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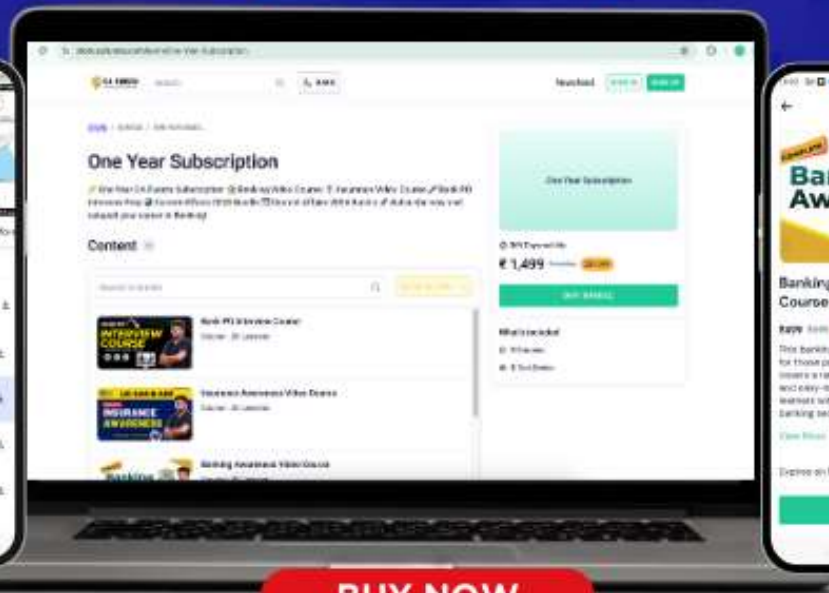
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➤ **Who won the ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month awards for February 2025?**



- A) Steve Smith and Annabel Sutherland
- B) Glenn Phillips and Thipatcha Putthawong
- C) Shubman Gill and Alana King
- D) Virat Kohli and Meg Lanning
- E) Babar Azam and Beth Mooney



Answer

C) Shubman Gill and Alana King



Event and Location:

- **Event:** ICC Player of the Month Awards – February 2025.
- **Date:** March 13, 2025.
- **Location:** ICC Headquarters, Dubai, UAE.



Mandates and Objectives:

- The ICC Player of the Month Awards recognize the best-performing male and female cricketers each month.
- Winners are selected based on fan votes and an expert ICC panel.



Shubman Gill's Performance and Achievements:

- **ODI Series vs England:** Scored 87 and 60 in the first two matches. Scored a match-winning 112 in Ahmedabad.
- **ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025:** Scored an unbeaten 101 against Bangladesh, helping India chase 229 runs.
- **Achievement:** Won his third ICC Men's Player of the Month award, defeating Glenn Phillips and Steve Smith.



Alana King's Performance and Achievements:

- **Ashes Test Match (Melbourne):** Took 4/45 in the first innings and 5/53 in the second innings.
- **Achievement:** Won her first ICC Women's Player of the Month award, defeating Annabel Sutherland and Thipatcha Putthawong.



Important Terms Explained:

- **ICC Player of the Month Award:** A monthly award recognizing top international cricketers based on fan votes and expert panel decisions.
- **ICC Men's Champions Trophy:** A premier ODI tournament featuring the world's top teams.
- **Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) Honours Board:** Recognizes players for outstanding performances at the MCG.



SPORTS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	ICC announced Player of the Month awards for February 2025. Shubman Gill (India) won the Men's award, and Alana King (Australia) won the Women's award.
Shubman Gill's Performance	Scored 406 runs in February, including two centuries. Played a key role in India's series win vs England and Champions Trophy 2025.
Gill's Achievement	Won his third ICC Men's Player of the Month award, beating Glenn Phillips & Steve Smith.
Alana King's Performance	Took 9 wickets in the Ashes Test, including 5/53 in the second innings, leading Australia to victory.
King's Achievement	Won her first ICC Women's Player of the Month award, defeating Annabel Sutherland & Thipatcha Putthawong.
Selection Process	Winners are decided through fan votes and an ICC expert panel.



➤ Which team emerged as the overall champion of Khelo India Winter Games 2025?

- A) Himachal Pradesh
- B) Ladakh
- C) Indian Army
- D) Maharashtra
- E) ITBP

Answer
C) Indian Army



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Khelo India Winter Games 2025 (5th Edition).
- **Date:** January 23 – March 12, 2025.
- **Location:** Leh, Ladakh & Gulmarg, Jammu & Kashmir.



Mandates and Objectives:

- Organized under **the Khelo India initiative** by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- Aimed at promoting **winter sports in India** and providing a platform for young athletes.
- Encouraged participation from **states, Union Territories (UTs), and institutional teams.**



Phases and Venues:

- **Phase 1: Leh, Ladakh (January 23-27, 2025)**
 - Hosted events like Ice Hockey and Ice Skating.
 - **Venues:**
 - Nawang Dorjay Stobdan (NDS) Sports Complex.
 - Guphuk Pond.
- **Phase 2: Jammu & Kashmir (March 9-12, 2025)**
 - Hosted events like Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Ski Mountaineering, and Snowboarding.
 - **Venues:**
 - Kangdoori Phase 1, Gulmarg.
 - Golf Course Club, Gulmarg.



Participation and Competition Format:

- **Over 400 athletes** participated, representing **19 teams** (States, UTs, and institutions).
- The competition followed a **team championship format**, where individual medals contributed to the overall team tally.



Notable Performances and Highlights:

- **Nayana Sri Talluri's Hat-Trick Gold in Speed Skating:**
 - 15-year-old from Telangana won three gold medals in Speed Skating.
 - Secured the first gold of KIWG 2025 in the women's 500m short track event.
- **Aanchal Thakur's Double Gold in Alpine Skiing:**
 - Alpine skier from Himachal Pradesh won gold in Slalom and Giant Slalom events.



SPORTS



Medal Tally – Top 5 Teams:

Rank	Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total Medals
1	Indian Army	7	5	6	18
2	Himachal Pradesh	6	5	7	18
3	Ladakh	4	2	1	7
4	Maharashtra	3	5	5	13
5	Tamil Nadu	3	2	0	5



Indian Army's Continued Dominance:

- Indian Army also won **the 2024 edition of KIWG** with **10 gold, 5 silver, and 6 bronze medals**.
- Their **second consecutive title victory** cements their dominance in winter sports.



Past Winners of Khelo India Winter Games:

- **2020:** Jammu & Kashmir (Host & Winner).
- **2021:** Jammu & Kashmir (Host & Winner).
- **2023:** Jammu & Kashmir (Host & Winner).
- **2024:** Indian Army (Winner).
- **2025:** Indian Army (Winner).



Impact of Khelo India Winter Games:

- Helped in **promoting winter sports in Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.**
- Encouraged **increased participation** in winter sports from across India.
- Led to **improved sports infrastructure** in northern and Himalayan regions.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Khelo India Winter Games:** A national-level winter sports tournament under the Khelo India initiative to promote winter sports.
- **Slalom & Giant Slalom:** Competitive alpine skiing events requiring agility and speed.
- **Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD):** A system ensuring zero wastewater discharge by recovering and recycling water.
- **Nordic Skiing:** A type of skiing sport including cross-country skiing and ski jumping.



SPORTS



Tabular Summary:

Aspect	Details
Event	Khelo India Winter Games 2025 (5th Edition).
Phases	Two (Leh, Ladakh & Jammu & Kashmir).
Dates	January 23-27 (Phase 1) & March 9-12 (Phase 2).
Venues	NDS Sports Complex, Guphuk Pond, Kangdoori Phase 1, Golf Course Club.
Total Athletes	Over 400.
Participating Teams	19 (States, UTs, Institutions).
Sports	Ice Hockey, Ice Skating, Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Ski Mountaineering, Snowboarding.
Champion Team	Indian Army (7 Gold, 5 Silver, 6 Bronze).
Top Individual Performers	Nayana Sri Talluri (Speed Skating, Telangana) & Aanchal Thakur (Alpine Skiing, HP).
Previous Winner (2024)	Indian Army.
Notable Impact	Growth of winter sports in India, increased participation, improved infrastructure.



RANKING



➤ Which country became the top source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai in 2024?

- A) United States
- B) France
- C) United Kingdom
- D) India
- E) Switzerland

Answer
D) India



RANKING



Event and Location:

- **Event:** India Becomes the Top Source of FDI into Dubai.
- **Date:** 2024.
- **Location:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).



Mandates and Objectives:

- **India** surpassed **the U.S., France, and the U.K.** to become the leading source of FDI into **Dubai**.
- **Dubai** retained its position as the **world's No.1** destination for **Greenfield FDI projects** for the **fourth consecutive year**.
- Financial Times Ltd.'s 'fDi Markets' data reported this achievement, highlighting Dubai's business-friendly environment, tax policies, and infrastructure.



India's FDI Contribution to Dubai:

- **India** accounted for **21.5%** of **Dubai's total FDI** in 2024.
- Other major contributors:
 - **U.S.:** 13.7%
 - **France:** 11%
 - **U.K.:** 10%
 - **Switzerland:** 6.9%



Dubai's FDI Growth in 2024:

- **Total FDI inflow:** AED 52.3 billion (\$14.24 billion), a 33.2% increase from 2023.
- **Greenfield FDI projects:** 1,117 projects, the highest ever recorded in Dubai.
- **Total FDI projects announced:** 1,826 projects, an 11% rise from 2023.
- **FDI-generated jobs:** 58,680 jobs, up 31% from 44,745 in 2023.



