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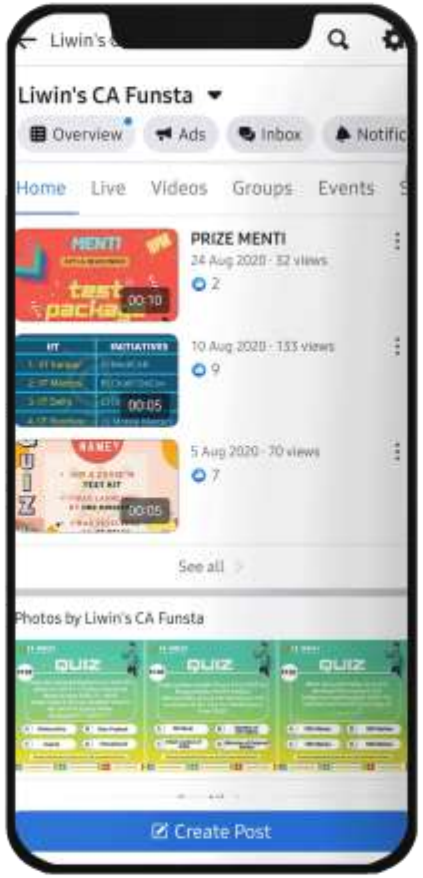

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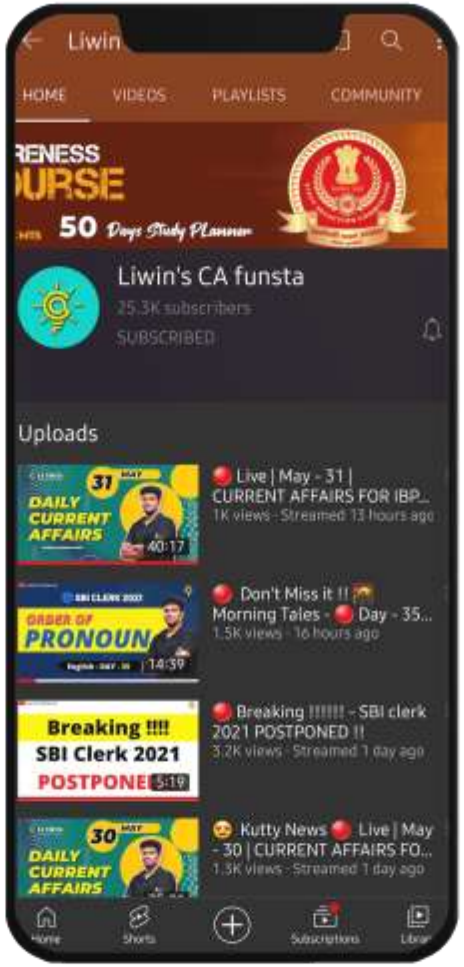

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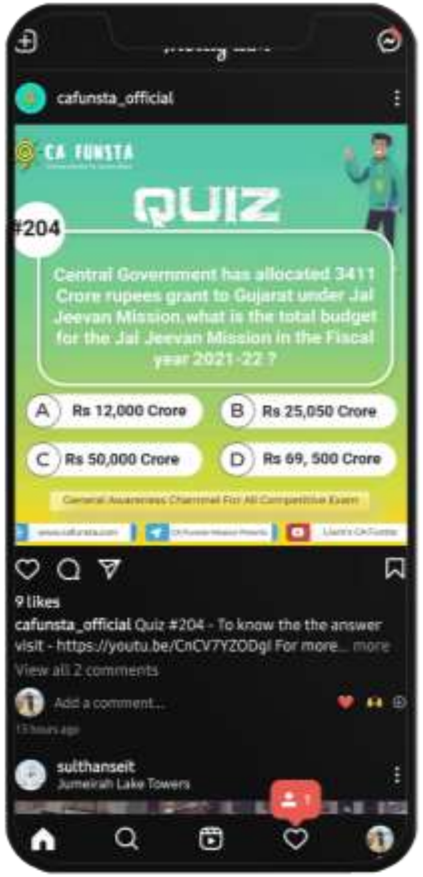

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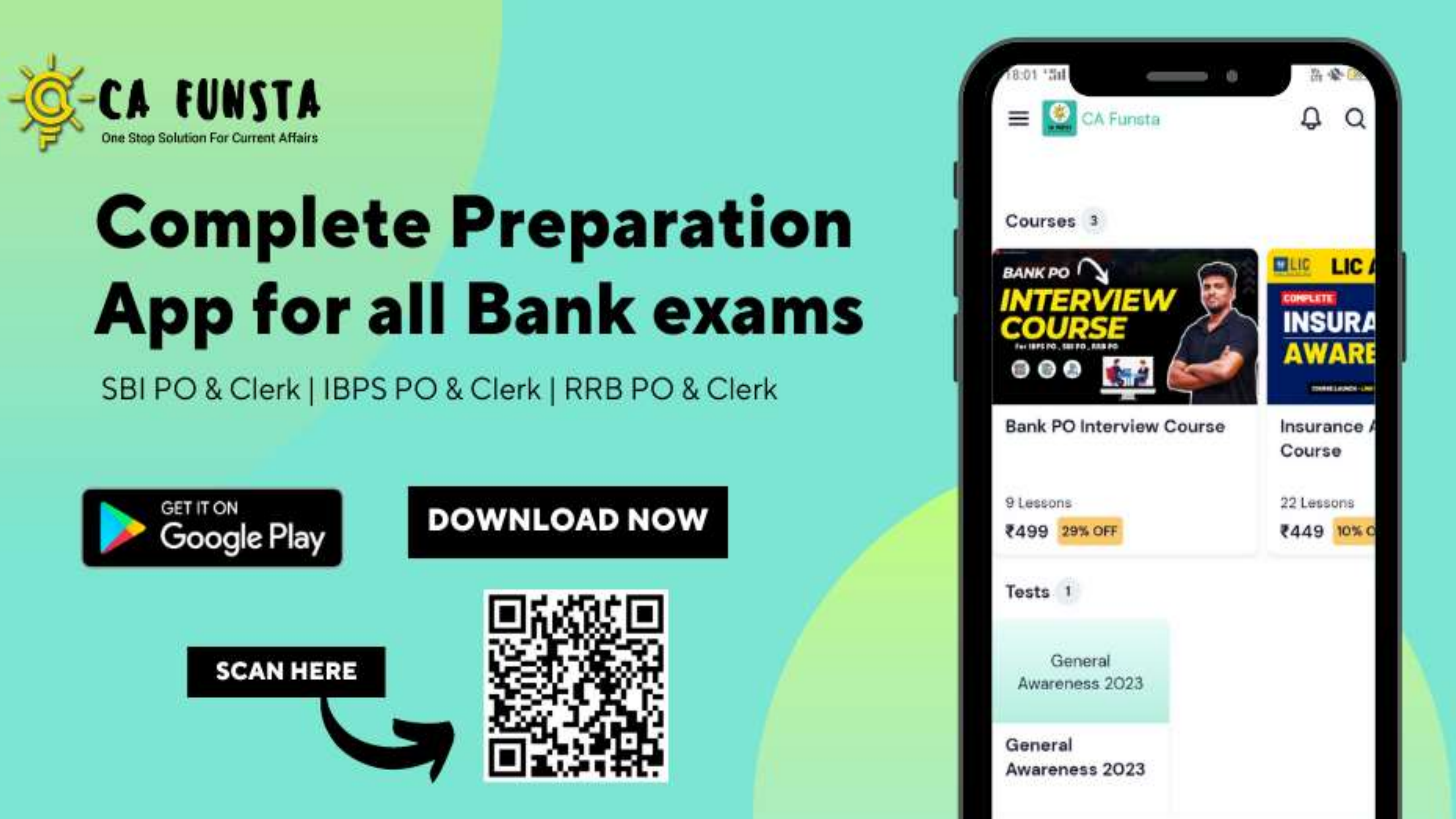
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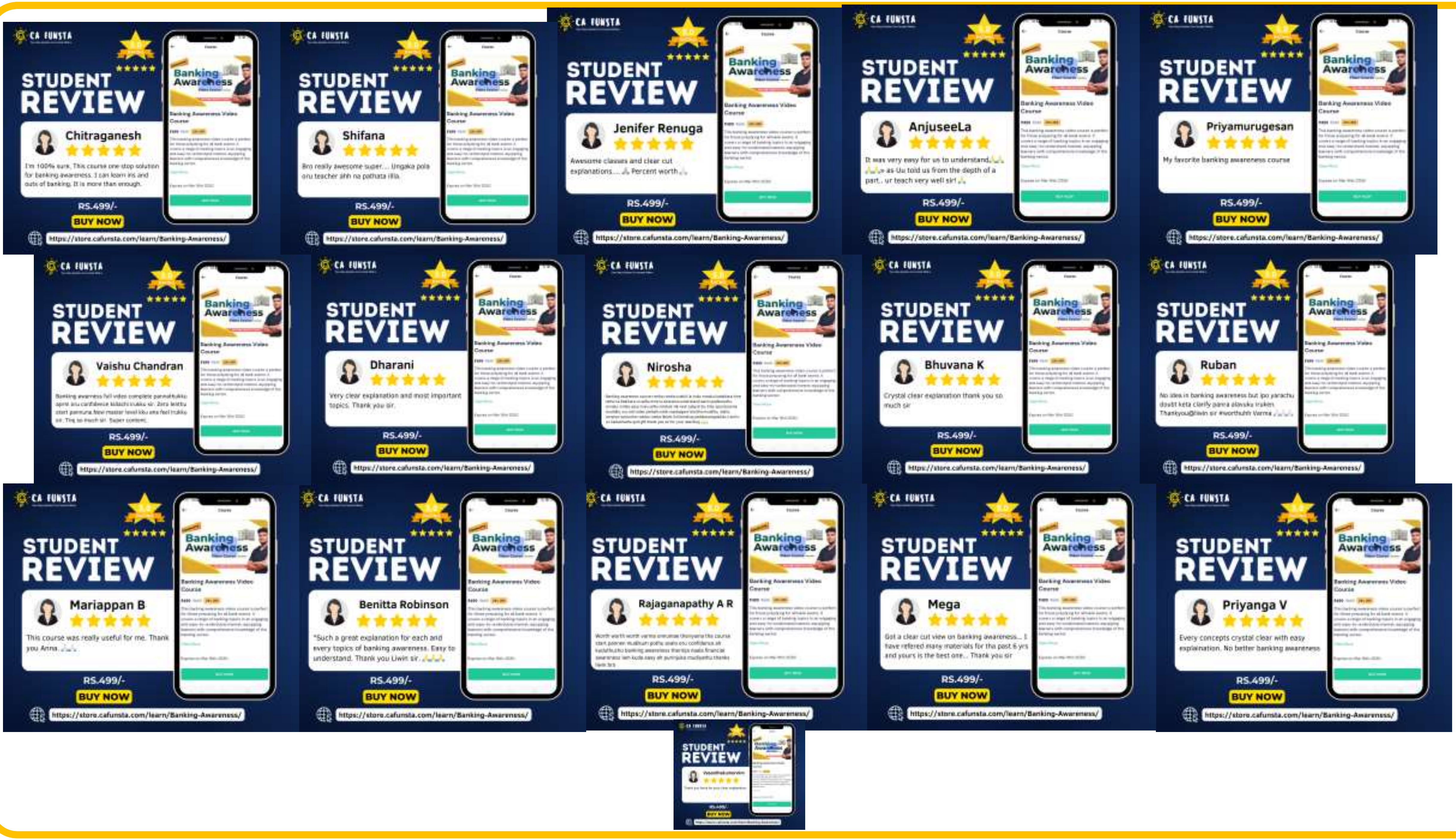

