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Monthly Weekly **Daily** **PIB News**

January 31 2025 PIB News - English Article

January 30 2025 PIB News - English Article

January 29 2025 PIB News - English Article

AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

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Hand Written Notes


NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)


NSO ^{Announced} → National Household Income Survey & Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises ^{Survey duration} → 1 year, starting April 2026
MoSPI


National Household Income Survey (NHIS)

 **Objective:** Collect household income, living conditions & income distribution data for policy-making and well-being assessment

 **Significance:** First nationwide income survey

Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises (ASISSE)

 **Objective:** Provide sectoral data on service enterprises to improve GDP estimation

 **Data Source:** Uses GSTN (Goods and Services Tax Network) data

NSO - National Statistical Office

MoSPI - Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

2)

Indian Railways ^{Launched} → India's 1st-ever LNG diesel dual-fuel DEMU Train ^{In} → Ahmedabad, Gujarat

LNG - Liquefied Natural Gas

DEMU - Diesel Electric Multiple Unit

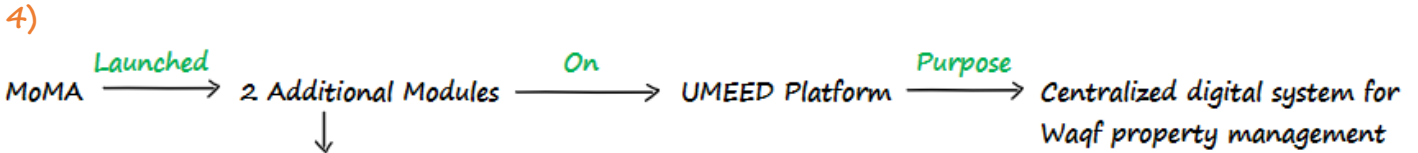
3)

Jitendra Singh ^{Inaugurated} → CSIR-NIO Shore-Based Regional Centre ^{In} → Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
MoS&T (MoS)

MoS&T - Ministry of Science & Technology

MoS - Minister of State

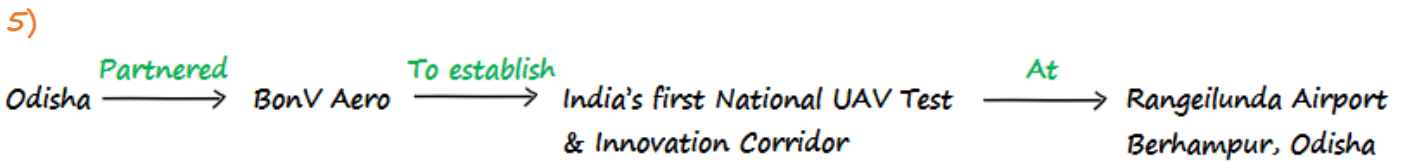
CSIR-NIO - Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - National Institute of Oceanography



- Survey Module
- Waqf Property Lease Management Module

MoMA - Ministry of Minority Affairs

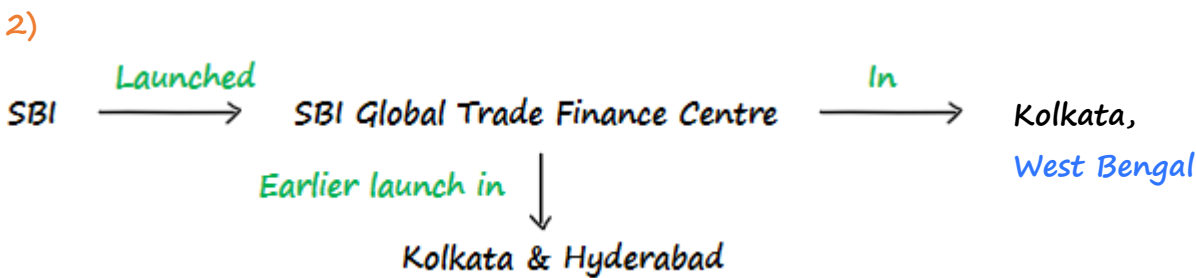
UMEED - Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development



BANKING & FINANCE

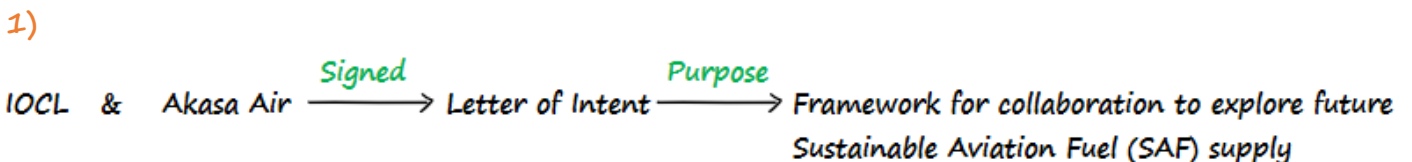


- 💰 Annual financing → USD 8-10 billion
- Financial Support to Indian Schemes
 - Pradhan Mantri Skilling Employability → USD 830 million
 - Maharashtra Project on Resilient Agriculture (Phase-II) → USD 490 million
 - Kerala Health Systems Improvement Program → USD 280 million



SBI - State Bank of India

ECONOMY & BUSINESS



IOCL - Indian Oil Corporation Limited

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

1)

Bhupender Yadav ^{Announced} → Patna Bird Sanctuary in Etah, UP & Chhari-Dhand in Kutch, Gujarat ^{Designated as} → India's 97th & 98th Ramsar Sites
MoEFCC



- 🏆 World's Top 3 Ramsar Sites: UK (176), Mexico (144), India (98)
- 🏆 Top 3 Ramsar Sites in India: TN (20), UP (11), and Odisha (6)
- 📄 Largest Ramsar Site in India: Sundarban Wetland in WB
- 🏠 Smallest Ramsar Site in India: Renuka Lake in HP

MoEFCC - Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

UP - Uttar Pradesh

UK - United Kingdom

TN - Tamil Nadu

WB - West Bengal

HP - Himachal Pradesh

2)

SAIL ^{Earned} → 'Great Place to Work' certification ^{For} → 3rd consecutive year
Maharatna PSU ^{Validity period} ↓
February 2026 to February 2027

SAIL - Steel Authority of India Limited

PSU - Public Sector Undertaking

OBITUARY

1)


Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal ^{Award} → Former CBSE Chairman → 1974 - Padma Shri (Literature & Education)
 ↓ ↓
^{Born} Kerala ^{Passed away} New Delhi


CBSE - Central Board of Secondary Education


IMPORTANT DAYS

1)

January 27-30, 2026 → 4th edition of India Energy Week

 **Theme:** "Energizing Growth, Securing Economies, Enriching Lives"

 **Host:** Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)

 **Organiser:** Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry

 **Agreements Signed**

1. **India-Canada Joint Statement**

Focus: LNG, LPG, crude trade via Trans Mountain Expansion

Investment: Canada - USD 116 bn, India - USD 500 bn

2. **GAIL & MOL (Tokyo) - LNG Carrier Charter**

Vessel: 'GAIL BHUWAN'

Long-term charter agreement


LNG Japonica Shipping Corp (MOL 74%, GAIL 26%)

3. **ONGC & OIL MoU**

Collaboration in oil & gas exploration

4. **BPCL & Tata Motors MoU**

Develop mega Electric Vehicle charging hubs at BPCL fuel stations

 **Awards & Winners**

FIPI/IIP Industry Awards:

- Exploration Co. of the Year → ONGC
- Production Co. → OIL
- Refinery of the Year → RIL SEZ Refinery, Jamnagar
- City Gas Distribution → Indraprastha Gas Limited
- OMC of the Year → Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited

LNG - Liquefied Natural Gas

LPG - Liquefied Petroleum Gas

MOL - Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Limited

ONGC - Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited

OIL - Oil India Limited

BPCL - Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited

FIPI - Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry

IIP - Indian Institute of Petroleum

REL - Reliance Industries Limited







SEZ - Special Economic Zone

OMC - Oil Marketing Company

2)

January 25 2026 → 73rd World Leprosy Day



-  **Aim:** To raise awareness about leprosy and address stigma and discrimination.
-  **When?** January 25 (last Sunday of January)
-  **2026 Theme:** "Leprosy is curable, the real challenge is stigma"
-  **2026 Observance:** 73rd
-  **Observance in India:** January 30 (Annually)
-  **Initiatives in India:**
 - **Programme:** National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)
 - **Target:** Zero Transmission, Zero Leprosy by 2027
 - **Status:** Eliminated as a public health problem in December 2005

3)

January 31, 2026 → International Zebra Day ^{Objective} → Raise awareness about zebra species and conservation

STATE NEWS

1)

Bhupendra Patel ^{Launched} → Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana ^{Objective} → Bridging the rural-urban development gap
CM of Gujarat
CM - Chief Minister

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Less Important NEWS

- [Scindia launches road, energy projects in Tripura](#)
- [National Health Authority organises Federated Intelligence Hackathon on development of Digital Public Goods for Health AI](#)
- [18th Pradhanmantri Rozgar Mela Held at 45 Locations Across India](#)
- [Indian Railways Delivers First Full Freight Rake of Rice to Anantnag](#)
- [DigiFT Introduces First Actively Managed Tokenized Equity Fund with BNY as Investment Management Services Provider](#)

Detailed Content

Current Affairs 1 & 2 February 2026: Headlines



AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY ENGLISH

INDIA ENERGY WEEK 2026 HELD IN GOA
Global policymakers and industry leaders discuss energy security, transition and investment opportunities

Patna Bird Sanctuary, Chhari-Dhand Added to Ramsar List
India's Wetland Conservation Network Expands with Two New Internationally Recognised Sites

CURRENT AFFAIRS February 1 & 2 2026

- ▶ NSO to Launch India's First-Ever NHIS & ASISSE from April 2026
- ▶ IR Launched 1st-ever LNG diesel dual-fuel DEMU Train in Ahmedabad
- ▶ Union MoS Jitendra Singh Inaugurates Rs 32 Crore CSIR-NIO Shore-Based Regional Centre in Visakhapatnam, AP
- ▶ MoMA Launches two Additional Modules on UMEED Platform
- ▶ Odisha to Establish a National UAV Test & Innovation Corridor at Rangeilunda Airport
- ▶ India Partners with World Bank on USD 8-10 Billion-a-year Plan to Boost Jobs and Growth
- ▶ SBI Strengthened its Trade Finance and Global Banking Operations, with the launch of GTFC in Kolkata
- ▶ IOCL Signs LoI with Akasa Air to Jointly Explore SAF Supply
- ▶ Patna Bird Sanctuary & Chhari-Dhand Designated as India's 97th & 98th Ramsar Sites
- ▶ SAIL Earns 'Great Place to Work' Certification for Third Consecutive Time
- ▶ Former CBSE Chairman and Padma Shri Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal Passed Away
- ▶ Overview of India Energy Week 2026 Held in Goa from January 27-30, 2026
- ▶ World Leprosy Day 2026 - January 25
- ▶ International Zebra Day 2026 - January 31
- ▶ Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel Launches 'Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana' to Upgrade Rural Infrastructure

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

NSO to Launch India's First-Ever NHIS & ASISSE from April 2026

In January 2026, the National Statistical Office (NSO), under the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), announced plans to conduct India's first-ever National Household Income Survey (NHIS) and Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises (ASISSE), both scheduled to run for one year starting April 2026.



Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** NSO to Launch India's First-Ever national surveys
- ✓ **Surveys:** NHIS (National Household Income Survey) & ASISSE (Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises)
- ✓ **When?** From April 2026
- ✓ **NHIS:** Household income, living conditions and income distribution
- ✓ **ASISSE:** Incorporated services sector using GSTN data
- ✓ **Digital Tool:** CAPI
- ✓ **Coverage:** All of India except Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Islands

Key Details:

Announcement: The announcement was made during the two-day All-India Workshop of Trainers (AIWOT) for NHIS and ASISSE, held from January 28 to 29, 2026 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN).

Digital Survey: Both NHIS and ASISSE will be conducted digitally using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

Coverage: The surveys will cover all of India, except the hard-to-access villages in the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands.

About National Household Income Survey (NHIS):

Overview: It collects detailed data on household income, living conditions and income distribution, enabling comparisons across regions and households and supporting policy formulation and assessment of household well-being.

Data Scope: NHIS will cover household income distribution across rural and urban areas, sources of income, including wages and salaries, business and self-employment earnings, farm or land income, capital and other returns, and living conditions and inter-regional comparisons.