Dubai's Global & Regional Rankings in FDI:

- **Ranked No.1** globally in **Greenfield FDI projects**.
- **Ranked No.4** globally in **Greenfield FDI capital (up from No.5 in 2023)**.
- **Top-ranked** in the **Middle East and Africa (MEA)** for Greenfield FDI projects, capital, and jobs.
- No.1 globally in attracting Headquarter (HQ) FDI projects for the third consecutive year with 50 HQ projects in 2024.



Key Investment Sectors in Dubai:

- Business services.
- Software and IT services.
- Real estate.
- Transportation and warehousing.
- Financial services.
- Industrial equipment.
- Consumer products.
- Communications.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Advanced Information Technologies (AIT).
- Dubai's share in global FDI for AIT increased from 7.3% in 2023 to 8% in 2024.



Dubai's Economic Vision & Investor Confidence:

- **Strong leadership** under His Highness **Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**, Vice President & Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.
- Growth driven by:
 - **Public-private partnerships.**
 - **Dubai Economic Agenda (D33).**
 - **Innovation and startup incubation.**
 - **Digital infrastructure and cost-effective energy solutions.**
- **Strategic global partnerships** enhance Dubai's appeal for investors.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** Investment from a foreign entity in another country's businesses or projects.
- **Greenfield FDI:** A type of FDI where foreign companies start a new business or project from scratch.
- **fDi Markets:** A global database tracking cross-border Greenfield investments, maintained by Financial Times Ltd.
- **Dubai Economic Agenda (D33):** A long-term economic roadmap for Dubai's growth and investment potential.



RANKING



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	India became the top source of FDI into Dubai, surpassing the U.S., France, and the U.K.
Top FDI Source (2024)	India (21.5%), followed by U.S. (13.7%), France (11%), U.K. (10%), and Switzerland (6.9%).
Total FDI Capital (2024)	AED 52.3 billion (\$14.24 billion), a 33.2% increase from 2023.
Greenfield FDI Projects (2024)	1,117 projects, the highest in Dubai's history.
Total FDI Projects (2024)	1,826 projects, an 11% increase from 2023.
FDI-Generated Jobs	58,680 jobs, up 31% from 44,745 in 2023.
Dubai's Global Ranking	No.1 for Greenfield FDI projects, No.4 for FDI capital.
Dubai's MEA Ranking	No.1 in Greenfield FDI projects, capital, and jobs.
Headquarter (HQ) FDI Projects	No.1 globally for the 3rd year with 50 HQ projects in 2024.
Key Sectors Attracting FDI	IT services, business services, AI, real estate, finance, industrial equipment, consumer products.
Dubai's Global AIT FDI Share	Increased from 7.3% in 2023 to 8% in 2024.

➤ By how much did the outstanding NPA amount in the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) segment increase between March 2021 and December 2024?

- A) 28%
- B) 35%
- C) 42%
- D) 50%
- E) 60%

Answer
C) 42%



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Rise in Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Non-Performing Assets (NPAs).
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The outstanding NPA amount in the KCC segment surged to ₹97,543 crore as of December 2024, a 42% increase from ₹68,547 crore in March 2021.**
- The data was obtained through an RTI (Right to Information) request filed with the RBI.
- KCC provides a revolving cash credit facility to farmers for agricultural and allied activities.



Key Highlights of KCC Loan NPAs:

KCC NPA Growth Over the Years:

Year	Outstanding NPA Amount (₹ crore)
March 2021	₹68,547 crore
FY2022	₹84,637 crore
FY2023	₹90,832 crore
FY2024	₹93,370 crore
Q1 FY2025	₹95,616 crore
Q2 FY2025	₹96,918 crore
Q3 FY2025	₹97,543 crore



Key Highlights of KCC Loan NPAs:

- KCC NPAs have increased significantly, making it the highest default category among all agriculture loans.
- Compared to other agriculture loans (such as tractor loans), the repayment rate in KCC loans is lower.



Reasons for Rising Defaults in KCC Loans:

- **Weather-related crop failures** affecting farmers' ability to repay loans.
- **Lack of awareness** about repayment timelines among farmers.
- **Delays in repayments** due to personal financial exigencies.
- **Weak loan recovery mechanisms** for banks.
- **Expectations of loan waivers** before state elections, distorting repayment behavior.
- **Limited recovery options:** Unlike housing or SME loans, banks cannot seize assets for recovery.



KCC Outstanding Loan Growth (Operative Accounts):

- The total outstanding KCC loan amount increased from ₹4.57 lakh crore in March 2021 to ₹5.91 lakh crore in December 2024 (a 30% rise).
- Despite rising NPAs, total KCC loan disbursements have continued to grow.



State-wise Outstanding KCC Loan Amounts (2024):

State	Outstanding KCC Loan Amount (₹ crore)
Uttar Pradesh	₹1.38 lakh crore
Rajasthan	₹1.08 lakh crore
Madhya Pradesh	₹84,523 crore
Maharashtra	₹78,018 crore
Gujarat	₹71,132 crore
Karnataka	₹62,794 crore



State-wise Outstanding KCC Loan Amounts (2024):

- Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest outstanding loan amount under the KCC scheme.



Government Schemes & Support for KCC Borrowers:

- **Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS):**
 - Interest subvention of 1.5% on KCC loans up to ₹3 lakh, reducing the interest rate to 7% per annum.
 - Farmers who repay on time receive an additional 3% interest subsidy, lowering the effective rate to 4%.
 - Budget 2025-26 increased the loan limit under MISS from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh.
 - Collateral-free loans up to ₹2 lakh, making credit more accessible for small farmers.



Government Schemes & Support for KCC Borrowers:

- **Impact on Banks & Financial Sector:**
 - Banks face significant financial stress due to rising KCC NPAs.
 - Agriculture lending is a priority sector lending (PSL) obligation for banks.
 - Strict recovery measures are politically sensitive, making it difficult for banks to collect outstanding loans.
 - Farmers' suicides further discourage aggressive recovery actions by banks.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Kisan Credit Card (KCC):** A revolving credit facility that provides short-term agricultural loans with flexible repayment periods.
- **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs):** Loans classified as defaulted when repayments remain overdue beyond a specified period.
- **Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS):** Government program subsidizing interest rates on agricultural loans.
- **Priority Sector Lending (PSL):** RBI-mandated lending targets requiring banks to allocate 40% of total credit to priority sectors, including agriculture.



Tabular Summary:

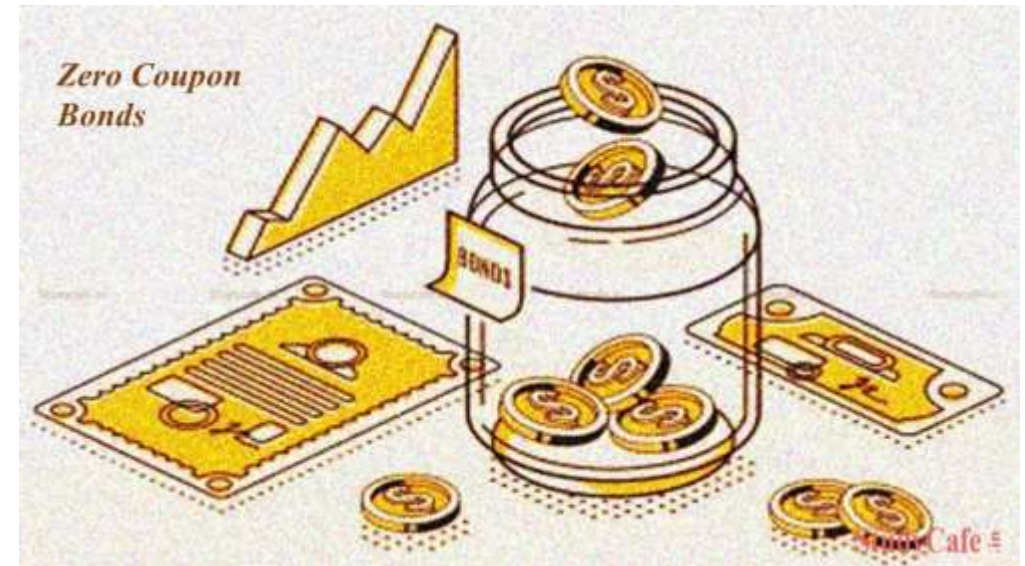
Category	Details
Why in News?	KCC NPAs rose by 42% from ₹68,547 crore (2021) to ₹97,543 crore (Dec 2024).
KCC NPA Amount (Dec 2024)	₹97,543 crore.
Increase Since 2021	42%.
Total Outstanding KCC Loans	₹5.91 lakh crore (Dec 2024).
Top State in KCC Loans	Uttar Pradesh (₹1.38 lakh crore).
Interest Rate on KCC Loans	7% (4% for timely repayments under MISS).
Government Support	Loan limit increased from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh under MISS.
Major Causes of Defaults	Weather issues, lack of awareness, weak recovery, loan waiver expectations.
Impact on Banks	High NPAs, PSL obligations, limited recovery mechanisms.



➤ What is the face value of each Zero Coupon Bond (ZCB) issued by Power Finance Corporation (PFC)?

