faisal Hospital and a decade at the National Guard Hospital as

a Royal Protocol Physician.

- He played a critical role by providing essential healthcare, vaccine advocacy, and round-the-clock consultations to the Indian diaspora.

156. In December, India's retail inflation rate dropped to what percent?

A 5.19%

B 5.12%

C 5.08%

D 5.22%

E 5.16%

Solution

- In December, India's retail inflation rate dropped to 5.22%, marking a four-month low.
- According to data published by the Ministry of Statistics, prices for vegetables, pulses, and sugar decreased over the month.
- In October, inflation reached 6.21%, marking a 14 month high level. In November, the CPI inflation rate fell to 5.48 percent.
- In December, the housing inflation rate compared to the previous year was 2.71%, a decrease from November's rate of 2.87%.
- The housing index is prepared exclusively for the urban sector.

- In December 2024, the five items with the highest year-on-year inflation at the All India level were peas, potatoes, garlic, coconut oil, and cauliflower.

157. Who inaugurated Entrepreneurship Development Conclave in Pune, Maharashtra, on 13 January?

A Jitender Singh

B Amit Shah

C Rajiv Ranjan Singh

D Piyush Goyal

E Nirmala Sitharaman

Solution

- Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh inaugurated Entrepreneurship Development Conclave in Pune, Maharashtra, on 13 January.
- The conclave is organised by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying.
- It is themed “Empowering Entrepreneurs: Transforming Livestock Economies.”
- The conclave brings together policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders from the livestock sector to encourage innovation and drive growth.

- The aim of Entrepreneurship Development Conclave is to provide a platform for discussions on challenges and opportunities in the livestock sector.
- The inauguration of the National Livestock Mission – Entrepreneurship Development Programme (NLM-EDP) Dashboard is the key highlight of the conclave.

158. India's net direct tax collection has increased by about _____ to around 16 lakh 90 thousand crore rupees in FY25 so far.

A 13%

B 14%

C 16%

D 15%

E 17%

Solution

- India's net direct tax collection has increased by about 16% to around 16 lakh 90 thousand crore rupees in FY25 so far.
- Direct tax collections surpassed 76% of the budget estimates (BE) of Rs 22.07 lakh crore.
- As per Central Board of Direct Taxes, gross direct tax collection has grown by around 20% to over 20 lakh crore rupees.
- This is a significant rise from nearly 17 lakh crore rupees collected in same period of the last fiscal year.
- The corporate tax contributed nearly ten lakh crore. Contribution of non-corporate tax stood at around 11 lakh crore rupees.

- Securities Transaction Tax (STT) recorded an increase of 80% from April 1, 2024, to January 12, 2025.

159. Recently, the EU and India reaffirmed their commitment to protecting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law during the India-EU Human Rights Dialogue. In which state/UT did it take place?

A Maharashtra

B Uttar Pradesh

C New Delhi

D Andhra Pradesh

E Ladakh

Solution

- India and the European Union (EU) reinforced their shared commitment to safeguarding human rights, democracy, and the rule of law during the India-EU Human Rights Dialogue held in New Delhi.
- Both parties agreed to protect the freedom, independence, and diversity of civil society organizations, journalists, and stakeholders.
- Emphasized respect for freedom of association, expression, and peaceful assembly.

- Reiterated commitment to democracy, freedom, and rule of law.
- Stressed the importance of strengthening national and international mechanisms to uphold human rights.
- Highlighted the need for closer cooperation in platforms like the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

160. Which nation and India reaffirmed their intention to develop their bilateral relations into a partnership encompassing maritime security and the economy?

A Maldives

B Singapore

C Thailand

D Myanmar

E Bangladesh

Solution

- India and the Maldives reaffirmed their commitment to enhance bilateral ties into a comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership during talks between India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Maldivian counterpart Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon in New Delhi.
- Both nations reiterated their determination to work closely towards the India-Maldives Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership, agreed upon in October 2023.

- Discussions emphasized boosting the capability of the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).
- Singh assured India's readiness to enhance Maldives' defence preparedness by providing defence platforms and assets, in line with Maldives' priorities and India's 'Neighborhood First' policy and SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

161. What is the total expenditure approved by the Union Cabinet for the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre, and within how many months is the project expected to be completed?

A ₹3984 crore; 36 months

B ₹3984 crore; 48 months

C ₹4450 crore; 48 months

D ₹3984 crore; 60 months

E ₹4324 crore; 36 months

Solution

- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, with an investment of Rs 3,984 crore, including associated facilities.
- The TLP will support ISRO's Next Generation Launch Vehicles (NGLV), which are heavy-lift vehicles and partially reusable. It will also support the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3).

- This launch pad will function as a standby for the Second Launch Pad (SLP) at Sriharikota, improving the nation's capacity for future human spaceflight missions and enhancing launch capacity for space exploration.
- The TLP project will be realized with maximum industry participation and will leverage ISRO's prior experience in building launch pads, while utilizing existing launch complex facilities.

162. The Odisha government has introduced a monthly pension of ₹20,000 for individuals imprisoned during which event?

A 1984 Riots

B The Emergency (1975-77)

C Veteran Freedom Fighter

D 1971 India - Bangladesh - Pakistan war

E The freedom revolution

Solution

- The Odisha government has announced a ₹20,000 monthly pension for individuals who were imprisoned during the Emergency between 1975-1977.
- The pension is available for individuals who were detained under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) during the Emergency and are still alive as of January 1, 2025.
- The benefits include medical expense coverage for the eligible individuals.
- A notification from the state's home department, issued on January 13, 2025, made this decision official.

- The state has set up state-level and district-level committees to identify the eligible beneficiaries.

163. Who did Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi defeat in rounds 10 and 11 in the online chess event in January 2025?

A Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura

B Fabiano Caruana and Ding Liren

C Hikaru Nakamura and Wesley So

D Magnus Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana

E None of these

Solution

- Arjun Erigaisi won the Titled Tuesday weekly blitz competition conducted by Chess.com on January 15, 2025, defeating top players like Magnus Carlsen (World No. 1) and Fabiano Caruana (World No. 2).
- He finished with 10 points from 11 rounds, securing victories over both Carlsen and Caruana in the final rounds.
- In round 7, Erigaisi lost only one match to Hikaru Nakamura, an American grandmaster, and currently ranked 3rd in FIDE classical ratings.

- The competition featured over 900 participants, including titled players with genuine Chess.com profiles, and had fair play measures like Zoom calls for verification.
- Erigaisi's victory in this event marks another milestone in his career, following his consistent performance in top-tier chess tournaments.

164. Which two countries will celebrate the year 2026 as a 'Dual Year' focusing on culture, tourism, and AI collaboration?

A India and Spain

B India and Japan

C India and Germany

D India and France

E India and China

Solution

- India and Spain will celebrate 2026 as a 'dual year', focusing on culture, tourism, and artificial intelligence (AI), as announced by EAM S. Jaishankar during his official visit to Spain.
- Jaishankar emphasized the growing potential of India-Spain relations, highlighting the Indian diaspora's role in strengthening bilateral ties and contributing to Spain's economy and society.
- Annual trade between India and Spain currently stands at USD 10 billion, with collaborations in areas such as railways, clean technology, drones, and space exploration.

- Jaishankar praised the Indian diaspora’s positive image in Spain, noting their significant contributions and Spain's recognition of Indian talent.

165. Who was sworn in as a Supreme Court judge on January 16, 2025?

A Justice R. Banumathi

B Justice S. Ravindra Bhat

C Justice K Vinod Chandran

D Justice Siddappa Sunil Dutt Yadav

E None of these

Solution

- Justice K Vinod Chandran was sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court on January 16, 2025, bringing the total number of judges to 33 out of the sanctioned strength of 34.
- Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna administered the oath of office during a brief ceremony.
- Prior to his elevation, Justice Chandran served as the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court since March 23, 2023.
- He was appointed as a judge of the Kerala High Court in 2011 and held various significant roles during his judicial career.

- The Supreme Court Collegium recommended his appointment, citing his seniority and the lack of representation from the Kerala High Court on the Bench.

166. Which service will Amit Shah inaugurate at 7 airports in January 2025 for seamless international travel?

A Fast Track Passport Service

B Digital Passport System

C Biometric Screening

D Trusted Traveller Programme

E All of the above

Solution

- Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the expansion of the Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Program (FTI-TTP) at seven airports: Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Cochin, and Ahmedabad.
- The program enables pre-verified flyers to use automated e-gates for faster biometric-based immigration, following its successful implementation at Indira Gandhi International Airport.
- The program provides 60% faster immigration clearance for enrolled passengers and is part of the 'Viksit Bharat'@2047 vision for world-class immigration facilities.

- Indian citizens and OCI cardholders can use the service free of cost.
- The FTI-TTP will eventually expand to cover 21 airports in India, with eight airports now included after this launch.

167. Which of the following Indian nuclear entities had Cold War-era sanctions lifted by the US in January 2025?

A BHEL

B BARC

C DRDO

D ISRO

E HAL

Solution

- The US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has removed three Indian entities—Indian Rare Earths, Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre (IGCAR), and Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)—from its Entity List.
- The decision removes trade barriers, fostering stronger bilateral collaboration between India and the US, especially in clean energy and advanced scientific research.
- These entities' inclusion on the Entity List had previously obstructed scientific exchanges and delayed collaborative projects, hindering cooperation.

- The delisting reflects a growing trust between the two nations, emphasizing their shared interests in rare earth minerals, nuclear energy, and clean energy technologies.
- India benefits from access to US technology, including advancements in clean energy, which is crucial for carbon reduction and meeting climate goals.

168. Who will be the Chief Guest at India's 76th Republic Day celebrations in 2025?

A Australian Prime Minister

B Indonesian President

C Canadian Prime Minister

D UK Prime Minister

E American Prime Minister

Solution

- Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto will visit India from January 25 to 26, 2025, marking his first visit to the country as president.
- Subianto will be the chief guest at India's 76th Republic Day celebrations on January 26, 2025, as announced by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- The visit, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is significant as Indonesia is a key partner in India's Act East Policy and its vision for the Indo-Pacific region.
- The trip will provide an opportunity for both countries' leadership to review bilateral ties and discuss regional and global issues of mutual

interest.

- Last year, French President Emmanuel Macron was the chief guest at Republic Day, and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi attended in 2023.

169. What was the name of the indigenously developed docking system used by ISRO to successfully dock satellites SDX01 and SDX02?

A Bhartiya Docking System

B PSLV Docking System

C Gaganyaan Docking System

D Chandrayaan Docking System

E None of these

Solution

- ISRO successfully completed the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) on January 16, 2025, marking a historic achievement for India.
- India becomes the 4th country after Russia, the USA, and China to successfully dock satellites in space.
- The docking occurred in a 475-kilometer orbit above Earth, using two Indian satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target).
- The indigenously developed Bhartiya Docking System was used for this complex maneuver.

- The process involved a precise maneuvering of the satellites, with the spacecraft moving from 15 meters to a 3-meter hold point before docking.

170. The Cabinet approved setting up the 8th Pay Commission to revise the salaries of central government employees and pensioners. How many employees and pensioners will be affected by it?

A 49 lakh employees and 65 lakh pensioners

B 50 lakh employees and 71 lakh pensioners

C 45 lakh employees and 60 lakh pensioners

D 66 lakh employees and 55 lakh pensioners

E 55 lakh employees and 38 lakh pensioners

Solution

- The Union Cabinet has approved the 8th Pay Commission to revise salaries, allowances, and pensions for Central government employees and retirees.
- The implementation will lead to salary increases for employees and adjustments in Dearness Allowance (DA).
- The 8th Pay Commission will likely come into force on January 1, 2026, with its setup expected by 2026.
- Chairman and two members will soon be appointed to oversee the rollout of the commission.

- The decision to set up the commission was made during a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

171. A HUL factory in eastern _____ has been named as an advanced 4IR end-to-end (E2E) value chain ‘Lighthouse’ by WEF.

A Haryana

B Assam

C Uttar Pradesh

D Bihar

E Madhya Pradesh

Solution

- A HUL factory in eastern Assam has been named as an advanced 4IR end-to-end (E2E) value chain ‘Lighthouse’ by WEF.
- The factory is located in Tinsukia district’s Doom Dooma.
- This is Hindustan Unilever Limited- HUL’s third factory in South Asia to get the honour for adopting 4IR technologies.
- Cloud computing, automation, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things at scale are examples of Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies.
- Sonapat in Haryana and Dapada in Dadra and Nagar Haveli are the other HUL factories that got this honour.

- The only company in India to have three plants recognised as Lighthouses is HUL.

172. The government has appointed Ashok Chandra as MD and CEO of _____.

A PNB

B SBI

C HDFC Bank

D IDBI Bank

E Indian Bank

Solution

- The government has appointed Ashok Chandra as MD and CEO of PNB and Binod Kumar as MD and CEO of Indian Bank.
- Both Ashok Chandra and Binod Kumar have taken charge on 16 January 2025.
- Chandra was an executive director at Canara Bank. He has been appointed for a three-year term.
- Binod Kumar was an executive director at PNB. He has been appointed for a three-year term.
- He will be eligible for an extension of up to two more years.

173. RBI has appointed _____ to oversee monetary policy department and department of economic and policy research.

A Urjit Patel

B Michael Patra

C V Ramasubramanyan

D V Narayanan

E **M. Rajeshwar Rao**

Solution

- RBI has appointed Deputy Governor M. Rajeshwar Rao to oversee monetary policy department and department of economic and policy research.
- This has been done after the Deputy Governor Michael Patra's term ended on January 15, 2025.
- Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao is in charge of banking regulation.
- Other portfolios of Patra have been distributed with other deputy governors.

- Patra was made the RBI deputy governor in January 2020 for a period of three years.
- In 2023, he received extension of one year and another year in 2024.

