

Monthly Magazine



TAKSHASHILA
SCHOOL OF CIVIL SERVICES



CURRENT AFFAIRS

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TAKSHASHILA SCHOOL OF CIVIL SERVICES
UPSC AND APSC



1800-212-4490
+91 6913203751



www.takshashilascs.com

PREFACE

This is our special edition of Current Affairs Magazine for various Central & State level Competitive Examinations, covering content from the month of June 2024.

The Magazine is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short

The first section is dedicated to Topic Wise Current Affairs with a short description to provide information about all major happenings this month.

Section 2: Practice Questions with Answers

The Second Section contains 150 Multiple Choice Questions based on daily current affairs.

Section 3: Detailed Analysis of important Event

The Third Section covers some major happenings in this month along with analysis. The content has been covered from various online & offline sources including reputed newspapers like The Hindu, Indian Express etc. All the news topics have been explained keeping in mind their underlying issues. Every issue has been covered comprehensively. Some of the information provided may not be directly relevant for the examination. As the content is very wide, we have only covered a limited set of issues. You can utilize it smartly along with Daily Study of News Papers as well as other sources.



INDEX

1. Important Days	Page 04
2. Agreements	Page 13
3. Appointments	Page 16
4. Awards	Page 23
5. Banking	Page 27
6. Books and Author	Page 31
7. Defence	Page 34
8. Economy	Page 38
9. International	Page 42
10. Miscellaneous	Page 46
11. National	Page 49
12. Obituaries	Page 55
13. Ranks & Reports	Page 58
14. Schemes & Committee	Page 63
15. Science & Technology	Page 67
16. Sports	Page 70
17. State	Page 76
18. Summits & Conferences	Page 81

Section 1

Topic Wise Current Affairs

Section 2

Question with Answers

• QUESTIONS - Page 86

• ANSWERS - Page 99

Section 3

Detailed Analysis of Events

1. Economics	Page 114
2. Environment & Diversity	Page 121
3. Governance	Page 132
4. History	Page 135
5. International Relations	Page 139
6. Polity	Page 144
7. Science, Tech, Art & Culture	Page 149
8. Security Issues	Page 158

SECTION 1

Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short



1: Important Days



Global Day of Parents : 01 June

Global Day of Parents is commemorated on June 1st each year to honor parents and their commitments to children all over the world. It is a United Nations (UN) commemorative day. The day allows us to recognize parents and parental figures for the critical role they play in shaping the growth of families. The UN General Assembly proclaimed Global Day of Parents in 2012 with a resolution to honor parents around the world. This year the theme of the Global Day of Parents is 'The Promise of Playful Parenting'.



World Milk Day : 01 June

World Milk Day, held annually on June 1st, raises global awareness of the significance of milk and the dairy industry. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations established this day in 2001 to recognize dairy's substantial contributions to sustainability, economic development, and nutrition. Milk is a nutrient-dense food that is vital for children's growth and development as well as adult health. This year's theme will focus on celebrating the vital role dairy plays in delivering quality nutrition to nourish the world.

TELANGANA

Formation Day



Telangana Formation Day : 02 June

Telangana, India's 29th state, will commemorate its formation day on June 2. Telangana Day, also known as Telangana Formation Day, commemorates the state's official formation on June 2, 2014. According to the Telangana government, the day is significant in the state's history because of the continued Telangana movement over the years. Telangana was formed out of Andhra Pradesh in 2014. Its long journey to Statehood began in 1952 and culminated on June 2, 2014, when K. Chandrasekhar Rao took oath as the first Chief Minister of the new State.



Italy Republic Day : 02 June

Italy Republic Day, also known as Festa della Repubblica, is a national holiday in Italy celebrated annually on June 2. Following Benito Mussolini's defeat in 1943, the Italian monarchy was forced to abdicate. A new government was constituted, but it quickly became evident that the country was divided between those who wanted to reinstate the monarchy and those who wanted to establish a republic. In June 1946, Italy

conducted a referendum to decide its destiny. The results were clear: 54.3% of voters chose to abolish the monarchy and establish a republic. The new republic was officially inaugurated on June 2, 1946, and this day has been celebrated as Italy Republic Day ever since.