- A) ₹50,000
- B) ₹75,000
- C) ₹1 lakh
- D) ₹1.5 lakh
- E) ₹2 lakh

Answer
C) ₹1 lakh



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Finance Ministry Approves Zero Coupon Bonds for Power Finance Corporation.
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- The Finance Ministry has authorized **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)** to issue **Zero Coupon Bonds (ZCBs)** to raise up to ₹10,000 crore.
- The bonds will be issued at a **discount** and **redeemed at full face value upon maturity**.
- The initiative aims to provide a **stable, long-term investment option** for investors seeking guaranteed returns.



Key Features of PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds:

- **Issuance & Maturity:**
 - **Issuance Deadline:** On or before March 31, 2027.
 - **Maturity Period:** 121 months (10 years and 1 month).
 - **Number of Bonds Issued:** 10 lakh bonds.
- **Pricing & Returns:**
 - **Issue Price:** ₹50,454 per bond.
 - **Face Value:** ₹1 lakh per bond at maturity.
 - **Fixed Returns:** Investors will receive ₹1 lakh per bond if held until maturity.



Key Features of PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds:

- **What is a Zero Coupon Bond (ZCB)?**
 - **A Zero Coupon Bond** does not pay periodic interest (coupon).
 - Issued at a discount and redeemed at full face value upon maturity.
 - The difference between the issue price and face value represents the return for investors.



Key Features of PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds:

- **Who Should Invest in Zero Coupon Bonds?**
 - Investors planning for long-term financial goals (children's education, marriage, retirement).
 - Conservative investors who prefer low-risk investments over equities or variable-rate bonds.
 - Portfolio diversification: Helps balance high-growth investments with guaranteed returns.



Key Features of PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds:

- **Advantages of Investing in Zero Coupon Bonds:**
 - **Guaranteed Returns:** Fixed return over a definite period.
 - **Lower Risk than Equities:** Less volatile than stocks or variable-rate bonds.
 - **Diversification:** Adds a low-risk, fixed-income component to portfolios.
 - **Tax Benefits:** Long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax of 12.5% if held for more than 12 months.



Key Features of PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds:

- **Risks Associated with Zero Coupon Bonds:**
 - **Interest Rate Risk:** If interest rates rise, bond prices fall.
 - **Duration Risk:** Long-term maturity makes bond prices highly sensitive to interest rate changes.
 - **Liquidity Risk:** If sold before maturity, investors may not get the expected return.
- **Tax Implications of Zero Coupon Bonds:**
 - **Short-Term Capital Gains (STCG):** If sold before 12 months, gains taxed as per investor's income tax slab.
 - **Long-Term Capital Gains (LTCG):** If held beyond 12 months, gains taxed at 12.5%.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Zero Coupon Bond (ZCB):** A bond issued at a discount, paying no interest but redeemed at full face value.
- **Power Finance Corporation (PFC):** A government-owned financial institution funding power sector projects.
- **Face Value:** The amount an investor receives at bond maturity.
- **Discounted Issue Price:** The price at which ZCBs are initially sold, lower than their face value.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Finance Ministry approved Zero Coupon Bonds for Power Finance Corporation.
Amount to be Raised	₹10,000 crore.
Issue Price	₹50,454 per bond.
Face Value	₹1 lakh per bond at maturity.
Maturity Period	121 months (10 years and 1 month).
Issuance Deadline	On or before March 31, 2027.
Total Bonds to be Issued	10 lakh bonds.
Target Investors	Long-term investors looking for lump sum payouts.
Taxation	STCG (if sold before 12 months): Taxed as per investor's slab. LTCG (if held for over 12 months): 12.5% tax rate.
Advantages	Guaranteed returns, low risk, portfolio diversification, tax benefits.
Risks	Interest rate risk, duration risk, liquidity risk.



➤ **What was India's retail inflation rate in February 2025?**

- A) 4.2%
- B) 3.75%
- C) 3.61%
- D) 5.1%
- E) 4.5%

Answer
C) 3.61%



Event and Location:

- **Event:** India's Retail Inflation Falls to a Seven-Month Low.
- **Date:** February 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **India's retail inflation dropped to 3.61% in February 2025, the lowest in seven months.**
- **Food inflation fell below 4%** for the first time in nearly two years.
- The decline raises expectations of an RBI rate cut in **the April 2025 Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting.**



Key Highlights of February 2025 Inflation Trends:

- **Food Inflation Sees a Sharp Decline:**
 - Food inflation fell to 3.75%, the lowest in 21 months.
 - Vegetable prices declined by 1.1% YoY, compared to an 11.4% rise in January.
 - Pulses recorded deflation after rising 2.6% in January.
- **Mixed Trends in Fruits and Edible Oils:**
 - Fruit and edible oil prices increased.
 - The volatile rupee led to higher import costs for edible oils.



Key Highlights of February 2025 Inflation Trends:

- **Core Inflation Rises Despite Lower Headline Inflation:**
 - Core inflation (excluding food & fuel) surged to a seven-month high.
 - Gold prices and personal care costs were the main drivers of this increase.
- **Inflation Impact on Personal Care & Miscellaneous Goods:**
 - **Miscellaneous goods inflation:** 4.8% in February (vs. 4.4% in January).
 - **Personal care inflation:** 13.6% in February (vs. 10.6% in January).



Key Highlights of February 2025 Inflation Trends:

- **Implications for RBI's Monetary Policy:**
 - RBI had cut the repo rate from 6.5% to 6.25% in February 2025.
 - Economists expect another 25 bps rate cut in April 2025.
 - Further rate cuts may follow in June or August 2025, depending on GDP growth.
- **Long-Term Inflation Projections:**
 - Inflation is expected to moderate to 3.8% by Q3 FY2026.
 - The fiscal year could end with a policy rate of 5.75%.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI):** Measures retail inflation by tracking price changes of essential goods and services.
- **Core Inflation:** Inflation excluding food and fuel prices, indicating underlying price trends.
- **Repo Rate:** The rate at which RBI lends money to banks, influencing borrowing costs.
- **Basis Points (bps):** A unit of measure for interest rates; 1 bps = 0.01%.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	India's retail inflation fell to a 7-month low of 3.61% in February 2025.
Retail Inflation (Feb 2025)	3.61%.
Food Inflation	3.75% (lowest in 21 months).
Vegetable Inflation	-1.1% (deflation) vs. +11.4% in January 2025.
Pulses Inflation	Deflation (vs. +2.6% in January 2025).
Fruits & Edible Oils	Prices increased.
Core Inflation	Highest in 7 months, driven by gold prices.
Personal Care Inflation	13.6% (vs. 10.6% in January 2025).
Repo Rate (Feb 2025 Cut)	6.25% (cut from 6.5%).
Expected RBI Rate Cut (April 2025)	25 bps cut expected.
FY26 Inflation Forecast	4.2%.



➤ What was India's overall Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate in February 2025?

- A) 4.12%
- B) 3.75%
- C) 3.61%
- D) 5.2%
- E) 3.32%

Answer
C) 3.61%



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Consumer Price Index (CPI) Data for February 2025.
- **Date:** March 12, 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** released CPI data for February 2025.
- **Retail inflation** declined to 3.61%, the lowest since July 2024.
- **Food inflation** also dropped significantly, especially in rural areas.



Key Highlights of the CPI Report:

- **Overall Inflation:**
 - CPI-based inflation stood at 3.61% in February 2025.
 - A decline of 65 basis points (bps) from January 2025.
 - Lowest inflation rate since July 2024.



Key Highlights of the CPI Report:

- **Food Inflation:**
 - **Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) inflation:** 3.75% (Provisional).
 - **Rural CFPI inflation:** 4.06%.
 - **Urban CFPI inflation:** 3.20%.
 - Food inflation fell by 222 bps compared to January 2025, marking the lowest since May 2023.
- **Rural vs Urban Inflation:**
 - **Rural Inflation:** 3.79% (down from 4.59% in January 2025).
 - **Urban Inflation:** 3.32% (down from 3.87% in January 2025).



Key Highlights of the CPI Report:

- **Sector-wise Inflation Trends:**
 - **Housing Inflation:** 2.91% (up from 2.82% in January 2025).
 - **Fuel & Light Inflation:** -1.33% (improved from -1.49% in January 2025).
 - **Education Inflation:** 3.83% (unchanged from January 2025).
 - **Health Inflation:** 4.12% (up from 3.97% in January 2025).
 - **Transport & Communication Inflation:** 2.87% (up from 2.76% in January 2025).



Key Highlights of the CPI Report:

- **Main Drivers of Inflation Decline:**
 - Prices of vegetables, eggs, meat & fish, pulses, and dairy products declined.
- **Top Five Items with Highest Inflation:**
 - **Coconut oil:** 54.48%.
 - **Coconut:** 41.61%.
 - **Gold:** 35.56%.
 - **Silver:** 30.89%.
 - **Onion:** 30.42%.



Key Highlights of the CPI Report:

- **Top Five Items with Lowest Inflation:**
 - **Ginger:** -35.81%.
 - **Jeera (Cumin):** -28.77%.
 - **Tomato:** -28.51%.
 - **Cauliflower:** -21.19%.
 - **Garlic:** -20.32%.
- **Data Collection:**
 - Price data collected from 1,114 urban markets and 1,181 villages across all States/UTs.
 - 100% rural and 98.6% urban data collection completed.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI):** Measures changes in retail prices of goods and services.
- **Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI):** Measures changes in food prices for consumers.
- **Basis Points (bps):** A unit of interest rate or inflation measurement; 1 bps = 0.01%.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Consumer Price Index (CPI) for February 2025 released.
Overall CPI Inflation	3.61%.
Food Inflation (CFPI)	3.75%.
Rural Inflation	3.79%.
Urban Inflation	3.32%.
Housing Inflation	2.91%.
Fuel & Light Inflation	-1.33%.
Education Inflation	3.83%.
Health Inflation	4.12%.
Transport & Communication Inflation	2.87%.
Highest Inflation Item	Coconut Oil (54.48%).
Lowest Inflation Item	Ginger (-35.81%).