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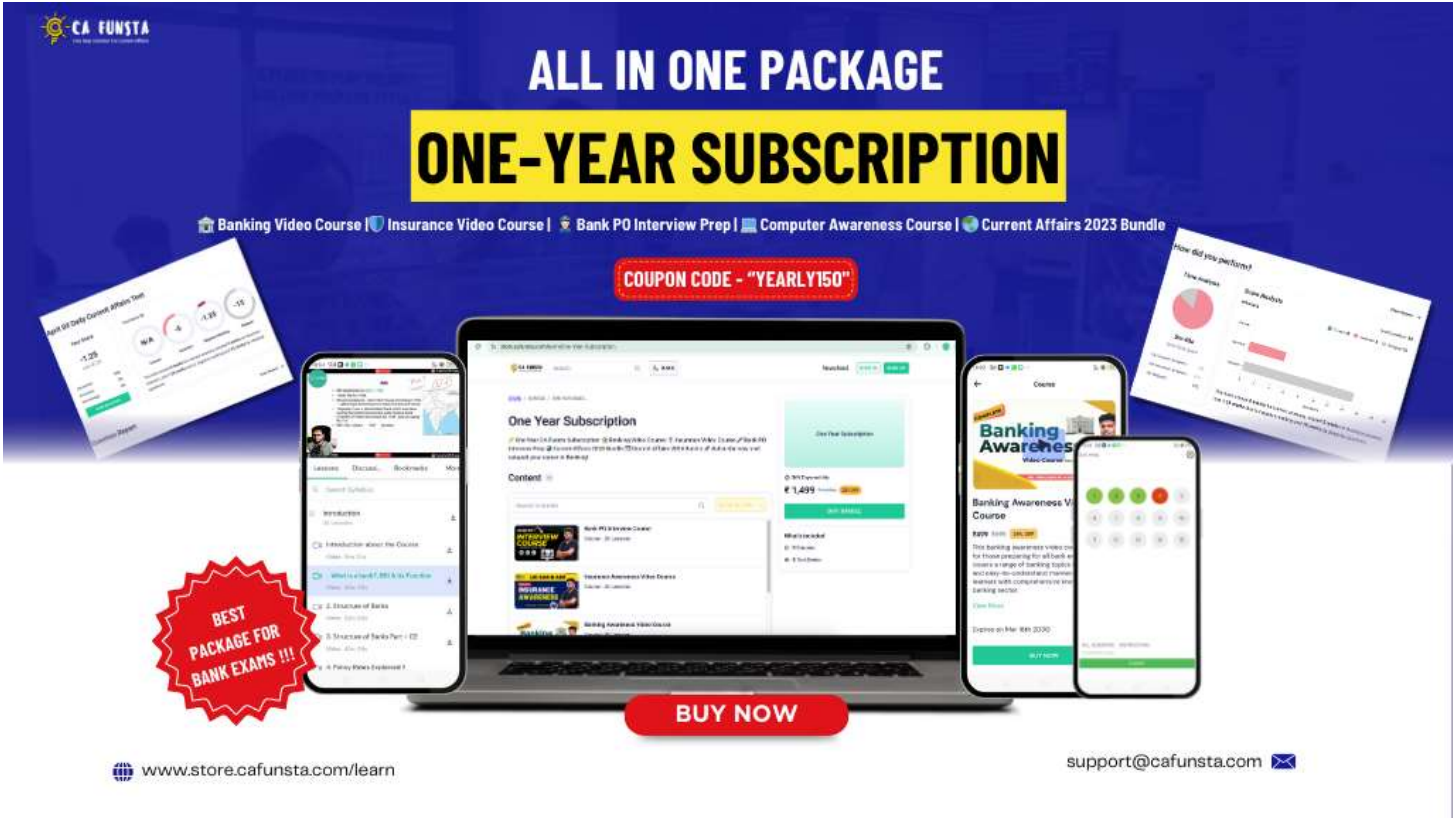

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Important Days

- **When is Ordnance Factory Day observed in India?**

A) January 26
B) February 15
C) March 18
D) April 5
E) August 15

Answer
C) March 18

Important Days

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Ordnance Factory Day 2025 Observance.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** India.
- **Why in News:** Ordnance Factory Day is observed annually on March 18 to mark the establishment of India's first ordnance factory in Cossipore, Kolkata (1802).

History of Indian Ordnance Factories:

- **Colonial-Era Development:**
  - **1775:** Board of Ordnance established at Fort William, Kolkata under British rule.
  - **1787:** First gunpowder factory set up in Ishapore, production started in 1791.
  - **1801:** Gun Carriage Agency established at Cossipore, Kolkata (now Gun & Shell Factory, Cossipore).
  - **March 18, 1802:** Operations began, marking the first Ordnance Factory in India.

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History of Indian Ordnance Factories:

- **Post-Independence Expansion:**
  - **1947**: India had 18 Ordnance Factories at the time of independence.
  - Expanded to 41 factories, including those in Nalanda and Korwa, producing arms, ammunition, vehicles, and defence equipment.
  - **2021**: Indian government restructured Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) into seven Defence PSUs.

Important Days

History of Indian Ordnance Factories:

- **Significance of Indian Ordnance Factories:**
  - Known as the Fourth Arm of Defence, supporting Army, Navy, and Air Force.
  - OFB was ranked 37th largest defence producer globally, 2nd in Asia, and the largest in India.
  - Plays a key role in research, development, testing, logistics, and production of defence systems.

Transformation of Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) in 2021:

- **Why Was OFB Restructured?**
  - **October 2021:** OFB was dissolved, and its functions were transferred to seven new Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).
  - **Aim**: To increase efficiency, competitiveness, and self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

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The Seven New Defence PSUs and Their Specializations:

DPSU	Specialization
Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited (AWEIL)	Small arms, rifles, and military-grade weapons
Gliders India Limited (GIL)	Parachutes and airborne defence equipment
Troop Comforts Limited (TCL)	Defence clothing, boots, and protective gear
Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (AVNL)	Battle tanks and armoured vehicles
Munitions India Limited (MIL)	Ammunition, explosives, and artillery shells
Yantra India Limited (YIL)	Engineering components and mechanical defence equipment
India Optel Limited (IOL)	Optics, surveillance systems, and night vision devices

India's Defence Capabilities and Role of Ordnance Factories:

- India exports arms, ammunition, and defence equipment to over 30 countries.
- Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative aims to make India self-reliant in defence manufacturing.
- Continuous modernization and technological advancements to strengthen national security.

Key Achievements of Ordnance Factories:

- Development of 12.7 mm Stabilized Remote-Controlled Gun (SRCG).
- Production of 14.5/20 mm Anti-Material Rifle.
- Indigenous manufacturing of rifles, ammunition, and battle tanks.

Objectives of Indian Ordnance Factories:

- **Production of Defence Equipment:** Manufacturing arms, ammunition, tanks, and military gear for Indian Armed Forces.
- **Modernization of Production:** Upgrading manufacturing processes and technology for better efficiency.
- **Research & Development:** Investing in advanced technology through in-house R&D and Transfer of Technology (ToT).
- **Global Expansion:** Strengthening exports and international collaborations.

Important Days

Important Terms Explained:

- **Ordnance Factory Board (OFB):**
  - The government body managing ordnance factories until 2021, later restructured into seven Defence PSUs.
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat Initiative:**
  - A campaign launched by the Indian government to promote self-reliance in manufacturing, including defence production.

Important Days

Tabular Summary:

Aspect	Details
Event	Ordnance Factory Day 2025
Date	March 18, 2025
First Ordnance Factory	Cossipore, Kolkata (Established in 1802)
Established By	British East India Company
Pre-Independence Expansion	First Gunpowder Factory (Ishapore, 1787)
Number of Factories (1947)	18
Number of Factories (2021)	41 (Before restructuring)
OFB Restructuring (2021)	Converted into 7 Defence PSUs
Significance	Known as the Fourth Arm of Defence
Global Ranking of OFB	37th largest defence producer
Key Defence PSUs	AWEIL, GIL, TCL, AVNL, MIL, YIL, IOL
Key Achievements	12.7 mm SRCG, Anti-Material Rifle, Battle Tanks

- **What is the primary objective of SBI's new project finance unit?**

A) Focus on traditional infrastructure projects
B) Provide financing solutions for AI, fintech, and e-commerce
C) Increase retail banking operations
D) Expand international banking operations
E) Strengthen personal loan services

Answer

B) Provide financing solutions for AI, fintech, and e-commerce

BANKING AND FINANCE

Event and Location:

- **Event:** SBI to launch a project finance unit for AI, fintech, and e-commerce.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** India.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Introduction:

- **SBI Initiative:** State Bank of India (SBI) is launching a dedicated unit for project financing in AI, fintech, and e-commerce.
- **Banking Expansion:** The move is part of SBI's strategy to expand beyond traditional infrastructure financing.
- **Technology-Focused Growth:** SBI aims to strengthen financial support for India's growing digital economy.

Objective of the Initiative:

- **Sector Diversification:** SBI wants to increase its project financing reach beyond infrastructure.
- **Boosting Innovation:** The initiative is designed to fund AI, fintech, and e-commerce ventures.
- **Enhancing Financial Inclusion:** This step will provide structured financial solutions for emerging industries.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Need for the Unit:

- **Market Demand:** AI, fintech, and e-commerce businesses require large-scale funding for expansion.
- **Economic Growth:** Supporting these industries contributes to India's digital and financial development.
- **Bank's Growth Strategy:** SBI is leveraging this unit to tap into new business opportunities.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Target Sectors:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Financing AI startups and companies for research and development.
- **Fintech:** Supporting financial technology firms in digital banking and payment solutions.
- **E-Commerce:** Providing capital for digital retail and online marketplace expansion.

Implementation Timeline:

- **One-Year Plan:** SBI aims to complete the unit's setup within a year.
- **Strategic Execution:** The unit will be implemented in phases for effective deployment.
- **Operational Readiness:** SBI is accelerating the process to ensure quick market entry.

Recruitment Strategy:

- **Specialized Professionals:** SBI will hire experts in AI, fintech, and project finance.
- **Talent Acquisition:** The bank will onboard industry professionals with strong sector knowledge.
- **Capacity Building:** The recruitment drive will focus on enhancing expertise in new-age financing.

Consultancy Support:

- **External Expertise:** SBI is appointing an external consultant for guidance.
- **Structured Approach:** The consultant will help in setting up the financial framework.
- **Industry Best Practices:** Insights from global markets will be integrated into SBI's financing model.

Expansion of SBI's Project Finance Portfolio:

- **Traditional Focus:** SBI has historically concentrated on infrastructure projects.
- **Diversified Approach:** The bank is now including AI, fintech, and digital commerce in its portfolio.
- **Increased Loan Accessibility:** More businesses in emerging sectors will benefit from structured financing.

Government Alignment:

- **Support for Infrastructure:** The initiative aligns with India's infrastructure expansion plans.
- **Digital Economy Growth:** SBI is playing a key role in India's transition to a digital economy.
- **Government Policy Backing:** The move supports government policies on AI and fintech development.

Past Project Financing Performance:

- **Previous Success:** SBI financed 48 large-scale projects in FY 2024.
- **Infrastructure Development:** These projects mainly focused on roads, power, and transport.
- **Future Expansion:** The new unit will help diversify beyond traditional infrastructure.

New Name of the Unit:

- **Official Name:** The unit will be called the "Center of Excellence for Project Financing."
- **Significance:** It reflects SBI’s commitment to research and financing excellence.
- **Reputation Building:** The center aims to become a knowledge hub for project financing.

Additional Role of the Unit:

- **Financial Advisory:** The unit will share insights with other financial institutions.
- **Cross-Bank Collaboration:** It will serve as a model for other banks to expand their project financing.
- **Industry Growth:** The insights will help in strengthening India's overall financial ecosystem.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Impact on AI, Fintech, and E-Commerce Sectors:

- **Access to Capital:** Businesses in AI, fintech, and e-commerce will have structured financing solutions.
- **Boost to Startups:** New companies will receive easier access to credit.
- **Growth Acceleration:** The financing will drive rapid development in digital and tech-driven industries.

Strategic Importance:

- **Innovation-Driven Banking:** SBI is focusing on financing modern, technology-driven industries.
- **Enhancing Competitiveness:** This initiative positions SBI as a leader in digital economy financing.
- **Strengthening Market Presence:** SBI's move will set a benchmark for other banks.

Future Growth Prospects:

- **Expansion to Other Sectors:** SBI may include deep-tech, agritech, and spacetech in future financing plans.
- **International Collaboration:** SBI might explore global partnerships for project financing.
- **Long-Term Vision:** The bank’s long-term goal is to become a leader in financing next-generation industries.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	SBI to launch a project finance unit for AI, fintech, and e-commerce.
Objective	Expand SBI's project finance beyond infrastructure.
Need for the Unit	Support India's growing technology-driven industries.
Target Sectors	AI, fintech, e-commerce, and renewable energy.
Implementation Timeline	Completion targeted within one year.
Recruitment Strategy	Hiring specialized professionals.
Consultancy Support	Appointing an external consultant.
Past Funding Success	Financed 48 large projects in FY 2024.
New Unit Name	Center of Excellence for Project Financing.
Government Alignment	Supports India's infrastructure expansion under PM Modi's vision.
Additional Role	Sharing insights with other financial institutions.

BANKING AND FINANCE

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➢ **What is the primary objective of the Frontier Seed (Pacific) program launched by ADB?**

A) Strengthening private sector growth and ocean impact in the Pacific
B) Expanding tourism infrastructure in Pacific island nations
C) Providing financial aid to governments in the Pacific region
D) Supporting only large-scale industries in Southeast Asia
E) Establishing new maritime trade routes for the Pacific

ADB

Answer

A) Strengthening private sector growth and ocean impact in the Pacific

Event and Location:

- **Event:** ADB launches "Frontier Seed (Pacific)" program to boost private sector growth and ocean impact.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** Pacific Region.

