GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3594
TO BE ANSWERED ON TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026/ 3 Chaitra, 1948 (Saka)

Active users of Central Bank Digital Currency

3594. Shri Parimal Nathwani;

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

a) the current volume of transactions and the number of active users in the retail pilot of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) as of January 2026;

b) whether Government plans to provide tax incentives for using the Digital Rupee over private virtual assets to encourage adoption; and

c) the details of the technological interoperability achieved between the Digital Rupee and existing Unified Payments Interface (UPI) systems?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY)

(a): As of January 2026, the cumulative volume of transactions in the CBDC retail pilot is 13 crore, and the number of participating users is 92 lakh.

(b): The CBDC is a sovereign currency in digital form, is legal tender, and is issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in terms of provisions of RBI Act, 1934. Private virtual assets are, currently, unregulated in India and the Government does not consider them legal tender or coin. Further, the virtual assets and CBDC have been provided with differential treatment under the Income-tax Act, 1961. Therefore, the need to provide tax incentives for using the CBDC over private virtual assets does not arise.

(c): The CBDC (e₹) has been made interoperable with UPI to leverage the widely accepted and accessible physical UPI quick response (QR) code infrastructure across the country. The scanned QR code directs the payment to their e₹ wallet in case the recipient has an e₹ wallet, or to their UPI-linked bank account otherwise, ensuring a seamless and inclusive user experience.

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