➤ **What was the overall IIP growth recorded for January 2025?**

- A) 4.4%
- B) 5.0%
- C) 6.3%
- D) 3.2%
- E) 7.2%



Answer
B) 5.0%



Event and Location:

- **Event:** India's Industrial Growth Reaches 5.0% in January 2025.
- **Date:** March 12, 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the Quick Estimates of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for January 2025.**
- IIP recorded a 5.0% growth, an improvement from 3.2% in December 2024.
- The manufacturing sector was the biggest contributor to the growth, followed by mining and electricity.



Key Highlights of IIP for January 2025:

- **Overall Industrial Growth:**
 - **IIP Growth:** 5.0% (up from 3.2% in December 2024).
 - **IIP Index Value:** 161.3 (compared to 153.6 in January 2024).
- **Sector-wise Performance:**
 - **Mining Sector:** 4.4% growth (Index: 150.7).
 - **Manufacturing Sector:** 5.5% growth (Index: 159.1).
 - **Electricity Sector:** 2.4% growth (Index: 201.9).



Key Highlights of IIP for January 2025:

- **Industry-wise Performance (Manufacturing Sector – NIC 2-digit level):**
 - 19 out of 23 industries recorded positive growth.
 - **Top 3 industries driving growth:**
 - **Manufacture of Basic Metals:** 6.3% growth.
 - **Manufacture of Coke & Refined Petroleum Products:** 8.5% growth.
 - **Manufacture of Electrical Equipment:** 21.7% growth.



Key Highlights of IIP for January 2025:

- **Key Items Driving Growth:**
 - **Basic Metals:** Steel pipes, alloy steel products, MS blooms/billets/ingots.
 - **Coke & Petroleum Products:** Diesel, petrol, LPG.
 - **Electrical Equipment:** Small transformers, optical fiber connectors, electric heaters.



Use-Based Classification (Index Values & Growth Rates):

Category	Index Value	Growth Rate
Primary Goods	162.8	5.5%
Capital Goods	116.8	7.8%
Intermediate Goods	172.3	5.2%
Infrastructure/Construction	199.6	7.0%
Consumer Durables	130.2	7.2%
Consumer Non-Durables	164.5	-0.2%



Top Three Contributors to IIP Growth (Use-Based Classification):

1. Primary Goods.
2. Infrastructure/Construction Goods.
3. Intermediate Goods.



Data Collection & Revisions:

- **January 2025 data:** Quick Estimate.
- **December 2024 data:** First revision.
- **October 2024 data:** Final revision.
- **Weighted Response Rates:**
 - **January 2025:** 90%.
 - **December 2024:** 94%.
 - **October 2024:** 96%.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Index of Industrial Production (IIP):** Measures the growth rate of different industrial sectors.
- **Quick Estimates:** Preliminary data subject to revision in subsequent months.
- **Consumer Durables & Non-Durables:**
 - **Durables:** Long-term goods like appliances and electronics.
 - **Non-Durables:** Short-term goods like food and pharmaceuticals.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	India's IIP recorded 5.0% growth in January 2025.
Overall IIP Growth	5.0% (Index: 161.3).
Mining Sector Growth	4.4% (Index: 150.7).
Manufacturing Sector Growth	5.5% (Index: 159.1).
Electricity Sector Growth	2.4% (Index: 201.9).
Top Growing Industries	Basic Metals (6.3%), Coke & Petroleum (8.5%), Electrical Equipment (21.7%).
Primary Goods Growth	5.5% (Index: 162.8).
Capital Goods Growth	7.8% (Index: 116.8).
Intermediate Goods Growth	5.2% (Index: 172.3).
Infrastructure/Construction Growth	7.0% (Index: 199.6).
Consumer Durables Growth	7.2% (Index: 130.2).
Consumer Non-Durables Growth	-0.2% (Index: 164.5).



APPOINTMENTS



➤ **Who has been appointed as the Head of Security Operations Center at ICICI Bank?**

- A) Rajesh Gopinathan
- B) Kamal Wali
- C) Ritesh Tiwari
- D) Nitin Chugh
- E) Sanjay Mehrotra

Answer
B) Kamal Wali



APPOINTMENTS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** ICICI Bank Appoints Kamal Wali as Head of Security Operations.
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** ICICI Bank Headquarters, Mumbai, India.



APPOINTMENTS



Mandates and Objectives:

- ICICI Bank appointed **Kamal Wali** as the **Head of Security Operations Center**.
- The appointment highlights the bank's focus on cybersecurity, risk management, and digital resilience.
- Wali's role involves enhancing security infrastructure to protect customer data and transactions.



APPOINTMENTS



Key Highlights of the Appointment:

- **Role & Responsibilities:**
 - Overseeing security operations and implementing risk mitigation strategies.
 - Strengthening digital security to counter cyber threats.
 - Enhancing data protection measures for secure banking operations.



APPOINTMENTS



Key Highlights of the Appointment:

- **Experience & Previous Roles:**
 - 18+ years of experience in cybersecurity and IT operations.
 - Held leadership positions at:
 - **Jio Platforms Limited.**
 - **Wipro.**
 - **IBM.**
 - **Intex Technologies.**
 - **Spanco Telesystems.**
 - Specialized in security frameworks, operational security strategies, and complex project implementation.



APPOINTMENTS



Key Highlights of the Appointment:

- **ICICI Bank's Cybersecurity Focus:**
 - Strengthening cybersecurity to counter increasing digital threats.
 - Ensuring secure transactions and data protection.
 - Reinforcing customer trust in ICICI Bank's digital banking infrastructure.



APPOINTMENTS



Important Terms Explained:

- **Security Operations Center (SOC):** A centralized unit that monitors, detects, and responds to cybersecurity incidents.
- **Cybersecurity Frameworks:** Industry standards and guidelines designed to protect digital systems from cyber threats.
- **Risk Mitigation Strategies:** Measures taken to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance digital security.



APPOINTMENTS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	ICICI Bank appointed Kamal Wali as Head of Security Operations.
Appointed Person	Kamal Wali.
New Role	Head of Security Operations Center, ICICI Bank.
Experience	18+ years in cybersecurity & IT operations.
Past Organizations	Jio Platforms, Wipro, IBM, Intex, Spanco Telesystems.
Key Responsibilities	Strengthening cybersecurity, risk mitigation, and data protection.
ICICI Bank's Focus	Enhancing digital security & ensuring customer trust.



AWARDS



➤ **Who became the first Indian to receive the Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use'?**

- A) Celeste Saulo
- B) Jayshree Vencatesan
- C) Jennifer George
- D) Tatiana Minayeva
- E) Sunita Narain

Answer

B) Jayshree Vencatesan



AWARDS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use 2024.
- **Date:** March 8, 2024.
- **Location:** Geneva, Switzerland.



AWARDS



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The Ramsar Award** is an international recognition given by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to honor contributions to wetland conservation and sustainable management.
- **Jayshree Vencatesan** was awarded under the 'Wise Use of Wetlands' category, making her the first Indian to receive this honor.
- The award was announced on **the eve of International Women's Day 2024.**



Jayshree Vencatesan's Contributions:

- **Work in Wetland Conservation:**
 - Co-founder of Care Earth Trust, Chennai, dedicated to wetland preservation.
 - Extensive research on Pallikaranai Marsh, Chennai, highlighting its biodiversity.
 - Advocated for wetlands' role in flood mitigation and urban planning.
- **Mentorship & Women Empowerment:**
 - Led an all-women research team, mentoring female conservationists.
 - Advocated for increasing women's roles in environmental governance.



Jayshree Vencatesan's Contributions:

- **Challenges in Wetland Conservation:**
 - **Land Ownership Issues:** Outdated land records create restoration challenges.
 - **Bureaucratic Red Tape:** Legal and regulatory hurdles delay conservation efforts.
 - **Lack of Awareness:** Wetlands are often seen as wastelands rather than vital ecosystems.
- **Dedication of the Award:**
 - Dedicated the award to her late father, Mayur Narasimhan, who inspired her passion for nature.



Jayshree Vencatesan's Contributions:

- **Other Women Recognized in the Ramsar Awards:**
 - **Celeste Saulo:** Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
 - **Jennifer George:** CEO of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).
 - **Tatiana Minayeva:** Consultant at Care for Ecosystems.
- **Tamil Nadu's Wetland Heritage:**
 - Tamil Nadu has 18 Ramsar sites, showcasing its rich wetland biodiversity.
 - Wetland conservation efforts in the state are crucial due to rapid urbanization.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:** An international treaty established in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran, for wetland conservation.
- **Wise Use of Wetlands:** A principle promoting sustainable wetland management for ecological and human benefits.
- **Pallikaranai Marsh:** A significant freshwater wetland in Chennai, home to 337+ species of flora and fauna.



