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1. The Central Government has authorized an additional allocation of 20 percent of commercial cooking gas cylinders to the states. Consequently, the total allocation for commercial-use cylinders has been increased to 50 percent.

(i) India imports Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)—which is utilized for various purposes, including cooking—from abroad (accounting for 60 percent of its total LPG requirement). Of this, 90 percent is imported from the West Asian region. Due to the conflict involving the U.S. and Israel, Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz; this disruption created difficulties in the availability of LPG for India. Consequently, issues arose regarding the supply of cooking gas cylinders for commercial use. In light of this situation, the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued a press release stating the following:

- Oil companies have increased domestic LPG production. The distribution of cooking gas cylinders intended for household use is proceeding as usual. Consumer bookings have declined, likely stemming from a fear that cylinders might not be available. No reports have been received from cylinder distribution agencies indicating that their stocks of cooking gas cylinders have been depleted.
- The Central Government has authorized an additional allocation of 20 percent of commercial cooking gas cylinders to the states. As a result, when combined with the previously established quota, the total allocation for commercial-use cylinders has now been increased to 50 percent.

(ii) Priority for Restaurants and Hotels:

- Priority must be accorded to distributing the currently allocated additional 20 percent of commercial-use cooking gas cylinders to restaurants, hotels, 'dhabas' industrial canteens, food processing units/dairy farms, restaurants operated by State Governments or Local Bodies, and community kitchens. Furthermore, priority should also be given to supplying commercial-use cooking gas to the 5 kg cylinders provided to migrant workers.

(iii) Additional Kerosene:

- An additional allocation of 48,000 kiloliters of kerosene has been made to all States and Union Territories. States and Union Territories have been requested to identify the specific areas within their districts where this kerosene may be distributed.

(iv) Advisory to the Public:

- The Central Government is taking all necessary measures to ensure the uninterrupted availability of cooking gas cylinders for all households. The public should rely solely on official information released in this regard and must refrain from spreading or believing in rumors.
- No one should place advance bookings out of fear that cylinders might become unavailable. Bookings should be made through digital channels.
- Although instances of panic-booking (driven by the fear of non-availability) have declined, reports continue to emerge regarding the public gathering at cylinder distribution agencies in certain locations. The public is advised not to congregate or wait in queues at these agencies; cylinders will be delivered directly to their doorsteps. Please wait patiently for this delivery. The public may also adopt the practice of conserving cooking gas in their daily usage by utilizing Piped Natural



Gas (PNG) or electric stoves wherever available. Consumers of commercial-use cylinders in major cities and urban areas have been requested to switch to the use of natural gas distributed via pipelines. A press release states that there are adequate stocks of petrol and diesel.

2. The Reserve Bank announced that it would once again conduct a one-day 'Variable Rate Repo (VRR)' auction worth ₹1 lakh crore to regulate liquidity within the country's banking system.

(i) As of the current situation, it is estimated that banks hold surplus liquidity of approximately ₹16,875.36 crore. However, given that the current financial year is set to conclude in March, banks' short-term liquidity requirements are expected to be higher than usual. The Reserve Bank is taking measures to address this situation and ensure adequate liquidity in the market.

(ii) Previously, on a recent date, ₹48,014 crore was infused into banks through a 7-day VRR auction; subsequently, last Friday, an additional ₹25,101 crore was provided through a 3-day VRR auction.

(iii) Furthermore, it is noteworthy that since the beginning of the current financial year, the Reserve Bank has ensured a permanent liquidity infusion of approximately ₹3.50 lakh crore through Open Market Operations (OMO), involving the purchase of Government securities in the open market.

3. Due to the war situation in Iran, as nations have opted for alternative routes, the Panama Canal is operating at full capacity and bustling with activity.

4. The Cuban Government has categorically stated that "no negotiations whatsoever will be held with the United States regarding Cuba's political system or the tenure of its President."

(i) Cuba expressed strong opposition following reports suggesting that the United States is attempting to remove Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel from office.

(ii) Cuba is currently facing a severe economic crisis resulting from stringent economic sanctions and fuel supply restrictions imposed by the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump. It is alleged that, capitalizing on this critical situation, the United States has set a condition that sanctions against Cuba will be lifted only if President Miguel Díaz-Canel steps down from his post.

(iii) Political analysts believe that the United States is now employing the same strategy in Cuba—just as it previously attempted in Venezuela—to remove President Nicolás Maduro and install a regime favorable to its interests.

5. For the first time, the International ITF Women's 35 World Tennis Tour tournament is set to take place in Tumakuru, Karnataka. It is noteworthy that this tournament will be held from May 4 to 10.

6. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to introduce a consolidated Bill in the Rajya Sabha aimed at regulating the appointment, deputation, promotion, and other service-related conditions of officers within the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

(i) Under this Bill, it is proposed to appoint Indian Police Service (IPS) officers to 50 percent of the posts at the Inspector General (IG) level.