Introduction to the Frontier Seed (Pacific) Program:

- **Launched By:** Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- **Objective:** Promote private sector development, strengthen local capital markets, and drive economic resilience in the Pacific region.
- **Funding Amount:** $4 million, with contributions from multiple global partners.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Key Focus Areas:

- **Private Sector Growth:** Support local businesses and industries.
- **Sustainable Development:** Enhance economic resilience and environmental sustainability.
- **Ocean Impact:** Support coastal adaptation, marine economy, and data-driven business models.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Initial Investments and Beneficiaries:

1. **SeaPAC Pte Ltd (Fiji):**
   - Investment: $200,000 technical assistance from ADB.
   - **Purpose:**
     - Commercializing Fiji's prawn industry.
     - Enhancing food security and aquaculture development.
2. **Kahuto Pacific:**
   - Investment: $200,000 technical assistance from ADB.
   - **Purpose:**
     - Strengthening aerial mapping services.
     - Improving coastal data collection and management.

ADB's Role in the Initiative:

- **Providing Risk Capital:** Helping small businesses attract further investments.
- **Encouraging Entrepreneurship:** Supporting innovative business models for regional development.
- **Strengthening Local Markets:** Facilitating sustainable financing for businesses.

Fiji Government's Support:

- Deputy Prime Minister Manoa Kamikamica endorsed the initiative.
- Recognized as a key step towards economic resilience and self-sufficiency.
- Aligns with Fiji's private sector growth and job creation strategy.

Funding & Key International Partners:

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB):** $2 million committed.
- **ORCA Trust Fund:** $2 million contribution.
- **Other Supporters:**
  - Nordic Development Fund.
  - United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK FCDO).

Impact of the Program on the Pacific Economy:

1. Strengthening Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):

- Encourages entrepreneurial growth.
- Supports locally-driven business initiatives.

2. Enhancing Economic Resilience:

- Builds long-term investment opportunities.
- Promotes self-sufficiency and sustainable economic models.

3. Improving Ocean-Based Industries:

- Supports marine economy and climate adaptation.
- Enhances coastal management through better data collection.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	ADB launches "Frontier Seed (Pacific)" program.
Objective	Strengthening private sector growth and ocean impact in the Pacific.
Total Funding	$4 million ($2M from ADB, $2M from ORCA Trust Fund).
Initial Beneficiaries	SeaPAC Pte Ltd (Fiji) – Prawn industry development.
Kahuto Pacific	Aerial mapping and coastal data enhancement.
Fiji Government's Stand	Supports job creation and self-sufficiency.
Key Funding Partners	ADB, ORCA Trust Fund, Nordic Development Fund, UK FCDO.
ADB's Role	Providing risk capital to attract further investment in the region.

- By 2030, what productivity gain is expected in Indian banking operations due to GenAI adoption?

A) 28%
B) 34%
C) 38%
D) 46%
E) 52%

Answer
D) 46%

Event and Location:

- **Event:** EY Report: GenAI to Drive Productivity Gains of up to 46% in Indian Banking by 2030.
- **Date:** March 17, 2025.
- **Location:** India.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Key Findings from the EY Report on GenAI in Financial Services:

- GenAI adoption in financial services is accelerating, with 74% of firms initiating proof-of-concept projects.
- 42% of organizations have actively allocated budgets for AI initiatives.
- 11% of firms have moved from pilots to full-scale deployment.
- NBFCs and insurers are leading GenAI adoption, particularly in automation and customer engagement.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Projected Productivity Gains by 2030:

- **Banking Operations:** Up to 46% improvement in efficiency.
- **Sales & Customer Service:** 38% to 40% productivity gains.
- **Credit & Collections:** 34% to 36% increase in efficiency.
- **Insurance Industry:** Customer service expected to improve by 48%.
- **New Business Processing, Sales & Partner Management:** 45% to 48% boost.
- **Claims Management & Product Development:** Emerging as high-impact areas.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Areas Where GenAI is Transforming Banking & Financial Services:

1. **AI-Driven Customer Service & Workflow Automation:**
    - **Voice Bots & Email Automation:** Reducing response time and improving accuracy.
    - **AI-Powered Collections Platforms:** Enhancing efficiency in loan recovery and credit risk assessment.
2. **AI in Risk Assessment & Compliance:**
    - **Automated Underwriting Copilots:** Improving risk evaluation & loan approvals.
    - **Cybersecurity Copilots:** Strengthening fraud detection and risk mitigation strategies.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Areas Where GenAI is Transforming Banking & Financial Services:

3. GenAI Integration with Core Banking Systems:

- **Loan Origination & Credit Decisioning:** Speeding up approval processes.
- **Card Management Platforms:** Automating dispute resolution & fraud detection.

4. Real-Time Business Intelligence & Predictive Analytics:

- NBFCs leveraging AI for real-time insights into profitability & operational efficiencies.
- AI-powered dashboards optimizing decision-making in financial services.

Challenges & Regulatory Compliance in GenAI Adoption:

1. **Data Localization & Cybersecurity:**
   - Financial firms must host GenAI within India using on-premise solutions or India-based cloud providers.
   - Strict data privacy laws require masking Personally Identifiable Information (PII) before processing AI queries.
2. **Regulatory Constraints & Governance Issues:**
   - Ensuring AI models comply with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and SEBI regulations.
   - GenAI must align with banking risk management frameworks to prevent bias & ethical issues.

Challenges & Regulatory Compliance in GenAI Adoption:

3. Adoption & Scaling Challenges:

- Enterprise-wide AI integration requires significant investment in infrastructure & talent development.
- Legacy systems pose hurdles in seamless AI deployment across financial institutions.

Future Outlook for GenAI in Indian Financial Services:

- Large banks are accelerating AI adoption, focusing on enterprise-scale AI integration.
- NBFCs are aggressively deploying GenAI in business intelligence & workflow automation.
- AI-powered customer service platforms are reshaping customer interactions via WhatsApp, email, SMS, and voice channels.
- Regulatory clarity and AI governance frameworks will be crucial for large-scale AI adoption.

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Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	EY Report: GenAI to Boost Productivity in Indian Banking by 46% by 2030.
AI Adoption Rate	74% of financial firms initiated proof-of-concept AI projects.
Investment in GenAI	42% of firms actively allocating AI budgets.
Productivity Gains in Banking	Up to 46% efficiency improvement in banking operations.
Sales & Customer Service Impact	38% to 40% improvement by 2030.
Insurance Sector Gains	Customer service expected to see a 48% efficiency boost.
Key AI Applications	Voice bots, underwriting copilots, AI-powered compliance systems.
Regulatory Challenges	Data localization, cybersecurity, and RBI compliance.
Future of AI in Banking	Enterprise-wide AI adoption for operational efficiency.

BANKING AND FINANCE

➢ **Which of the following state-owned firms have been shortlisted for RBI's currency management project?**

A) Engineers India Ltd (EIL) & MECON
B) NTPC & BHEL
C) HAL & DRDO
D) ONGC & GAIL
E) NALCO & SAIL

Answer

A) Engineers India Ltd (EIL) & MECON

Event and Location:

- **Event:** RBI Shortlists Six Firms for Currency Management Infrastructure Modernization Project.
- **Date:** March 16, 2025.
- **Location:** India.

Overview of RBI's Currency Management Project:

- **Objective:** Modernizing India's currency management infrastructure to meet future cash needs.
- **Key Upgrades:**
  - Creation of greenfield currency management centers.
  - Warehouse automation for banknote storage.
  - Enhanced security and surveillance systems.
  - Inventory management & centralized command center.

Overview of RBI’s Currency Management Project:

- **Reason for Modernization:**
  - Rising volume of banknotes and coins.
  - High costs & security risks associated with handling cash.
  - Need for efficiency & sustainability in cash distribution.

Shortlisted Firms for the Project:

1. **State-Owned Companies:**
   - Engineers India Ltd (EIL).
   - MECON Ltd.
2. **Private Sector Firms:**
   - Accenture Solutions.
   - Colliers International (India) Property Services.
   - PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).
   - The Boston Consulting Group (India).

Currency Management in India:

- **Currency Printing Presses:** 4 locations in India.
- **Coin Minting Facilities:** 4 mints.
- **Distribution Network:**
  - 19 Issue Offices (IOs) receive new currency.
  - 2,800 Currency Chests (CCs) store and distribute banknotes through scheduled banks.

Challenges in Currency Management:

- Growing volume of banknotes printed, circulated, and processed.
- Rising operational costs and security risks.
- Need for technology-driven efficiency & automation.

Global Examples of Currency Modernization:

- Several central banks have successfully modernized currency management infrastructure, including:
  - **Austria, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and the USA.**
- The RBI aims to adopt best practices from these countries for India's system.

Expected Impact of the Project:

1. **Enhanced Efficiency:**
   - Faster processing of banknotes with automated sorting & handling.
   - Better inventory tracking & cash forecasting.
2. **Strengthened Security Measures:**
   - Advanced surveillance & risk management.
   - Minimizing fraud & counterfeit risks.
3. **Sustainability & Green Initiatives:**
   - Eco-friendly currency handling facilities.
   - Reduction in cash transportation costs & waste.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	RBI shortlists six firms for modernizing currency management.
Objective	Improve efficiency, security, and sustainability in currency handling.
State-Owned Firms Shortlisted	Engineers India Ltd (EIL) & MECON Ltd.
Private Firms Shortlisted	Accenture, PwC, Colliers, Boston Consulting Group.
Currency Printing Presses in India	4 locations.
Coin Minting Facilities	4 mints.
Currency Storage & Distribution	19 Issue Offices (IOs) & 2,800 Currency Chests (CCs).
Global Currency Modernization Examples	Austria, France, Germany, Japan, USA.
Expected Benefits	Automation, security upgrades, green initiatives.

- **How much debt exposure of McLeod Russel India Ltd (MRIL) has been transferred to NARCL?**

A) ₹500 crore
B) ₹700 crore
C) ₹1,030 crore
D) ₹1,104 crore
E) ₹1,461 crore

Answer
B) ₹700 crore

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Lenders Transfer ₹1,104 Crore McLeod Russel Debt to NARCL at a Discounted ₹700 Crore with a 5-Year Repayment Tenure.
- **Date:** March 16, 2025.
- **Location:** Kolkata, India.

Key Highlights of the Debt Transfer:

- **Total Debt Transferred:** ₹1,104.69 crore.
- **Transferred to:** National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL).
- **Settlement Value:** ₹700 crore (36% haircut on total debt).
- **Repayment Structure:**
  - 15% (₹105 crore) in upfront cash.
  - 85% (₹595 crore) via Security Receipts (SRs) over five years.

Background of McLeod Russel's Financial Stress:

- **Total outstanding debt (as of June 30, 2024):** ₹1,461.06 crore.
- **Loans became NPAs in October 2019 due to:**
  - Prolonged downturn in tea prices.
  - Rising production costs.
  - Unrecovered loans to group entity McNally Bharat Engineering Co Ltd (under insolvency).
- **Previous One-Time Settlement (OTS) Attempt:**
  - ₹1,030 crore deal backed by Carbon Resources failed due to lender disagreements.

Lenders Involved in the Debt Transfer:

- **ICICI Bank-led consortium, including:**
  - State Bank of India (SBI).
  - HDFC Bank.
  - Axis Bank.
  - Punjab National Bank (PNB).
  - UCO Bank.
  - Indian Bank.
  - RBL Bank.

Current Debt Holders Post-Transfer:

- NARCL.
- JC Flowers Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC).
- IndusInd Bank.

Expected Recovery for Lenders:

- Additional net recovery of ₹270 crore upon full redemption of SRs.

Impact of Debt Transfer on McLeod Russel:

1. **Reduction in Number of Creditors:**
   - Earlier, McLeod Russel had to negotiate with a dozen banks.
   - Now, it will only deal with three debt holders (NARCL, JC Flowers ARC, IndusInd Bank).
2. **Business Stability & Avoidance of Distress Sale:**
   - Avoids forced sale of assets.
   - Gains time for financial restructuring & turnaround.
3. **Future Business Operations:**
   - NARCL expected to work with existing management to restructure operations.
   - Long-term financial recovery plan to stabilize the company.

About McLeod Russel India Ltd (MRIL):

- **Promoter:** Khaitan family.
- **Industry:** Bulk tea production.
- **Tea Estates:** 31 in Assam, 2 in West Bengal.
- **Production in FY24:** 39.19 million kg.
- **Total Workforce:** Over 50,000 employees.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Lenders transfer ₹1,104 crore McLeod Russel debt to NARCL at ₹700 crore.
Haircut Applied	36% (₹404 crore reduction).
Repayment Structure	15% upfront (₹105 crore); 85% in Security Receipts over 5 years.
Lenders Involved	ICICI Bank, SBI, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, PNB, UCO Bank, Indian Bank, RBL Bank.
Debt Holders Post-Transfer	NARCL, JC Flowers ARC, IndusInd Bank.
Total Outstanding Debt (June 2024)	₹1,461.06 crore.
Previous OTS Attempt	₹1,030 crore (failed).
Expected Additional Recovery for Lenders	₹270 crore via Security Receipts.
McLeod Russel's Tea Production (FY24)	39.19 million kg.
Total Employees	50,000+.