- The data will help analyze poverty, inequality, and economic behaviour more accurately than expenditure-based surveys alone.

About Annual Survey of Incorporated Service Sector Enterprises (ASISSE):



Overview: It covers the incorporated services sector using Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) data and provides state- and industry-level estimates of Gross Value Added (GVA), capital formation, employment and emoluments.

- It aims to collect detailed financial and operational data of service-sector companies and improve measurement of the services sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and national accounts.

Data Coverage: It includes data on output and value added, employment and wages, operating expenses and profits, capital formation and assets, and industry-wise and region-wise performance of service enterprises.

Significance: ASISSE fills critical data gaps in services sector statistics and supports policy formulation, economic planning, and national income estimation.

- It complements household-level surveys such as NHIS by providing enterprise-level data.

About National Statistical Office (NSO):

The NSO was established through the merger of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). It functions under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). Chief Statistician of India (CSI) – Saurabh Garg

Headquarters – New Delhi, Delhi

Established – 2019

IR Launched 1st-ever LNG diesel dual-fuel DEMU Train in Ahmedabad

Indian Railways (IR) successfully launched India's 1st-ever Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)-diesel dual-fuel Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) train at Sabarmati in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in January 2026.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Successful Launch of India's 1st-ever LNG-diesel DEMU train
- ✓ **Where?** Sabarmati (Ahmedabad, Gujarat)
- ✓ **Launched by:** Indian Railways (IR)
- ✓ **Significance:** Operating on dual-fuel system
- ✓ **Environment Significance:** Replacing Up to 40% of diesel with LNG
- ✓ **Cost Savings:** Nearly Rs 11.9 lakh per DPC; about Rs 23.9 lakh annually

Key Features:

Dual-fuel System: The Integrated Coaching Depot (ICD), Sabarmati has successfully modified two 1,400 Horse Power (HP) DEMU Driving Power Cars (DPCs) equipped with 2,200-liter (lt) LNG tank to operate on a dual-fuel system, enabling up to 40% diesel substitution with LNG.

Operational Efficiency: Both modified units have successfully completed more than 2,000 kilometers (kms) of field trials.

- After the successful trials, the train is now capable of covering a maximum 222 km of daily operation on a single full refill.

Economic Significance: Trial-based estimates indicate an annual savings of nearly Rs 11.9 lakh per DPC and about Rs 23.9 lakh annually for an 8-coach DEMU train.

Environment Impact: The use of LNG will help in reducing the levels of Carbon Dioxide (CO2), Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), and particulate matter.

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Union MoS Jitendra Singh Inaugurates Rs 32 Crore CSIR-NIO Shore-Based Regional Centre in Visakhapatnam, AP

In January 2026, Union Minister of State (MoS)(Independent Charge, IC) **Dr Jitendra Singh**, Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T) and Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), inaugurated the **Shore-Based Laboratory** of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – National Institute of Oceanography (**CSIR-NIO**) Regional Centre at **Visakhapatnam**, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Inauguration of CSIR–NIO Shore-Based Regional Centre
- ✓ **By Whom?** Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, MoS&T and MoES
- ✓ **Where?** Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
- ✓ **Cost:** Rs 32 crore
- ✓ **Objective:** Strengthen marine research, energy security, and Blue Economy initiatives

About CSIR–NIO Regional Centre:

Infrastructure: The Rs 32 crore facility with a built-up area of 4,550 square metres (sq m) was constructed by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) at Yendada Village, Rushikonda, Visakhapatnam.

Research: The centre focuses on marine geological and geophysical surveys of the Eastern Continental Margin of India (ECMI), including bathymetry mapping, tectonic studies, deep-sea exploration, and monsoon research in the Bay of Bengal.

Energy: The facility strengthens national energy security by supporting offshore oil, gas, hydrocarbon, and seabed mineral exploration.

Community: The centre contributes to the Blue Economy by supporting fisheries, coastal resilience, skill development, seaweed cultivation, and harmful algal bloom forecasting.

MoMA Launches two Additional Modules on UMEED Platform

In January 2026, the Ministry of Minority Affairs (**MoMA**) launched two additional modules named '**Survey Module**' and '**Waqf Property Lease Management Module**' on Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (**UMEED**) central portal.

- These two new modules were formally launched by Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar, Secretary, MoMA in New Delhi, Delhi.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Launch of two new modules on UMEED Platform
- ✓ **Name of Modules:** Survey Module and Waqf Property Lease Management Module
- ✓ **Launched by:** Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA)

About New Modules:

Survey Module: This new module offers a comprehensive digital framework that helps in recording, managing, and updating information related to the survey of Waqf properties on the central portal.

Waqf Property Lease Module: It facilitates end-to-end management of leasing-related information of Waqf properties via the portal, enabling systematic recording and monitoring of key details like: lease information, lease period, lease amount and other relevant information in a structured and transparent manner.

UMEED Central Portal: The platform, launched in June 2025, serves as a centralized digital system under the Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (**UMEED**) Act, 1995, enabling real-time uploading, verification, and monitoring of Waqf properties.

Odisha to Establish a National UAV Test & Innovation Corridor at Rangeilunda Airport

In January 2026, Government of Odisha partnered with **BonV Aero** at Wings India 2026 (Hyderabad – Telangana) to establish **India's first National UAV Test & Innovation Corridor** at Rangeilunda Airport

(Ganjam district), repurposing the operational commercial airport for live drone testing in dynamic airspace up to 1,000 metres.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** National UAV Test and Innovation Corridor to be set up
- ✓ **Who?** Government of Odisha
- ✓ **Where?** At Rangeilunda Airport in Berhampur, Odisha
- ✓ **Framework:** B-MAAN scheme
- ✓ **Partner:** BonV Aero

Key Features of the Corridor:

Drone Testing: Drones will operate in low-altitude airspace up to about 1,000 metre (m), enabling realistic testing conditions. It includes beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations, swarm drone trials, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based navigation, and autonomous airspace management scenarios.

Phased Development: The project is being developed in phases under the Building and Management of Aviation Assets and Network (B-MAAN) scheme, Government of India (GoI)'s initiative to grow regional aviation and new tech infrastructure.

Significance: It will be India's first operational commercial airport repurposed as a live UAV test and development facility, enabling drones to fly and be tested in real and dynamic airspace.