174. According to PHDCCI, India's GDP would overtake Japan and rank _____ in the world by 2026.

A 1st

B 2nd

C 3rd

D 4th

E 5th

Solution

- According to PHDCCI, India's GDP would overtake Japan and rank fourth in the world by 2026.
- It predicted that India's GDP would expand by 7.7% in FY26 and 6.8% in the current fiscal year.
- The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry added that only those with incomes over Rs 40 lakh should be subject to the highest income tax rate.
- This rate is presently applicable at 30% on income above Rs 15 lakh.

- It suggested raising the income tax exemption threshold to Rs 10 lakh.
- In its policy review next month, PHDCCI anticipates that the RBI will cut the benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points.

175. **SHE COHORT 3.0 has been launched by _____ to empower women-led startups.**

A Gujarat

B Karnataka

C Kerala

D Haryana

E Punjab

Solution

- SHE COHORT 3.0 launched by Punjab to empower women-led startups.
- On 15 January, Punjab launched SHE COHORT 3.0 (Startups Handholding & Empowerment—Cohort 3.0) at Mohali.
- The initiative supports aspiring female entrepreneurs and students in building and scaling technology-based ventures, with assistance from business incubators and ecosystem enablers.
- Inaugurated by Secretary Science, Technology, and Environment, Punjab, Priyank Bharti, the event highlighted the upcoming plans of

Startup Punjab to boost the state's startup ecosystem in the presence of over 250 emerging start-ups, innovators, and students.

- This initiative provides a platform for budding poor and marginalized women entrepreneurs to showcase their talent and ideas for start-ups and become self-reliant by using science and technology.

176. Which country awarded the Honorary Citizen Award to Tarun Das, the former head of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

A USA

B UK

C France

D Indonesia

E Singapore

Solution

- Singapore awards the Honorary Citizen Award to Tarun Das, the former head of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam honored Tarun Das with the Honorary Citizen Award for his role in strengthening India-Singapore relations.
- During a ceremony in New Delhi, President Tharman, who is on a state visit to India, presented the award to Das.
- A non-Singaporean can receive the highest recognition from the Singapore government through the Honorary Citizenship Award.

- It is awarded to individuals who have made significant impact in fields such as business, science and technology, education, health, arts and culture, and community service.
- Mr Das is the second Indian to be honoured with this honour, before him the only Indian to receive this honour was late Ratan Tata.

177. **Global unemployment stood steady at _____ in 2024, according to International Labour Organisation (ILO) report.**

A 4%

B 5%

C 6%

D 7%

E 8%

Solution

- Global unemployment stood steady at 5 percent in 2024, according to International Labour Organisation (ILO) report.
- Global unemployment in 2024 remained at a historical low continuing from the 2023, as per ILO report.
- The report is titled as “World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025 (WESO Trends).
- In 2024, economic growth was 3.2%, which was lower than the 3.3% and 3.6% growth in 2023 and 2022, respectively.
- In 2025, a similar expansion is anticipated, followed by a slowdown over the medium term.

- According to the ILO report, there have been no improvements, particularly for youth.
- The unemployment rate for young people is still significantly higher at 12.6%.

178. Which organization is leading the revolutionary project Bima Sugam, which aims to establish a one-stop digital platform for insurance, and is now anticipated to launch in the middle of 2025 instead of April 2025 as originally planned?

A SIDBI

B IRDAI

C NTPC

D NABARD

E RBI

Solution

- The much-anticipated Bima Sugam, a transformative project spearheaded by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to create a one-stop digital platform for insurance, is now expected to launch mid-year 2025, rather than the earlier target of April 2025.
- Offering a seamless, unified experience for customers, agents, and insurers.
- 2022: IRDAI initially proposed the concept of Bima Sugam.

- **2024 Announcement:** IRDAI Chairman Debasish Panda declared the platform's first phase would launch in April 2025.
- **Current Update:** The first phase is now projected for a mid-2025 rollout, as per a source close to the project.

179. How many ELI programs with an annual allocation of Rs 10,000 crore were announced in the FY25 Budget with the goal of generating employment opportunities?

A 3

B 5

C 1

D 4

E 2

Solution

- The government is poised to save over Rs 70,000 crore in capital and revenue expenditure that was allocated for new schemes in the FY25 Budget, which are yet to be implemented.
- Employment-linked Incentive (ELI) Schemes: The FY25 Budget announced three ELI schemes with an annual allocation of Rs 10,000 crore aimed at creating employment opportunities.
- The Ministry of Skill Development was tasked with upgrading 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), with an allocated budget of Rs

1,000 crore for the current financial year. This initiative, too, has not been implemented as planned.

- The Finance Ministry earmarked Rs 62,000 crore for various new schemes under the Department of Economic Affairs, but the execution of these plans remains pending.

180. Which nation has received official admission to the UN-CEBD (United Nations Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics)?

A USA

B India

C Australia

D Germany

E China

Solution

- India has been officially inducted into the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics(UN-CEBD).
- This committee was created to explore the benefits and challenges of big data, including its potential for monitoring and reporting on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Timing: India's inclusion in this expert committee is significant, as it comes shortly after India assumed membership of the United Nations Statistical Council, marking the country's return after a considerable gap.

- **Global Recognition:** This inclusion is seen as a major step forward for India's statistical ecosystem, underlining the country's growing influence in the global statistical community.

181. In order to promote innovation, increase efficiency, and facilitate business dealings, which organization has broadened the scope of its regulatory sandbox framework?

A SEBI

B IRDAI

C DICGC

D SIDBI

E NABARD

Solution

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has expanded the scope of its regulatory sandbox framework to encourage innovation, improve efficiency, and ease of doing business.
- Objective of Changes: These changes align with IRDAI's move towards a modern, dynamic, and principle-based regulatory framework.
- The aim is to foster innovation, improve governance, ensure data security, and drive sustainable growth while upholding policyholder

protection.

182. Which year did the Bank of India launch its first dollar syndicated loan with a \$400 million target?

A 2011

B 2012

C 2013

D 2014

E 2015

Solution

- Bank of India is raising its first dollar syndicated loan since 2012, with a target amount of \$400 million.
- The loan is being raised through the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) branch of Bank of India.
- Arrangers of the Loan Facility: The arrangers for the syndicated loan facility are CTBC Bank Co. and Standard Chartered Plc.
- Rising Foreign Currency Debt Among Indian Borrowers: The Bank of India's move is part of a broader trend where more Indian borrowers are tapping global credit markets.

183. Which Indian bank, with a market capitalization that increased by 25.8% to \$105.7 billion, is a standout performer among the three that rank among the top 25 global banks by market capitalization for Q4 2024?

A HDFC bank

B ICICI bank

C State Bank of India

D Punjab National Bank

E Axis bank

Solution

- According to a report by GlobalData, a leading data analytics and research company, 3 Indian banks -HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and State Bank of India (SBI) ranked in the top 25 global banks by market capitalization for Q4 2024:
- HDFC Bank: Ranked 13th with a market cap of \$158.5 billion.
- ICICI Bank: Ranked 19th with a market cap of \$105.7 billion.
- SBI: Ranked 24th with a market cap of \$82.9 billion.

- **ICICI Bank's Standout Performance:** ICICI Bank was a standout performer, with its market cap growing by 25.8% to \$105.7 billion, driven by the strength of India's expanding digital banking and credit ecosystem.

184. According to information from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), the monthly mutual fund SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) increased from Rs 25,320 crore in November 2024 to how many crores in December 2024?

A Rs.26000crore

B Rs.25500crore

C Rs.27000crore

D Rs.28000crore

E Rs.29000crore

Solution

- As per data provided by Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), The monthly mutual fund SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) crossed the Rs 26,000 crore mark for the first time in December 2024, reaching Rs 26,459 crore, up from Rs 25,320 crore in November 2024.
- New SIP Registrations: The number of new SIPs registered in December 2024 was 54,27,201, an increase from 49,46,408 in November 2024.

- **SIP AUM (Assets Under Management):**The SIP AUM stood at Rs 13.63 lakh crore in December 2024, compared to Rs 13.54 lakh crore in November 2024.
- **SIP Accounts:**The total number of SIP accounts reached an all-time high of 10,32,02,796 in December 2024, up from 10,22,66,590 in November 2024.

185. Which government-owned company, Rosatom, has shipped the sixth and last unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant from Novorossiysk seaport on a specialized ship?

A China

B Russia

C Iran

D UAE

E Afghanistan

Solution

- The Russian government-owned company Rosatom has shipped the 6th and final unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant being set up in Kudankulam, Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu, on board a specialised ship from the seaport of Novorossiysk.
- The equipment, weighing 320 tonnes and manufactured by Atommmash, Rosatom's machine-building division, was shipped at the end of 2024.
- Historical Agreement : In 1988 an agreement was signed between the government of India and the Soviet Union to construct a 6000

MW nuclear power plant in Kudankulam, Tamil Nadu.

- The power plant consists of 6 units of 1000 MW capacity each.
- India's Nuclear Energy Status (2024) : According to the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) in 2024 there were 24 operational nuclear reactors in the country with an installed capacity of 8080 MW.

186. With a focus on Maharishi Agastya, which Kashi Tamil Sangamam edition will take place from February 15–24, 2025?

A 2nd

B 1st

C 3rd

D 4th

E 5th

Solution

- The Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2025 Event will be held on February 15-24, 2025.
- Theme: The 3rd edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam will focus on Rishi Agastya, emphasizing the ancient connection between Tamil Nadu and Varanasi (Kashi).
- Objective: Celebrating the civilizational and cultural bond between Kashi and Tamil Nadu.
- Tamil is one of the oldest languages of human civilization, and the government plays a crucial role in fostering unity and promoting cultural heritage.

187. Recently(Jan'25), Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, established the National Turmeric Board. In order to improve the income of turmeric producers nationwide, the new Board will put the welfare of farmers first and seek to boost production, particularly in Andhra Pradesh and which state?

A Madhya Pradesh

B Telangana

C Meghalaya

D Maharashtra

E TamilNadu

Solution

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the National Turmeric Board in New Delhi.
- Shri Palle Ganga Reddy was announced as the first Chairperson of the Board.
- The Board's headquarters has been established in Nizamabad, a major turmeric-producing region in India.

- **Focus on Farmers:** The new Board will prioritize the welfare of turmeric farmers and aims to increase production, especially in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, boosting the income of turmeric producers across the country.

188. Recently, The Ministry of Earth Sciences' India Meteorological Department (IMD) commemorated 150 years of devoted service to the country. In which year, a roadmap for ensuring India's climate change adaptation and weather resilience was released in anticipation of the country's centennial celebrations of independence?

A 2029

B 2030

C 2050

D 2040

E 2047

Solution

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD), under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, is celebrating a historic milestone □ 150 years of dedicated service to the nation.
- Established in 1875, IMD has significantly contributed to weather forecasting, climate monitoring, disaster management, agriculture, aviation, and public safety.

- During this event, the Prime Minister acknowledged IMD's remarkable 150-year journey as a symbol of India's progress in science and technology.
- Launch of Mission Mausam: This initiative aims to transform India into a "Weather-ready and Climate-smart" nation, employing advanced technologies like high-resolution atmospheric observations, radars, satellites, and high-performance computing.

189. How many state-run banks in India considering selling their stake to reduce their ownership, or is it letting the banks sell shares to big investors?

A 5

B 2

C 7

D 3

E 4

Solution

- India is considering reducing its ownership in 5 state-run banks, including UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, and Punjab and Sind Bank, through stake sales or allowing the banks to sell shares to large investors.
- Minimum Public Holding Norms: The goal is to bring down the government's stake in these banks below 75% to meet regulatory norms.
- Methods of Stake Reduction: The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) may facilitate the stake sales.

- The alternative is for the banks to sell shares to large investors, which will help them meet the required public holding norms.

190. As per Jan'25 report, what percentage coupon rate was utilized by Bank of Baroda (BoB) to raise Rs 5,000 crore through a 10-year infrastructure bond?

A 7.21%

B 7.22%

C 7.23%

D 7.24%

E 7.25%

Solution

- Bank of Baroda (BoB) raised Rs 5,000 crore through a 10-year infrastructure bond at a coupon rate of 7.23%.
- The infrastructure bond issued by BoB was rated AAA by CRISIL and India Ratings, indicating a high credit rating.
- Issue Details: The base issue size was Rs 2,000 crore, with a green shoe option of Rs 3,000 crore, allowing for an additional issue of bonds.
- Full Issue Amount Retained: BoB decided to retain the full issue amount of Rs 5,000 crore despite the demand exceeding the issue

size.

- **IRFC's Bond Issuance:** The Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) also raised Rs 2,780 crore through 10-year bonds at a 7.25% interest rate.

191. As per the report, the government has reconstituted the Atomic Energy Commission. T V Somanathan and Manoj Govil are among the newest members. Who served as Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy and has been appointed Chairman of the Commission?

A Vikram Misri

B Pankaj Kumar Mishra

C Ajit Doval

D Ajit Kumar Mohanty

E Vivek Bhasin

Solution

- The government has re-constituted the Atomic Energy Commission. T V Somanathan and Manoj Govil are among the new members.
- The reconstituted commission includes National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri.
- T V Somanathan has been included as the Cabinet Secretary.
- Manoj Govil has joined as the Expenditure Secretary.

- Pankaj Kumar Mishra, who assumed the role of Member (Finance) last year, is also a member.
- Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy, has been appointed as the Chairman of the commission.

192. As per the report, the one essential part of the Zojila Tunnel Project, which aims to connect Srinagar and Ladakh throughout the year, is the Z-Morh Tunnel. How many kilometers per hour can a vehicle travel, cutting down on travel time and allowing for 1,000 vehicles per hour?