- **What initiative has the RBI proposed to improve climate-related financing in India?**

A) Imposing a carbon tax on financial institutions
B) Creating a common pool of bankable green projects
C) Restricting loans to high-emission industries
D) Launching a new green cryptocurrency
E) Increasing interest rates on loans for non-sustainable projects

Answer
B) Creating a common pool of bankable green projects

CA FUNSTA

Event and Location:

- **Event:** RBI Proposes a Common Pool of Bankable Projects for Climate Finance.
- **Date:** March 13, 2025.
- **Location:** New Delhi, India.

Key Announcements by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra:

- RBI is finalizing disclosure norms for regulated entities to outline their climate risk management plans.
- A guidance note is being developed for climate scenario analysis and stress testing by financial institutions.
- Regulated entities should create a common pool of bankable projects to enhance climate-related financing.

Objectives of the RBI's Climate Finance Initiative:

1. Strengthening Climate Risk Management in Financial Sector:

- Regulated entities must assess, manage, and disclose their exposure to climate-related financial risks.
- Scenario analysis & stress testing to evaluate the impact of climate risks on individual banks & the financial system.

Objectives of the RBI's Climate Finance Initiative:

2. Creating a Common Pool of Bankable Green Projects:

- Addresses the lack of viable climate finance projects in India.
- Encourages banks & NBFCs to collaborate and share expertise in climate-related investments.

3. Enhancing Technical & Financial Capabilities for Green Finance:

- Banks must build expertise in assessing risks in green finance projects.
- Development of innovative solutions for climate finance.

Regulatory & Policy Measures Introduced by RBI:

1. "On Tap" Regulatory Sandbox for Climate Finance:

- Encourages innovation in green banking & climate risk management.
- Financial institutions can experiment with new solutions for sustainable finance.

2. Special "Greenathon" Initiative:

- Aimed at identifying and promoting best practices in climate finance.
- Encourages banks & fintech firms to collaborate on climate-resilient financial products.

Regulatory & Policy Measures Introduced by RBI:

3. Green Deposits Framework:

- Encourages banks to accept green deposits.
- Funds are directed towards renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and eco-friendly projects.

4. Renewable Energy as Priority Sector Lending (PSL):

- Funding for small-scale renewable energy projects is now part of priority sector lending.
- Encourages banks & NBFCs to increase lending for solar, wind, and bioenergy projects.

Future Roadmap & Commitments by RBI:

- Finalizing Climate Disclosure Guidelines based on industry feedback.
- Strengthening coordination with Government & Financial Regulators for a harmonized approach to green finance.
- Developing stress-testing guidelines for banks to assess resilience against climate shocks.

BANKING AND FINANCE

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Announcement	RBI proposes a common pool of bankable projects for climate finance.
RBI Governor	Sanjay Malhotra.
Key Objective	Enhance green financing & climate risk management.
New Initiative	“On Tap” Regulatory Sandbox for Climate Finance.
Special Event	RBI’s “Greenathon” to promote sustainable finance innovations.
Climate Risk Guidelines	Final disclosure framework in progress.
Green Deposits Framework	Encourages banks to invest in renewable & sustainable projects.
Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Expansion	Renewable energy projects now part of PSL.
Future Plans	Climate stress testing, policy harmonization, capacity building.

- **By how much has India's sugar production declined so far in the 2024-25 season?**

A) 10.5%
B) 16.13%
C) 20.2%
D) 25.7%
E) 30%

Answer
B) 16.13%

Event and Location:

- **Event:** India’s Sugar Production Falls by 16.13% in 2024-25 Season; NFCSF Flags Data Ambiguity.
- **Date:** March 16, 2025.
- **Location:** India.

Key Findings on Sugar Production Decline:

- **Total Sugar Production (2024-25 Season):** 23.71 million tonnes as of mid-March.
- **Initial Projection:** 33.3 million tonnes, leading to policy misalignment.
- **Revised Projection:** NFCSF estimates total production at 25.9 million tonnes, compared to 31.9 million tonnes in the previous season.
- **Government Permitted Exports:** 1 million tonnes (January 2025), now facing a supply-demand mismatch.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

State-Wise Sugar Production Decline (as of March 15, 2025):

- **Maharashtra (Largest Producer):**
  - **2023-24 Season:** 10.04 million tonnes.
  - **2024-25 Season:** 7.86 million tonnes (-21.7%).
- **Uttar Pradesh (Second Largest Producer):**
  - **2023-24 Season:** 8.85 million tonnes.
  - **2024-25 Season:** 8.09 million tonnes (-8.6%).
- **Karnataka (Third Largest Producer):**
  - **2023-24 Season:** 4.95 million tonnes.
  - **2024-25 Season:** 3.91 million tonnes (-21.0%).

Factors Behind the Sugar Production Decline:

1. Shortened Crushing Season:

- Maharashtra mills operated for just 83 days instead of the usual 140-150 days.
- Financial stress due to high operational costs over a shorter production period.

2. Crop Diseases & Pests:

- Uttar Pradesh: Co-0238 variety hit by "Red Rot" disease and "Top Shoot Borer" pest infestation.
- Maharashtra & Karnataka: Premature flowering of sugarcane resulted in lower sugar yields.

Factors Behind the Sugar Production Decline:

3. Weather Impact & Agronomic Factors:

- Unstable climatic conditions led to reduced sugarcane growth and sucrose content.
- Inconsistent rainfall and temperature fluctuations affected yield.

Industry & Government Response:

1. NFCSF's Concern Over Ambiguity in Production Data:

- Inaccurate early estimates led to government policies based on inflated numbers.
- NFCSF urges accurate production tracking for better planning.

2. Optimism for 2025-26 & 2026-27 Seasons:

- Improved monsoon in 2024 expected to boost sugarcane planting.
- Favorable climate predictions indicate higher sugarcane availability.

Economic & Policy Implications:

- **Ethanol Supply Concerns:** Oil marketing companies (OMCs) have announced preference for ethanol from cooperative sugar factories.
- **Sugar Exports at Risk:** Due to lower output, export restrictions may increase.
- **Impact on Sugar Prices:** Possible domestic price rise due to lower supply.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	India's sugar production declines by 16.13% in 2024-25 season.
Total Sugar Output (as of March 15, 2025)	23.71 million tonnes.
Initial Government Estimate	33.3 million tonnes.
Revised NFCSF Estimate	25.9 million tonnes.
Maharashtra Output Drop	From 10.04 to 7.86 million tonnes (-21.7%).
Uttar Pradesh Output Drop	From 8.85 to 8.09 million tonnes (-8.6%).
Karnataka Output Drop	From 4.95 to 3.91 million tonnes (-21.0%).
Crushing Season Issue	Maharashtra's crushing season lasted only 83 days instead of 140-150.
Major Crop Issues	Red Rot & Top Shoot Borer (UP), Premature Flowering (MH, KA).
Ethanol Production Impact	OMCs prioritize ethanol from cooperative sugar factories.
Future Outlook	Stronger production expected in 2025-26 due to better monsoons.

APPOINTMENTS

➢ **Who has been appointed as the new CEO of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)?**

A) Dr. Abhay Karandikar
B) Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman
C) Dr. K. Radhakrishnan
D) Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy
E) Dr. V. K. Saraswat

Answer

B) Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman

APPOINTMENTS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman appointed as CEO of Anusandhan National Research Foundation.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** India.
- **Appointment Details:** Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman has been appointed as the CEO of ANRF, replacing Professor Abhay Karandikar.
- **Role of CEO:** Dr. Shivkumar will oversee research strategies, industry collaborations, and technological advancements in India.

APPOINTMENTS

Event and Location:

- **Who is Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman:** A distinguished scientist with expertise in technology and research, previously serving as the CTO for Energy Industry, Asia at Microsoft.
- **Educational and Professional Background:** Dr. Shivkumar is an alumnus of IIT Madras and Ohio State University and has received multiple recognitions, including the IEEE Fellow and ACM Distinguished Scientist titles.
- **About ANRF:** The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) is an apex body for scientific research in India, established based on the National Education Policy (NEP).

APPOINTMENTS

Objectives of ANRF:

- **Enhancing R&D:** Promotes research across universities, colleges, and research institutions.
- **Industry Collaboration:** Encourages partnerships between academia, industries, and government agencies.
- **Government Participation:** Facilitates involvement of state governments and industries in research initiatives.
- **Strengthening Global Presence:** Aims to improve India's position in global scientific research rankings.

APPOINTMENTS

Significance of New Leadership:

- **Interdisciplinary Research:** Encourages research across multiple scientific and technological fields.
- **Global Research Ranking:** Strengthens India's standing in international research and innovation.
- **Industry-Academia Ties:** Enhances collaborations between industries and academic institutions.
- **Research Funding:** Expands investment in scientific innovation and infrastructure.

APPOINTMENTS

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Appointment	Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman appointed as CEO of ANRF, replacing Prof. Abhay Karandikar.
Who is Dr. Shivkumar?	Former CTO for Energy Industry, Asia at Microsoft; Alumnus of IIT Madras & Ohio State University.
What is ANRF?	An apex body for scientific research & innovation, established under the National Education Policy (NEP).
ANRF's Role	Enhancing R&D, fostering industry-academia collaborations, and boosting research funding.
Key Goals Under New CEO	Strengthening India's research ecosystem, increasing its global R&D ranking, and fostering interdisciplinary innovation.

APPOINTMENTS

➢ **Who has been appointed as the new CEO of Intel Corporation?**

A) David Zinsner
B) Michelle Johnston Holthaus
C) Lip-Bu Tan
D) Frank D. Yeary
E) Pat Gelsinger

Answer
C) Lip-Bu Tan

APPOINTMENTS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Intel appoints Lip-Bu Tan as CEO, effective March 18, 2025.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** United States.

APPOINTMENTS

New Leadership at Intel:

- **CEO Appointment:** Lip-Bu Tan has been named as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Intel Corporation.
- **Previous Role:** He succeeds Interim Co-CEOs David Zinsner and Michelle Johnston Holthaus.
- **Board Membership:** Tan will rejoin Intel's board of directors after stepping down in August 2024.

APPOINTMENTS

Leadership Restructuring:

- **David Zinsner:** Will continue as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
- **Michelle Johnston Holthaus:** Will remain as CEO of Intel Products.
- **Frank D. Yeary:** Will return to his role as Independent Chair of the Board.

APPOINTMENTS

Lip-Bu Tan's Industry Experience:

- **Semiconductor Industry Expert:** Over 20 years of leadership in technology and semiconductors.
- **Transformation Leader:** Led Cadence Design Systems (2009-2021), doubling revenue and boosting stock price by 3,200%.
- **Venture Capitalist:** Founding Managing Partner of Walden Catalyst Ventures.

APPOINTMENTS

Previous Key Roles:

- CEO of Cadence Design Systems (2009-2021).
- Executive Chairman of Cadence (2021-2023).
- Chairman of Walden International.
- Board Member at Credo Technology Group and Schneider Electric.

APPOINTMENTS

Intel’s Strategic Vision Under Lip-Bu Tan:

- **Strengthening Foundry Business:** Enhancing manufacturing and semiconductor production.
- **Process Technology Growth:** Accelerating advanced chip development.
- **Customer-Centric Leadership:** Expanding Intel’s global market presence.
- **Investor Confidence:** Implementing long-term business strategies for financial stability.

APPOINTMENTS

Impact of Tan's Leadership on Intel:

- **Product Innovation:** Driving next-generation semiconductor technologies.
- **Competitive Growth:** Strengthening Intel's global leadership in chipmaking.
- **Industry Network:** Leveraging global semiconductor partnerships.

APPOINTMENTS

Educational Background:

- B.Sc. in Physics – **Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.**
- M.Sc. in Nuclear Engineering – **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).**
- MBA – **University of San Francisco.**

Industry Recognition:

- **Robert N. Noyce Award (2022):** Semiconductor Industry Association’s highest honor for contributions to the sector.

APPOINTMENTS

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Appointment	Lip-Bu Tan appointed as Intel CEO, effective March 18, 2025.
Predecessors	David Zinsner & Michelle Johnston Holthaus (Interim Co-CEOs).
Leadership Changes	David Zinsner remains CFO, Michelle Holthaus continues as CEO of Intel Products, Frank D. Yeary returns as Independent Chair.
Industry Expertise	Former CEO & Executive Chairman of Cadence Design Systems.
Intel's Strategic Focus	Enhancing foundry business, improving process technology, expanding market presence.
Investor Confidence	Regain trust through sustainable business strategies.
Educational Background	B.Sc. (Physics) – Nanyang Technological University, M.Sc. (Nuclear Engineering) – MIT, MBA – University of San Francisco.
Industry Recognition	Robert N. Noyce Award (2022) for semiconductor contributions.