BANKING & FINANCE

India Partners with World Bank on USD 8-10 Billion-a-year Plan to Boost Jobs and Growth

In January 2026, the Government of India (GoI) and the World Bank Group (WBG) announced a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF), aimed at accelerating job creation across both urban and rural areas of the country with **USD 8-10 billion** in annual financing over the **next 5 years**.



- This newly announced plan took effect from the start of January 2026, fully aligns with India's "Viksit Bharat" vision which aims to make the country a developed nation by **2047**.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Announcement of Country Partnership (CPF)
- ✓ **Between:** GoI and World Bank Group (WBG)
- ✓ **Annual Financing:** USD 8-10 billion
- ✓ **Time Period:** Over the next 5 years
- ✓ **Purpose:** To boost job creation across both urban and rural areas of India
- ✓ **Key Projects Covered:**
 - Maharashtra Project on Resilient Agriculture;
 - Kerala Health Systems Improvement Program;
 - Scaling Electric Mobility

Key Details:

Key Pillars: The WBG's global jobs strategy is structured around 3 main pillars i.e. investing in critical infrastructure, both physical and human; strengthening a business-friendly environment via predictable laws, rules and regulations; and using risk-management tools to help private investment scale.

Focus Sectors: This new strategic partnership will focus on **5 key sectors** and is expected to generate locally relevant jobs at scale like: infrastructure and energy, agr-business, healthcare, tourism, and value-added manufacturing.

Strategic Outcomes: The partnership is expected to generate **4** strategic outcomes i.e. boosting rural prosperity and resilience; supporting urban transformation and livable cities; investing in people and bolstering energy security and core infrastructure; and strengthening resilience.

Financial Support to Various Indian Schemes: As per the CPF, the funds provided by the WBG will be used for various ongoing Indian schemes such as:

- **Pradhan Mantri Skilling Employability:** A USD 830 million credit in collaboration with the private sector aimed to upgrade India's network of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
- **Maharashtra Project on Resilient Agriculture (Phase-II):** This USD 490 million project aimed to improve crop productivity and bolster resilience by adopting digital technology in precision farming practices.
- **Kerala Health Systems Improvement Program:** This USD 280 million program is designed to bolster the digital health systems of Kerala through expanded e-Health services, integrated data platforms, and enhanced cybersecurity.
- **Scaling Electric Mobility:** The WBG through its programmatic ecosystem approach is supporting India's electric vehicles transition.

About World Bank Group (WBG):

The World Bank Group (WBG), originally established as International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference (held in 1944) to help in rebuilding Europe and Japan after World War-II.

- At present, the group comprises 5 key institutions: IBRD; International Development Association (IDA) (in 1956); Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) (in 1988); International Finance Corporation (IFC) (in 1956) and International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) (in 1965)

President- Ajay Banga

Headquarters- Washington, DC, the United States of America (USA)

SBI Strengthened its Trade Finance and Global Banking Operations, with the launch of GTFC in Kolkata

In January 2026, India's largest Public Sector Bank (PSB), State Bank of India (**SBI**), bolstered its trade finance and global banking operations with the launch of a Global Trade Finance Centre (GTFC) in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB).

- In July 2025, the bank launched two specialized GTFCs i.e. in Kolkata and Hyderabad (Telangana) on the occasion of **70th** anniversary of SBI.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** SBI strengthened its trade finance and global banking operations
- ✓ **Through:** GTFC (in Kolkata, WB)
- ✓ **Launched in:** July 2025
- ✓ **Along with:** GTFC in Hyderabad (Telangana)

About SBI's GTFC:

Centralized System: It is designed to streamline Inland trade and the processing of Import and Export

transactions.

Significance: It also supports all SBI branches across eastern and northern parts of the country, facilitating faster turnaround times, robust compliance oversight and a significantly improved customer experience for businesses involved in domestic and cross-border trade.

Technology-driven: GTFC uses the advanced technologies such as: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Blockchain, among others, thereby transitioning from traditional paper-based systems.

Operational Details:

Staff Strength: 277 total (161 SBI employees, 105 outsourced, 11 temporary)

Local Hiring: 61% workforce (169 employees) from West Bengal

Economic Contribution: Rs.1.40 crore Goods and Services(GST) to West Bengal since 2024

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

IOCL Signs LoI with Akasa Air to Jointly Explore SAF Supply

In January 2026, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (**IOCL**), under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), signed a Letter of Intent (**LoI**) with **Akasa Air** to jointly explore the future supply of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (**SAF**) during the Wings India 2026 airshow in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** LoI signed
- ✓ **Entities:** IOCL & Akasa Air
- ✓ **Purpose:** To explore the future supply of SAF

Key Details of LoI:

Framework : The LoI establishes a framework for collaboration to assess how IOCL might supply SAF to Akasa Air in the future.

Role of Entities: IOCL and Akasa Air will evaluate potential SAF supply volumes, delivery locations, timelines, and approved sustainable feedstocks and production pathways that meet global standards.

SAF: It is a lower-carbon alternative to conventional jet fuel that can significantly reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from aviation.

About IOCL: IOCL, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE), was established in 2019 in New Delhi, Delhi, under the MoPNG. It is India's largest integrated oil & gas company, operating across refining, pipelines, fuel marketing, petrochemicals, and clean energy initiatives.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Patna Bird Sanctuary & Chhari-Dhand Designated as India's 97th & 98th Ramsar Sites

On January 30, 2026, Union Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), announced that **Patna Bird Sanctuary** in Etah, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and **Chhari-Dhand** in Kutch, Gujarat were designated as **Ramsar wetlands** of international importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

- With this move, the total Ramsar sites in India have grown to **98**.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** GoI added two new Ramsar sites
- ✓ **Ramsar Sites:** Patna Bird Sanctuary, UP (97) and Chhari-Dhand, Gujarat (98)
- ✓ **Announced by:** Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, MoEFCC
- ✓ **Governing Convention:** Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, 1971

- ✓ **World's Top 3 Ramsar Sites:** UK (176), Mexico (144), India (98)
- ✓ **Top 3 Ramsar Sites in India:** TN (20), UP (11), and Odisha (6)
- ✓ **Largest Ramsar Site in India:** Sundarban Wetland in WB
- ✓ **Smallest Ramsar Site in India:** Renuka Lake in HP



About Patna Bird Sanctuary:

Overview: The Patna Bird Sanctuary, spanning an area of approximately 109 hectares, is located at Patna village in Etah. It is located on the banks of the Upper Ganga Canal, which provides water to the wetland.