A 50km/h

B 60km/h

C 70km/h

D 80km/h

E 40km/h

Solution

- The Z-Morh Tunnel is a vital component of the Zojila Tunnel Project, aimed at providing year-round connectivity between Srinagar and Ladakh.
- The name “Z-Morh” originates from the Z-shaped roadway that previously existed in the area.
- Features include a two-lane tunnel with real-time monitoring systems and a 7.5-meter-wide parallel escape passage for

emergencies.

- Vehicles can travel at speeds of 70 km/h, reducing travel time significantly and accommodating 1,000 vehicles per hour.

193. The National Health Authority (NHA) and the Government of Odisha signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), making Odisha the state to implement AB PM-JAY.

A 32nd

B 33rd

C 34th

D 35th

E 36th

Solution

- Odisha became the 34th state to implement AB PM-JAY after a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the National Health Authority (NHA) and the Government of Odisha.
- The scheme will be implemented in convergence with the existing Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY) in Odisha.
- Coverage: Provides a health cover of ₹5 lakh per family per year, with an additional ₹5 lakh for women members.

194. What percentage of wholesale inflation in India increased from 1.89% in November 2024 to what percentage in December 2024?

A 2.36%

B 2.35%

C 2.37%

D 2.38%

E 2.39%

Solution

- India's wholesale inflation rose to 2.37% in December 2024, up from 1.89% in November 2024.
- Key Contributors to the Rise: The increase in inflation was driven by fuel and power and primary non-food articles, which together contributed 42 basis points (bps) out of the 48 bps increase in wholesale prices.
- Food Prices: Despite the overall inflation rise, food prices eased, with food inflation dipping below 9% for the first time in December, falling to 8.4%.

- Retail Inflation: In contrast, retail inflation, which directly affects consumer prices, hit a four-month low of 5.2% in December 2024.
- This indicates a divergence between wholesale prices (which measure the cost of goods at the wholesale level) and retail prices (which reflect the cost to consumers).

195. Which company achieved a major milestone for the Indian Army and the telecom company by successfully deploying the first-ever 5G site in the Siachen Glacier?

A VI

B Bharati Airtel

C BSNL

D Reliance Jio

E MTNL

Solution

- Reliance Jio has successfully deployed the first-ever 5G site in the Siachen Glacier, marking a significant achievement for both the telecom company and the Indian Army.
- This development is crucial as the Siachen Glacier, the highest battlefield in the world, had previously lacked reliable connectivity.
- The 5G network will enable seamless communication for soldiers in this remote and challenging region, enhancing critical communication capabilities.

- Fire and Fury Corps, the Indian Army division responsible for Siachen, collaborated with Jio Telecom to install the 5G mobile tower.
- The successful deployment was announced through an X post by Fire and Fury Corps, highlighting the partnership with Jio.

196. Which High Court's Chief Justice, Justice Upadhyay, was named Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court?

A Calcutta

B Bombay

C Madras

D Patna

E Manipur

Solution

- Justice Upadhyay, the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.
- This decision was made on January 14, 2025, following a recommendation by the Supreme Court Collegium on January 7, 2025.
- Justice Vibhu Bakhru is currently serving as the acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court after the elevation of Justice Manohar to the Supreme Court.
- Justice Alok Aradhe, the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court,

following the same recommendation by the Supreme Court Collegium.

197. Recently, Nawaf Salam, a well-known diplomat and judge, was named the new prime minister of Lebanon by President Joseph Aoun after receiving the parliamentary majority. Salam previously served as Lebanon's ambassador to the UN from 2007 until which year?

A 2015

B 2012

C 2016

D 2017

E 2018

Solution

- Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has appointed Nawaf Salam, a prominent diplomat and judge, as Lebanon's new Prime Minister after securing majority support from the Lebanese parliament.
- Salam, the head of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), won the support of 73 out of 128 members of parliament, mainly from Western-backed groups and independents, and is also backed by Saudi Arabia and Western countries.

- The nomination of Salam marks a setback for Hezbollah, as it comes after the group's militant wing weakened due to the 14-month war with Israel.
- Salam's appointment signifies the diminishing influence of Hezbollah in Lebanon's politics.

198. With Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra's term ending on January 15, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a portfolio reorganization for its three surviving Deputy Governors. Who will take over as head of the Monetary Policy Department?

A T Rabi Sankar

B Swaminathan Janakiraman

C M Rajeshwar Rao

D BP Kanungo

E MK Jain

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a reshuffle in the portfolios of its three remaining Deputy Governors on January 14, as Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra's term is set to end on January 15.
- New Portfolio Assignments: M Rajeshwar Rao will take over as the head of the Department of Monetary Policy, a role previously managed by Dr. Patra.
- T Rabi Sankar will now oversee the Financial Markets Operations Department.

- M Rajeshwar Rao is now responsible for 11 portfolios.
- T Rabi Sankar will handle 13 departments.
- Swaminathan Janakiraman will manage 9 portfolios.

199. Which company's chairman and managing director (CMD), Robert Jerard Ravi, is most likely to be reappointed by the Ministry of Communications?

A VI

B Bharati Airtel

C BSNL

D Reliance Jio

E MTNL

Solution

- The Ministry of Communications is likely to reappoint Robert Jerard Ravi as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).
- Ravi was first appointed as BSNL CMD in July 2024, succeeding PK Purwar, whose tenure ended after serving since July 2019.
- In October 2024, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) advertised for hiring a new BSNL CMD, with the application deadline being November 15.
- However, no applications were received for the position.

- Robert J Ravi is currently serving as Deputy Director General at DoT and previously served as Advisor (Consumer Affairs and Quality of Services) at the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

200. Recently, The government's premier oil and gas industry conference, India Energy Week (IEW) 2025, will take place in New Delhi from February 11–14, 2025. How many top start-ups will have their creative solutions highlighted by the Avinya Energy Start-Up Challenge 2.0, giving them international exposure?

A 5

B 8

C 2

D 9

E 3

Solution

- India Energy Week (IEW) 2025, the government's flagship oil and gas sector conference, will be held in New Delhi from February 11-14, 2025.
- The event will feature participation from over 20 energy ministers and deputy ministers, representing advanced economies, major energy producers, and the Global South.

- The Avinya Energy Start-Up Challenge 2.0 will spotlight innovative solutions from the top five start-ups, providing them with global visibility.

201. According to the World Bank's World Economic Prospects (WEP) report, India is expected to grow by _____.

A 6.6%

B 6.7%

C 6.8%

D 6.9%

E 7.0%

Solution

- India is expected to grow by 6.7%, which is more than the 2.7% world growth rate, according to World Bank projections.
- India is expected to dominate the world economy, according to the World Bank's World Economic Prospects (WEP) report, which was released in January 2025.
- According to the report, for the next two fiscal years, India will continue to be the large economy with the quickest rate of growth.
- A flourishing services sector and a revived manufacturing base are credited by the WEP report with this exceptional momentum.

- Government policies, which range from tax simplification to infrastructure modernisation, are boosting domestic growth and establishing India as a pillar of international economic stability.
- Additionally, the report predicts that China's economic growth will slow to 4% in the upcoming year.

202. RBI sold a record _____ in foreign exchange in November.

A \$18.7 billion

B \$19.3 billion

C \$20.2 billion

D \$21.9 billion

E \$22.6 billion

Solution

- To control currency volatility, the RBI sold a record \$20.2 billion in foreign exchange in November.
- By the end of the month, this increased its forward market net short position to \$58.9 billion.
- At the end of October, RBI's net forward sales position was \$49.18 billion.
- RBI sold \$51.1 billion worth of foreign currency on the open market and purchased \$30.8 billion worth in November.
- Throughout the month, the rupee lost 0.48 percent of its value.

- The intervention was attributed by market participants to significant outflows of foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) brought on by an increase in US Treasury yields.
- Foreign investors net sold \$2.1 billion worth of Indian equities in November.
- During April-September, RBI was a net buyer, bought \$8.52 billion in the spot market.

203. Which of the following banks has received permission from RBI to open 20 new bank branches?

A HDFC Bank

B HSBC India

C ICIC Bank

D Axis Bank

E SBI

Solution

- The RBI has given HSBC India permission to open 20 new bank branches.
- Cities chosen for their expanding wealth pools will host the new branches.
- The new branches will act as extra points of contact for wealthy, high net worth, and ultra-high net worth customers with both local and foreign banking and wealth requirements.
- At the moment, HSBC operates a network of 26 branches in 14 Indian cities.

- The HSBC just opened its largest branch in the nation, in Bengaluru, as part of its branch network.

204. Which Co-operative Bank has partnered with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Ltd. (PNB MetLife) for strategic bancassurance cooperation?

A Saraswat Co-operative Bank

B Cosmos Co-operative Bank

C Shamrao Vithal Co-operative Bank

D Abhyudaya Co-Operative Bank

E Bharat Co-operative Bank

Solution

- Saraswat Co-operative Bank and PNB MetLife collaborate to provide insurance options.
- Saraswat Co-operative Bank Ltd. and PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Ltd. (PNB MetLife) have established a strategic bancassurance cooperation.
- By providing Saraswat Bank's large client base with a full range of life insurance options, this partnership seeks to improve financial inclusion.

- Companies and banks collaborate to market insurance goods or policies under the bancassurance insurance distribution model.
- The bank and insurance firms both gain from this arrangement.
- The insurer benefits from the bank's distribution network, while the bank receives a commission from the insurance firm.

205. Over 65 lakh property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme distributed by PM Modi. This scheme was launched in which year?

A 2018

B 2019

C 2020

D 2021

E 2022

Solution

- Over 65 lakh property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme distributed by PM Modi.
- On 18 January, over 65 lakh property cards distributed under the SVAMITVA Scheme by PM Narendra Modi, marking a major milestone in India's rural empowerment efforts.
- The distribution will reach property owners in over 50,000 villages across 10 states – Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, as well as two Union Territories – Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

- This is a significant occasion as it marks the day of preparation and distribution of around 2.25 crore property cards under the Swamitva Yojana, with 65 lakh cards being issued in a single day.
- The SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) scheme was launched on April 24, 2020.

206. India aims to achieve _____ export earnings from fish and fishery products.

A ₹1 lakh crore

B ₹2 lakh crore

C ₹3 lakh crore

D ₹4 lakh crore

E ₹5 lakh crore

Solution

- India aims to achieve ₹1 lakh crore export earnings from fish and fishery products.
- Previous year, India earned total ₹63,000 crore via fish and fishery products exports.
- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying inaugurated AQUAMAP-25, an international workshop.
- It is organised by National Centre for Aquatic Animal Health at Cochin University of Science and Technology as part of its silver jubilee celebrations.

- The Minister urged for a change in dependence of Kerala’s fisheries sector from native fishery resources to modern aquaculture practices.

207. In New Delhi, which nation's president Tharman Shanmugaratnam presented Tarun Das the Honorary Citizen Award?

A Germany

B Singapore

C Thailand

D Malaysia

E Vietnam

Solution

- Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam presented the Honorary Citizen Award to Tarun Das in New Delhi.
- The Honorary Citizen Award is the highest recognition granted by the Singapore government to a non-Singaporean.
- This prestigious award is presented to individuals who have made notable contributions in various fields such as business, science and technology, education, health, arts and culture, and community service.
- Tarun Das, former head of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was honored for his exceptional role in strengthening the

bilateral relations between India and Singapore.

208. Recently(Jan’25), Amitav Ghosh talks about his new book, “Wild Fictions,” which tackles societal issues and climate change in a “time of monsters.” Which nation’s Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci was cited by Ghosh when he emphasized that the world was about to enter a “time of monsters,” when the old era was dying and a new one was struggling to emerge?

A Germany

B Italy

C France

D Morocco

E Poland

Solution

- Ghosh unveils his book □ Wild Fictions (Essays) □ with former foreign secretary, Shyam Saran, at India International Centre (IIC).
- At the launch of his new book, Wild Fictions (Essays), Ghosh also delivered the CD Deshmukh Memorial lecture on the theme “Time of Monsters, Time of Possibilities: Reflections of an Interstitial Era.”

- In his speech, Ghosh quoted Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, emphasizing that the world was entering a “time of monsters,” a period in which the old era was dying while a new one struggled to emerge.

209. What percentage of equity shares in Ashoka Concessions Limited (ACL) and some of its convertible instruments have been approved by the Competition Commission of India for Ashoka Buildcon (ABL) and Viva Highways (Viva)?

A 32%

B 31%

C 33%

D 34%

E 35%

Solution

- The Competition Commission of India has approved Ashoka Buildcon's (ABL) acquisition of 34% equity shareholding in Ashoka Concessions Limited (ACL) and certain convertible instruments of ACL by ABL and Viva Highways (Viva).
- Additionally, the approval covers the acquisition of a 26% shareholding in Jaora Nayagaon Toll Road Company (JN) by Viva.
- Ashoka Buildcon (ABL): Engaged in engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC), as well as operation and maintenance (O&M) of

roads and highways in India.

- It operates its road assets through various models, including EPC, BOT, and Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM).

210. On January 13, 2025, Justice Krishnan Vinod Chandran, the Chief Justice of which High Court, was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Droupadi Murmu?

A Calcutta

B Bombay

C Madras

D Patna

E Uttarakhand

Solution

- President Droupadi Murmu appointed Justice Krishnan Vinod Chandran, the Chief Justice of Patna High Court, as a judge of the Supreme Court on January 13, 2025.
- The Supreme Court Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, recommended the appointment of Justice Chandran on January 7, 2025.
- The Collegium noted that there was no judge from Kerala High Court on the Supreme Court Bench at the time of Justice Chandran's recommendation.

- Justice Chandran was the senior most among High Court judges from Kerala when recommended for the appointment.
- With the appointment of Justice Chandran, the judicial strength of the Supreme Court has increased to 33 judges, which is one short of the full quorum.

211. Which Insurance company has partnered with Saraswat Co-operative Bank, one of the biggest urban co-ops in India, to provide bancassurance services?