APPOINTMENTS

➢ **Who has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago?**

A) Dr. Keith Rowley
B) Kamla Persad-Bissessar
C) Stuart Young
D) Faris Al-Rawi
E) Colm Imbert

Answer
C) Stuart Young

APPOINTMENTS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Stuart Young sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** President’s House, St. Ann’s, Trinidad and Tobago.

APPOINTMENTS

Leadership Transition:

- **New Prime Minister:** Stuart Young takes over leadership from Dr. Keith Rowley.
- **Previous Role:** Young was the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries before becoming PM.
- **Planned Transition:** Dr. Rowley had earlier announced his resignation and named Young as his successor.

APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Keith Rowley's Departure:

- **Resignation Announcement:** Dr. Rowley formally announced his resignation in January 2025.
- **Final Appearance:** He addressed the public at the People's National Movement (PNM) Special Convention at City Hall.
- **Commitment to the Nation:** Assured continued dedication to Trinidad and Tobago despite stepping down.

APPOINTMENTS

Swearing-in Ceremony:

- **Venue:** President's House, St. Ann's.
- **Attendees:** Government officials, party members, and dignitaries were present.
- **Significance:** Marks the official transition of power in Trinidad and Tobago's government.

APPOINTMENTS

Political Background of Stuart Young:

- **Key Ministerial Roles:**
  - Minister of Energy and Energy Industries.
  - Former Minister of National Security.
  - Key figure in economic and energy policy reforms.
- **Political Affiliation:** Member of the People's National Movement (PNM).
- **Policy Focus:** Strengthening the energy sector, economic stability, and national security.

APPOINTMENTS

Impact of Leadership Change:

1. Continuity in Governance:
- PNM retains power with Young’s leadership.
- Smooth transition without political instability.

2. Focus on Economic and Energy Policies:
- Energy sector remains a priority, given Young’s expertise.
- Potential new strategies for economic growth and stability.

3. Political Reactions and Future Prospects:
- Opposition's View: Likely to assess Young’s leadership effectiveness in upcoming elections.
- Public Expectations: Citizens expect policy continuity and economic development.

APPOINTMENTS

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Event	Stuart Young sworn in as Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.
Outgoing PM	Dr. Keith Rowley.
Successor	Stuart Young, former Minister of Energy and Energy Industries.
Resignation Announcement	Dr. Rowley announced his resignation in January 2025.
Final Appearance	People's National Movement (PNM) Special Convention at City Hall.
Swearing-in Ceremony	Held at the President's House, St. Ann's.
Young's Political Affiliation	People's National Movement (PNM).
Expected Focus Areas	Energy sector, economic stability, national security.

- **What is the primary focus of the Shri S Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence at IIT Madras?**

  A) Developing new satellite propulsion systems
  B) Research on artificial intelligence in space
  C) Addressing thermal challenges in space applications
  D) Enhancing space debris management
  E) Studying exoplanet atmospheres

Answer

C) Addressing thermal challenges in space applications

Event and Location:

- **Event:** ISRO Chairman V Narayanan launches Thermal Research Centre at IIT Madras.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** IIT Madras, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Introduction to the Research Centre:

- **Name:** Shri S Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence in Fluid and Thermal Science Research.
- **Institute:** Located at IIT Madras, in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.
- **Objective:** Focuses on thermal and fluid science research for space applications.
- **Named After:** S Ramakrishnan, an IIT Madras alumnus and renowned aerospace engineer.

Objectives and Research Focus Areas:

- **Heat Dissipation Challenges:** Developing solutions for satellites and launch vehicles.
- **Advanced Cooling Technologies:**
  - Micro heat pipes for efficient heat transfer.
  - Vapour chambers for uniform thermal management.
  - Spray cooling systems for high-performance spacecraft.
  - Two-phase heat transfer devices for next-gen space missions.
- **Simulation & Testing Facilities:** Creating high-fidelity models for real-world thermal conditions.
- **Thermal Control Systems:** Enhancing satellite longevity and spacecraft safety.

ISRO-IIT Madras Collaboration:

- **Joint Research:** ISRO scientists will collaborate with IIT Madras faculty on space technology.
- **Deep-Space Missions:** Research will contribute to lunar, Mars, and interplanetary missions.
- **Academic Engagement:** ISRO scientists encouraged to pursue advanced degrees at IIT Madras.
- **Industry Partnerships:** Strengthening ties between space industry and academia for innovation.

Impact on India's Space Program:

- **Enhanced Mission Efficiency:** Improving thermal management systems in space missions.
- **Self-Reliance in Space Technology:** Reducing dependency on foreign thermal solutions.
- **Global Leadership in Space Research:** Positioning India as a leader in advanced space engineering.
- **Attracting Global Talent & Funding:** Encouraging international research collaborations.

Future Scope of the Research Centre:

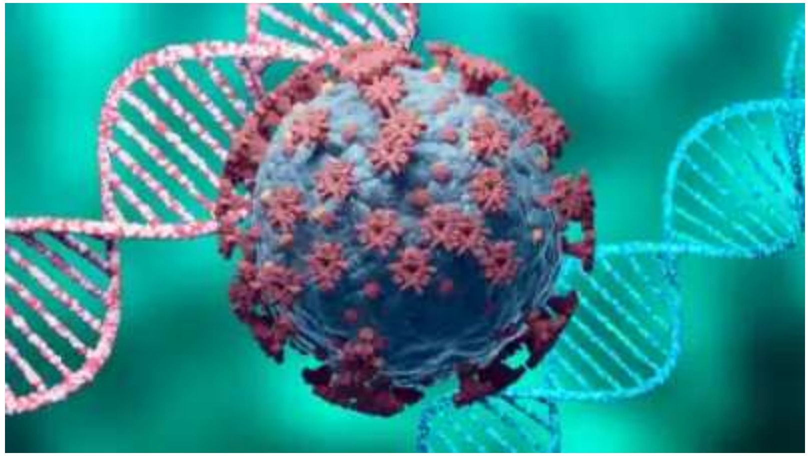
- **Advanced Thermal Research:** Expansion into next-generation space cooling systems.
- **Extended Collaboration:** Strengthening industry-academia partnerships globally.
- **Space Exploration Support:** Contributing to human spaceflight and deep-space travel.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Launch of Thermal Research Centre at IIT Madras.
Centre Name	Shri S Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence in Fluid and Thermal Science Research.
Location	IIT Madras, Department of Mechanical Engineering.
Inaugurated By	ISRO Chairman V Narayanan.
Primary Focus	Thermal management research for satellites & launch vehicles.
Key Technologies	Micro heat pipes, vapour chambers, spray cooling, two-phase heat transfer devices.
Collaboration	ISRO scientists working with IIT Madras faculty.
Impact on Space Missions	Enhanced satellite longevity, spacecraft safety, and deep-space mission success.
Future Scope	Self-reliance in space tech, attracting global talent, and fostering industry partnerships.

- **When was Human Coronavirus HKU1 first identified?**

A) 2000
B) 2003
C) 2005
D) 2010
E) 2019



Answer
C) 2005

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Human Coronavirus HKU1 detected in a woman in Kolkata.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** Kolkata, West Bengal.

About HKU1 Coronavirus:

- **Discovery:** First identified in 2005; not a new virus.
- **Virus Family:** Belongs to the coronavirus family, but does not cause severe outbreaks.
- **Primary Effect:** Affects the upper respiratory tract, leading to mild illnesses.

Symptoms of HKU1 Infection:

- **Common Symptoms:**
  - Cough.
  - Runny nose or nasal congestion.
  - Sore throat.
  - Fatigue and headaches.
  - Low-grade fever.
- **Severe Cases:**
  - May cause pneumonia or bronchitis, especially in high-risk individuals.

Who is at Higher Risk?

- **Generally Self-Limiting:** Most people recover without medical intervention.
- **High-Risk Groups:**
  - Elderly individuals.
  - Children.
  - Pregnant women.
  - People with weakened immune systems or chronic illnesses.

How Does HKU1 Spread?

- **Transmission Methods:**
  - **Respiratory droplets** from coughing or sneezing.
  - **Direct contact** with infected individuals.
  - **Touching contaminated surfaces** and then touching the face, mouth, or nose.

Prevention Measures:

- **Maintain Hygiene:**
  - Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - Using sanitizers when soap is unavailable.
- **Mask-Wearing:** Recommended in crowded or high-risk areas.
- **Cough Etiquette:** Cover mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing.
- **Avoid Social Interactions:** Stay home if feeling unwell.

Treatment for HKU1:

- **No Specific Antivirals:** The infection is self-limiting in most cases.
- **Supportive Care:** Treatment focuses on relieving symptoms through rest, hydration, and fever management.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Human Coronavirus HKU1 detected in Kolkata.
Virus Name	HKU1 Coronavirus.
First Identified	2005.
Nature of Virus	Mild, affects the upper respiratory tract.
Symptoms	Cough, runny nose, sore throat, fatigue, headaches, low fever.
Severe Cases	May cause pneumonia or bronchitis in high-risk individuals.
High-Risk Groups	Elderly, children, pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals.
Transmission Mode	Respiratory droplets, direct contact, contaminated surfaces.
Prevention	Hand hygiene, mask-wearing, avoiding contact with infected individuals.
Treatment	No specific antivirals; supportive care for symptom relief.

- **Which category under the proposed US Travel Ban 2025 faces complete visa suspension?**

A) Red List
B) Orange List
C) Yellow List
D) Green List
E) Restricted List

Answer
A) Red List

Event and Location:

- **Event:** US President Donald Trump considers a travel ban affecting 43 countries in 2025.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** United States.

Overview of the US Travel Ban 2025:

- **Proposed by:** US President Donald Trump.
- **Status:** Under review; categorizes countries into three levels of restrictions.
- **Historical Context:** Expansion of Trump's first-term travel bans, which were revoked by Joe Biden in 2021.

Breakdown of the Travel Ban Categories:

1. Red List (Complete Visa Suspension) – 11 Countries

- Citizens from these countries will be completely prohibited from obtaining US visas.
- **Countries Affected:**
  - Afghanistan
  - Bhutan
  - Cuba
  - Iran
  - Libya
  - North Korea
  - Somalia
  - Sudan
  - Syria
  - Venezuela
  - Yemen

Breakdown of the Travel Ban Categories:

2. Orange List (Severe Visa Restrictions) – 10 Countries

- Visa issuance will be highly restricted, requiring in-person interviews for all applicants.
- **Countries Affected:**
  - Belarus
  - Eritrea
  - Haiti
  - Laos
  - Myanmar
  - Pakistan
  - Russia
  - Sierra Leone
  - South Sudan
  - Turkmenistan

CA FUNSTA

Breakdown of the Travel Ban Categories:

3. Yellow List (60-Day Window to Address Concerns) – 22 Countries

- Countries must resolve US concerns within 60 days to avoid further restrictions.
- **Countries Affected:**
  - Angola
  - Antigua and Barbuda
  - Benin
  - Burkina Faso
  - Cambodia
  - Cameroon
  - Cape Verde
  - Chad
  - Republic of Congo
  - Democratic Republic of Congo
  - Dominica
  - Equatorial Guinea
  - Gambia
  - Liberia
  - Malawi
  - Mali
  - Mauritania
  - St. Kitts and Nevis
  - St. Lucia
  - São Tomé and Príncipe
  - Vanuatu
  - Zimbabwe

Implications of the Ban:

1. **Red List Countries:**
   - Complete visa suspensions; no travel, work, or student visas will be issued.
   - Citizens will be unable to enter the US for any purpose.
2. **Orange List Countries:**
   - Strict visa screening for tourists, students, and workers.
   - Business elites and diplomats may still receive entry approvals.

Implications of the Ban:

3. Yellow List Countries:

- Given 60 days to resolve issues raised by the US government.
- Failure to comply may result in movement to the Orange or Red List.

Historical Context of US Travel Bans:

- **Trump's First-Term Travel Ban (2017):**
  - Banned travel from seven Muslim-majority countries.
  - Imposed a reverse travel ban on North Korea.
- **Biden's Reversal (2021):**
  - Revoked most of Trump's travel bans.
  - Kept restrictions on North Korea.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	US President Donald Trump proposes a travel ban affecting 43 countries.
Status	Under review.
Red List (11 Countries)	Complete visa suspension (No US entry allowed).
Orange List (10 Countries)	Severe visa restrictions, in-person interviews required.
Yellow List (22 Countries)	60-day window to resolve US concerns.
Historical Context	Expansion of Trump's first-term travel ban (2017), revoked by Biden (2021).
US Government's Justification	National security and immigration control.