Habitat: It is a key habitat for migratory and resident birds, especially during the winter season. It supports diverse avian species, including waterfowl such as ducks, geese; waders and shorebirds; and Kingfishers, herons, egrets, and other wetland birds.

- It also serves as an important stopover site for migratory birds traveling along the Central Asian Flyway.

Ecology: The sanctuary consists of marshy wetlands, shallow ponds, and reed beds, which provide feeding and nesting grounds. It supports other wildlife such as fish and amphibians, forming a complete ecosystem that sustains bird populations.

Bird Sanctuary: In 1991, it was declared a Bird Sanctuary to protect the habitat from encroachment and pollution. It is managed by the UP-forest department.

About Chhari-Dhand:

Overview: Chhari-Dhand is situated in the Kutch district, part of the Great Rann of Kutch. It is a seasonal wetland, forming a shallow water body during the monsoon and drying out in the summer.

- It is surrounded by salt flats and desert-like terrain, making it a unique ecosystem in western India.

Habitat: It supports hundreds of migratory and resident bird species, particularly during the wet season. It supports species, including waterfowl and waders such as ducks, sandpipers, plovers, Flamingos and herons, and other wetland bird's dependent on shallow water and mudflats.

- It acts as a critical stopover and breeding site for birds migrating along the Central Asian Flyway.
- It also supports mammals such as Chinkara (**Indian gazelle**), wolves, caracal and desert cats, and desert foxes. It provides a rare freshwater and wetland habitat in a largely arid region.

Significance: It plays a vital role in supporting aquatic life and birds, maintaining groundwater recharge, and acting as a buffer against desertification.

About Ramsar Sites:

Overview: Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. It aims to conserve these wetlands, maintain their ecological functions, and protect biodiversity.

- Each site is recognized internationally, highlighting its value for wildlife, water resources, and ecosystems.

Criteria: A wetland can be designated as a Ramsar site if it supports rare or endangered species of plants or animals, provides habitat for migratory birds, has high biodiversity, provides important ecological functions such as water purification, flood control, or groundwater recharge, and supports human communities sustainably.

Wetlands: It includes lakes, rivers, marshes, swamps, mangroves, peatlands, coral reefs, estuaries, and human-made wetlands such as reservoirs and rice paddies.

Global Overview: As of January 2026, **2,522 wetlands**, spanning approximately 253, 075, 668 hectares have been designated as the Ramsar sites. The United Kingdom (**UK**) with 176 sites has a high number of designated Ramsar sites, followed by Mexico (144 sites).

Ramsar Sites in India:

Overview: India ranks third globally with 98 Ramsar sites, the highest number in South Asia.

First Sites: Chilika Lake (Odisha) and Keoladeo National Park (NP) (Rajasthan) were designated as India's first Ramsar sites in 1981.

Top 3 States with Ramsar Sites: Tamil Nadu (TN) with 20 Ramsar Sites, followed by UP with 11 sites and Odisha with 6 sites, are the top 3 states in India by number of Ramsar sites.

Largest Ramsar Site: The Sundarban Wetland in West Bengal (WB) is the largest Ramsar Site in India, covering an area of 4,230 square kilometer(km²).

Smallest Ramsar Site: Renuka Lake in Himachal Pradesh (HP) is the smallest Ramsar Site in India, with an area of just 0.2 km².

Recently added Ramsar Sites: Newly Added Ramsar Sites in 2025: In 2025, India added 11 new Ramsar Sites across several states, including Sakkarakottai and Therthangal Bird Sanctuaries (TN), Khecheopalri Wetland (Sikkim), Udhwa Lake (Jharkhand), Khichan and Menar (Rajasthan), Gokul Jalashay, Udaipur Jheel, and Gogabeel Lake (Bihar), Siliserh Lake (Rajasthan), Kopra Jalashay (Chhattisgarh).

About Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

The Ramsar Convention, "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat" is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It was adopted on 2 February 1971 in Ramsar, Iran, entered into force in 1975. In 1982, India became a Contracting Party.

- World Wetlands Day is observed on February 2 of every year to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands.

Secretary General – Dr. Musonda Mumba

Headquarters – Gland, Switzerland

SAIL Earns 'Great Place to Work' Certification for Third Consecutive Time

In January 2026, Steel Authority of India Limited (**SAIL**), a Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) and India's largest steelmaker, earned the 'Great Place to Work' certification for the period **February 2026 to February 2027**.

- This marks the **third consecutive year** that SAIL has received the certification, following a company-wide assessment conducted by the Great Place To Work Institute, India.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Great Place to Work certification
- ✓ **Who?** Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)
- ✓ **Certification Period:** February 2026 to February 2027
- ✓ **Achievement:** Third consecutive certification
- ✓ **Assessing Body:** Great Place To Work Institute, India

About SAIL's Recognition:

Commitment: This recognition reflects SAIL's commitment to nurture a workplace culture that is contemporary, agile and deeply aligned with the professional and personal growth of its people.

Assessment : SAIL achieved a notable increase in its TRUST INDEX© score, indicating a high level of positive feedback from employees during the evaluation.

Performance Transparency: SAIL continues to introduce progressive Human Resource (HR) initiatives,

with **SAIL DARPAN** promoting a transparent, performance-driven system that ensures objective evaluation, aligned target setting, and empowers employees to take ownership of their growth.

OBITUARY

Former CBSE Chairman and Padma Shri Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal Passed Away

In January 2026, **Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal**, a Jesuit priest and one of the most prominent personalities in India's post-Independence education system, passed away at the age of **99** in New Delhi, Delhi. He was born on July 03, 1926 in Alappuzha, Kerala.



- He was awarded with the **Padma Shri**, India's 4th highest civilian honor, in **1974** in the field of 'literature and education'.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Former CBSE Chairman Passed Away
- ✓ **Who?** Father Thomas V. Kunnunkal,
- ✓ **Awards:** Padma Shri in 1974
- ✓ **Key Contribution:** Strengthened CBSE; 1st Chairperson of National Open School.