A ADITYA BIRLA INSURANCE

B SBI LIFE INSURANCE

C PNB METLIFE

D BAJAJ ALLIANCE INSURANCE

E TATA AIA INSURANCE

Solution

- PNB MetLife has entered into a bancassurance partnership with Saraswat Co-operative Bank, one of India's largest urban co-operative banks.
- Target Customer Base: The collaboration will offer insurance products to Saraswat Banks large customer base, consisting of approximately 30 lakh individuals, across 302 branches nationwide.
- Bancassurance Model: Bancassurance is a model where banks partner with insurance companies to sell insurance products.

- Promoting PNB MetLife’s Brand Positioning: The collaboration reinforces PNB MetLife’s brand slogan, Milkar Life Aage Badhaein, meaning “Together, Move Life Forward.”

212. Recently(Jan '25), Piramal Capital & Housing Finance (Piramal Finance) and MobiKwik Systems have partnered strategically to offer personal loans to MobiKwik users. For ZIP EMI ranges, what is the minimum loan amount?

A Rs.25000

B Rs.50000

C Rs.75000

D Rs.100000

E Rs.150000

Solution

- MobiKwik Systems has entered into a strategic partnership with Piramal Capital & Housing Finance (Piramal Finance) to provide personal loans to MobiKwik customers.
- Objective of the Partnership:The partnership aims to enhance access to affordable credit solutions, enabling MobiKwik users to apply for and receive personal loans seamlessly through the MobiKwik platform.

- **Loan Offering:**The personal loan offering is designed to cater to various financial needs of individuals, such as education, medical expenses, travel, and other consumption purposes.
- **Loan Amount & Eligibility:**The loan amount for ZIP EMI ranges from INR 50,000 to INR 2,00,000.

213. Despite Tata Sons' continuous efforts to deregister from this category, it is still listed on the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) list of upper-layer non-banking finance companies (NBFC-UL). In the upper-layer list, how many NBFCs are listed?

A 15

B 18

C 12

D 22

E 19

Solution

- Tata Sons, the holding company of Tata Group, remains on the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) list of upper-layer non-banking finance companies (NBFC-UL), despite its ongoing application to deregister itself from this category.
- Deregistration Proposal: Tata Sons seeks to deregister itself as a core investment category NBFC because RBI mandates that upper-layer NBFCs must be listed on exchanges by September 2025.

- The Shapoorji Paloونji Group, which holds nearly 18.5% of Tata Sons, is reportedly in favor of the company’s listing.

214. By the end of January 2025, which bank intends to introduce a cash-flow-based digital MSME loan product with a maximum amount of ₹25 lakh?

A Punjab & Sind bank

B State bank of India

C Punjab National bank

D Bank of Baroda

E Canara bank

Solution

- Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) plans to launch a cash-flow-based digital MSME loan product of up to ₹25 lakh by the end of January 2025.
- Objective: The initiative is expected to change the perception of PSB as a “digital-friendly bank,” enabling easier and faster loan sanctioning for MSMEs based on cash flow rather than traditional methods.
- Digital Lending Features: Customers will be able to apply for loans by scanning a QR code, giving a missed call, or visiting the bank’s website.

- Previous Digital Products:PSB had previously rolled out digital e-car and e-home loan products, using QR codes and missed calls for easy loan application processes.

215. In FY26, Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) plans to raise Rs 2,500 crore through a Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) to support business growth and reduce government holdings to what percentage?

A 10%

B 50%

C 75%

D 49%

E 51%

Solution

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) plans to raise Rs 2,500 crore through a Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) in FY26 to support business growth and reduce government holding to 75%.
- The bank raised Rs 3,500 crore through QIP, reducing the government's stake from 86.46% to 79.60%.
- The share equity was issued at Rs 57.36 per share.
- Government Holding and Dispensation: The government's stake in BoM will be reduced to 75% by August 2026, in line with regulatory

requirements for minimum public holding (at least 25%).

216. Which bonds are the subject of an e-learning course being launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM)?

A Corporate bonds

B Municipal bonds

C Zero Coupon bonds

D Treasury bonds

E Callable bonds

Solution

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has partnered with the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) to launch an e-learning course on municipal bonds.
- **Municipal Bonds Overview:** Municipal bonds (muni bonds) are debt securities issued by urban local governments and agencies. They are used to fund everyday obligations and finance capital projects such as highways, roads, and schools.

217. Which Housing Finance changed its name to Truhome Finance following its acquisition by QIA and Warburg Pincus?

A L&T finance

B Indiabulls

C IIFL

D Shriram

E Sundaram

Solution

- Shriram Housing Finance (SHF) has rebranded itself as Truhome Finance following its acquisition by Warburg Pincus and its co-investors, including QIA (Qatar's sovereign wealth fund), from Shriram Finance.
- In December 2024, Shriram Finance completed the sale of its entire stake (84.44% of the shareholding on a fully diluted basis) in SHF to Warburg Pincus for ₹3,929 crore.
- The rebranding aligns with Truhome Finance's vision of enabling homeownership and ensuring financial accessibility for individuals across various socio-economic backgrounds.

218. Which Mutual Fund introduced the first exchange-traded fund (ETF) devoted to the Indian railway industry, the Nifty India Railways PSU ETF?

A Groww

B ET Money

C Policy Bazaar

D Aditya Birla

E Cleartax

Solution

- Groww Mutual Fund has launched the Groww Nifty India Railways PSU ETF, the first exchange-traded fund (ETF) focused on the Indian railway sector.
- The New Fund Offer (NFO) will be open for subscription from January 16 to January 30, 2025.
- The ETF aims to track the Nifty India Railways PSU Index-TRI, providing exposure to public sector undertakings (PSUs) crucial to India's railway ecosystem.

219. Which scam has the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) denied, stating that no fraudulent incidents related to UPI transactions have been identified?

A Charity Scam

B Jumped deposit

C Money Mules

D Skimming

E Overpayment Scam

Solution

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has refuted claims about the “Jumped Deposit” scam, stating that no fraud incidents related to UPI transactions have been found.
- Media reports had described a scam where fraudsters deposit small amounts into UPI users’ accounts and use psychological manipulation to encourage larger payment authorizations.
- NPCI reaffirmed that UPI is a device-based payment system that securely links a user’s account with their registered mobile number and device, ensuring safe transactions.

220. In order to promote the use of the Indian Rupee (INR) and other local/national currencies for settling cross-border transactions, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced liberalized standards on January 16, 2025. In which year can foreign banks open accounts in India for trade transactions using Indian rupees (INR) under the Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA)?

A 2020

B 2019

C 2021

D 2022

E 2023

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced liberalised norms on January 16, 2025 to encourage the use of the Indian Rupee (INR) and other local/national currencies for settling cross-border transactions.
- The announcement was made at a time when the Indian Rupee had recently touched an all-time low of 86.70 per USD.

- **Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA):** Introduced in July 2022, the Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) allows foreign banks to open accounts in India for trade transactions using INR.

221. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given HSBC India permission to open 20 new branches in strategic locations throughout the nation. Following the expansion, HSBC India will have _____ branches nationwide.

A 46

B 42

C 48

D 45

E 40

Solution

- HSBC India has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to open 20 new branches in key cities across the country.
- This approval marks the largest branch expansion by a foreign bank in India in over a decade.
- Branch Network Growth: After the expansion, HSBC India will have a total of 46 branches in the country.
- In 2016, HSBC India had 50 branches, but it later decided to shut down 24 branches as part of its earlier strategy.

- **Current Branch Network:**As of now, HSBC India has a network of 26 branches across 14 cities in India.

222. To improve coordination and information sharing, the National Housing Bank (NHB) and the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU-IND) have signed a memorandum of understanding. When did the National Housing Bank Act come into being?

A 1981

B 1983

C 1985

D 1987

E 1989

Solution

- The Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) and the National Housing Bank (NHB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance coordination and information exchange in the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing.
- About NHB: NHB is the regulatory authority overseeing the regulation and licensing of housing finance companies in India.
- It operates under the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

- Established on July 9, 1988, under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.

223. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India is addressing the lack of liquidity by introducing daily variable rate repo auctions. On January 16, 2025, the first such auction will take place, with a total value of how many crores?

A ₹50,000 crore

B ₹30,000 crore

C ₹60,000 crore

D ₹40,000 crore

E ₹20,000 crore

Solution

- On a review of current and evolving liquidity conditions, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to conduct Variable Rate Repo (VRR) auctions on all working days in Mumbai with reversal taking place on the next working day, until further notice.
- The reversal of VRR auction conducted on a Friday will take place on the ensuing Monday or the next working day, if Monday is a holiday in Mumbai.

- The auction will be conducted between 10:00 AM and 10:30 AM every day.
- First Auction : The first such auction will be conducted on January 16, 2025, Thursday, for an amount of ₹50,000 crore.

224. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) tightened rules for small and medium-sized enterprises' initial public offerings (IPOs), and tweaked the framework for merchant bankers and custodians by raising their minimum net-worth requirements. The Sebi has also limited the size of the offer for sale (OFS) by selling shareholders to what percentage of the total issue size?

A 10%

B 15%

C 20%

D 25%

E 30%

Solution

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) tightened rules for initial public offerings (IPO) of small and medium enterprises, and tweaked the framework for merchant bankers and custodians by raising their minimum net-worth requirements.
- Tightened IPO Rules for SMEs : SEBI has proposed raising the minimum application size for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME)

IPOs from ₹1 lakh to ₹2-4 lakh.

- Currently application size for SME IPOs is at least ₹1 lakh and minimum number of allottees for SME IPOs is 50.
- Offer for Sale (OFS) Limitations : Sebi has also limited the offer for sale (OFS) size by selling shareholders to 20% of the total issue size, while a selling shareholder cannot sell more than 50% of their holdings.

225. In order to facilitate the rollout of 5G and upcoming 6G services, the Cabinet has authorized the refarming of _____ MHz of spectrum from various government ministries, according to Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia.

A 685MHz

B 686MHz

C 687MHz

D 688MHz

E 689MHz

Solution

- Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia announced that the Cabinet has approved the refarming of 687 MHz of spectrum from various government ministries to support the deployment of 5G and future 6G services.
- The total value of this spectrum, which will now be auctioned, is estimated at ₹2 lakh crore.
- India currently has 900 MHz of spectrum across 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G technologies.

- The total spectrum requirement is projected to reach 2000 MHz by 2030, leaving a deficit of 1100 MHz.
- Approved the refarming of 687 MHz of spectrum, bringing the total available spectrum to 1587 MHz.

226. To increase digital connectivity and security, India introduces the Sanchar Saathi App and National Broadband Mission 2.0. Although Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)-funded 4G mobile sites have implemented Intra-Circle Roaming (ICR), it allows users from how many different networks to access 4G services from a single DBN-funded tower?

A 6

B 2

C 4

D 3

E 1

Solution

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has introduced two landmark initiatives—National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0 and the Sanchar Saathi mobile application—to advance India’s digital infrastructure and strengthen telecom security.
- Intra-Circle Roaming (ICR) has been introduced at Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)-funded 4G mobile sites.

- Enables subscribers of BSNL, Airtel, and Reliance to access 4G services from a single DBN-funded tower.

227. Recently, the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, which is situated in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in China, it was the longest expressway tunnel in the world. How many minutes will the tunnel cut down a three-hour trip, providing commuters with a huge convenience?

A 10minutes

B 15minutes

C 20minutes

D 25minutes

E 30minutes

Solution

- China has completed the construction of the world's longest expressway tunnel, known as the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, located in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region.
- Tunnel Length and Location: The Tianshan Shengli Tunnel is 22.13 kilometers long, situated in the Tianshan Mountains, at an elevation of 3,000 feet above sea level.

- **Impact on Travel Time:**The tunnel will significantly reduce travel time by shortening a three-hour journey to just 20 minutes, offering a major convenience for commuters.
- **Urumqi-Yuli Expressway:**The tunnel is part of the 319.72-kilometer Urumqi-Yuli Expressway, which will reduce driving time between Urumqi and Yuli County from seven hours to just over three hours.

228. How many Indian organizations were taken off the US Bureau of Industry and Security's (BIS) Entity List?

A 3

B 1

C 6

D 2

E 5

Solution

- The United States Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) removed three Indian organizations from its Entity List.
- U.S.-China Relations:BIS Entity List Addition: 11 Chinese entities were added to the BIS Entity List.
- Reason: The removal aims to enhance U.S.-India energy cooperation, particularly in advanced energy sectors, defense, and technology.
- U.S.-China Relations:BIS Entity List Addition: 11 Chinese entities were added to the BIS Entity List.

229. Which government announced that those who were imprisoned during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's 1975 Emergency would receive a monthly pension of ₹20,000?

A Sikkim

B Odisha

C Gujarat

D Tripura

E Rajasthan

Solution

- The Odisha government has announced a monthly pension of ₹20,000 for people who were imprisoned during the 1975 Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- The pension scheme will be effective from January 1, 2025.
- Odisha joins other states like Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Assam, which have similar pension schemes for Emergency detainees.
- Eligibility Criteria: Individuals arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Defence of India Rules (DIR), and The

Defence and Internal Security of India Rules during the Emergency period from June 25, 1975, to March 21, 1977.

- Financial Implications: The scheme is expected to incur an annual expenditure of ₹8 crore for the Odisha government.

230. To make transactional calls to customers, banks and other regulated entities (REs) must only use the _____ numbering series, per instructions from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

A 1200xx

B 1400xx

C 1600xx

D 1800xx

E 1500xx

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has instructed banks and other regulated entities (REs) to use the ‘1600xx’ phone numbering series exclusively for making transactional calls to customers.
- Use of ‘140xx’ for Promotional Calls: For promotional purposes, the RBI has directed that banks and REs should use the ‘140xx’ series for calls, to avoid confusion with transactional calls and to reduce the risk of fraud.
- Utilizing the Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL): The RBI has advised regulated entities to use the Mobile Number Revocation List

(MNRL) available on the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP), developed by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), to monitor and clean up their customer databases.