(ii) Currently, the various Central Armed Police Forces operating in the country—including the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central



Industrial Security Force (CISF), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)—are governed by their respective statutory Acts. These statutory provisions govern the appointment and service conditions of CAPF Group 'A' General Duty officers, other officers, and the rank and file personnel.

(iii) Against this backdrop, the 'Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026'—a consolidated legislative measure intended to regulate the appointment, deputation, promotion, and other service conditions of Group 'A' General Duty officers and other officers within the CAPFs—is scheduled to be introduced in the Rajya Sabha on Monday.

(iv) The new Bill proposes the appointment of IPS officers on a deputation basis to 50 percent of the posts at the IG level and 67 percent of the posts at the Additional Director General (ADG) level within the Central Armed Police Forces.

(v) Union Home Minister Amit Shah is set to introduce this legislative bill in the Rajya Sabha; a key feature of this bill is that appointments to posts holding the rank of Special Director General and Director General will be made exclusively on a deputation basis.

(vi) The Supreme Court's Order and the Government's Response:

- Previously, the Supreme Court issued an order last year directing that the representation of IPS officers at the officer level within the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) be reduced, in order to increase promotion opportunities for cadre officers. The Supreme Court subsequently dismissed a petition filed by the Central Government seeking a review of this order.
- Against this backdrop, the aforementioned legislative bill is being introduced in the Rajya Sabha. Allegations have surfaced that the provisions of this bill serve to dilute the Supreme Court's order.
- At the same time, the bill notes: "IPS officers have long been an integral and vital component of the Central Armed Police Forces. Through the deputation mechanism, they work in tandem with other officers and personnel of these forces. Close coordination between the Central and State Governments is essential to ensure the efficient functioning of these forces; to this end, the current practice of appointing IPS officers on a deputation basis must continue."
- In response to the advancement of this bill, several former CAPF officers have filed a contempt of court petition in the Supreme Court against the Union Home Secretary.

7. Officials stated that the Indigenous stealth frigate 'Taragiri' is set to be commissioned into the Indian Navy on April 3rd.

(i) Officials further informed that Defense Minister Rajnath Singh will participate in the commissioning ceremony, which is scheduled to take place in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

(ii) Elaborating on the matter, they added: "Taragiri (Yard 12653)—the fourth warship of the Nilgiri class (Project 17A)—was handed over to the Navy on November 28th of last year. Built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai, Taragiri is the third warship constructed by the yard and weighs 6,670 tons."

(iii) This warship stands as a complete manifestation of our nation's engineering prowess and serves as an exemplary model of the 'Make in India' initiative.

(iv) Featuring modern technologies—including a low-observability (stealth) design, formidable strike capabilities, and autonomous operational capacity—Taragiri embodies the spirit of a 'Self-Reliant India'



(Atmanirbhar Bharat), capable of high-speed navigation and diverse maritime operations.

(v) Diverse Missile Systems:-

- This warship is equipped with supersonic surface-to-surface missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles, and specialized anti-submarine warfare systems.
- The world-class, indigenously built Taragiri warship is scheduled to be commissioned into the Indian Navy on April 3rd. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh will attend this event," they concluded.

8. Amidst the prevailing uncertainty in the global energy market caused by the conflict in West Asia, India has achieved a milestone by producing 1 billion tonnes of coal for the second consecutive year. In a press release issued on Saturday regarding this achievement, the Union Ministry of Coal stated the following:

(i) Thanks to the concerted and sustained efforts of all stakeholders within the coal sector, the nation achieved a milestone on the 20th of this month by reaching the production target of 1 billion tonnes of coal for the second consecutive year.

(ii) This accomplishment not only demonstrates robust planning, efficient execution, and close collaboration but also plays a significant role in contributing to the nation's economic growth.

(iii) It was further noted that this high volume of coal production helps in meeting the country's growing energy demands while also facilitating the maintenance of record-high coal inventory levels at thermal power plants.

9. Sahitya Akademi Awards Announced

(i) The Sahitya Akademi—a literary organization operating under the Union Ministry of Culture—annually selects the finest work from among those published in 24 languages (including poetry, short stories, novels, and literary criticism) and presents this award to its creator.

(ii) The Sahitya Akademi Award for the Tamil language for the year 2025 has been conferred upon writer S.Tamilselvan for his work of literary criticism titled "Tamizh Sirukathaiyin Thadanga!" (Traces of the Tamil Short Story). Tamilselvan has meticulously researched and documented the various dimensions of Tamil short stories published over the past century. In this book, he not only describes the evolving trends of these stories but also records how the political and cultural influences, as well as the social changes of the specific eras in which they were written, were reflected within those short stories.

(iii) Tamilselvan is the author of a prolific body of work, comprising over 25 collections of short stories—including titles such as "Veyilodu Poi", "Vaalin Thanimai", and "Midhamana Kaatrum Isaiyana Kadalalaiyum". His maternal grandfather was the legendary playwright and lyricist Madhurakavi Bhaskaradas. Although Tamilselvan is primarily a short story writer, the award has been bestowed upon him for a scholarly research work.