AWARDS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Jayshree Vencatesan became the first Indian to receive the Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use'.
Awarded By	Ramsar Secretariat, Geneva on March 8, 2024 (International Women's Day).
Category	'Wise Use of Wetlands' under the Ramsar Awards.
Key Contributions	Wetland conservation (Pallikaranai Marsh, Chennai), biodiversity research, flood mitigation efforts, women mentorship.
Challenges Faced	Bureaucratic hurdles, outdated land titles, lack of awareness about wetland significance.
Dedication	Dedicated the award to her late father, Mayur Narasimhan.
Call to Action	Urged investment in women's technical education in environmental conservation.
Tamil Nadu's Ramsar Sites	18 Ramsar wetlands, highlighting the state's rich wetland heritage.
Other Women Recognized	Celeste Saulo (WMO), Jennifer George (EAAFP), Tatiana Minayeva (Care for Ecosystems).



AWARDS



➤ **Which airport won the ASQ Award 2024 for Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in Asia-Pacific?**

- A) Changi Airport, Singapore
- B) Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi
- C) Hong Kong International Airport
- D) Incheon International Airport, South Korea
- E) Narita International Airport, Japan



Answer

B) Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi



AWARDS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** ASQ Airport Experience Award 2024.
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** Delhi, India.



AWARDS



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards** recognize the world's best airports based on passenger satisfaction surveys.
- Organized by **Airports Council International (ACI)**, these awards are the gold standard for airport excellence.
- Delhi International Airport won **the Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in Asia-Pacific category.**



AWARDS



Key Highlights of Delhi International Airport's Recognition:

- **Seventh consecutive win** in this category, previously securing the award from 2018 to 2023.
- Recognized for passenger experience, operational efficiency, and world-class services.
- **Major milestone in 2024:** Delhi Airport became one of the few airports globally to serve 100 million passengers annually.



AWARDS



Understanding the ASQ Awards:

- **Global Benchmarking:** The only international program measuring real-time passenger experience.
- **Passenger-Centric Approach:** Based on feedback across multiple service parameters.
- **Worldwide Participation:** 400+ airports participate in ASQ surveys.



AWARDS



Upcoming ASQ Awards Ceremony:

- **The ASQ Awards Ceremony** will be held on September 10, 2025, in Guangzhou, China.
- Part of **the ACI World's annual Customer Experience Summit** (September 8-11, 2025).



About GMR Airports Limited (GAL):

- Operator of **Delhi International Airport**.
- Manages airports in **Hyderabad, Goa, Indonesia (Medan), and the Philippines (Mactan Cebu)**.
- Developing **greenfield projects in Bhogapuram (Visakhapatnam, India) and Crete (Greece)**.
- Operates **India's largest MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul) facility**.
- **GMR Innovex**: Focuses on technology-driven airport solutions.
- **GMR Aero Academy & School of Aviation**: Provides aviation training and workforce development.



AWARDS



Groupe ADP – A Strategic Partner:

- Co-promoter of **GMR Airports Limited**.
- Manages **Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Paris-Orly, and Paris-Le Bourget** airports.
- Handled **336.4 million passengers worldwide** in 2023.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Airports Council International (ACI):** A global organization representing airport operators worldwide.
- **Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards:** ACI's benchmark program assessing passenger satisfaction at airports.
- **MPPA (Million Passengers Per Annum):** A metric measuring airport capacity and traffic volume.
- **GMR Innovex:** A division of GMR focused on digital transformation in airport operations.



AWARDS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Delhi International Airport won the ASQ Award 2024 for Best Airport Over 40 MPPA in Asia-Pacific.
Awarding Organization	Airports Council International (ACI).
Category	Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in Asia-Pacific.
Award Basis	Passenger satisfaction surveys conducted at airports worldwide.
Previous Wins	2018 – 2023 (six consecutive years) before 2024.
Statement by DIAL CEO	Recognized for continuous improvement in passenger experience and operational efficiency.
Upcoming ASQ Awards Ceremony	September 10, 2025, Guangzhou, China.
Delhi Airport's Major Milestone	Achieved 100 million passengers annually in 2024.
GMR Airports Limited (GAL)	Operates airports in India (Delhi, Hyderabad, Goa), Indonesia, and the Philippines.
Groupe ADP	Co-promoter of GAL, managing Paris airports and other global aviation hubs.
GMR Innovex & Aero Academy	Focuses on digital transformation and aviation training.



AWARDS



➤ Which initiative won Muthoot Microfin the SKOCH Award for Best Customer Application on Digital Financial Inclusion?

- A) Griha Raksha Insurance Scheme
- B) Mahila Mitra
- C) Sakhi Loan Scheme
- D) Swavalamban Digital Finance
- E) Udyogini Credit Program

Answer
B) Mahila Mitra



AWARDS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Muthoot Microfin Wins Double Gold at SKOCH Awards 2025.
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** New Delhi, India.



AWARDS



Mandates and Objectives:

- **Muthoot Microfin**, a leading microfinance institution, won two Gold Awards at the SKOCH Awards 2025.
- Recognized for digital financial inclusion and innovative insurance solutions.
- Awards were presented to **Sadaf Sayeed**, CEO of Muthoot Microfin, by **Sameer Kochhar** (Chairman, SKOCH Group) and **Gursharan Dhanjal** (Vice-Chairman, SKOCH Group).



Muthoot Microfin's Achievements at SKOCH Awards 2025:

1. Corporate Excellence – “Best Customer Application on Digital Financial Inclusion”

- Awarded for Mahila Mitra, a digital platform that enhances financial transactions for women in rural India.
- **Key Highlights:**
 - 1.73 million downloads.
 - 4.2-star rating.
 - Provides seamless and secure digital transactions for women entrepreneurs.
 - Eliminates financial barriers for underserved communities.



Muthoot Microfin's Achievements at SKOCH Awards 2025:

2. BFSI Award – “Best Insurance Scheme”

- Awarded for Griha Raksha Insurance Scheme.
- **Key Highlights:**
 - Coverage for 2.66 million beneficiaries.
 - Provides a financial safety net for low-income households.
 - Empowers women entrepreneurs by reducing financial risks.



Muthoot Microfin's Impact on Women Entrepreneurs:

- Enabled 34.2 lakh women-led households.
- Positively impacted 1.4 crore Indians.
- Provides microloans for small business expansion.
- Promotes financial literacy and digital adoption in rural areas.



The Significance of SKOCH Awards:

- Among India's most prestigious independent awards in governance, finance, and inclusive development.
- Recognizes organizations that demonstrate innovation, efficiency, and societal impact.



About Muthoot Microfin Ltd.:

- Part of Muthoot Pappachan Group (Muthoot Blue).
- 3.42 million active customers.
- 1,651 branches across 20 states and 379 districts.
- Gross Loan Portfolio (GLP): ₹12,404.9 Cr (as of Dec 31, 2024).
- Listed on S&P BSE Financial Services Index.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Microfinance Institution (MFI):** Provides small loans to low-income individuals and small businesses.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Ensuring access to financial services for underserved communities.
- **BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance):** A sector covering financial institutions providing banking, investment, and insurance services.



AWARDS



Tabular Summary:

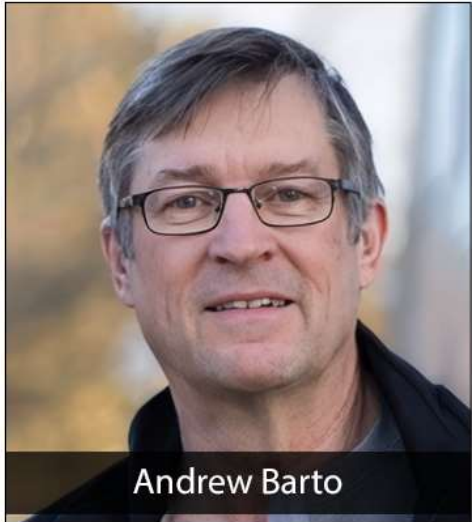
Category	Details
Why in News?	Muthoot Microfin won two Gold Awards at the SKOCH Awards 2025.
Awards Won	1. Best Customer Application on Digital Financial Inclusion (Mahila Mitra). 2. Best Insurance Scheme (Griha Raksha Insurance Scheme).
Significance of Mahila Mitra	1.73 million downloads, 4.2-star rating. Enhances financial inclusion via secure digital transactions for women.
Significance of Griha Raksha	Coverage for 2.66 million beneficiaries. Ensures financial security for low-income women and families.
CEO's Statement	Sadaf Sayeed emphasized bridging the financial inclusion gap for women.
Impact on Women Entrepreneurs	34.2 lakh women-led households benefited. 1.4 crore Indians positively impacted.
About Muthoot Microfin	Part of Muthoot Pappachan Group. GLP: ₹12,404.9 Cr (as of Dec 31, 2024).
Significance of SKOCH Awards	Recognizes excellence in governance, finance, and inclusive development.



AWARDS



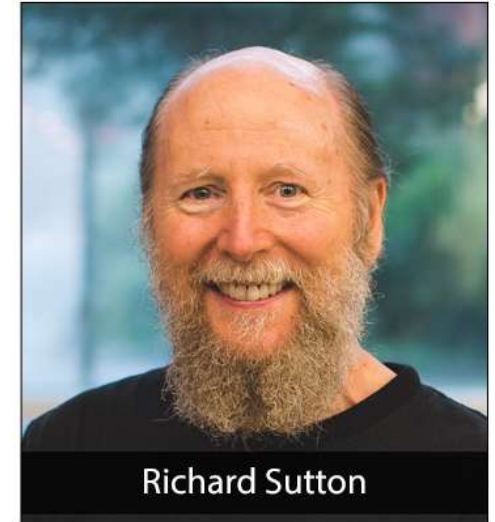
- For which field were Andrew Barto and Richard Sutton awarded the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award?