231. In FY25, India's fertiliser imports fell by what percentage between April and December?

A 10%

B 18%

C 25%

D 30%

E 5%

Solution

- Between April and December of FY25, fertiliser imports fell by 18%.
- Sales of urea up to December 31 in the current fiscal year were 300.26 lakh tonnes (lt).
- The combined sales of all fertilisers rose 7.3% to 525.92 litres.
- Reduced sales of fertilisers containing diammonium phosphate (DAP) were the primary cause of this.
- However, from April to December, total DAP sales fell 12.7% to 86.23 litres.

- Nevertheless, complex climbed by 27.1 percent to 122.65 lt, while muriate of potash (MOP) increased 31.6 percent to 16.78 lt.
- Despite increased sales, urea imports have been kept to a minimum.
- The government had previously set a goal to make India self-sufficient in urea by 2025.

232. How much will Reliance Industries contribute to the biogas feedstock development project under ICAR?

A ₹50 crore

B ₹95 crore

C ₹100 crore

D ₹120 crore

E ₹150 crore

Solution

- Reliance Industries would contribute ₹100 crore to the development of biogas feedstock under the ICAR project.
- About ₹100 crore would be allocated by Reliance Industries (RIL) to a project run by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- Eleven different types of grass species that can be utilized as feedstock to create compressed biogas are the focus of the investment.
- RIL is expected to sign a deal with the Indian Grassland & Fodder Research Institute (IGFRI), which is located in Jhansi and is part of

ICAR.

- The project will be for a period of five years and about ₹85 crore (excluding GST) will be provided by RIL.

233. To cover wedding costs, _____ introduced Shubh Muhurat.

A HDFC Life Insurance

B Tata AIA Life Insurance

C SBI Life Insurance

D ICICI Prudential Life Insurance

E Birla Sun Life Insurance

Solution

- To cover wedding costs, Tata AIA Life Insurance introduced Shubh Muhurat.
- In order to assist parents in saving for their child's wedding, Tata AIA Life Insurance has introduced "Shubh Muhurat," a life insurance plan.
- The solution is appropriate for parents who are between the ages of 31 and 50 and with children of ages 1 to 20.
- By making an early investment in this, the parent may have enough time to build up the corpus needed for the child's wedding.

- Shubh Muhurta provides equity exposure along with a capital guarantee.
- Unaffected by market fluctuations, the guaranteed lump money guarantees that wedding preparations stay on course.

234. When were the "Monetary Penalty Guidelines" released by the Competition Commission of India (CCI)?

A 2019

B 2020

C 2021

D 2024

E 2022

Solution

- A Global Antitrust Award nomination has been made for CCI's Monetary Penalty Guidelines.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has gained international acclaim.
- It has received a nomination for the 2025 Concurrences Antitrust Awards in the Soft Laws & Studies category for its "Determination of Monetary Penalty Guidelines, 2024."
- Every year, the Concurrences Antitrust Writing Awards are held.
- The awards honor exceptional global contributions to competition law and policy.

- In 2024, the Competition Commission of India released its guidelines.

235. Which state leads in coffee production in India?

A Maharashtra

B Goa

C Uttarakhand

D Kerala

E Karnataka

Solution

- India is currently the world's seventh-largest producer of coffee.
- India's exports of coffee reached 1.29 billion dollars during the last fiscal year.
- According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, this is almost twice as much as the 719 million dollars in exports in 2020–21.
- Italy, Belgium, and Russia were India's top importers of the 9,300 tonnes of coffee that the country sold in the first half of this month.
- India's main export is unroasted coffee beans.
- The country's export boom is being further fuelled by the rising demand for roasted and instant coffee.

236. According to the World Bank, what is India's projected GDP growth rate for FY25?

A 5.2%

B 6.3%

C 6.7%

D 7.1%

E 7.9

Solution

- India is expected to grow by 6.7%, which is more than the 2.7% world growth rate, according to World Bank projections.
- India is expected to dominate the world economy, according to the World Bank's World Economic Prospects report (WEP), which was released in January 2025.
- According to the report, for the next two fiscal years, India will continue to be the large economy with the quickest rate of growth.
- A flourishing services sector and a revived manufacturing base are credited with this exceptional momentum.

- Government policies, which range from tax simplification to infrastructure modernisation, are boosting domestic growth and establishing India as a pillar of international economic stability.
- Additionally, the report predicts that China's economic growth will slow to 4% in the upcoming year.

237. Who authored the book 'How India scaled Mt. G20'?

A Narendra Modi

B Amitabh Kant

C S. Jaishankar

D Piyush Goyal

E Nirmala Sitharaman

Solution

- Amitabh Kant authored the book 'How India scaled Mt. G20'.
- On 21 January, G-20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant was lauded by PM Narendra Modi for his book on the country's G-20 presidency titled How India Scaled Mt. G-20.
- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar has written a fascinating foreword for the book.
- It is noteworthy that Amitabh Kant's book 'How India Scaled Mt. G-20' depicts the country's determination and collaborative spirit in making the G-20 Presidency an unparalleled success.

238. The sixth International Millets Festival was held in which city?

A Mumbai

B Bengaluru

C New Delhi

D Chennai

E Hyderabad

Solution

- The sixth International Millets Festival was held in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- As part of the festival, a conference called "Transformation of agrifood systems through agri-ecology: A Global Perspective" was organised.
- International organisations like GIZ Germany and FiBL Switzerland collaborated to host the event.
- The symposium featured experts from more than ten nations, including Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Australia, Kenya, Tanzania, Italy, Peru, and England.

- One of the leading producers of nutri cereals is Karnataka, which hosted the inaugural International Millets Festival in 2017.
- In the state, millets are cultivated on more than 18.37 lakh hectares (ha).

239. Which government has made Ratha Saptami a state holiday that will be observed at the Sri Suryanarayana Swamy temple over three days?

A Uttar Pradesh

B West Bengal

C Andhra Pradesh

D Himachal Pradesh

E Maharashtra

Solution

- The Andhra Pradesh (AP) government has declared Ratha Saptami as a State festival to be celebrated over three days at the Sri Suryanarayana Swamy temple in Arasavalli, Srikakulam district.
- The decision followed a proposal from the Endowments Commissioner, highlighting the temple's significance and the large number of devotees visiting from Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Telangana.
- The Sri Suryanarayana Swamy temple generates an annual income of ₹11.26 crore, showcasing its financial stability and the ability to

support the festival without requiring government funding.

240. Despite observing a more severe than anticipated slowdown in economic activity, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has kept its growth forecast for India at what percentage for FY25 and FY26?

A 6.1%

B 6.6%

C 6.3%

D 6.4%

E 6.5%

Solution

- The Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) launched the ‘Kreeda App’, a first-of-its-kind mobile application in India, aimed at modernizing and streamlining sports management in the state.
- Objectives of the App: The app is designed to eliminate malpractices in the issuance of sports quota certificates.
- It provides a unified platform for managing comprehensive sports data, ensuring transparency and efficiency in sports administration.

241. According to the report, Roger Federer's previous record of how many Grand Slam matches was surpassed by Novak Djokovic, solidifying his place in tennis history with his 430th match?

A 422

B 456

C 478

D 429

E 425

Solution

- Novak Djokovic cemented his place in tennis history by playing his 430th Grand Slam match, surpassing Roger Federer's previous record of 429 matches.
- Djokovic achieved this milestone during the second round of the Australian Open, where he defeated Portuguese qualifier Jaime Faria in four sets.

242. To improve the state's ecosystem for technology and skill development, which government has forged a historic alliance with ITE Education Services (ITEES), a division of Singapore's Institute of Technical Education?

A Sikkim

B Odisha

C Gujarat

D Tripura

E Rajasthan

Solution

- The Odisha government has entered a landmark partnership with ITE Education Services (ITEES), a subsidiary of Singapore's Institute of Technical Education, to enhance the state's technology and skill development ecosystem.
- The World Skill Centre in Bhubaneswar will be expanded, with a focus on advanced IT and ITES areas like:
- Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Blockchain, Internet of Things (IoT) and Data Science.

243. In a historic 20-year cooperation agreement, which country's president Masoud Pezeshkian and Russian president Vladimir Putin have signed, signifying the strengthening of ties between two countries that have been heavily sanctioned by the West?

A Iraq

B Indonesia

C Iran

D France

E Vietnam

Solution

- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Russian President Vladimir Putin have signed a landmark 20-year cooperation pact, signaling deepening ties between two nations heavily sanctioned by the West.
- The agreement covers various sectors, including trade, military cooperation, energy, science, culture, and education, marking a new chapter in their bilateral relationship.

244. The _____ edition of the Multinational Exercise La Perouse is being participated in by the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Mumbai, a guided missile destroyer that was designed and constructed in India.

A 3rd

B 4th

C 5th

D 2nd

E 1st

Solution

- The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Mumbai, an indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer, is participating in the 4th edition of the Multinational Exercise La Perouse.
- Participants: The exercise involves personnel and assets from multiple navies, including the Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Royal Navy, United States Navy, Indonesian Navy, Royal Malaysian Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy, and Royal Canadian Navy.
- The 1st edition of the La Perouse multinational naval exercise was held in 2019, and was led by France.

- The 3rd edition of the exercise is scheduled to be conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023.

245. Recently(Jan'25), the Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, and INS Vaghsheer at Mumbai Naval Dockyard. How many large ships worth ₹1.5 lakh crore are currently being built in India?

A 60

B 20

C 50

D 40

E 70

Solution

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi commissioned three advanced naval combatants: INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, and INS Vaghsheer at a ceremony held at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
- Domestic Defense Production:PM Modi highlighted that the Indian armed forces have identified over 5,000 items and equipment that will no longer be imported, indicating a move towards self-reliance in defense production.

- Currently, 60 large ships worth approximately ₹1.5 lakh crore are being built in India.
- Recent Naval Inductions: In the past decade, 33 ships and 7 submarines have been inducted into the Indian Navy, of which 39 were built in Indian shipyards.

246. Who has been appointed as Secretary of the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education (MoE)?

A Vineet Joshi

B Sukanta Majumdar

C Jayant Singh

D Sanjiv Ranjan

E Suresh Agarwal

Solution

- Vineet Joshi (IAS) has assumed the role of Secretary of the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education (MoE), at Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Prior to this appointment, he served as the Chief Secretary of Manipur.
- Vineet Joshi is a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Manipur cadre.
- Director-General of the National Testing Agency (NTA).
- Chairman of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).
- Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Education.

247. As per the report, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has named Sanjiv Ranjan, a senior Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer from the 1993 batch, as its new secretary general. How many states are members of the IORA organization so far?

A 21

B 22

C 23

D 24

E 25

Solution

- Sanjiv Ranjan, a senior Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer from the 1993 batch, has been appointed as the next Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- IORA is a regional organisation that promotes economic cooperation, sustainable development, and regional security among countries bordering the Indian Ocean.
- It was established in 1997 as an intergovernmental organisation for the states on the rim of the Indian Ocean.

- **IORA Membership:**The organisation has 23 member states, including countries such as India, Australia, Indonesia, and South Africa.
- IORA is supported by 12 dialogue partners, such as China, the European Union, and the United States

248. Recently(Jan'25), Alok Kumar Agarwal has been named Zurich Kotak General Insurance's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).Whom does he succeded?

A Kumar Joshi

B Sukanta Majumdar

C Jayant Singh

D Sanjiv Ranjan

E Suresh Agarwal

Solution

- Alok Kumar Agarwal has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Zurich Kotak General Insurance.
- His appointment took effect on January 1, 2025, succeeding Suresh Agarwal.
- Zurich completed a strategic majority stake acquisition of Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Ltd in June 2024.

249. Recently(Jan'25),the Google has revealed its next-generation chip, dubbed _____, marking a major breakthrough in quantum computing.

A Tensor

B Willow

C Titan

D Pixel

E Axion

Solution

- Google has announced a significant advancement in quantum computing as it unveiled its next-generation chip called 'Willow'.
- Performance and Efficiency: Willow completed a benchmark computation in under five minutes, a task that would take a supercomputer 10 septillion years (10^{25} years).
- Qubit Count: Willow includes 105 qubits, allowing it to perform tasks that classical computers are incapable of handling within practical timeframes.

250. In order to combat the threat posed by swarm drones, India successfully tested Bhargavastra, its first indigenously developed micromissile system. How many kilometers away are the threats that the system is intended to counter with swarm drones?

A \(>\) 1.5km

B \(>\) 1.0km

C \(>\) 2.5km

D \(>\) 2.0km

E \(>\) 5.0km

Solution

- India successfully tested its first domestically developed micro-missile system, Bhargavastra, aimed at countering swarm drone threats.
- The testing included two successful firings at the Gopalpur Seaward Firing Ranges.
- The micro-missile system was developed by Economic Explosives Limited.

- Capabilities: The system is designed to counter swarm drones, targeting threats over 2.5 km away.
- It can detect small flying objects at over 6 km and neutralize them using guided micro munitions.
- The system can simultaneously fire more than 64 micro missiles.

251. What was India's Services PMI in January 2025?

A 52.1

B 59.3

C 56.8

D 57.5

E 60.2

Solution

- India's business activity grew at its slowest pace in over a year in January 2025.
- The services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) have fallen to 56.8, the lowest level in 26 months, from 59.3 in December.
- Manufacturing sector PMI rose to a six-month high level of 58.0 in January, up from 56.4 in December.
- The composite PMI dropped to 57.9 in January, down from December's 59.2. This is the lowest level since November 2023.
- The job creation reached an all-time high since the survey began in December 2005.