World Bicycle Day : 03 June

World Bicycle Day is commemorated every year on June 3rd. Professor Leszek Sibilski, a Polish-American social scientist working in the United States, was the first to propose the notion of marking World Bicycle Day. He finally gained support from Turkmenistan and 56 other nations. In April 2018, the United Nations General Assembly declared that World Bicycle Day would be observed annually on June 3. Every year, World Bicycle Day is observed to raise awareness about the benefits of cycling and urge more people to take up this mode of transportation to enable a sustainable way of living.



International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression : 04 June

Every year on June 4th, the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression is observed to highlight the suffering of children all over the world who have been subjected to physical, mental, and emotional abuse. The day affirms the United Nations' commitment to protecting children's rights. The war that began in

June 1982, when Israeli Defense Forces invaded southern Lebanon, laid the groundwork for the day. On 19th August 1982, at its emergency special session, the General Assembly decided to commemorate 4 June as the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression every year.



World Environment Day : 05 June

World Environment Day (WED) is observed yearly on June 5th. In 1972, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched the World Environment Day. World Environment Day is one of the largest international environmental celebrations. It is a forum that promotes awareness about the environmental issues confronting our planet. The day also provides an opportunity to encourage environmental changes and sustainable behaviors. This year, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the 2024 Environment Day celebration with the theme "Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience".



World Food Safety Day : 07 June

Annually on June 7, the entire world commemorates World Food Safety Day to emphasize the need of upholding food standards. Every year, 4,20,000 people die worldwide as a result of illnesses caused by tainted food, according to the World Health Organization. The

current increase in such diseases from food is due to a lack of purity and increased usage of chemicals (Toxic substance). Another major problem is the contamination of water as well. The theme for World Food Safety Day 2024 is 'Food Safety: Prepare for the Unexpected.'



World Oceans Day : 08 June

World Oceans Day is an annual event held on June 8. The day is intended to raise awareness about the need of maintaining and safeguarding maritime resources. It also recognizes the numerous ways in which mankind and wildlife rely on oceans. World Ocean Day was first proposed in 1992 by Canada's International Centre for Ocean Development and the Ocean Institute of Canada during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2008, the UN General Assembly passed an official resolution to mark June 8 as World Oceans Day. "Awaken New Depths" is the theme for World Oceans Day 2024.



World Brain Tumour Day : 08 June

World Brain Tumor Day, observed on June 8, raises awareness and educates people about brain tumours. A brain tumor is a large collection of abnormal cells in the brain. There are several types of brain tumors. Some are noncancerous while others are cancerous. Cancer can start in the brain or spread to other parts of the body, resulting in secondary brain tumors. German Brain Tumour Association (Deutsche Hirntumorhilfe e.V.), a

nonprofit organisation, first marked this day in the year 2000 to spread awareness about brain tumor among the general public. The theme of World Brain Tumour Day 2024 is 'Brain Health and Prevention'.



World Day Against Child Labour : 12 June

June 12 marks World Day Against Child Labour. Its mission is to ignite the growing global movement against child labour. On June 12, 2002, the International Labour Organization (ILO) recognized the first World Day Against Child Labour at its Geneva headquarters, which had been established the day before. World Day Against Child Labour was created to promote and amplify the global call to end child labour. Since 1987, the Indian central government has implemented a National Policy on Child Employment, which focuses on the rehabilitation of children and adolescents who have been exposed to employment. This year the theme is "Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour!".



World Blood Doner Day : 14 June

World Blood Donor Day is commemorated annually on June 14. In 1940, a scientist named Richard Lower performed a blood transfusion between two dogs with no adverse effects. This invention enabled the development of contemporary blood transfusion techniques, making blood donation and transfusion a routine operation in the healthcare sector. In 2005, The

World Health Assembly announced June 14 to be observed as World Blood Donor Day every year. In 2024, the theme for World Blood Donor Day is "20 years of celebrating giving: thank you, blood donors!".



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day : 15 June

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is an annual event founded on June 15, 2006, by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The UN General Assembly formally acknowledged the day in December 2011. Elder abuse is a major issue affecting millions of individuals throughout the world. It can take many forms, including physical, emotional, and financial abuse, as well as neglecting their needs. The theme of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2024 is 'Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies.'



Global Wind Day : 15 June

World Wind Day, also known as Global Wind Day, is an annual event held on June 15 to promote awareness about the value of wind energy and its possibilities to help us transition to a sustainable energy future. Wind energy is a clean, renewable energy source that can help us lessen our dependency on fossil fuels while combating climate change. Global Wind Day was first celebrated in 2007 by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

In 2009, the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) joined forces with the EWEA to organise Global Wind Day.