About Father Thomas V Kunnunkal:

Profile: He was known for his pivotal role in strengthening and reforming CBSE, establishing it as a credible national benchmark for school education.

CBSE Chairman: Father Kunnunkal widely known as **Father Stany**, served as Chairman of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) from 1980 to 1987.

Other Key Roles: He played a pivotal role in founding the **National Open School** in November 1989 as an autonomous organisation in pursuance of the National Education Policy (**NEP 1986**) by the Ministry of Education (MoE).

- He served as the 1st chairperson of National Open School, now christened the National Institute of Open Schooling and held this post till 1992.
- He had also served on two Central government commissions i.e. the National Commission for Teachers and the National Commission for Review of the NEP.

Books: In 2005, he published a book titled 'The Role of Teachers on National Regeneration'.

Other Key Honors: In 2006, the Government of India (GoI) selected him as an honorary fellow of the **Commonwealth of Learning** (Vancouver, Canada), an intergovernmental organisation under the Commonwealth Heads of Government which works specifically in the field of education.



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IMPORTANT DAYS

Overview of India Energy Week 2026 Held in Goa from January 27–30, 2026

The 4th edition of **India Energy Week (IEW 2026)** was held at the Advanced Training Institute (ATI) of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) in **Goa**, from 27-30 January 2026, hosted under the patronage of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (**MoPNG**).



Exam Hints:

- ✓ **Event:** 4th edition of India Energy Week 2026 Held
- ✓ **When?** 27-30 January 2026
- ✓ **Where?** Advanced Training Institute (ATI) of ONGC, Goa
- ✓ **Host:** Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)
- ✓ **Organiser:** Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI) and dmgevents.
- ✓ **Theme:** “Energizing Growth, Securing Economies, and Enriching Lives.”
- ✓ **Agreements:**
 - India–Canada joint statement to deepen energy cooperation;
 - GAIL (India) Limited & MOL signed Long-term LNG carrier charter agreement;
 - MoU signed between ONGC and OIL for exploration collaboration;
 - MoU signed between BPCL and Tata Motors to develop Mega EV Charging Hubs
- ✓ **Awards:** AVINYA, VASUDHA Startup Challenges & FIPI/IIP Industry Awards.

About India Energy Week 2026:

Organization: The event was jointly organized by the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI) and dmgevents under the patronage of the MoPNG.

Theme: The central theme of the event was “**Energizing Growth, Securing Economies, and Enriching Lives.**”

Key Focus: The four-day summit featured both a Strategic Conference and a Technical Conference, enabling high-level discussions on energy collaboration, energy transition and resilience, net-zero strategies, hydrogen, Renewable Energy(RE), Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI), and City Gas Distribution (CGD).

Participants: The event brought together over 75,000 energy professionals and more than 700 exhibitors from more than 120 countries, and featured more than 550 speakers.

Pavilions: The event featured 11 country pavilions, with participation from Japan, the United States of America (USA), Germany, the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands, Norway, Canada, Russia, and China, enhancing global collaboration and international engagement.

PM Narendra Modi Interacts with Global Energy Sector CEOs:

On 28th January 2026, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, interacted with Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the global energy sector at Lok Kalyan Marg, New Delhi (Delhi), as part of India Energy Week (IEW) 2026.

Entities Involved: Global energy companies including TotalEnergies, BP, Vitol, HD Hyundai, HD KSOE, Aker,

LanzaTech, Vedanta, International Energy Forum (IEF), Excelerate, Wood Mackenzie, Trafigura, Staatsolie, Praj, ReNew, MOL; MoPNG.

Economy: India is rapidly becoming the world's third-largest economy, underpinned by policy stability, energy sector reforms, and strong long-term investment visibility.

Investment: Opportunities include USD 100 billion in exploration & production (E&P), USD 30 billion in Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG), and growth across natural gas, refinery-petrochemical integration, maritime, and shipbuilding.

Demand: India is projected to drive global oil demand growth, adding 8.2 million barrels (MMBL) per day by 2050, with total primary energy demand rising from 22 million barrels of oil equivalent per day (mboe/d) to **43.6 mboe/d**.

Agreement Signed during IEW 2026:

Signed by Canada:

Overview: During the IEW 2026, India and Canada signed a joint statement to strengthen strategic cooperation in the energy sector.

Signatories: The agreement was signed between Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, MoPNG and Canada's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Timothy Hodgson, marking a renewed momentum in bilateral energy relations.

Trade: India and Canada will expand LNG, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), crude, and refined petroleum trade via Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) and Western Canadian ports.

CleanEnergy: Both countries cooperate in RE, hydrogen, biofuels, sustainable aviation fuel, battery storage, AI, and nuclear energy with uranium under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards for India's 100 Gigawatt (GW) target by 2047.

Investment: Canada highlighted USD 116 billion in energy projects while India offered USD 500 billion in energy investment opportunities across the value chain.

GAIL (India) and MOL:

Overview: GAIL (India) Limited and Japanese shipping major Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Limited (MOL), Tokyo, entered into a long-term charter agreement for a LNG carrier named '**GAIL BHUWAN**' strengthening India's LNG shipping and maritime energy infrastructure.

Signatories: Contract was signed by S. Bairagi, Executive Director (ED) (International Shipping & LNG), GAIL, and Hisashi Umemura, Director General (DG), Headquarters of Energy Business, MOL.

Joint Venture: LNG Japonica Shipping Corporation Limited is a JV with MOL holding 74% and GAIL (India) Limited holding 26%, leveraging MOL's reliable transportation, safety, and quality operations.

ONGC and OIL:

Overview: Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (**ONGC**) and Oil India Limited (**OIL**) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) at India Energy Week 2026 in Goa to explore collaboration in oil and gas exploration.

Signatories: The MoU was signed between Dinesh Singh, Chief General Manager (CGM) (Geology), ONGC and D. S. Manral, ED, OIL.

Objective: Combine ONGC and OIL expertise to boost exploration under Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) Round X and future bid rounds, enhancing efficiency and supporting India's energy security.

BPCL and Tata Motors:

Overview: Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (**BPCL**) and **Tata Motors** signed a MoU at India Energy Week 2026 to jointly develop India's largest Mega Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging and Engagement Hubs.