- A) Neural Networks
- B) Reinforcement Learning
- C) Cryptography
- D) Quantum Computing
- E) Cloud Computing

Answer

- B) Reinforcement Learning**



AWARDS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** ACM A.M. Turing Award 2024.
- **Date:** Announced in March 2025.
- **Location:** United States.



AWARDS



Mandates and Objectives:

- **Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton** received the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award for their groundbreaking contributions to Reinforcement Learning (RL).
- The award, known as **the “Nobel Prize of Computing,”** carries a \$1 million prize, sponsored by Google.
- Their work laid the foundation for modern AI systems, including deep reinforcement learning applications.



AWARDS



Key Highlights of the ACM A.M. Turing Award 2024:

- **Recipients and Contributions:**
 - **Andrew G. Barto:** Professor at University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
 - **Richard S. Sutton:** Professor at University of Alberta, Canada.
- **Key Contributions to RL:**
 - **Temporal Difference Learning:** Solves reward prediction problems.
 - **Policy-Gradient Methods:** Optimizes decision-making policies.
 - **Neural Network-Based Function Representations:** Helped in deep RL advancements.
 - **Combining Learning and Planning:** Enhanced AI's ability to understand environments.



Key Highlights of the ACM A.M. Turing Award 2024:

- **Notable Achievements:**
 - **Published the textbook “Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction” (1998), cited over 75,000 times.**
 - **Their work inspired major AI breakthroughs, including AlphaGo, ChatGPT, and robotics.**
 - **Mathematical Foundation:** Based on Markov Decision Processes (MDPs).



AWARDS



Impact and Real-World Applications:

- **Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning:**
 - **AlphaGo:** The first AI to defeat human champions in Go.
 - **ChatGPT's RLHF (Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback):** Used to fine-tune chatbot behavior.
- **Robotics:**
 - Autonomous robots use RL to learn motor skills, grasp objects, and even solve Rubik's Cube.



Impact and Real-World Applications:

- **Industrial & Business Applications:**
 - **Supply Chain Optimization:** AI-powered inventory and logistics improvements.
 - **Network Congestion Control:** RL used in efficient internet traffic management.
 - **Chip Design:** Google's AI-driven chip layout optimizations.
- **Neuroscience & Human Learning:**
 - Their work provides insights into the dopamine system, explaining how human brains learn through rewards and punishments.



Impact and Real-World Applications:

- **Recognition & Statements:**
 - **ACM President Yannis Ioannidis:** Praised their work for its lasting impact across multiple fields.
 - **Google Senior VP Jeff Dean:** Recognized RL as a “lynchpin of AI progress.”



Important Terms Explained:

- **Reinforcement Learning (RL):** AI learns by interacting with an environment and receiving rewards for good actions.
- **Temporal Difference Learning:** A technique for predicting future rewards in uncertain environments.
- **Policy-Gradient Methods:** A method for optimizing decision-making strategies.
- **Markov Decision Processes (MDPs):** A mathematical framework for decision-making under uncertainty.



AWARDS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Andrew Barto & Richard Sutton won the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award.
Award Name	ACM A.M. Turing Award 2024.
Recipients	Andrew G. Barto & Richard S. Sutton.
Field of Contribution	Reinforcement Learning (RL).
Key Concept	Learning through rewards and punishments.
Major Achievements	Temporal Difference Learning, Policy-Gradient Methods, Deep RL advancements.
Notable Work	“Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction” (1998).
Practical Applications	AlphaGo, ChatGPT, robotics, supply chain optimization, network control.
Connection to Neuroscience	Insights into the human dopamine system.
Prize Amount	\$1 million.



➤ **What is the primary objective of NASA's SPHEREx mission?**

- A) Studying the Sun's outer corona and solar wind
- B) Mapping cosmic light from the earliest galaxies
- C) Observing the asteroid belt for potential resources
- D) Tracking space debris around Earth
- E) Investigating black hole mergers

Answer

B) Mapping cosmic light from the earliest galaxies



Event and Location:

- **Event:** NASA's SPHEREx and PUNCH Missions.
- **Date:** Scheduled launch in 2025.
- **Location:** Launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon Rocket.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **NASA** is launching two major space missions – **SPHEREx** and **PUNCH**.
- **SPHEREx** will map cosmic infrared light from the earliest galaxies.
- **PUNCH** will study the Sun's outer corona and solar wind.
- The missions will advance astrophysics and heliophysics, improving our understanding of the universe and space weather.



Key Highlights of SPHEREx and PUNCH Missions:

SPHEREx: Unlocking the Universe's Cosmic Glow

- **Mission Goal:** Measure the total light from galaxies across cosmic history, including those from the Big Bang.
- **Technology Used:**
 - Infrared detectors to scan the entire sky.
 - Will conduct four complete surveys over two years.
 - Orbit altitude: 400 miles (640 km) above Earth.



Key Highlights of SPHEREx and PUNCH Missions:

SPHEREx: Unlocking the Universe's Cosmic Glow

- **Key Discoveries Expected:**
 - Insights into the formation of the first galaxies.
 - Understanding why the universe expanded rapidly after the Big Bang.
 - Mapping interstellar ices to learn about water and organic molecule distribution in early planetary systems.



Key Highlights of SPHEREx and PUNCH Missions:

PUNCH: Investigating the Sun's Outer Atmosphere

- **Mission Goal:** Study how solar material transitions from the Sun's corona into interplanetary space.
- **Technology Used:**
 - Four small satellites working together.
 - Polarimetric imaging for high-resolution observation of solar wind and coronal mass ejections (CMEs).



Key Highlights of SPHEREx and PUNCH Missions:

PUNCH: Investigating the Sun's Outer Atmosphere

- **Key Discoveries Expected:**
 - Track solar wind movement across space.
 - Improve space weather forecasting to protect satellites and astronauts.
 - Understand how solar storms impact Earth's magnetosphere, GPS, and communication systems.



Impact of SPHEREx and PUNCH on Space Research:

- **SPHEREx:**
 - Creates the most detailed infrared 3D map of the universe.
 - Helps trace galaxy formation and evolution.
- **PUNCH:**
 - Enhances real-time monitoring of solar activity.
 - Improves predictions of solar storms to mitigate space weather risks.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Infrared Mapping:** A technique used to detect cosmic radiation from distant galaxies.
- **Polarimetric Imaging:** A method to observe solar wind movement using light polarization.
- **Coronal Mass Ejection (CME):** A powerful burst of solar energy that can disrupt Earth's magnetic field and electronics.
- **Heliosphere:** The outermost layer of the Sun's influence, extending beyond Pluto.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	NASA is launching SPHEREx and PUNCH missions to study space and solar activity.
Missions	SPHEREx (Cosmic Light Study) & PUNCH (Solar Wind Study).
Launch Vehicle	SpaceX Falcon Rocket.
SPHEREx Technology	Infrared detectors for mapping cosmic light.
PUNCH Technology	Polarimetric imaging to observe solar wind.
SPHEREx Goal	Understand galaxy formation and the Big Bang's aftermath.
PUNCH Goal	Track solar storms and improve space weather forecasting.
Expected Impact	Advances astrophysics, galaxy research, and solar storm predictions.



- **What is the primary purpose of the White Shipping Agreement between India and Mauritius?**
- A) Establishing naval bases in the Indian Ocean
 - B) Sharing commercial shipping data for maritime security
 - C) Conducting joint military exercises
 - D) Enhancing tourism and trade relations
 - E) Strengthening air defense cooperation



Answer

B) Sharing commercial shipping data for maritime security



Event and Location:

- **Event:** INS Imphal Strengthens India-Mauritius Ties.
- **Date:** March 10-12, 2025.
- **Location:** Port Louis, Mauritius.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **India and Mauritius** are set to sign a **White Shipping Agreement** to enhance maritime security cooperation.
- This agreement enables the **exchange of commercial shipping information between the Indian and Mauritian navies and coast guards.**
- The move is part of India's broader strategy to counter Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean.



Key Highlights:

- **Maritime Security Agreement:**
 - **Purpose:** Strengthen monitoring capabilities in the Western Indian Ocean.
 - Enhances regional cooperation and improves maritime surveillance.
 - Part of India's **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)** initiative.



Key Highlights:

- **INS Imphal's Role in Strengthening Bilateral Ties:**
 - Made its maiden port call to Mauritius on March 10, 2025.
 - Participated in Mauritius' National Day celebrations on March 12, 2025.
 - Engaged in joint exercises with the Mauritius Coast Guard (MCGS).



Key Highlights:

- **Strategic Importance of India-Mauritius Relations:**
 - Supports Mauritius' sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, which remains under UK control.
 - India assisted in the development of airstrips and infrastructure on Agalega Island.
 - Aims to counter growing Chinese naval influence in the region.



Key Highlights:

- **Geopolitical Context – Chagos Islands Dispute:**
 - Mauritius gained independence in 1968, but the UK retains control over Chagos.
 - Diego Garcia, the largest island in Chagos, has housed a US military base since 1966.
 - A 2021 international tribunal ruled that the UK must return Chagos to Mauritius, but the UK plans to retain Diego Garcia.
 - India aims to strengthen its regional role after being caught off guard by the establishment of the US base on Diego Garcia.



Important Terms Explained:

- **White Shipping Agreement:** An agreement between countries to share commercial shipping data for enhanced maritime security.
- **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region):** India's maritime cooperation initiative to ensure stability and security in the Indian Ocean.
- **Chagos Archipelago Dispute:** A territorial conflict between Mauritius and the UK over the Chagos Islands, where the US maintains a military base on Diego Garcia.