Father's Day 2024 : 16 June

Father's Day is observed yearly around the world to honor our fathers and acknowledge their presence in our lives. Numerous nations, including India, commemorate the event on the third Sunday in June. This year, it falls on June 16th. Father's Day dates back to 1910, when Sonora Smart Dodd launched a sincere movement in Spokane, Washington. In 1909, a Mother's Day talk piqued Dodd's interest and encouraged her to honor her father and many other fathers. Dodd decided to start marking Father's Day inspired by her father's role in raising her and her siblings as a single parent. However, it took some time for the holiday to be celebrated widely. Later, in 1972, Father's Day finally gained official recognition in the United Nations.



International Day of Family Remittances : 16 June

The United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR), to be observed on June 16. The IDFR honors almost 200 million migrant workers, both men and women, who send money home to more than 800 million loved ones. On June 16, 2008, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank jointly

commemorated the first International Day of Family Remittances, with the goal of highlighting the role of migrant workers and their remittances in improving developing countries' economies. The Theme for 2024 International Day of Family Remittances is "Digital Remittances Towards Financial Inclusion and Cost Reduction"



World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought : 17 June

Every year on June 17, the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed to raise public awareness about international efforts to prevent desertification. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought was created in 1994 following a consensus at the United Nations General Assembly. The first observance of this day occurred in 1995. To fight the environmental damage caused by climate change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was established. This year the theme is "United for Land. Our Legacy. Our Future".



International Day for Countering Hate Speech : 18 June

Every year on June 18, the International Day for Countering Hate Speech is observed. It serves as a timely reminder of the critical need to address the global problem of hate speech. Hate speech, despite the fact

that communication technology have expanded its reach and impact, continues to fuel violence, intolerance, and division. This day is significant because it advocates for collaborative action to combat the spread of divisive discourse and promote understanding, respect, and inclusivity. This year the theme is 'The Power of Youth for Countering Hate Speech'.



Autistic Pride Day : 18 June

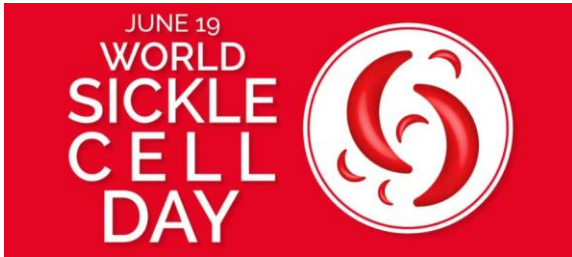
Autistic Pride Day is observed on June 18 every year. Autism Pride Day, as the name implies, is a prominent event that educates the public about the challenges that people with autism experience. Our goal should be to reduce stigma by treating autistic people with dignity and care. Furthermore, this day should emphasize equitable opportunity for those with autism. Autistic Pride Day was first celebrated in 2005 by Aspies For Freedom (AFF), who chose June 18 to honour the birthday of the group's youngest member at that time. The theme for this year is "Taking the Mask Off".



International Picnic Day : 18 June

International Picnic Day is an annual celebration that takes place on June 18. Picnics have been a common means to enjoy the outdoors and spend time with family and friends for ages, and International Picnic Day is an excellent opportunity to carry on that tradition. The French Revolution of the late 18th century helped

popularize the concept of outdoor dining. Picnics gained popularity in Europe during the Victorian era of the 19th century, particularly in England. Parks, beaches, and other recreational areas became popular picnic destinations.



World Sickle Cell Awareness Day : 19 June

Every year on June 19th, World Sickle Cell Awareness Day raises awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD) and its impact on individuals, families, and communities around the world. Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood ailment characterized by defective red blood cells that form a crescent or sickle shape. These irregularly shaped cells can cause blockages in blood arteries, resulting in a variety of health consequences. On December 22, 2008, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution declaring World Sickle Cell Awareness Day. The resolution recognised sickle cell disease as a global health concern and designated June 19th as the official day to raise awareness about the disease worldwide. This year's global theme is "Hope Through Progress: Advancing Care Globally."