- **Where was the Lachit Barphukan Police Academy inaugurated?**

A) Guwahati
B) Majuli
C) Dergaon
D) Dispur
E) Jorhat

Answer
C) Dergaon

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Lachit Barphukan Police Academy inaugurated in Assam by Amit Shah.
- **Date:** March 15, 2025.
- **Location:** Dergaon, Assam.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inauguration Ceremony:

- **Chief Guest:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the academy.
- **Other Dignitaries:** Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma and Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal were present.
- **Objective:** Strengthen police training in the Northeast region with modern facilities.

Significance of the Lachit Barphukan Police Academy:

- **Phase 1 Completed:** Built at a cost of ₹167 crore.
- **Total Investment:** ₹1050 crore planned in three phases.
- **First of Its Kind:** Assam's first advanced police training center.
- **Training Capacity:** 2,000 police personnel from Goa and Manipur have already been trained here.
- **Future Vision:** Amit Shah aims to make it India's No. 1 police academy in five years.

Who Was Lachit Barphukan?

- **Ahom Warrior:** Led Assamese forces to victory against the Mughals in the Battle of Saraighat (1671).
- **Legacy Recognition:**
  - Previously known only in Assam.
  - The Modi government has made his biography available in 23 languages.
  - The academy is named to honor his bravery and inspire future generations.

Infrastructure and Economic Development in Assam:

- **Peace Agreements Signed Under PM Modi:**
  - Bodoland Agreement (2020).
  - Karbi Anglong Agreement (2021).
  - Tribal Peace Agreement (2022).
  - ULFA, Assam-Meghalaya, Assam-Arunachal Agreements (2023).
  - **Impact**: Over 10,000 militants have surrendered and joined the mainstream.
- **Major Industrial and Investment Projects:**
  - ₹27,000 crore semiconductor industry being set up in Assam.
  - Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit secured ₹5.18 lakh crore MoUs, with ₹3 lakh crore allocated for infrastructure.

Key Infrastructure Projects in Assam:

- **Bharatmala Project:** ₹10,000 crore investment for 200+ km of roadways.
- **Dhubri-Phulbari Bridge:** ₹3,000 crore mega project.
- **Silchar-Churaibari Four-Lane Corridor:** ₹3,400 crore road expansion.
- **Majuli Island Embankment & Road Development:** ₹1,000 crore for flood protection.
- **Six-Lane Bridge Over Brahmaputra River.**

Key Infrastructure Projects in Assam:

- **NH 715-K (Majuli to Jorhat):** ₹382 crore for highway expansion.
- **Expansion of Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport:** ₹1,200 crore investment.
- **Railway Projects:** ₹9,000 crore allocated for modernization.
- **AIIMS Assam: ₹1,000 crore for advanced healthcare facilities.**

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Law & Order Improvements in Assam:

- **Conviction Rate Growth:** Increased from 5% to 25% under BJP rule.
- **Police Transformation:** Assam Police has shifted focus from counterterrorism to criminal justice and citizens' rights.
- **New Criminal Laws:** The three new laws introduced by PM Modi will be strictly implemented in Assam.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Welfare and Social Development Initiatives:

- **Water Supply:** 58 lakh homes received tap water for the first time.
- **Healthcare Support:** 1.8 crore people get free medical treatment up to ₹5 lakh.
- **Sanitation Improvements:** 43 lakh households received toilets under government schemes.
- **Food Security:** 2.32 crore poor people receive 5 kg free rice per person every month.
- **Housing and Cooking Gas:** 51 lakh gas cylinders and 21 lakh houses provided under central schemes.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Future Vision for Assam:

- **Economic Growth:** ₹5 lakh crore in investments will create massive employment opportunities.
- **Transformation Goal:** Assam is evolving into a hub of peace, economic growth, and infrastructure development.
- **Enhanced Security:** The Lachit Barphukan Police Academy will play a vital role in modernizing law enforcement in the Northeast.

CA FUNSTA

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Inauguration of Lachit Barphukan Police Academy in Assam.
Event Date	March 15, 2025.
Location	Dergaon, Assam.
Chief Guest	Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
Other Guests	Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.
Project Cost	₹167 crore (Phase 1), ₹1050 crore (total planned).
Significance	Aims to be India's top police academy in five years.
Peace Agreements	Bodoland (2020), Karbi Anglong (2021), Tribal (2022), ULFA & Inter-state (2023).
Economic Initiatives	₹27,000 crore semiconductor industry, ₹5.18 lakh crore investments.
Infrastructure Projects	Bharatmala, Dhubri-Phulbari Bridge, AIIMS, NH 715-K, Gopinath Airport expansion.
Law & Order Improvements	Conviction rate up from 5% to 25%.
Welfare Measures	Free tap water (58 lakh homes), free healthcare (1.8 crore people), toilets (43 lakh homes).
Future Vision	Assam to become a major industrial and infrastructure hub.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

➢ **Where was Maharashtra's first-ever Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Temple inaugurated?**

A) Pune
B) Bhiwandi
C) Raigad
D) Nashik
E) Kolhapur

Answer
B) Bhiwandi

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Maharashtra’s first-ever Shivaji Maharaj Temple inaugurated in Bhiwandi.
- **Date:** On the occasion of Shivaji Maharaj’s birth anniversary.
- **Location:** Bhiwandi, Thane, Maharashtra.

Architectural Design and Features:

- **Designed By:** Architect Vijaykumar Patil.
- **Total Area:** 2,500 sq. ft. temple within a 5,000 sq. ft. fort-like boundary.
- **Grand Entrance:** 42-foot-tall gateway inspired by Maratha forts.
- **Sabha Mandap (Assembly Hall):** Built to the same height as the entrance, showcasing Maratha architecture.

Architectural Design and Features:

- **Shivaji Maharaj Statue:**
  - **Height**: 6.5 feet.
  - **Sculptor**: Arun Yogiraj (who also sculpted Lord Ram's idol for the Ayodhya Ram Temple).
- **Historical Depictions:**
  - 36 intricately designed sections showcasing key moments from Shivaji Maharaj's life.
  - Fort-like structure with bastions, surveillance pathways, and watchtowers.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Cultural and Religious Significance:

- **Pilgrimage Status:**
  - CM Fadnavis announced plans to declare the temple a pilgrimage site.
  - Emphasized that devotees should seek blessings from Shivaji Maharaj first, similar to worshipping Lord Hanuman before Lord Ram.
- **Spiritual Importance:** The temple honors Shivaji Maharaj's divine mission in protecting Dharma and shaping Hindu identity.

Historical Legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj:

- **Founder of the Maratha Empire:** Established a strong naval and military presence.
- **Military Strategies:** Built forts and implemented guerilla warfare tactics against the Mughals.
- **Administrative Reforms:** Introduced progressive governance policies and welfare programs.
- **Symbol of Resistance:** Led successful battles against the Mughal Empire, preserving Maratha sovereignty.

Impact on Maharashtra and Tourism:

- **Tourist Attraction:** Expected to become a major pilgrimage and tourist site.
- **Preserving Heritage:** Helps preserve and promote Maratha culture and history.
- **Economic Growth:** Increased tourism and cultural tourism revenue for Maharashtra.

Future Plans for the Temple:

- **Recognition as a Heritage Site:** The temple is expected to be recognized as a cultural landmark.
- **Expansion of Historical Displays:** More depictions and exhibits showcasing Shivaji Maharaj's battles and governance.
- **Annual Celebrations:** The temple will host Shivaji Jayanti events to honor his legacy.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Event	Inauguration of Maharashtra's first-ever Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Temple.
Date	On Shivaji Maharaj's birth anniversary.
Location	Bhiwandi, Thane, Maharashtra.
Inaugurated By	Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis.
Architect	Vijaykumar Patil.
Total Area	2,500 sq. ft. temple inside 5,000 sq. ft. premises.
Main Features	42-ft entrance, 6.5-ft statue, fort-like boundary, 36 historical depictions.
Sculptor	Arun Yogiraj (who also crafted Ayodhya Ram Temple idol).
Cultural Status	To be declared a pilgrimage site.
Historical Inspiration	Built to resemble Maratha forts, honoring Shivaji Maharaj's military legacy.
Tourism Impact	Expected to attract pilgrims, tourists, and historians.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

➢ What is the primary objective of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS) Mobile App?

A) Providing government jobs to students
B) Facilitating easy access to internship opportunities
C) Offering direct financial aid to unemployed youth
D) Promoting digital banking services
E) Providing scholarships for higher education

Answer

B) Facilitating easy access to internship opportunities

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Launch of PM Internship Scheme Mobile App by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** New Delhi.

Introduction to the PMIS Mobile App:

- **Purpose:** The app enhances accessibility and efficiency in the internship application process.
- **Government Initiative:** Aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations.
- **Youth Employment Focus:** Supports skilling, internships, and job readiness for students.

Key Features of the PMIS App:

- **User-Friendly Interface:** Designed for easy navigation and simple layout.
- **Seamless Registration:** Candidates can register using Aadhaar face authentication.
- **Real-Time Updates:** Provides notifications on new internship opportunities.
- **Improved Accessibility:** Ensures a smooth and transparent internship application process.

About the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS):

- **Announced In:** Union Budget 2024-25.
- **Target:** Providing one crore internships in India's top 500 companies over five years.
- **Implementation:** Internship opportunities are rolled out in multiple phases to ensure smooth execution.

Pilot Project Implementation:

- **Round-I (October 2024 – December 2024):**
  - **Internship Opportunities:** 1.27 lakh internships posted.
  - **Participating Companies:** 280 companies from 25 sectors.
  - **Internship Locations:** Available across 745 districts in India.
  - **Internship Offers Extended:** 82,000+ candidates received offers.
- **Round-II (January 2025 – March 2025):**
  - **Internship Opportunities:** 1.18 lakh internships posted.
  - **Participating Companies:** 327 companies.
  - **Application Window:** Open until March 2025.

Impact of the PM Internship Scheme:

1. **Bridging Education and Industry Needs:**
   - Connects classroom learning with real-world industry requirements.
   - Ensures students are job-ready after education.
2. **Creating a Skilled Workforce:**
   - Internships help develop in-demand skills aligned with market needs.
   - Enhances India's workforce competitiveness globally.

Impact of the PM Internship Scheme:

3. Boosting Employment Prospects:

- Provides structured internship opportunities for young graduates and diploma holders.
- Encourages corporate participation in training young professionals.

4. Industry Participation and Nation Building:

- Companies play a key role in nation-building by offering structured internship programs.
- Strengthens industry-academia collaboration.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Launch of PMIS Mobile App for internships.
Launched By	Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
Location	New Delhi.
Objective	Enhance accessibility to internship opportunities.
Key Features	User-friendly interface, Aadhaar-based registration, real-time updates.
PMIS Announcement	Union Budget 2024-25.
Target	One crore internships in top 500 companies over five years.
Pilot Project Implementation	Phase-I (Oct–Dec 2024): 1.27 lakh internships, 82,000 offers.
Ongoing Round-II	Jan–March 2025: 1.18 lakh internships (Applications open).
Expected Impact	Bridging education and industry, creating skilled workforce, boosting employment.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

➢ **What is the primary objective of the Rajiv Yuva Vikasam Scheme launched by the Telangana government?**

A) Providing free education to SC/ST students
B) Offering government jobs to unemployed youth
C) Supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship
D) Expanding industrial zones in Telangana
E) Promoting foreign employment opportunities

Answer

C) Supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy launches 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' Scheme for self-employment.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** Telangana Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad, Telangana.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Introduction to the Rajiv Yuva Vikasam Scheme:

- **Purpose:** To promote self-employment and economic development among marginalized youth.
- **Target Groups:** Unemployed youth from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Backward Classes (BC), and Minority communities.
- **Budget Allocation:** ₹6,000 crore for implementation.
- **Expected Beneficiaries:** 5 lakh youth across Telangana.

Key Objectives of the Scheme:

- **Financial Support:** Provide self-employment loans to eligible candidates.
- **Unemployment Reduction:** Help SC, ST, BC, and Minority communities become financially independent.
- **Encouraging Entrepreneurship:** Empower youth to start their own businesses.
- **Equitable Financial Support**: Ensure fair distribution of loans across all eligible sections.

Financial Assistance and Subsidy Structure:

- **Loans up to ₹1 lakh:** 80% subsidy provided by the government.
- **Loans up to ₹2 lakh:** 70% subsidy provided.
- **Loans up to ₹3 lakh:** 60% subsidy provided.
- **Loan Usage:** Can be used to establish small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs).

Expected Impact of the Scheme:

1. **Reducing Unemployment:**
   - Empowering underprivileged youth with financial support.
   - Enhancing job creation through new businesses.
2. **Promoting Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs):**
   - Encouraging growth of small businesses across Telangana.
   - Supporting economic development in urban and rural areas.