Charging Hubs: Large-scale EV hubs with fast-charging facilities and dedicated customer zones will be set up at select BPCL fuel stations across India to enhance the EV ownership experience.

Conclusion of India Energy Week 2026:

India Energy Week (IEW) 2026, concluded with an awards ceremony celebrating startups, industry leaders, and academic institutions for their contributions to clean energy, upstream technology, and sustainable exploration.

Winners of Startup Challenges and Industry Awards at IEW 2026:

Category / Challenge	Winner
AVINYA – Energy Startup Challenge	Minimines Cleantech Solutions
VASUDHA – Overseas Upstream Startup Challenge	SENERGETICS, The Netherlands
Hackathon Challenge	Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay (Mumbai, Maharashtra)
Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry/ Indian Institute of Petroleum FIPI / IIP Annual Industry Awards	
Exploration Company of the Year	Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC)
Oil & Gas Production Company of the Year (Over 1 MTOE)	Oil India Limited (OIL)
Oil & Gas Production Company of the Year (Under 1 MTOE)	Sun Petrochemicals Private Limited
Refinery of the Year	Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Refinery, Jamnagar (Gujarat)
Innovator of the Year (Joint Winners)	Research and Development (R&D) Division, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). Innovation Center, Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited.
Best Managed Project of the Year	Shell India (Project Monitoring Group, PMG Joint Venture, JV)
City Gas Distribution Company of the Year	Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL)
Pipeline Transportation Company of the Year	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)
Oil Marketing Company of the Year	Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)
Young Achiever of the Year – Female	Vanashree Mahatre, Pipeline Infrastructure Limited (PIL)

Young Achiever of the Year – Male

Karthik R., Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.

[Click here to read full list of winners](#)

India Energy Sector Overview:

Energy Profile: India is the world’s **third-largest crude oil consumer** and is projected to account for over 23% of global incremental energy demand by 2050.

Clean Capacity: India achieved 50% cumulative installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources in June 2025, five years ahead of its 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target.

Upstream Framework: The Oilfield (Regulation and Development) Amendment (ORDA) Act, 2025 and the Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG) Rules, 2025 modernised the upstream regulatory to improve ease of doing business, investor confidence, and energy security.

Pipeline Tariff: The Unified Pipeline Tariff (UPT), introduced in 2023, standardised gas transportation tariffs nationwide and covered about 90% of operational pipelines by December 2025.

Ethanol Drive: The National Policy on Biofuels, (NPB) 2018 (amended 2022) advanced the 20% ethanol blending target to Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025–26, achieving 19.05% blending by 31 July 2025.

PMUY Coverage: Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), launched in 2016 by PM Narendra Modi, covered 10.41 crore households by January 2026, approved 25 lakh LPG connections for Financial Year (FY) 2025–26, and offers a Rs 300 subsidy per 14.2 kilogram (kg) cylinder (up to nine refills), raising average LPG use from three refills in 2019–20 to 4.85 refills per annum in FY 2025–26.

SAF Roadmap: Indicative Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) blending targets were set at 1% from 2027, 2% from 2028 and 5% from 2030 for international flights.

- Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) became the first Indian company to receive International Sustainability and Carbon Certification–Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (ISCC–CORSA) certification, commenced SAF production at Panipat Refinery (Haryana) and signed agreement with Air India for SAF supply.

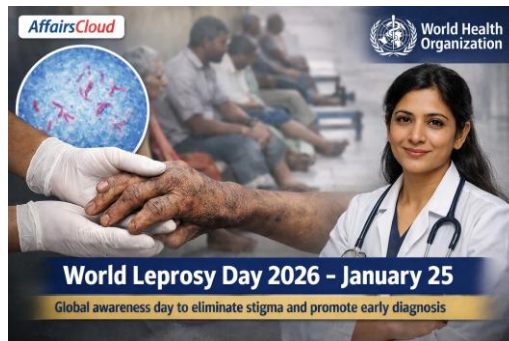
About Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG):

Union Minister – Hardeep Singh Puri (Rajya Sabha- Uttar Pradesh, UP)

Minister of State (MoS) – Suresh Gopi (Constituency – Thrissur, Kerala)

World Leprosy Day 2026 – January 25

World Leprosy Day (WLD) is observed globally on the **last Sunday of January** to raise awareness about leprosy and address stigma and discrimination.



- In 2026, WLD was observed on **25 January**, marking its **73rd** observance, while in 2027, WLD will be observed on 31 January.
- In **India**, National Leprosy Day is observed annually on **30 January**, coinciding with the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Theme:

2026 Theme: “Leprosy is curable, the real challenge is stigma.”

Significance: It promotes awareness about leprosy, addresses social stigma, and urges collective action to

eliminate the disease.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** World Leprosy Day 2026
- ✓ **When?** January 25 (last Sunday of January)
- ✓ **2026 Theme:** "Leprosy is curable, the real challenge is stigma"
- ✓ **2026 Observance:** 73rd
- ✓ **Observance in India:** January 30 (Annually)
- ✓ **Initiatives in India:**
 - **Programme:** National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)
 - **Target:** Zero Transmission, Zero Leprosy by 2027
 - **Status:** Eliminated as a public health problem in December 2005.

About Leprosy:

Hansen's Disease: Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease and named after Norwegian physician Gerhard Henrik Armauer Hansen, is caused by *Mycobacterium* bacteria and mainly affects the skin, peripheral nerves, eyes, and upper respiratory tract.

Incubation Period: Leprosy has a long incubation period, with symptoms often appearing 5 to 20 years after infection.

Mode of Transmission: The disease spreads through droplets from the nose and mouth during prolonged close contact with untreated individuals.

Treatment: Leprosy is completely curable with Multidrug Therapy (MDT), which has been provided free of cost by the World Health Organization (WHO) since 1995.

Global Status : Leprosy is classified as a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) and remains endemic in more than 120 countries, with around 2,00,000 new cases reported worldwide each year

Initiatives for Leprosy in India:

National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP): Under the NLEP, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has reiterated the government's commitment to eliminating leprosy and the stigma associated with it.

- The programme provides free diagnosis and MDT at government health facilities.
- The NLEP has set an ambitious goal of 'Zero Transmission, Zero Leprosy' by 2027.

Elimination Status in India: India achieved the elimination of leprosy as a public health problem at the national level in December 2005, defined as a prevalence rate of less than one case per 10,000 population.