World Sauntering Day : 19 June

Every year on June 19, World Sauntering Day is observed to celebrate life as it comes and not be concerned with the speed of the world; instead, we establish our own pace and enjoy it. Sauntering also helps to boost productivity and improve overall mood. The French

coined the term saunter, which meant to walk casually and deliberately as if you had unlimited time. In 1970, W.T. Rabe, a publicist who worked at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island conceived this idea to combat the fact pace with which United States moved. Since 1970, World Sauntering Day is celebrated.



World Refugee Day : 20 June

RefuWorld gee Day is an international day established by the United Nations to pay tribute to refugees all over the world. Every year on June 20, it commemorates the bravery and courage of those compelled to depart their home country due to violence or persecution. The United Nations General Assembly established World Refugee Day on December 4, 2000, to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. The day was first celebrated on June 20, 2001. This year's theme is 'For a World Where Refugees Are Welcomed.'



International Day of Yoga 2024 : 21 June

Yoga, which originated in India, is a physical and mental health-promoting activity. In 2024, the world will commemorate the tenth anniversary of International Yoga Day. On June 21, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will mark the International Day of Yoga on the shores of Dal Lake in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir. Over 3,000-4,000 people are expected to attend the event, which will take place at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention

Centre (SKICC) on the scenic Boulevard Road. The Theme for International Day of Yoga 2024 is 'Yoga for Self and Society'.



World Music Day : 21 June

Every year on June 21, the world celebrates World Music Day, also known as the 'Fête de la Musique', to encourage music all throughout the world. World Music Day was started in France in 1982 and has a long history. The concept of World Music Day was presented by the then-French Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, composer Maurice Fleuret, and a radio producer as a day dedicated to all music enthusiasts. The first World Music Day was observed in France on June 21, 1982. It has become a great success and thousands of musicians have started performing in the parks and on the streets.



World rainforest day : 22 June

Every year on June 22nd, the world celebrates World Rainforest Day. It is a day set aside to raise awareness about the value of rainforests and encourage efforts to protect and conserve them. World Rainforest Day began in 2017 when Rainforest Partnership, a non-profit organization dedicated to rainforest conservation and community empowerment, established the day. The initial event centered on the topic of community action to protect rainforests and restore damaged ecosystems.

The theme for this year's World Rainforest Day 2024 is 'Empowering the World in Defense of Our Rainforests.'



United Nations Public Service Day : 23 June

Every year, the UN Public Service Day recognizes the tremendous worth and noble nature of public service. Commemorated on June 23, this particular celebration aims to highlight the critical contribution of public servants. On December 20, 2002, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 57/277, officially designating June 23 as Public Service Day. In 2003, the United Nations established the UN Public Service Awards (UNPSA) program to raise awareness of this significant day and promote the importance of public service. The 2024 UN Public Service Forum and Awards Ceremony will take place in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 24 to 26 June 2024, under the theme 'Fostering Innovation amid Global Challenges: a Public Sector Perspective'.



International Olympic Day : 23 June

International Olympic Day, which is observed annually on June 23rd, occupies a unique place in the hearts of sports fans around the world. This historic event marks the establishment of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894 and serves as a reminder of the unifying force of sport. The International Olympic Committee founded the day in 1948 to encourage people of all backgrounds to embrace the Olympic values of

excellence, camaraderie, and respect. The first International Olympic Day was celebrated in Paris at the Sorbonne, where the modern Olympic Games were born. The theme of this year's Olympic Day is 'Let's Move and Celebrate'.



International Widow's Day : 23 June

International Widow's Day (IWD), observed annually on June 23rd, is a significant occasion committed to raising awareness about the condition of widows around the world and campaigning for their rights and welfare. The United Nations initially acknowledged and established this day in 2011, in recognition of the challenges that widows confront around the world and the need to address their specific social, economic, and legal concerns. By raising awareness, advocating for policy changes, and providing support, we can create a more inclusive and equitable society where widows are valued, respected, and have equal opportunities to reach their full potential.



International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking : 26 June

The International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, commonly known as World Drug Day, is observed on June 26 every year. The day strives to increase action and cooperation in the pursuit of a drug-free world. According to the United Nations, by

resolution 42/112 on December 7, 1987, the General Assembly declared June 26 as International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking as a reflection of its commitment to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of a drug-free world. The theme for 2024 is "The evidence is clear: invest in prevention".