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	INS Imphal strengthens India-Mauritius maritime security ties.
Agreement Type	White Shipping Agreement.
Purpose	Sharing commercial shipping data for maritime security.
Participants	Indian & Mauritian Navies and Coast Guards.
Strategic Importance	Enhancing security in the Western Indian Ocean.
INS Imphal's Role	Participating in Mauritius' National Day (March 12) & joint exercises.
India's SAGAR Initiative	Security and Growth for All in the Region (Announced in 2015).
Chagos Islands Dispute	UK retains control, US operates a base on Diego Garcia.
India's Stance on Chagos	Supports Mauritius' sovereignty over the region.



➤ **Where was the 4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference held?**

- A) Paris, France
- B) New Delhi, India
- C) Munich, Germany
- D) Washington D.C., USA
- E) Geneva, Switzerland



Answer

C) Munich, Germany



Event and Location:

- **Event:** 4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference.
- **Date:** March 2025.
- **Location:** Munich, Germany.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **The NMFT Conference** focuses on global efforts to combat terror financing.
- **India** has been **an active participant** since 2018, playing a crucial role in shaping international anti-terror financing policies.
- The conference addressed cross-border terror financing, digital financial threats, and the need for stronger global cooperation.



Key Highlights of India's Participation:

- **Concerns Raised by India:**
 - Terror financing increasingly involves cross-border transactions and digital networks.
 - Terrorists use evolving financial methods to transfer assets undetected.
 - India called for greater international cooperation to track and counter terror financing.



India's Efforts to Combat Terror Financing:

- **Legal and Institutional Measures:**
 - Strengthened Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967 and Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.
 - Terror Funding and Fake Currency (TFFC) Cell established under NIA (National Investigation Agency).
 - **Amendments in UAPA & NIA Act (2019):**
Allowed asset seizure, attachment, and forfeiture.



India's Efforts to Combat Terror Financing:

- **Enforcement and Intelligence Mechanisms:**
 - **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** introduced three new verticals focusing on:
 - Cyber Terrorism.
 - Explosives & Prohibited Arms.
 - Human Trafficking.
 - **Fake Indian Currency Note Coordination Centre (FCORD)** established to curb counterfeit currency circulation.



India's Efforts to Combat Terror Financing:

- **Financial Sector Regulations:**
 - **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** monitors regulations to prevent illicit financial activities.
 - **Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)** empowered to issue guidelines for detecting suspicious transactions.
 - Permanent Working Group on **Terror Financing Identification** established, including:
 - **Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs).**
 - **Social Media & Messaging Platforms.**
 - **Crowdfunding Platforms.**



Addressing Virtual Digital Assets (Cryptocurrency) Risks:

- **Virtual Digital Asset Service Providers (VDA SPs)** brought under PMLA, 2002.
- **Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) compliance** made mandatory for cryptocurrency firms.
- Enhanced monitoring through KYC requirements and risk assessment.



Technology-Driven Countermeasures:

- **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)** developed as an IT platform for intelligence sharing among enforcement agencies.
- **Strengthened real-time inter-agency coordination** to track suspicious financial activities.



India's Global Role in NMFT:

- India has been **actively participating in NMFT since 2018.**
- **Enhancing cooperation with global partners for more targeted enforcement against terror financing.**



Important Terms Explained:

- **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967:**
A law aimed at preventing unlawful activities, including terrorism-related offenses.
- **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002:**
Provides for confiscation of properties involved in money laundering activities.
- **Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND):** An agency under the Ministry of Finance responsible for analyzing financial transactions related to suspicious activities.



Important Terms Explained:

- **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID):** A centralized intelligence-sharing platform connecting security agencies for counter-terrorism efforts.
- **No Money for Terror (NMFT) Conference:** An international forum for coordinating efforts to combat terror financing.



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	India's role in the 4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference.
Conference Name	4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference.
Location	Munich, Germany.
India's Key Concerns	Cross-border terror financing, digital financial threats, and need for global cooperation.
Legal Framework	UAPA (1967), PMLA (2002), Amendments in UAPA & NIA Act (2019).
Key Enforcement Bodies	NIA, FCORD, FIU-IND, RBI.
New Vertical Focus Areas	Cyber Terrorism, Explosives & Prohibited Arms, Human Trafficking.
Regulatory Actions on Crypto	VDA SPs brought under PMLA, AML/CFT compliance mandated.
Technology Used	NATGRID for intelligence sharing, FIU-IND for financial monitoring.
India's Global Role	Active participant in NMFT since 2018, enhancing targeted enforcement coordination.



➤ **Who represented India at the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW)?**

- A) Nirmala Sitharaman
- B) Smriti Irani
- C) Annpurna Devi
- D) Droupadi Murmu
- E) S. Jaishankar

Answer

C) Annpurna Devi



Event and Location:

- **Event:** 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW).
- **Date:** March 10-21, 2025.
- **Location:** UN Headquarters, New York.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **India** actively participated in **the 69th UNCSW session**, focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Union Minister for Women and Child Development, **Smt. Annpurna Devi**, led India's delegation.
- The session addressed global efforts to accelerate gender policies and strengthen women's rights.



Key Highlights of India's Participation:

- **India's Leadership at UNCSW 69:**
 - Smt. Annpurna Devi delivered India's National Statement at the Ministerial Forum.
 - India emphasized a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to women's empowerment.
 - Reaffirmed commitment to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Key Highlights of India's Participation:

- **Focus on Gender Equality & Women's Development:**
 - Addressed 12 critical areas of concern under the Beijing Platform for Action.
 - Highlighted flagship schemes improving women's health, education, nutrition, and financial independence.
 - Strengthened India's global stance on gender-inclusive policymaking.



Key Highlights of India's Participation:

- **Ministerial Round Table & Policy Advocacy:**
 - Participated in discussions on National Mechanisms for Gender Equality.
 - Stressed the need to recommit, resource, and accelerate gender-related policies.
 - Advocated for greater outreach and implementation of women's rights programs.



Bilateral Meetings with Global Leaders:

- **India strengthened gender cooperation through meetings with:**
 - Ms. Melrose Karminty (Sierra Leone).
 - Mr. Sodyq S. Safoev (Uzbekistan).
 - Dr. Vindhya Persaud (Guyana).
 - Ms. Antonia Orellana Guarello (Chile).
- **Overview of the 69th UNCSW Session:**
 - Largest intergovernmental forum for gender equality and women's empowerment.
 - Operates under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
 - Engages UN member states, private sector, civil society, and global organizations.



Bilateral Meetings with Global Leaders:

- **India's Vision for Women's Welfare:**
 - "The welfare of women and children is at the core of our nation's progress."
 - Aims to empower every woman and nurture every child in a safe environment.



Important Terms Explained:

- **Beijing Platform for Action:** A UN framework adopted in 1995 to advance gender equality globally.
- **UNCSW (United Nations Commission on the Status of Women):** A UN body dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's rights.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** A UN agenda with 17 global goals, including gender equality (SDG 5).



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	India participated in the 69th UNCSW session.
Event	69th UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW).
Date & Venue	March 10-21, 2025 – UN Headquarters, New York.
India's Representative	Smt. Annpurna Devi, Union Minister, WCD.
Key Themes	Gender equality, women's rights, SDGs.
India's Focus Areas	Women's health, education, economic empowerment, nutrition.
Ministerial Round Table	Strengthening national gender equality mechanisms.
Bilateral Meetings	Sierra Leone, Uzbekistan, Guyana, Chile.
Global Participants	UN Member States, private sector, NGOs, civil society.
Key Message	Commitment to holistic women's empowerment and child welfare.



➤ **What was the primary focus of the Water Sustainability Conference 2025?**

- A) Domestic water conservation strategies
- B) Industrial Water Use Efficiency
- C) Agricultural water management
- D) Groundwater depletion solutions
- E) Urban water distribution systems

Answer

B) Industrial Water Use Efficiency



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** Water Sustainability Conference 2025.
- **Date:** March 12, 2025.
- **Location:** NDMC Convention Centre, New Delhi.



Mandates and Objectives:

- Hosted by the **Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE)** under the **National Water Mission (NWM)**, Ministry of Jal Shakti, in collaboration with **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**.
- Aimed at enhancing Industrial Water Use Efficiency by encouraging industries to adopt water conservation technologies and sustainable practices.
- Promoted **industry-government partnerships** for sustainable water use.



Key Highlights:

- **Inauguration & Leadership Address:**
 - Inaugurated by Shri C. R. Patil, Union Minister of Jal Shakti.
 - Emphasized the 4R approach (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recharge) and introduced Respect as the 5th principle.
 - Highlighted successful models like PEPL Kadodara (Surat) and Vapi Paper Industry for industrial water use efficiency.



Key Highlights:

- **Government's Vision & Strategy:**
 - Highlighted key initiatives like Jal Jeevan Mission and Jal Shakti Abhiyan for sustainable water management.
 - Encouraged industries to embrace circular economy models focusing on water treatment, reuse, and recycling.



Key Highlights:

- **Keynote Address & Expert Insights:**
 - Ms. Debashree Mukherjee (Secretary, DoWR, RD&GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti) discussed groundwater recharge, river health, and effluent management.
 - Dr. Syamal Kumar Sarkar (TERI Fellow, Former WR & DoPT Secretary) projected India's industrial water demand to reach 151 BCM by 2050, urging immediate efficiency measures.