Expected Impact of the Scheme:

3. Boosting Financial Inclusion:

- Ensuring marginalized communities have access to economic opportunities.
- Encouraging self-reliance instead of government job dependency.

4. Strengthening Telangana's Economy:

- Driving state-wide economic development.
- Increasing business ownership among disadvantaged groups.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Event	Launch of 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' Scheme for self-employment.
Announced By	Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy.
Location	Telangana Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad.
Total Budget	₹6,000 crore.
Target Beneficiaries	5 lakh unemployed youth from SC, ST, BC, and Minority communities.
Financial Assistance	Up to ₹3 lakh per beneficiary.
Subsidy Structure	80% for ₹1 lakh loans, 70% for ₹2 lakh loans, 60% for ₹3 lakh loans.
Application Process	Begins next month; loan sanctions on June 2, 2025 (Telangana Formation Day).
Expected Impact	Reducing unemployment, promoting SMEs, financial inclusion, and economic growth.

- **Which existing law in Chhattisgarh regulates religious conversions?**

A) Chhattisgarh Religious Freedom Act, 1975
B) Chhattisgarh Faith Protection Act, 1990
C) Chhattisgarh Freedom of Religion Act, 1968
D) Chhattisgarh Anti-Conversion Act, 2010
E) Chhattisgarh Religious Regulation Act, 1985

Answer
C) Chhattisgarh Freedom of Religion Act, 1968

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Chhattisgarh government plans to introduce a stricter anti-conversion law.
- **Date:** March 18, 2025.
- **Location:** Chhattisgarh, India.

Existing Anti-Conversion Law in Chhattisgarh:

- **Current Law:** Chhattisgarh Freedom of Religion Act, 1968 penalizes forced religious conversions.
- **Scope:** Covers coercion, inducements, and deceptive religious practices leading to conversions.

Proposed Stricter Law:

- **Government's Plan:** Introduce a tighter legal framework to regulate conversions.
- **Objective:** Prevent illegal religious conversions through coercion, inducement, or "faith healing" gatherings.
- **Home Minister's Statement:** Vijay Sharma confirmed new legislation will ensure strict control over unlawful conversions.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Allegations and Political Reactions:

- **BJP MLA’s Claim:** Ajay Chandrakar alleged that some NGOs misuse foreign funding for religious conversion under the guise of social work.
- **Districts Under Scrutiny:** Jashpur (CM Vishnu Deo Sai’s home district) and Bastar report most conversion-related cases.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Allegations and Political Reactions:

- **Opposition's Stand:**
  - Questions the need for a stricter law when one already exists.
  - Claims government inaction has led to an increase in religious conversions.
- **Government's Response:**
  - Denied opposition claims of rising conversions.
  - Assured financial audits of NGOs to prevent misuse of funds.

Legal Cases on Conversions in Chhattisgarh (2019-2025):

Year	Cases Registered
2019	0
2020	1
2021	7
2022	3
2023	0
2024	12
2025	4

Government's Assurance:

- **NGO Funding Audits:** Strict monitoring of financial inflows and expenditure of NGOs.
- **Action Against Violators:** Legal measures against organizations involved in illegal conversions.
- **Preventing Coercion & Inducement:** Ensuring religious conversions happen voluntarily without pressure.

Impact of the Proposed Law:

1. **Strengthened Legal Framework:**
   - More stringent regulations on religious conversions.
   - Harsher penalties for forced or fraudulent conversions.
2. **Increased Monitoring of NGOs:**
   - Tighter scrutiny on organizations receiving foreign funding.
   - Stricter compliance rules for NGOs working in religious and social sectors.

Impact of the Proposed Law:

3. Political and Social Impact:

- Heightened political debates over religious freedom and regulation.
- Potential influence on religious organizations and their community outreach programs.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Chhattisgarh government to introduce a stricter anti-conversion law.
Existing Law	Chhattisgarh Freedom of Religion Act, 1968.
Proposed Law	Stronger legal measures against forced religious conversions.
Home Minister’s Stand	Vijay Sharma confirmed government’s commitment to curb unlawful conversions.
BJP MLA’s Allegation	Ajay Chandrakar claims NGOs misuse foreign funds for religious conversions.
Most Affected Districts	Jashpur, Bastar.
Conversion Cases (2019-2025)	27 cases registered.
Opposition’s Concern	Questions the need for stricter laws, argues existing law is sufficient.
Government’s Assurance	NGOs’ financial audits will be reviewed, legal action will be taken if needed.

➢ **How many new tourist destinations have been sanctioned across India under various tourism schemes?**

A) 50
B) 84
C) 100
D) 116
E) 132

Answer
D) 116

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

CA FUNSTA

Event and Location:

- **Event:** 116 New Tourist Destinations Sanctioned Across India Under Various Tourism Schemes.
- **Date:** March 14, 2025.
- **Location:** India.

Key Highlights of the Initiative:

- **Total New Tourist Destinations Approved:** 116.
- **Total Development Cost:** ₹4,088 crore.
- **Tourism Ministry's Goal:** Sustainable & responsible tourism development in partnership with State Governments.

Schemes Under Which Destinations Were Sanctioned:

1. **Swadesh Darshan 2.0:**
   - **Number of Destinations:** 34.
   - **Focus**: Theme-based circuit development for sustainable tourism.
2. **Challenge-Based Destination Development (CBDD):**
   - **Number of Destinations:** 42.
   - **Purpose**: Encouraging states to propose innovative tourism projects.
3. **Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI):**
   - **Number of Destinations:** 40.
   - **Objective**: Financial aid to states for tourism infrastructure.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Other Key Announcements:

- **Skill Development in Tourism:**
  - The Tourism Ministry will conduct short-term job-oriented skill programs across various institutes.
  - Aims to train professionals for India's growing tourism sector.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Expected Impact of the Development:

1. Boost to Domestic & International Tourism:

- New tourism circuits will enhance travel experiences for visitors.
- Increased footfall in less-explored destinations.

2. Economic Growth & Job Creation:

- Infrastructure projects worth ₹4,088 crore will create employment opportunities.
- Local businesses such as hotels, transport, and handicrafts will benefit.

Expected Impact of the Development:

3. Strengthening Cultural & Heritage Tourism:
- Promotion of Indian heritage, religious sites, and eco-tourism.
- Encouragement of state-wise thematic tourism.

4. Development of Sustainable Tourism Models:
- Green tourism initiatives to reduce environmental impact.
- Improved eco-friendly infrastructure & waste management at tourist sites.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Total Destinations Sanctioned	116.
Total Cost of Development	₹4,088 crore.
Swadesh Darshan 2.0	34 destinations.
Challenge-Based Destination Development (CBDD)	42 destinations.
Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI)	40 destinations.
Tourism Ministry’s Additional Initiative	Job-oriented skill development programs.
Expected Benefits	Boost in tourism, job creation, sustainable travel infrastructure.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

➢ **What key recommendation has the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development made regarding MGNREGS wages?**

A) Reduce wages due to excess budget allocation
B) Maintain current wage levels despite inflation
C) Increase wages to match price rise and ensure uniform rates across states
D) Abolish the scheme and replace it with direct cash transfers
E) Increase wages only for selected states

Answer

C) Increase wages to match price rise and ensure uniform rates across states

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** Parliamentary Panel Recommends Wage Hike for MGNREGS to Match Inflation.
- **Date:** March 15, 2025.
- **Location:** New Delhi/Kolkata, India.

Key Highlights of the Report:

- **The Standing Committee on Rural Development** has recommended revising MGNREGS wages due to rising cost of living.
- **Committee Chairperson:** Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka (Congress MP).
- **Major Demands:**
  - Increase MGNREGS wages to reflect inflation and price rise.
  - Ensure uniform wage rates across all Indian states.
  - Timely release of pending wages to states, including West Bengal.
- **Government Response:** No action has been taken despite multiple recommendations.

Introduction to the PMIS Mobile App:

- **Purpose:** The app enhances accessibility and efficiency in the internship application process.
- **Government Initiative:** Aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations.
- **Youth Employment Focus:** Supports skilling, internships, and job readiness for students.

Concerns Raised by the Committee:

1. Low MGNREGS Wages Compared to Inflation:

- Current wage rates are insufficient to support rural households.
- Disparity exists in wages between states, leading to inequality.

2. Delays in Wage Payments:

- The Centre has delayed wage disbursal to multiple states.
- West Bengal is one of the worst affected states with unpaid wages.

Concerns Raised by the Committee:

3. Need for Uniform Wages Across India:

- MGNREGS wages vary by state, creating regional disparities.
- The panel demands a standard wage structure across all states.

Expected Impact of the Wage Hike:

1. **Improved Rural Livelihoods:**
   - Higher wages would help MGNREGS workers cope with inflation.
   - Increased rural spending can boost local economies.
2. **Reduced Migration from Villages:**
   - Better wages can reduce distress migration to urban areas.
   - Workers will have stable income sources within their villages.

Expected Impact of the Wage Hike:

3. Stronger Social Safety Net:

- Higher wages will improve living standards for millions of rural workers.
- Ensures sustainable employment for economically weaker sections.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Development	Parliamentary panel recommends MGNREGS wage hike.
Committee Chairperson	Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka (Congress MP).
Main Recommendations	Increase wages to match inflation & ensure uniform rates.
Issue with Wage Payments	Delays in wage disbursal, especially in West Bengal.
Govt Response	No action despite multiple recommendations.
Expected Impact	Better rural livelihoods, reduced migration, stronger safety net.
Ministry Concerned	Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India.

- **What is the key feature of PB-SHABD, Prasar Bharati's shared news feed service?**

A) It offers only video content for news agencies
B) It provides logo-free news content in multiple formats
C) It requires media organizations to credit Prasar Bharati when using content
D) It is a paid subscription service from March 2025 onwards
E) It delivers only entertainment news

Answer

B) It provides logo-free news content in multiple formats

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Event and Location:

- **Event:** PB-SHABD Completes One Year; Free Subscription Extended Till March 2026.
- **Date:** March 13, 2025.
- **Location:** New Delhi, India.

About PB-SHABD:

- **Full Name:** Prasar Bharati-Shared Audio-Visuals for Broadcast and Dissemination (PB-SHABD).
- **Launched In:** March 2024.
- **Purpose:** A shared feed service providing logo-free news content to media organizations.
- **Subscription:** Free access extended till March 2026 to support small and independent media houses.

Key Features of PB-SHABD:

1. Comprehensive News Coverage:
- Over 1000 news stories daily.
- Covers more than 50 categories (e.g., agriculture, technology, foreign affairs, politics).
- Available in all major Indian languages.

2. Wide Network of Reporters & Editors:
- 1,500+ reporters, correspondents, and stringers across India.
- 60 dedicated edit desks working 24/7 for real-time news updates.

Key Features of PB-SHABD:

3. Logo-Free & No Credit Required:

- All content is available without logos.
- Media organizations can use content without attribution.

4. Live Feed Feature:

- Exclusive coverage of national events & press briefings without logos.

5. Media Repository & Archival Library:

- Allows access to past news reports, videos, images, and text articles.
- Includes special curated packages and editorial pieces.

Expected Impact of PB-SHABD:

1. **Support for Small & Regional Media Houses:**
    - Provides free access to high-quality news content, reducing operational costs.
    - Encourages unbiased reporting by making factual content widely available.
2. **Enhanced News Coverage & Accessibility:**
    - Increases the availability of verified news from Prasar Bharati's trusted sources.
    - Helps local and national media outlets focus on news dissemination rather than content production.

Expected Impact of PB-SHABD:

3. Strengthening Public Trust in News Media:

- Combats misinformation by providing official, verified news sources.
- Ensures media houses have access to unbiased and comprehensive coverage.

Tabular Summary:

Category	Details
Key Announcement	PB-SHABD free subscription extended till March 2026.
Launched In	March 2024.
Operated By	Prasar Bharati (Doordarshan & AIR).
Key Features	Logo-free content, live feeds, news in 50+ categories.
Content Formats	Text, video, pictures, and audio.
Number of Daily Stories	1,000+.
Reporter Network	1,500+ journalists & 60 edit desks.
Accessibility	Available in all major Indian languages.
Media Repository	Provides archival footage & special news packages.
Social Media Presence	X (Twitter) & Instagram.