252. How much fine was imposed by the IRDAI on Royal Sundaram General Insurance?

A ₹1 crore

B ₹75 lakh

C ₹2 crore

D ₹50 lakh

E ₹3 crore

Solution

- The IRDAI has imposed a ₹1 crore penalty on Royal Sundaram General Insurance.
- The penalty has been imposed by Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) for violating norms related to outsourcing activities.
- IRDAI found that payments exceeding ₹1 crore, made to vendors during 2018-19 and 2019-20, were not reported in the outsourcing returns submitted to it.
- IRDAI also issued a warning to the insurer regarding the closure of claims.

253. Who is leading new working group on cryptocurrency formed by US?

A Elaine Chao

B David Sacks

C Ron Wyden

D Gary Gensler

E Nikolai Vasiliev

Solution

- The US has banned central bank digital currencies.
- A new crypto working group has been formed. The group is led by David Sacks.
- Other members include the Secretary of the Treasury and the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission.
- This working group aims to make America the global leader in crypto.
- It will focus on creating a regulatory framework for digital assets.
- The group will also evaluate the possibility of a national digital assets stockpile.

- The executive order prohibits agencies from taking any action to establish, issue, or promote central bank digital currencies.

254. Who was reappointed as the MD & CEO of IDBI Bank?

A Usha Subramanian

B Shikha Sharma

C Ravi Narayan

D Rakesh Sharma

E Sandeep Bakhshi

Solution

- Rakesh Sharma's re-appointment as MD & CEO of IDBI Bank has been approved by the bank's board.
- IDBI Bank's Board of Directors has approved his re-appointment as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) for a three-year term.
- His term will be starting from March 19, 2025. Sharma has been leading the bank since October 10, 2018.
- Before joining IDBI Bank, he served as the MD & CEO of Canara Bank.

- Earlier, IDBI bank’s major shareholders began the process of selling their shares in October 2022.

255. Who has been elected the President of ICSI for 2025?

A Pradeep Sharma

B Amit Kumar

C Manoj Kumar Jain

D Pawan G. Chandak

E **Dhananjay Shukla**

Solution

Dhananjay Shukla has been elected as the president of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) for 2025. He is a Commerce and Law graduate and a Fellow of ICSI and is working as a company secretary in Gurugram. On the other hand, Pawan G. Chandak has been appointed as the Vice President of ICSI for 2025. He was also the Vice President of ICSI for the year 2024. However, Pawan G. Chandak, who has been appointed as the Vice Chairman, is a company secretary specialising in labour laws and labour welfare.

256. As of January 20, 2025, what is the total installed capacity of non-fossil fuel energy in India?

A 200 gigawatts

B 250 gigawatts

C 217 gigawatts

D 180 gigawatts

E 300 gigawatts

Solution

- By January 20, 2025, India's non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity has grown to 217 gigawatts.
- The New and Renewable Energy Ministry reports that in the past year, 3.4 gigawatts of wind power and a record 24.5 gigawatts of solar power have been installed.
- With 47% of all installed renewable energy capacity, solar energy continued to be the leading source of the nation's growth in renewable energy.
- With 71 percent of all utility-scale solar installations in the nation, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu were the best-performing states.

- Within ten months of its start, the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has enabled seven lakh rooftop solar installations.

257. How much did India's digital economy contribute to the national GVA in 2022-23?

A ₹35.91 lakh crore

B ₹28.94 lakh crore

C ₹33.76 lakh crore

D ₹43.19 lakh crore

E ₹27.28 lakh crore

Solution

- India's digital economy will constitute nearly a fifth of overall GDP by 2030: ICRIER.
- India's digital economy will contribute 13.42% in national income by the end of 2024–25. In 2022-23, its contribution was 11.74%.
- A report regarding the size of the digital economy was prepared by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).
- ICRIER in its report included the Digital share of traditional industries like trade, banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) and education in the Digital Economy.

- Under this framework, the digital economy in 2022–23 was ₹28.94 lakh crore in Gross Value Added (GVA)] and ₹31.64 lakh crore (~\$402 billion) in GDP.
- As per the report, Information and communications technology firms, telecom activities, and electronics manufacturing contributed 7.83% to the national GVA.

258. What was the value of India's engineering goods exports in December 2024?

A \$9.9 billion

B \$8.2 billion

C **\$10.84 billion**

D \$13.1 billion

E \$11.8 billion

Solution

- The US continued to be the leading destination for India's engineering goods exports in December 2024.
- For the first time, the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region became the top region for these exports in December 2024.
- India's engineering exports have seen consistent growth for eight months in a row.
- In December 2024, engineering exports reached \$10.84 billion.
- From April to December 2024, the total value of engineering exports was \$87.21 billion.

- Exports of engineering goods to the US grew by 5% to \$1.64 billion in December 2024.

259. Recently, the Indian team has named former Saurashtra cricketer Sitanshu Kotak as its batting coach for the forthcoming home limited-overs series between India and which nation?

A New Zealand

B Australia

C England

D Srilanka

E South Africa

Solution

- Former Saurashtra cricketer Sitanshu Kotak has been appointed as the batting coach for the Indian team for the upcoming India-England limited-overs series at home.
- India will play 5 T20Is and 3 ODIs starting with a T20I at Eden Gardens, Kolkata, on January 22.
- The team will assemble in Kolkata on January 18 for a three-day camp.

260. As per news, Jasprit Bumrah received the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for his outstanding play during India's December 2024 tour of which nation?

A New Zealand

B Australia

C Srilanka

D South Africa

E Russia

Solution

- Jasprit Bumrah has been honored with the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for his stellar performances during India's tour of Australia in December 2024.
- He edged out competitors Pat Cummins and Dane Paterson to claim the award.
- His remarkable spells earned him the Player of the Series title.

261. What is the '1600xx' numbering series to be used for, according to the RBI's recent directive?

A Transactional calls to customers

B Promotional calls to customers

C Fraud prevention calls

D Customer verification calls

E None of the above

Solution

- RBI directs banks to use '1600xx' numbering series for transactional calls and '140xx' for promotional calls to prevent financial fraud.
- The '1600xx' numbering series is designated for transactional calls, while '140xx' is for promotional calls.
- The RBI's directive aims to prevent financial frauds that often occur through voice calls and SMS.
- The directive also mandates banks and financial entities to monitor and clean their customer databases using the Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL).

- The compliance deadline for all regulated entities is set for March 31, 2025.

262. Which app was launched by Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia to enhance telecom security and accessibility for citizens?

A National Broadband App 2.0

B Sanchar Saathi Mobile App

C Intra Circle Roaming App

D DBN-Connectivity App

E None of the above

Solution

- Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the Sanchar Saathi Mobile App to enhance telecom security and accessibility for citizens.
- The Sanchar Saathi App aims to provide telecom security tools directly to citizens.
- It allows users to manage mobile connections and report lost or stolen devices easily.
- Launched alongside the National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0 and Intra Circle Roaming.

- Part of the government’s vision of a Viksit Bharat through technology and connectivity.

263. Which countries are participating in the 4th edition of Exercise La Perouse in which INS Mumbai, an indigenously built destroyer, is also participating?

A Australia, France, India, Germany, Japan, South Korea, USA, and U.K.

B Australia, France, USA, U.K., India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Canada

C France, USA, U.K., Germany, Singapore, Italy, Ukraine, Moldova and Canada

D India, USA, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines and Australia

E Germany, Singapore, Italy, Ukraine

Solution

- INS Mumbai, an indigenously built destroyer, is participating in the 4th edition of Exercise La Perouse.
- Countries participating include India, Australia, France, USA, U.K., Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Canada.
- Exercise focuses on maritime surveillance, air defense, and tactical interoperability.

- Includes complex multi-domain exercises for enhanced operational synergy.
- Aligns with India's SAGAR vision for a secure Indo-Pacific region.

264. Who was recently honored with the Singapore Honorary Citizen Award for strengthening India-Singapore bilateral relations?

A Azim Premji

B Anand Mahindra

C Tarun Das

D Sunil Bharti Mittal

E N. R. Narayana Murthy

Solution

- Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam conferred the Honorary Citizen Award on Tarun Das, former head of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), for his contributions to strengthening India-Singapore relations.
- The Honorary Citizenship Award is Singapore's highest recognition for non-citizens, awarded for impactful contributions in fields like business, science and technology, education, health, arts and culture, and community service.
- Tarun Das received the award at a ceremony in New Delhi, during President Tharman's state visit to India.

- Das expressed his gratitude, stating he was "deeply honoured and privileged" to receive the award, noting that his journey with Singapore started 31 years ago and reflected the evolution of the ‘Singapore-India Fever’, a growing partnership between the two nations.
- Das’s pivotal role included leading delegations of Indian industrialists to Singapore, particularly in 1993, as part of India’s Look East policy.

265. Who has been appointed as the Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India? (January 2025)

A Jay Shah

B Sourav Ganguly

C Justice Arun Mishra

D Prabhtej Singh Bhatia

E Devajit Saikia

Solution

- Justice Arun Mishra was appointed Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- Justice Arun Mishra was previously elected as the youngest Chairman of the Bar Council of India in 1998-99.
- He served as the Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court in 2010.
- In 2012, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court.
- His vast experience in law makes him a significant choice for this role in BCCI.

266. What is the revised growth forecast for India in FY25 according to the IMF's latest update in January 2025?

A 6.8%

B 6.5%

C 6.6%

D 6.4%

E 6.9%

Solution

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised India's growth forecast for FY25 to 6.5%, down from the earlier estimate of 7%.
- The downgrade is attributed to a sharper-than-expected slowdown in industrial activities in India.
- Despite the FY25 downgrade, the IMF has maintained India's growth projections for FY26 and FY27 at 6.5%.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) also lowered its growth forecast for FY25 to 6.6%.
- The falling rupee has been identified as a concern for growth, inflation, and exports.

267. Which NATO Secretary-General announced a new mission to protect undersea cables, particularly in the Baltic Sea region?

A Jens Stoltenberg

B Admiral Rob Bauer

C Ursula von der Leyen

D Mark Rutte

E None of the above

Solution

- NATO has initiated Baltic Sentry, a mission aimed at safeguarding undersea cables in the Baltic Sea, crucial for global internet and financial communications.
- Security Concerns: The move comes in response to concerns over Russian activities, including potential sabotage of these cables, which carry over 95% of global internet traffic and handle \$10 trillion in daily transactions.

268. How much did UPI process in terms of transactions in December 2024?

- A** 10 billion transactions
- B** 16.73 billion transactions

C 20.51 billion transactions

D 25.24 billion transactions

E 32.19 billion transactions

Solution

- UPI processed over 16.73 billion transactions in December 2024, contributing to India's shift toward a cashless economy.
- UPI processed 16.73 billion transactions in December 2024, with a transaction value of ₹23.25 lakh crore.
- UPI has become a central pillar in India's digital payment revolution, supporting individuals, businesses, and merchants.
- IMPS and NETC FASTag have also emerged as significant players, supporting secure, real-time transactions and toll payments respectively.

- The rise of these systems reflects India's transition to a digital-first economy, ensuring faster and more secure financial transactions.

269. Which organization received Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) approval from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs for receiving foreign funds?

- A** Central Tibetan Administration
- B** Tibetan Youth Congress
- C** Tibetan Government-in-Exile
- D** His Holiness the Dalai Lama Charitable Trust
- E** None of the above

Solution

- **FCRA Approval for Dalai Lama Charitable Trust:** The Dalai Lama Charitable Trust has received FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) registration, enabling it to legally accept foreign funds for its various initiatives.
- **What Does FCRA Registration Mean?:** This approval allows the Trust to fund its religious, cultural, and welfare programs, particularly for the Tibetan refugee community in India. FCRA registration ensures transparency and accountability in accepting foreign donations.

- **Focus Areas of the Trust:** The Trust works on cultural preservation, education, economic development, and religious activities for the Tibetan refugees. It collaborates with the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the body responsible for Tibetan welfare in India.
- **Tibetan Refugees in India:** Since 1959, India has hosted Tibetan refugees, offering asylum and support. The 2022 census reported 63,167 Tibetan refugees residing in India.

270. Which satellite constellation launched by Pixxel Space is India's first private constellation for hyper-spectral imaging?

A Plutus

B Primus

C SCOT

D Firefly

E Optimus

Solution

- Pixxel Space launched Firefly, India's first private satellite constellation, marking a significant milestone in hyper-spectral imaging.
- Firefly satellites provide the world's highest-resolution hyperspectral images.
- They can observe the Earth in over 150 spectral bands.
- The satellites benefit diverse sectors, including agriculture and defense.
- Launched via SpaceX, showcasing India's private sector capabilities in space technology.

271. Which organization, given the uncertainty surrounding global trade, revised its 2024–25 GDP growth projection to 6.5–6.8%?

A Moody's

B S&P Global ratings

C IMF

D Deloitte India

E RBI

Solution

- Deloitte India has revised its GDP growth forecast for 2024-25 to 6.5-6.8%, with 6.7-7.3% expected in the following year.
- The economy faces challenges with lower-than-expected Q2 growth (5.4%), lagging government capex, election uncertainties, and high inflation.
- However, strong rural consumption and a thriving services sector show resilience.
- The Indian economy faces a slowing growth-high inflation conundrum, with food prices remaining a key concern.

- India needs to adapt to the evolving global landscape and harness its domestic strengths to drive sustainable growth.

272. Recently(Jan '25), the Shriram Life Sunishchit Laabh, a non-participating individual savings plan offered by Shriram Life Insurance, promises substantial returns of up to 668% of the entire premium paid. What is the minimum age to join this plan?

A 15 days

B 30 days

C 45 days

D 60 days

E 90 days

Solution

- Shriram Life Insurance has launched Shriram Life Sunishchit Laabh, a non-participating individual savings plan that guarantees high returns of up to 668% of the total premium paid.
- **Terms & Benefits:**The plan offers flexible entry options for individuals aged 30 days to 60 years, with a minimum ticket size starting at Rs. 30,000 annually, Rs. 15,500 half-yearly, Rs. 8,000 quarterly, and Rs. 3,000 monthly.