Key Highlights:

- **Technical & Ministerial Sessions:**
 - **Ministerial Session:** Government strategies to accelerate water efficiency, chaired by Shri Praveen Gupta (CEA Member).
 - **Technical Session I:** Benchmarking industrial water efficiency, featuring case studies from NTPC, SAIL, and CPCB, chaired by Dr. S.K. Sarkar.
 - **Technical Session II:** Achieving Water Neutrality & Net Zero Future, chaired by Dr. Sunil Kumar Ambast (Chairman, CGWB).



Key Recommendations & Outcomes:

- Encourage self-regulation through industrial water audits.
- Adopt water-efficient processes for reuse, recycling, and groundwater recharge.
- Implement **water footprint marking** and **BIS standards** for industrial products.
- Promote **Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD)** and **advanced water recycling technologies**.
- Strengthen **policy frameworks** and **introduce real-time water usage monitoring**.
- Enhance **industry-government collaboration** for sustainable water solutions.



Important Terms Explained:

- **4R Approach:** A strategy for water conservation focusing on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Recharge, with Respect added as the 5th principle.
- **Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD):** A water treatment process ensuring zero wastewater discharge by recovering and recycling water.
- **Circular Economy Model:** A system aimed at minimizing waste and maximizing resource efficiency through reuse and recycling.
- **Water Neutrality:** A concept where water consumption is balanced by water conservation measures to maintain sustainability.



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	Water Sustainability Conference 2025 focused on Industrial Water Use Efficiency.
Event Name	Water Sustainability Conference 2025.
Date & Venue	March 12, 2025, NDMC Convention Centre, New Delhi.
Organizer	BWUE, NWM, Ministry of Jal Shakti & TERI.
Chief Guest	Shri C. R. Patil, Union Minister of Jal Shakti.
Key Focus	Enhancing Industrial Water Use Efficiency.
4R Approach	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recharge + Respect (5th principle).
Notable Case Studies	PEPL Kadodara (Surat), Vapi Paper Industry.
Technical Sessions	Industrial water efficiency, benchmarking, water neutrality, ZLD, policy regulations.
Key Recommendations	Industrial water audits, circular economy, real-time monitoring, advanced recycling technologies.
Outcome	Strengthened industry-government collaboration for sustainable water management.



➤ **What is the main objective of the PM-YUVA 3.0 scheme?**

- A) Encouraging students to pursue careers in science and technology
- B) Providing financial assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs
- C) Mentoring young authors to promote reading and writing culture
- D) Offering scholarships for higher education abroad
- E) Organizing national-level competitive exams for literature enthusiasts

Answer

C) Mentoring young authors to promote reading and writing culture



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Event and Location:

- **Event:** PM-YUVA 3.0 (Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors).
- **Date:** Launched on March 11, 2025.
- **Location:** India.



Mandates and Objectives:

- **PM-YUVA 3.0** aims to mentor young authors (below 30 years of age) to promote reading, writing, and book culture in India.
- The scheme aligns with the Prime Minister's vision of **encouraging youth** to understand India's cultural and intellectual legacy.
- Implemented by **the National Book Trust (NBT), India**, under the Ministry of Education.



Key Highlights of PM-YUVA 3.0:

- **Program Structure:**
 - **Total Authors Selected:** 50.
 - **Mentorship Duration:** June 30, 2025 – December 30, 2025.
 - **Platform for Selection:** www.mygov.in.
 - **Books Published In:** Multiple Indian languages and English.



Key Highlights of PM-YUVA 3.0:

- **Objectives of the Initiative:**
 - **Promote Reading & Writing Culture:** Encourage youth to engage with India's history, culture, and heritage.
 - **Develop Young Authors:** Provide structured mentorship and guidance to emerging writers.
 - **Showcase Indian Literature Globally:** Highlight India's contributions on the world stage.



Themes of PM-YUVA 3.0:

- 1. Contribution of Indian Diaspora in Nation Building**
 - Highlights the political, economic, and cultural contributions of Indians abroad.
 - Examines how the diaspora influences global policies while maintaining ties with India.
- 2. Indian Knowledge System**
 - Explores ancient wisdom, scientific contributions, and philosophical traditions.
 - Showcases how India's intellectual heritage has influenced global thought.



Themes of PM-YUVA 3.0:

3. Makers of Modern India (1950-2025)

- Chronicles contributions of visionaries in education, science, economy, and social empowerment.
- Presents India's post-independence journey through impactful narratives.



Role of the National Book Trust (NBT), India:

- **Publishing & Translation:** Books developed under the scheme will be published by NBT and translated into multiple languages.
- **Literary Engagements:** Selected authors will interact with renowned writers and participate in literary festivals.
- **National Camp:** A special National Camp will be held at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2026.



Impact and Significance:

- **Empowering Youth for Nation-Building:**
 - India's youth population (66%) will be equipped with intellectual and creative opportunities.
- **Alignment with NEP 2020:**
 - Supports the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by fostering leadership and education-driven development.
- **Cultural and Literary Exchange:**
 - Promotes Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat by encouraging linguistic and cultural diversity.
- **Global Recognition of Indian Literature:**
 - Helps young Indian authors gain international exposure through global literary collaborations.



Important Terms Explained:

- **National Book Trust (NBT):** An autonomous publishing house under the Ministry of Education responsible for promoting Indian literature.
- **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat:** A government initiative promoting national integration through cultural exchange.
- **NEP 2020 (National Education Policy):** A framework aimed at transforming India's education system with a focus on research, innovation, and skill development.



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Why in News?	PM-YUVA 3.0 launched to mentor young Indian authors.
Launch Date	March 11, 2025.
Implementing Agency	National Book Trust (NBT), India.
Target Audience	Authors below 30 years of age.
Major Themes	1) Contribution of Indian Diaspora. 2) Indian Knowledge System. 3) Makers of Modern India (1950-2025).
Application Period	March 11 – April 10, 2025.
Total Authors Selected	50.
Mentorship Period	June 30 – December 30, 2025.
National Camp	New Delhi World Book Fair 2026.
Languages	Books published in multiple Indian languages and English.



QUICK RECALL



- **Shubman Gill won the ICC Men's Player of the Month award.**
- **Khelo India Winter Games 2025 was held in Leh, Ladakh, and Jammu & Kashmir.**
- **India became the top source of FDI into Dubai in 2024, surpassing the U.S., France, and the U.K.**
- **Kisan Credit Card (KCC) NPAs increased by 42% between 2021 and 2024.**
- **The Finance Ministry approved PFC's Zero Coupon Bonds worth ₹10,000 crore.**
- **India's retail inflation dropped to 3.61% in February 2025.**
- **India's CPI-based inflation fell to 3.61% in February 2025.**
- **India's IIP recorded 5.0% growth in January 2025, up from 3.2% in December 2024.**
- **ICICI Bank appointed Kamal Wali as the Head of Security Operations.**
- **Jayshree Vencatesan became the first Indian to win the Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use.**



QUICK RECALL



- **Delhi International Airport won the ASQ Award 2024 for Best Airport Over 40 MPPA in Asia-Pacific.**
- **Muthoot Microfin won two Gold Awards at the SKOCH Awards 2025.**
- **Andrew Barto & Richard Sutton won the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award for Reinforcement Learning.**
- **NASA is launching SPHEREx and PUNCH missions aboard a SpaceX Falcon Rocket.**
- **India and Mauritius are set to sign a White Shipping Agreement for maritime security.**
- **The 4th NMFT Conference was held in Munich, Germany, in March 2025.**
- **India participated in the 69th Session of UNCSW from March 10-21, 2025.**
- **Water Sustainability Conference 2025 focused on promoting Industrial Water Use Efficiency.**
- **PM-YUVA 3.0 was launched on March 11, 2025, by the Ministry of Education.**



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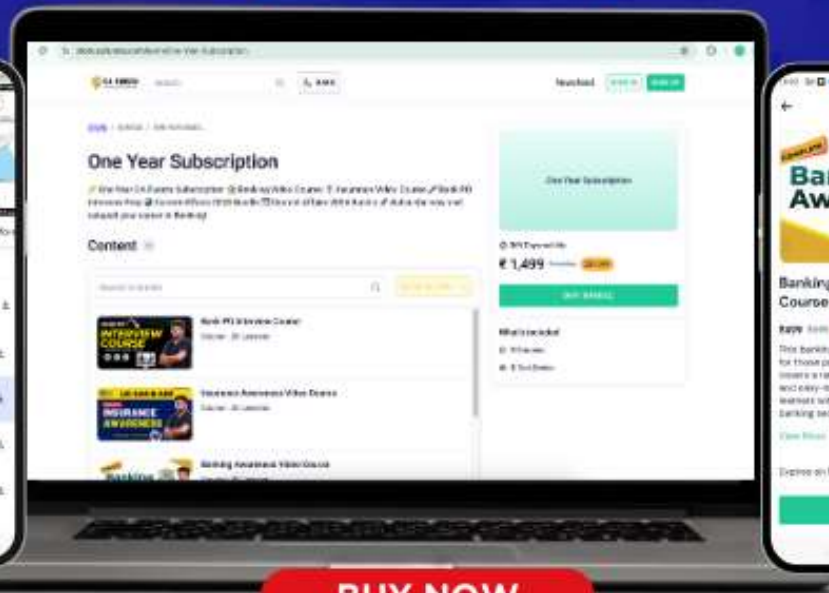
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