QUICK RECALL

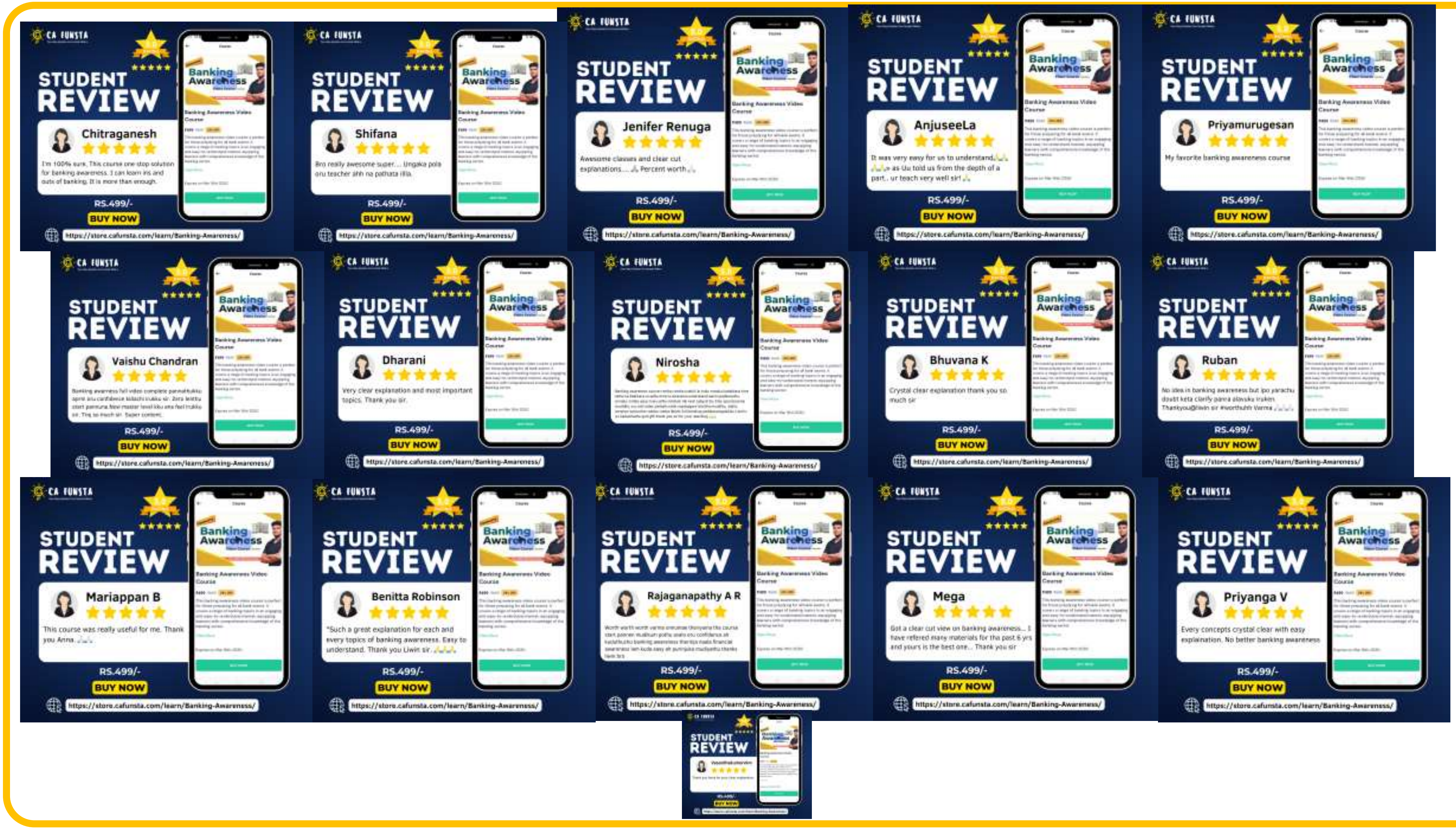
- Ordnance Factory Day is observed annually on March 18 to mark India’s first ordnance factory.
- SBI is launching a specialized project finance unit for AI, fintech, and e-commerce.
- ADB launched the Frontier Seed (Pacific) program to support private sector growth in the Pacific.
- The EY report predicts 46% productivity gains in Indian banking operations due to GenAI by 2030.
- The RBI has shortlisted six firms for modernizing its currency management infrastructure.
- Lenders transferred ₹1,104 crore McLeod Russel debt to NARCL at ₹700 crore.
- RBI proposes a common pool of bankable projects to enhance climate-related financing.
- India’s sugar production declined by 16.13% in the 2024-25 season, reaching 23.71 million tonnes.
- Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman has been appointed as the CEO of Anusandhan National Research Foundation.

QUICK RECALL

- Intel has appointed Lip-Bu Tan as CEO, effective March 18, 2025.
- Stuart Young was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.
- ISRO Chairman V Narayanan inaugurated the Shri S Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence at IIT Madras.
- A case of Human Coronavirus HKU1 has been detected in Kolkata.
- US President Donald Trump is considering a travel ban impacting 43 countries in 2025.
- Amit Shah inaugurated the Lachit Barphukan Police Academy in Dergaon, Assam.
- Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated the state's first Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Temple in Bhiwandi, Thane.

QUICK RECALL

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched the PM Internship Scheme Mobile App in New Delhi.
- Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy launched the ‘Rajiv Yuva Vikasam’ Scheme to promote self-employment.
- The Chhattisgarh government plans to introduce a stricter anti-conversion law.
- The Centre has sanctioned 116 new tourist destinations under various schemes.
- A parliamentary panel recommended increasing MGNREGS wages to match inflation.
- PB-SHABD provides free, logo-free news content for media organizations till March 2026.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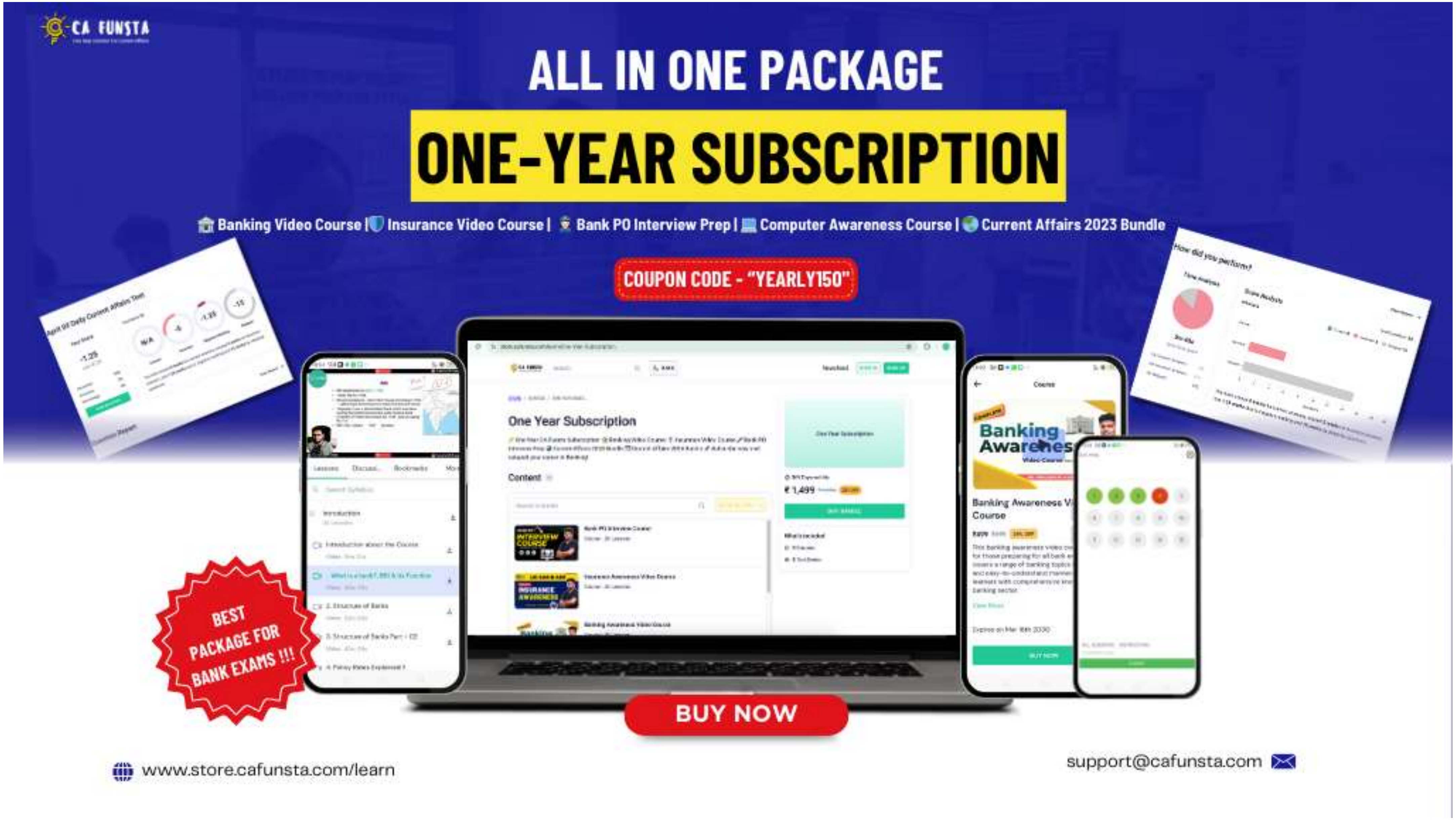
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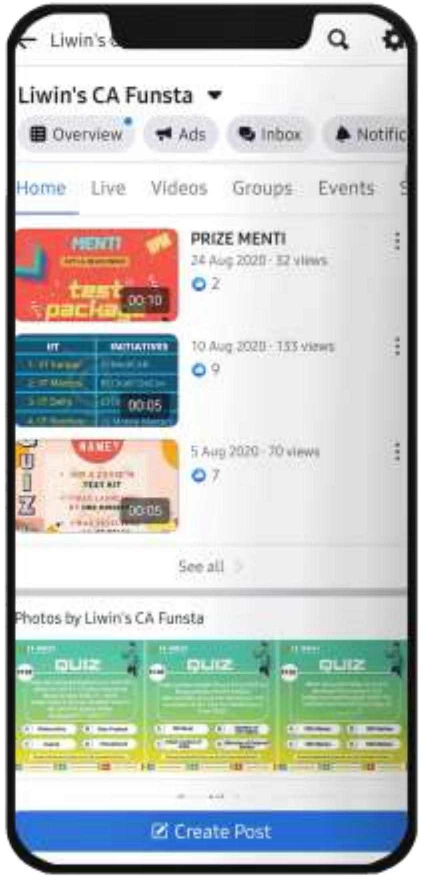

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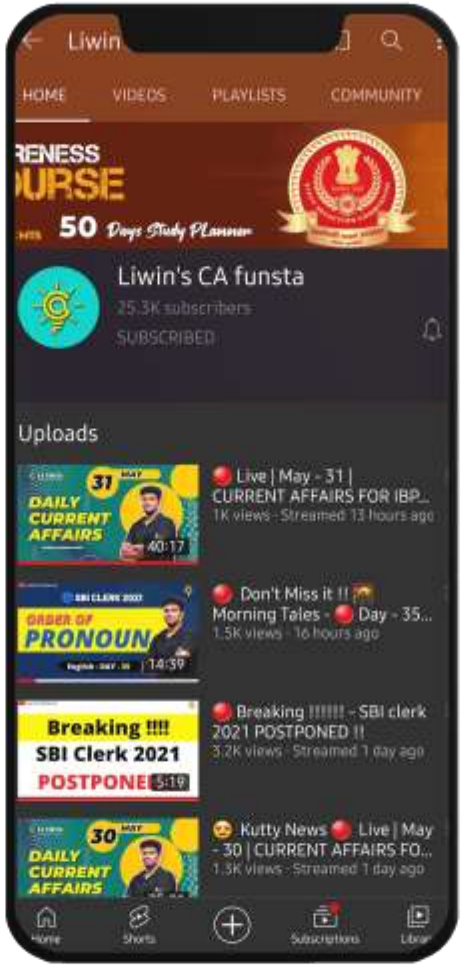

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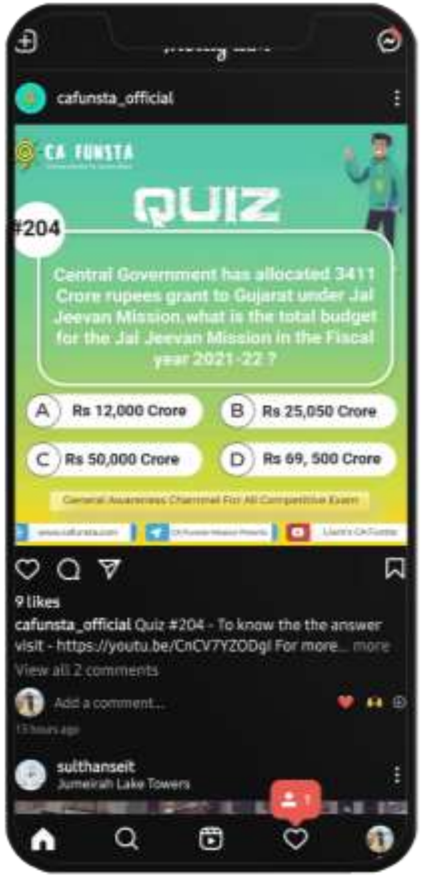

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