Current Progress : As of March 2025, 31 States and Union Territories (UTs) and 638 districts have achieved this milestone, with the national prevalence rate declining to 0.57 per 10,000 population.

About World Health Organization (WHO):

Director-General (DG)-Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Headquarters- Geneva, Switzerland

Established- April 7, 1948

International Zebra Day 2026 – January 31

International Zebra Day is observed annually across the globe on **31 January** to raise awareness about zebra conservation, their ecological importance, and the threats faced by different zebra species due to habitat loss and human activities.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** International Zebra Day 2026
- ✓ **When?** 31 January 2026
- ✓ **Objective:** Raise awareness about zebra species and conservation

About Zebra Da:

Species: Three species: Grévy's (Endangered), Mountain (Vulnerable), and Plains (Near Threatened), with multiple subspecies.

Traits: Unique stripes aid predator confusion, thermoregulation, insect protection, and individual identification (ID).

Habitat: Zebras mainly inhabit grasslands, semi-deserts, and hilly regions across Kenya, Ethiopia, Namibia, Angola, and South Africa.

Importance: Zebras maintain grassland balance, support predator-prey dynamics, and indicate ecosystem health.

STATE NEWS

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel Launches 'Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana' to Upgrade Rural Infrastructure

In January 2026, **Bhupendra Patel**, the Chief Minister (CM) of Gujarat, launched the state-wide 'Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana (MGY)' from Bhadran in Anand district, Gujarat, with the objective of providing urban-equivalent facilities in rural areas.

Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Launch of Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana
- ✓ **Who?** Bhupendra Patel, CM of Gujarat
- ✓ **Objective:** Bridging the rural-urban development gap
- ✓ **First Phase:** 114 Taluka HQ villages

About Mukhyamantri Gramotthan Yojana(MGY):

Implementation Strategy: In the first phase of this mission, **114 villages** that serve as Taluka headquarters(HQ) will be equipped with modern amenities, including high-quality road networks, underground drainage, solar street lights, and digital electronic Gram(e-Gram) services.

Grassroots Infrastructure: During the event, CM Bhupendra Patel, laid the foundation stone for 2,666 Gram Panchayat Ghar-cum-Talati Awas buildings worth Rs.663 crore.

Expansion: The initiative will be expanded to all villages with populations above 10,000, a move aimed at accelerating inclusive development by bringing urban-level amenities and governance to rural areas.

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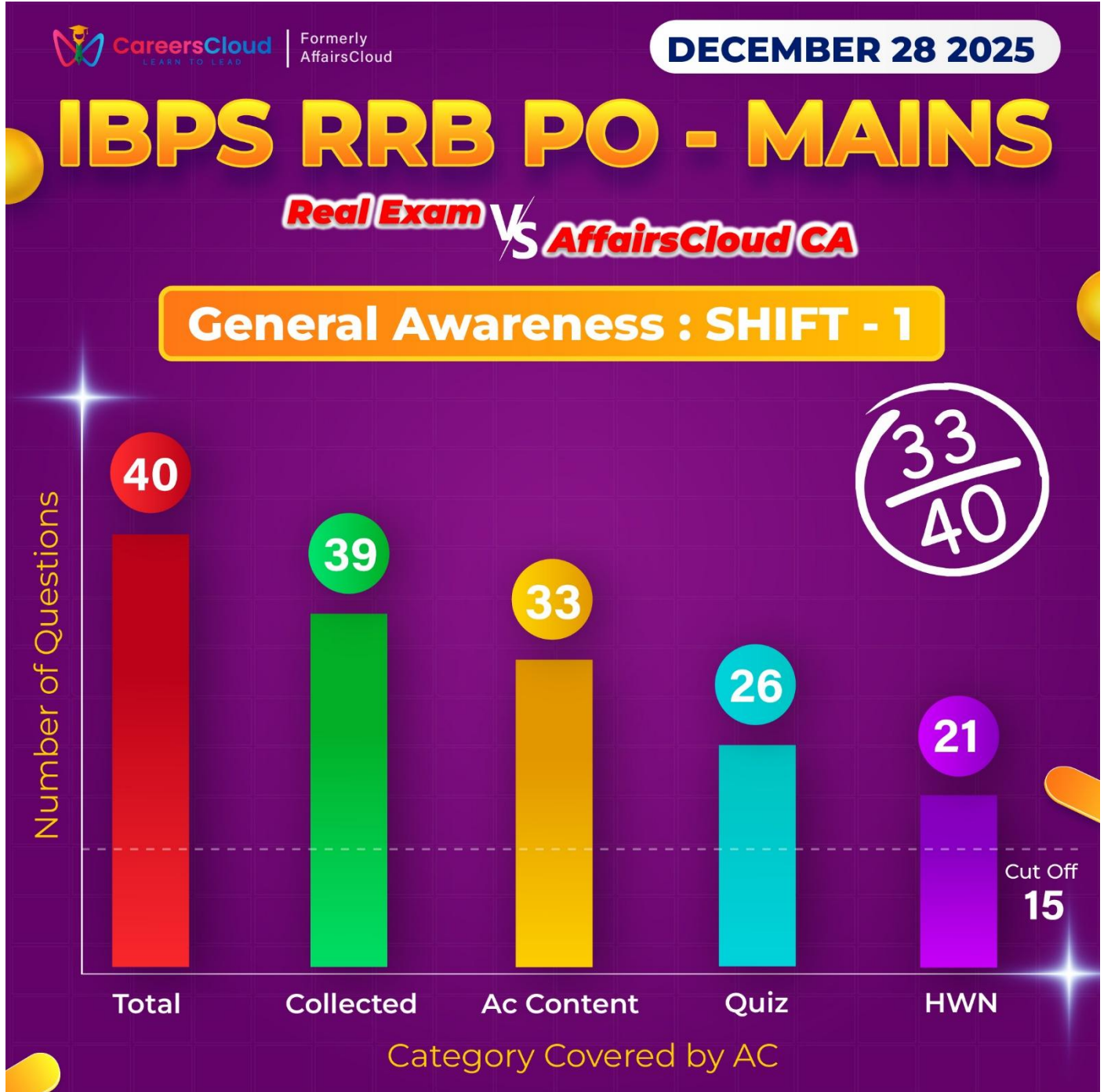
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