

THE DAILY GK DOSE

FORMER INDIAN AMBASSADOR JAWED ASHRAF CONFERRED FRANCE'S LEGION D'HONOUR RANK OF 'COMMANDEUR

- **Highest French Distinction:** The Legion d'honneur is France's highest civilian and military honor. Jawed Ashraf was elevated to the rank of Commandeur, which is a rare and prestigious promotion from the rank of Officier he received previously. It recognizes his "exceptional contribution" to elevating the India-France Strategic Partnership to historic heights.
- **Key Architect of Strategic Ties:** Serving as India's Ambassador to France from 2020 to 2025, Ashraf played a central role in several landmark agreements, including the Horizon 2047 Roadmap, the fast-tracked delivery of Rafale fighter jets, and the expansion of the civil nuclear partnership at Jaitapur.
- **Symbol of Diplomatic Success:** The award was presented by the French Foreign Minister during a special ceremony in Paris.

UNION CABINET OF INDIA APPROVED BHARAT AUDYOGIK VIKAS YOJNA

- **Development of 100 Plug-and-Play Parks:** The scheme allocates ₹33,660 crore to develop 100 world-class industrial parks over the next six years (FY 2026–27 to 2031–32). These "plug-and-play" ecosystems provide pre-approved land and ready

infrastructure—including internal roads, underground utilities, and factory sheds—enabling businesses to move from "intent to production" almost immediately.

- **Challenge-Based Selection & Sustainability:** To ensure high quality, projects will be selected via a "Challenge Mode" based on state reforms and investment readiness.

INDIAN EDUCATOR & ALAKH PANDEY MAKES FORBES WORLD'S BILLIONAIRES LIST 2026



- **Billionaire Debut at 34:** Following PhysicsWallah's successful Initial Public Offering (IPO) in November 2025, Alakh Pandey entered the global rich list with a net worth of \$1 billion. At 34 years old, he is recognized as one of India's youngest self-made billionaires, ranking 3,332 globally.
- **India's Billionaire Surge:** Pandey is part of a record-breaking year for India, which produced 229 billionaires in 2026 (up from 200 in 2025). India now maintains the third-highest number of billionaires globally, trailing only the United States and China. Notably, his co-founder Prateek Maheshwari also joined the list this year.

IMPORTANT FACTS

- *Study of blood is called Hematology*
- *Platelets help in blood clotting*
- *Vitamin K helps in blood clotting*
- *Liquid part of blood is called plasma*
- *Plasma contains about 90% water*
- *About 55% of blood is plasma*
- *4th state of matter is called plasma*
- *Metal found in blood is iron*
- *Spleen is called "blood bank" of body*

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH LAUNCHED THE 'DIVYANG SHAKTI YOJANA'

- **Comprehensive Coverage & Eligibility:** The scheme applies to individuals with more than 40% disability across 21 different categories (including physical, mental, neurological, and rare blood disorders). It is expected to benefit approximately 12.76 lakh people, including 11.16 lakh PwDs and their attendants.
- **Operational Details & Attendant Benefits:** Beneficiaries can travel free of charge in five categories of APSRTC buses: City Ordinary, Metro Express, Palle Velugu, Ultra Palle Velugu, and Express buses.

GSi DECLARES KALINJAR FORT HILL AS NATIONAL GEO-HERITAGE SITE

- **Geological Significance (Vindhyan Supergroup):** The Kalinjar hill is composed of massive Bundelkhand Gneiss and sedimentary rocks belonging to the Vindhyan Supergroup, dating back nearly 1.6 billion to 2.5 billion years.
- **Intersection of Heritage and Science:** While famous for its 10th-century Chandela-era fort and the Neelkanth Temple, the site is now recognized for its "Scientific Value."
- **Boost to Geo-Tourism:** With this declaration, Kalinjar joins an elite list of approximately 35 National Geo-Heritage sites in India (such as the Lonar Lake in Maharashtra and the Fossil Parks in Himachal).

RAVI MITTAL APPOINTED AS DEPUTY SECRETARY AT PMO

- **Officer Profile & Background:** Ravi Mittal is a 2016-batch IAS officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre. Notably, he holds an MBBS degree from Maulana Azad Medical College (Delhi) and an M.A. in Public Management from JNU. He is recognized as a young, tech-savvy bureaucrat who cleared the UPSC exam in his first attempt without formal coaching.
- **Key Previous Roles:** Before this central deputation, he served

in high-profile roles in Chhattisgarh, including Commissioner of Public Relations and Joint Secretary in the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

- **Recognition of Excellence:** His elevation to the PMO follows his receipt of the Excellence in Governance Award (2025) in the category of Startups and Innovation.

RAILWAY BOARD APPOINTS SUDEEP PRASAD AS GM AT DFCCIL



- **Designation and Tenure:** Sudeep Prasad has been appointed as the Additional General Manager (Commercial Coordination) at DFCCIL's Corporate Office in Noida. The appointment is for a standard deputation period of three years, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- **Professional Background:** He is a 2010-batch officer of the Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers (IRSME). Prior to this move, he was serving at the policy level as Director (Efficiency & Research) within the Railway Board.
- **Strategic Objective:** His move to DFCCIL is aimed at

strengthening commercial coordination and project execution as India accelerates its freight infrastructure vision.

TATA GROUP CHAIRMAN N CHANDRASEKARAN RECEIVES HONORARY KNIGHTHOOD

- **The Honor (KBE):** Chandrasekaran was presented with the insignia of the Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE). The award was presented by the British High Commissioner to India, Lindy Cameron, on behalf of King Charles III at a ceremony in New Delhi.
- **"Honorary" Distinction:** As a foreign national, the knighthood is "honorary." While it is one of the highest honors awarded by the British Sovereign, recipients are not permitted to use the title "Sir" or "Dame" before their name; instead, they may use the post-nominal letters "KBE" after their name.
- **Recognition of Economic Impact:** The award recognizes his leadership in driving massive investments in the UK. The Tata Group is one of the largest Indian employers in Britain, with 19 subsidiaries (including iconic brands like Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) and Tetley) and over 70,000 employees.

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

20.03.2026 / FRIDAY

- **French Language Day 20th March**
- **Theme 2026: active ta francophonie**
- **The day promotes French as a language of opportunity, education, and cultural diversity in a digital age.**