- It features flexible maturity income payout options, including tax-free payouts for up to 40 years (until a maximum age of 101), ensuring long-term income even during retirement.
- The plan also offers death benefits up to 160 times the annualized premium, and customers can modify the payout modes during the policy term.

273. Recently(Jan '25), CyberEdge, a new cyber insurance solution from top general insurance provider TATA AIG General Insurance Company, is intended to shield companies of all sizes from a variety of cyberthreats. In the next five years, what percentage of the cyber insurance market does CyberEdge hope to capture?

A 20%

B 25%

C 15%

D 30%

E 50%

Solution

- TATA AIG General Insurance Company, a leading general insurance provider, has introduced CyberEdge, a new cyber insurance solution designed to protect businesses of all sizes against a wide array of cyber risks.
- The policy offers robust financial and operational support, covering forensic investigations, legal fees, data recovery, extortion payments, and losses from business interruptions.

- With a strong commitment to enhancing cybersecurity resilience, CyberEdge aims to capture 25% of the cyber insurance market in the coming 5 years.
- The report also projected that these attacks could surge to 1 trillion annually by 2033.
- Provides immediate access to Tata AIG's panel of incident response experts 24/7/365 during a cyber incident.

274. Which bank has introduced the revolutionary RuPay Credit Card, called “FIRST EAṚN,” which is enabled by UPI, in partnership with RuPay?

A YES bank

B Axis bank

C HDFC bank

D IDFC First bank

E ICICI bank

Solution

- IDFC FIRST Bank, in collaboration with RuPay, has launched the transformative UPI-enabled RuPay Credit Card named ‘FIRST EAṚN’.
- This innovative product is a Fixed Deposit (FD)–backed virtual credit card designed to democratize credit access while offering rewarding benefits for users.
- The FIRST EAṚN RuPay Credit Card enables customers to seamlessly access credit via UPI, a feature that stands out in the financial services industry.

- Backed by an FD, the card ensures universal eligibility, eliminating barriers for those who might face difficulties obtaining traditional credit cards.
- Customers can apply online and instantly access the card, enabling convenient and rewarding transactions.

275. Which Indian port has the most capacity, with over 10 million TEUs as of January 2025?

A Deendayal port

B Syama Prasad Mookerjee port

C Mumbai port

D Jawaharlal Nehru port

E Paradip port

Solution

- Union Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal launched projects worth ₹2,000 crore at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPA), Mumbai.
- JNPA's Achievements: India's largest port, with 10+ million TEUs capacity as of January 2025.
- Handled its highest-ever container volume of 7.05 million TEUs in 2024, operating at over 90% capacity.
- Achieved 11% annual growth (Year-on-Year).
- Commissioning of Phase 2 of Bharat Mumbai Container Terminal (BMCT) in January 2025, adding 2.4 million TEUs capacity.

- Upgradation of Nhava Sheva Freeport Terminal (NSFT) is expected to further increase capacity to 10.4 million TEUs by 2027.

276. In which state , the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying’s Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying is holding a two-day conference called “Dialogue for Holistic Development of the Livestock Sector in North East India”?

A Meghalaya

B Manipur

C Tripura

D Sikkim

E Mizoram

Solution

- The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, is hosting a two-day conclave titled “Dialogue for Holistic Development of Livestock Sector in North East India” in Shillong, Meghalaya, on 23rd–24th January 2025.
- The conclave aims to: Discuss strategies for holistic livestock development in the Northeast Region (NER).
- Assess the current status and challenges faced by the sector.

- Explore opportunities for growth through value chain strengthening, technology interventions, and policy support.

277. To increase India's diamond industry's worldwide competitiveness, the Department of Commerce and Industry has implemented the Diamond Imprest Authorization (DIA) Scheme, which will take effect on April 1, 2025. Under this scheme, it allows for duty-free imports of natural cut and polished diamonds worth less than how many cents?

A <20cents

B <10cents

C <15cents

D <25cents

E <50cents

Solution

- The Department of Commerce and Industry has introduced the Diamond Imprest Authorization (DIA) Scheme, effective April 1, 2025, to boost the global competitiveness of India's diamond industry.
- The scheme aims to streamline duty-free imports of small diamonds, promote value addition, and boost exports, particularly benefiting

MSME exporters.

- A press release on the scheme was issued on January 21, 2025.
- Key Features of the DIA Scheme: Allows duty-free import of natural cut and polished diamonds less than $\frac{1}{4}$ carat (25 cents).
- Requires an export obligation with a value addition of 10%.
- Available to diamond exporters with Two Star Export House status and above, and annual exports of at least US\$15 million.

278. Recently(Jan'25),the Centre has begun looking for trial sites for air taxis or electric-vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. Which state has the Centre started visiting to seek prospective trial sites for eVTOL testing?

A Maharashtra

B Gujarat

C Karnataka

D Madhya Pradesh

E Telangana

Solution

- The Centre has begun identifying trial sites for air taxis or electric-vertical take off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft.
- eVTOL (Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing) aircraft represent a cutting-edge solution to urban congestion.
- Promising rapid commutes, eVTOLs are designed to offer sustainable and efficient alternatives to traditional transportation.
- The Centre has initiated visits to states like Gujarat to identify potential trial sites for eVTOL testing.

- A regulatory sandbox is being developed to allow safe testing of new eVTOL technologies in sites with no habitation, equipped with runways and charging facilities.
- An expert team comprising officials from the DGCA, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India, and industry leaders is overseeing these initiatives.

279. In an effort to safeguard, educate, and empower Indian girls, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) program is celebrating its tenth anniversary, according to the Ministry of Women and Child Development. From 918 in 2014–15 to _____ in 2023–24, the National Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) has improved, as determined by BBBP's Impactful Achievements.

A 930

B 980

C 850

D 740

E 800

Solution

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development is marking the 10th anniversary of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, a decade-long effort to protect, educate, and empower the girl child in India.
- The anniversary celebration aligns with India's vision for Viksit Bharat 2047 and the global shift from Women's Development to

Women-Led Development, a theme emphasized during India’s G20 Presidency and now embraced by Brazil’s G20 Presidency.

280. Recently(Jan '25), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted cross-border payments company Skydo Technologies in-principle permission to function as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) organization. Which organization recently granted Skydo Payment Service Provider (PSP) approval?

A Flipkart

B Amazon

C Nykaa

D Magneto

E Square

Solution

- Skydo Technologies, a cross-border payments company, has received in-principle authorization from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) entity.
- Future Plans and Expansion: Srivatsan Sridhar, Co-Founder and CEO of Skydo, expressed plans to scale payments volume 10x over the next 18-24 months.

- Movin Jain, Co-founder of Skydo, highlighted plans to introduce new offerings beyond payments, such as credit, tax compliance, Treasury Services, and EDPMS reconciliation.
- Recent Achievements: Skydo recently secured Payment Service Provider (PSP) approval from Amazon, enabling it to process payments for exporters participating in Amazon's Global Selling program.

281. Which bank has accomplished a noteworthy milestone by being the first in India to adopt Clari5's NCRP Integration Solution, a state-of-the-art platform connected with the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) of the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C)?

A Canara bank

B Punjab National bank

C Indian bank

D Bank of Baroda

E State bank of India

Solution

- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first Indian bank to implement Clari5's NCRP Integration Solution, a cutting-edge platform integrated with the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre's (I4C) National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP).
- Enhanced Cybercrime Management: The system ensures real-time complaint handling across banking channels such as Internet

Banking, Mobile Banking, ATMs, Debit Cards, UPI, IMPS, and more.

- **Future-Proof Technology:** The platform is designed to accommodate future integrations, including credit cards and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), aligning with I4C's evolving standards.

282. How many rupees is the proposed launch of a sachetized mutual fund product, also known as a systematic investment plan (SIP), by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to improve mutual fund accessibility nationwide?

A Rs.150

B Rs.100

C Rs.200

D Rs.250

E Rs.300

Solution

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed the introduction of a ₹250 systematic investment plan (SIP), referred to as a sachetised mutual fund product, to enhance mutual fund accessibility across the country.
- The consultation paper is open for public comments until February 6, 2025.
- Discounted Fees: SEBI proposes subsidized fees for mutual fund asset management companies (AMCs) offering this product.

- **Limit on SIPs:** Investors can initiate up to three ₹250 SIPs, one each in up to three AMCs, with discounted rates applicable only to the first three SIPs.
- **Growth Option:** The ₹250 SIP will be available only under the Growth option of mutual fund schemes.

283. Recently(Jan'25), The UAE's top online insurance marketplace, Policybazaar.ae, has unveiled PB Advantage, a ground-breaking project designed to revolutionize the country's health insurance sector. What percentage of the sum insured is added for each year without a claim, up to a maximum of five years?

A 5%

B 10%

C 15%

D 20%

E 25%

Solution

- Policybazaar.ae, the UAE's leading online insurance marketplace, has introduced PB Advantage, a revolutionary initiative aimed at transforming the health insurance experience in the UAE.
- 30-Minute Claims Assistance: A dedicated claims desk ensures quicker resolutions for customers.
- Auto Recharge of Sum Insured: Automatically restores the full coverage amount after the first claim, providing additional coverage

for unrelated conditions.

- For example, an AED 1 million policy is recharged with another AED 1 million for future claims.

284. As per the report, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notices to cab aggregators Ola and Uber for suspected differential pricing based on the user's mobile operating system. When was CCPA established?

A 2021

B 2020

C 2022

D 2023

E 2019

Solution

- The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notices to cab aggregators Ola and Uber regarding alleged differential pricing based on the user's mobile operating system (iOS vs Android).
- Union Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi highlighted the issue, stating it demonstrates a “blatant disregard for consumer rights”.

- Ola and Uber are required to clarify their pricing mechanisms and address whether a user's operating system influences fare calculations.

285. Which edition of Swachh Survekshan (SS), the largest urban cleanliness survey in the world, was introduced by Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Shri Manohar Lal Khattar with a new toolset designed to streamline and improve the process?

A 7th

B 8th

C 6th

D 9th

E 10th

Solution

- Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, launched the 9th edition of Swachh Survekshan (SS), the world's largest urban cleanliness survey, with a new toolkit aimed at simplifying and enhancing the process.
- Introduction of Super Swachh League: A special category designed to acknowledge the top cities excelling in cleanliness.
- Cities that have been in the top 3 for at least 2 years (2021-2023) are included in this league.

- ULBs in this league must maintain a score of 85% or higher to retain their position.

286. Which city hosted the National Conference on Good Governance in FY 2025?

A Gujarat

B Tamilnadu

C Maharashtra

D West Bengal

E New Delhi

Solution

- With the objective of implementing the Prime Minister’s vision of “Maximum Governance – Minimum Government”, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Gujarat is organizing a two-day National Conference on “Good Governance” from 30th to 31st January, 2025 at Gandhinagar.
- Venue and Date: 30th–31st January 2025, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- e-Journal on Administrative Reforms: Minimum Government-Maximum Governance, featuring Prime Minister’s Awards 2023

initiatives.

287. Shunya, India’s first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) air taxi prototype, was introduced by Bengaluru-based aerospace firm Sarla Aviation. Which year does Bengaluru get to be the first city to launch eVTOL?

A 2026

B 2027

C 2028

D 2029

E 2030

Solution

- Sarla Aviation, a Bengaluru-based aerospace startup, has launched ‘Shunya’, India’s first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) air taxi prototype.
- Initial Launch: Bengaluru has been chosen as the first city for the launch in 2028, addressing the city’s notorious traffic congestion.

288. In which city has Amazon Web Services (AWS) pledged to invest ₹60,000 crore to build its data center infrastructure?

A Kochi

B Chennai

C Bengaluru

D Hyderabad

E Mumbai

Solution

- Amazon Web Services (AWS) has committed ₹60,000 crore to expand its data centre infrastructure in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- AWS previously committed \$4.4 billion (approx. ₹36,000 crore) by 2030 for cloud infrastructure development in the state.
- Operational Sites: Three data centres have already been established with a \$1 billion investment.
- Hyderabad is emerging as the “Data Centre Hub of India,” further enhancing its leadership in the cloud services sector.
- The Telangana government has agreed to allocate additional land to AWS for seamless expansion.

289. Which government has started a program to give 100 villages direct financing for forest management and protection in an effort to empower local populations in this area?

A Karnataka

B Odisha

C Rajasthan

D Bihar

E Uttar Pradesh

Solution

- The Odisha government has launched a programme aimed at empowering local communities in forest management by providing direct funding for forest protection and management to 100 villages.
- The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs' Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) approved Community Forest Resource (CFR) plans for these 100 villages, which are part of the Forest Rights Act.
- The state government has plans to implement these initiatives in a total of 400 villages.

- The PAC allocated ₹16 crore for the execution of these plans, with each village receiving ₹15 lakh annually.

290. Recently(Jan '25), Which bank is offering financing options to its dealers and clients in collaboration with Escorts Kubota Limited, a producer of tractors and construction equipment?

A Canara bank

B Punjab National bank

C Indian bank

D Bank of Baroda

E State bank of India

Solution

- Indian Bank has partnered with Escorts Kubota Limited, a manufacturer of tractors and construction equipment, to offer financing solutions to its dealers and customers.
- The partnership aims to provide working capital and tractor loans at affordable interest rates, covering Escorts Kubota's full product range, including Powertrac, Farmtrac, and Kubota tractors.
- Indian Bank Executive Director Ashutosh Choudhury emphasized that the collaboration would enable quick and hassle-free financing for dealers, farmers, and prospective customers.

- Through Indian Bank's digital platform, Escorts Kubota Ltd dealers can easily access these benefits, streamlining the financing process and supporting the agricultural and construction sectors.

291. Which organization, a joint venture between the State Bank of India and Hitachi Payment Services, has partnered with Pine Labs to enhance digital payment solutions across India?

A SBI Digital Services

B State Bank of India Payments

C SBI Merchant Solutions

D Hitachi SBI Payments

E SBI FinTech Solutions

Solution

- State Bank of India Payments and Pine Labs have announced an expanded partnership, building on their 12-year collaboration.
- SBI Payments, a joint venture between the State Bank of India and Hitachi Payment Services Pvt. Ltd., has joined forces with Pine Labs, a leading merchant commerce platform, to further strengthen their alliance.
- The partnership aims to accelerate the adoption of digital payments and commerce solutions across India.

292. A cutting-edge feature for its JioBharat gadget, JioSoundPay was introduced by Reliance Jio with the goal of completely changing the way small-scale retailers in India handle payments. How much rupees may JioBharat consumers save each year with JioSoundPay's lifetime free offer?

A Rs.500

B Rs.1000

C Rs.1500

D Rs.2000

E Rs.2500

Solution

- Reliance Jio has launched JioSoundPay, an innovative feature for its JioBharat device, designed to revolutionize payment operations for small-scale merchants across India.
- Currently, small and micro merchants spend approximately ₹125 per month on sound boxes, but JioSoundPay is offered free for life, allowing JioBharat users to save nearly ₹1,500 annually.

- This solution is expected to benefit around 5 crore merchants, including Kirana stores, vegetable vendors, and roadside eateries, by enhancing cost-efficiency and eliminating the need for external devices.
- The move is part of Reliance Jio's strategy to strengthen its market presence following subscriber losses.

293. Recently(Jan'25), Which bank, Bank of India, and Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited have all been hit with financial fines by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for failing to follow regulatory guidelines?

A HDFC bank

B ICICI bank

C **Canara bank**

D Indian bank

E Punjab & Sind bank

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties on Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited, Bank of India, and Canara Bank for non-compliance with regulatory directions.
- RBI imposed a penalty of ₹3.32 crore on Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited through an order dated January 14, 2025, for non-compliance with directions related to Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA), Know Your Customer (KYC), and Loans and Advances – Statutory and Other Restrictions.

- On January 7, 2025, RBI imposed a penalty of ₹1 crore on Bank of India for failing to comply with provisions of Section 26A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, concerning the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014.

294. What percentage will the interest rate on the Government of India Floating Rate Bonds, 2035 (GOI FRB 2035) be annually for the period of January 25, 2025, to January 24, 2030, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) announcement?

A 6.66%

B 6.56%

C 6.64%

D 6.65%

E 6.67%

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that the interest rate on the Government of India Floating Rate Bonds, 2035 (GOI FRB 2035), will be 6.66% per annum for the period from January 25, 2025, to January 24, 2030. The GOI FRB 2035 was originally issued on January 25, 2005, by the Government of India to the RBI on a private placement basis.
- This issuance was made against the transfer of subordinated debt of IDFC.

- For the current period, the coupon rate of 6.66% was determined based on secondary market transactions in Government securities as of January 24, 2025.

295. In a ruling dated January 15, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Datson Exports Limited., West Bengal, how many lakhs for failing to follow its guidelines on “Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services by NBFCs.”?

A Rs. 50000

B Rs. 150000

C Rs. 100000

D Rs. 250000

E Rs. 300000

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), through an order dated January 15, 2025, has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹1 lakh on Datson Exports Limited., West Bengal for non-compliance with RBI’s directions on ‘Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services by NBFCs’.
- This action has been taken under the provisions of Section 58 G(1) (b) read with Section 58B(5)(aa) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

- The penalty was imposed following a statutory inspection of the company’s financial position as of March 31, 2023.

296. On 26th January 2025, during the 76th Republic Day celebrations at Kartavya Path, who was the Chief Guest at the event, symbolizing India's close ties with their country?

A Emmanuel Macron

B Fumio Kishida

C Sheikh Hasina

D **Prabowo Subianto**

E Justin Trudeau

Solution

- On 26th January 2025, President Droupadi Murmu led the nation in celebrating the 76th Republic Day at Kartavya Path (formerly Janpath) in New Delhi.
- An impressive parade, tableaux, and a cultural extravaganza marked the occasion. Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto was the Chief Guest, symbolizing India's close ties with Indonesia.
- 16 States/UTs and 10 Union Ministries/Departments displayed tableaux showcasing India's diversity and achievements.

297. How many Indian cities have achieved the important milestone of being designated as Wetland Cities under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands?

A 2

B 6

C 5

D 1

E 3

Solution

- Indore and Udaipur have reached a significant milestone by becoming the first two Indian cities to be recognized under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands as Wetland Cities.
- This prestigious recognition is a testament to India's ongoing commitment to sustainable urban development and ecological conservation.
- The accreditation highlights the role of wetlands in providing ecological, social, and economic benefits, making them crucial to the sustainable growth of cities.

298. With initiatives spanning more than 60 years, India has been a global leader in the fight against tuberculosis (TB). Which year does India intend to eradicate tuberculosis?

A 2025

B 2027

C 2028

D 2030

E 2029

Solution

- India has been a global leader in the fight against tuberculosis (TB), with efforts spanning over six decades.
- Despite significant progress, the country faces several challenges in reaching the World Health Organization's (WHO) targets for TB elimination.
- India's resolve to eliminate TB by 2025 is reflected in its evolving strategies and robust public health initiatives.
- 1962: National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) was launched, focusing primarily on BCG vaccinations as a preventive measure against TB.

- 1997: The Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program (RNTCP) was introduced, adopting the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) strategy to improve treatment adherence and success rates.

299. How many members of the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) received gallantry awards from President Droupadi Murmu in recognition of their exceptional bravery, heroic deeds, and selfless devotion to the country?

A 91

B 90

C 92

D 93

E 96

Solution

- President Droupadi Murmu conferred gallantry awards to 93 personnel from the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), recognising their extraordinary bravery, valiant efforts, and selfless service to the nation.
- These awards celebrate acts of heroism, including many conferred posthumously, honoring those who sacrificed for India.

300. From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) published the Ombudsman Scheme Annual Report. Which of the following state became the lowest contributors?

A Chandigarh

B Rajasthan

C Gujarat

D Mizoram

E Uttarakhand

Solution

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the Annual Report of the Ombudsman Scheme for the period from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.
- The report highlights key activities under the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2021, which covers banks, NBFCs, payment system participants, and credit information companies, and emphasizes consumer education and protection.
- The scheme saw a 32.81% increase in complaints, reaching 9.34 lakh, which were registered with 24 Offices of the RBI Ombudsman

(ORBIOs) and the Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC).

- Of the total complaints, 2,93,924 (31.46%) were received at ORBIOs, and 6,40,431 (68.54%) were received at the CRPC. ORBIOs achieved a 95.10% disposal rate, resolving 2,84,355 complaints.

301. What is the primary reason for restricting UPI transaction IDs to alphanumeric characters?

- A** To improve security against fraud
- B** To enhance technical standardization and uniformity
- C** To increase transaction speed
- D** To reduce server costs
- E** To limit international transactions

Solution

- Starting 1 February 2025, all Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions containing special characters in transaction IDs will be rejected by the central system, as per a recent directive issued by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- This decision aims to enhance technical standardization and ensure uniformity in UPI operations, reinforcing its role as a crucial pillar of India's digital payment ecosystem.
- In a circular dated 9 January 2025, NPCI directed UPI ecosystem participants to generate transaction IDs using only alphanumeric characters.

302. Which bank has introduced the Travelone Credit Card?

A RBL BANK

B HSBC BANK

C ICICI BANK

D YES BANK

E HDFC BANK

Solution

- HSBC has introduced the TravelOne Credit Card, designed to cater to the needs of frequent travelers.
- The card offers instant reward redemptions across multiple airline and hotel partners, allowing users to convert points into air miles and hotel stays via the HSBC mobile app.
- Travel Benefits: 6 domestic and 4 international airport lounge visits per year and Discounts on holiday bookings, car rentals, and lifestyle experiences.

303. **What is the significance of BIMCOIN in the education sector?**

A It allows students to trade cryptocurrencies globally

B
It makes BIMTECH the first business school in India to launch a digital currency

C It replaces traditional banking systems in India

D It is the first government-approved blockchain currency for education

E It is used for international tuition fee payments

Solution

- Birla Institute of Management Technology (BIMTECH) has launched BIMCOIN, a blockchain-based digital currency designed specifically for its ecosystem.
- This initiative marks a significant step in fintech innovation within the education sector, making BIMTECH the first business management institute in India to introduce such a platform, following IIT Madras.
- Inspired by Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) models and the Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative.

304. Recently(Jan '25), What is the name of Narayana Health Insurance's newly introduced high-coverage health insurance plan?

A Arya

B Dhanvantri

C Suraksha

D Jeevan Raksha

E Aarogya

Solution

- After launching its first insurance product, 'Aditi,' in July 2024, Narayana Health Insurance has now introduced 'Arya,' a high-coverage health insurance plan aimed at addressing gaps in the healthcare industry.
- The plan offers hospitalization coverage ranging from ₹25 lakh to ₹1 crore, with flexible top-up options starting at ₹25,000.
- Focusing on preventive healthcare, 'Arya' provides consultations with general practitioners, pediatricians, and OBGYNs, along with significant savings on diagnostics, specialist consultations, and medications.

- Additional conveniences include home sample collection, free medicine delivery, and access to CAP-certified labs.

305. At the 20th Annual Banking Technology Conference, Expo & Citations, 2024, organized by the Indian Banks' Association, how many prestigious awards did Karnataka Bank win?

A 8

B 3

C 9

D 6

E 4

Solution

- Karnataka Bank won 6 prestigious awards at the 20th Annual Banking Technology Conference, Expo & Citations, 2024, organized by the Indian Banks' Association.
- Karnataka Bank fosters a digital-first culture with ongoing training, partnerships with industry experts, and innovative tools to improve team collaboration and accelerate development.
- The bank has implemented robust security frameworks and proactive risk monitoring, incorporating technologies like AI & ML for predictive risk analytics.

- Highlight: GSLB for active DC-DR, SAM & HAM from ServiceNow.

306. Which anniversary of Uttarakhand coincided with the 38th National Games?

A 20th

B 22nd

C 25th

D 30th

E 35th

Solution

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 38th National Games in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- The event coincides with Uttarakhand's 25th anniversary celebrations.
- Theme: 'Green Games' – Focus on eco-friendly initiatives and sustainability.
- Platform for young athletes to showcase talent and promote India's growing sports culture.
- PM Modi highlighted Uttarakhand's spiritual significance, invoking Baba Kedarnath, Badrinath, and Maa Ganga.

- Reinforced sports as a tool for fitness, economic growth, and national unity.
- Eco-friendly approach: Trophies and medals made from e-waste.

307. What is the theme of the UAE's Year of Community 2025 initiative?

A Stronger Together

B Unity in Diversity

C Hand in Hand

D One Nation, One Future

E Together We Rise

Solution

- United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan announced 2025 as the Year of Community, aiming to promote unity and inclusion across the society.
- The initiative, under the slogan “Hand in Hand,” reflects the leadership’s vision to foster a cohesive and empowered community.
- The UAE is home to over four million Indians, who play a vital role in the nation’s diverse population, and this initiative reinforces the leadership’s commitment to creating a harmonious society.
- Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, supported the initiative, emphasizing that the nation’s strength lies in

unity and strong families.

308. Who will take over as the Head of Global Corporate and Investment Banking in India at BofA Securities from April 1, 2025?

A Raj Balakrishnan

B Mandar Donde

C Kaku Nakhate

D Vishal Gupta

E Rakesh Mehta

Solution

- Mandar Donde, currently Head of Asia-Pacific TMT Investment Banking at BofA Securities, will take over as the new Head of Global Corporate and Investment Banking in India starting April 1, 2025.
- Raj Balakrishnan, the current co-head of India Investment Banking at BofA Securities, will assume the role of Vice-Chairman, Global Corporate and Investment Banking, India.
- Donde, with over 24 years of experience at BofA, will relocate from Singapore to India as part of the reshuffle.

- Balakrishnan, who has also spent 24+ years at the firm, transitions after co-heading the division for 12 years.

309. Who recently stepped down as the CEO of the International Cricket Council (ICC) just weeks before the Champions Trophy?

A Manu Sawhney

B Greg Barclay

C Geoff Allardice

D David Richardson

E Jay Shah

Solution

- Geoff Allardice, the CEO of the International Cricket Council (ICC), has decided to step down just weeks before the upcoming Champions Trophy.
- A board member has suggested that his failure to present a clear picture of host Pakistan's lack of preparedness was one of the key factors contributing to his decision.
- Allardice, aged 57, joined the ICC in 2012 as General Manager of Cricket and had a prior role with Cricket Australia as Cricket Operations Manager.

- He was appointed CEO in November 2021, after serving as acting CEO for eight months.

310. Recently (Jan '25), Which fintech platforms have initiated their e-rupee pilot programs in partnership with the RBI?

A Paytm and PhonePe

B MobiKwik and Cred

C Google Pay and Amazon Pay

D Razorpay and BharatPe

E PayU and Freecharge

Solution

- One MobiKwik Systems Limited. and Cred have initiated their individual e-rupee pilot programs in partnership with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- This collaboration makes them the first fintech platforms to join hands with the RBI for implementing the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).
- Yes Bank has been selected as the primary sponsor bank to facilitate the issuance of CBDC for both of these third-party application providers.

- MobiKwik has introduced the e₹ wallet, which is a CBDC wallet now accessible to all Android users.
- This wallet supports peer-to-peer (P2P) and peer-to-merchant (P2M) transactions.
- By utilizing the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), users can make payments by scanning any UPI QR code using the e₹ wallet.



(<https://www.entri.me>).



(<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=me.entri.entri.me>).