International Day in Support of Victims of Torture : 26 June

On December 12, 1997, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution designating June 26 as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Adopting the UN resolution was a critical step toward recognizing that torture and inhumane treatment should be universally prohibited. The day is marked to encourage nations, civic societies, and individuals around the world to show their support for torture victims and those being tortured. Incidentally, the first International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was observed in 1998, which marked the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

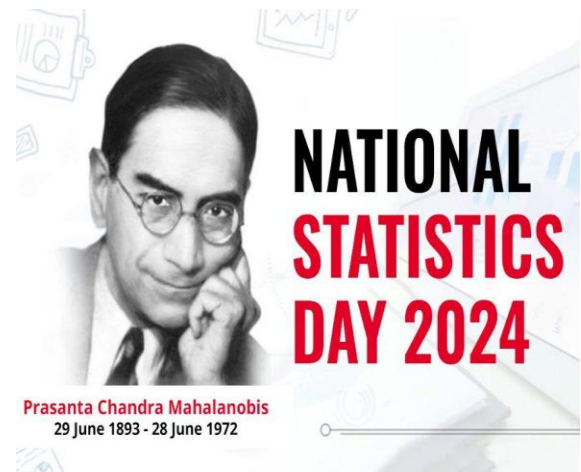


World MSME Day : 27 June

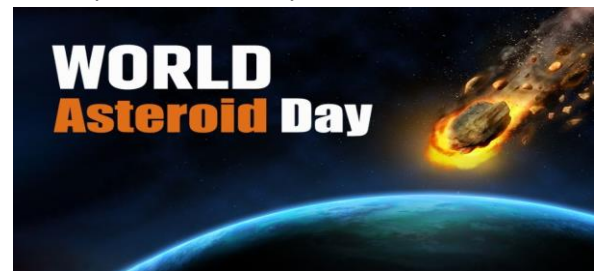
The United Nations General Assembly established World MSME Day on June 27 in 2017 to raise awareness about the importance of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in supporting inclusive and sustainable development around the world. MSMEs are vital to the global economy because of their substantial contributions to economic growth, employment creation, and poverty alleviation. They are considered the backbone of many economies, particularly in developing countries. This year's theme for this day is 'leveraging the power and resilience of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to accelerate sustainable development and eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises.'

**International Day of the Tropics : 29 June**

The International Day of the Tropics celebrates the extraordinary diversity of the tropics while highlighting unique challenges and opportunities nations of the Tropics face. It provides an opportunity to take stock of progress across the tropics, to share tropical stories and expertise and to acknowledge the diversity and potential of the region. The Ecosystem The Tropics are a region of the Earth, roughly defined as the area between the tropic of Cancer and the tropic of Capricorn.

**National Statistics Day : 29 June**

National Statistics Day is celebrated on June 29 every year to acknowledge and appreciate the exceptional contributions made by statisticians in India, particularly honoring the birth anniversary of eminent statistician (Late) Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis. The celebration aims to popularize statistics as a field of study and highlight its importance in policy-making and everyday life. To achieve this, various seminars, campaigns, and programs are conducted across the country to mark the day.

**International Asteroid Day : 30 June**

In December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution, declaring 30 June International Asteroid Day. It was done to observe the anniversary of the Tunguska impact over Siberia, Russian Federation, on 30 June 1908. International Asteroid Day aims to raise public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard and to inform the public about the crisis communication actions to be taken at the global level in case of a credible near-Earth object threat. The General Assembly's decision was made based on a proposal by the Association of Space Explorers.

2: Agreements



Adani Ports Expands Global Reach: Secures 30-Year Deal For Tanzania Port Terminal

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) wholly-owned subsidiary Adani International Ports Holdings Pte Ltd. (AIPH) entered Tanzania strategically by obtaining a 30-year concession to manage Container Terminal 2 (CT2) at Dar es Salaam Port. The Dar es Salaam Port, a crucial gateway with an extensive network of roadways and railways, is set to see a boost under this new agreement. CT2, comprising four berths, boasts an annual cargo handling capacity of 1 million TEUs.



Nokia And Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya Collaborate On 5G/6G Research

Nokia, the Finnish telecom gearmaker, announced that it has struck a deal with the Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) to conduct joint research on 5G/6G communications in the transportation and logistics sectors. Nokia and Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, a university affiliated with the Ministry of Railways, will collaborate on 5G/6G communications research opportunities aimed at air, land, and sea transportation use cases, as well as standards development, smart

factory/automation, and AI/GenAI labs, according to a company statement.



School Education Department Signs MoU With National Book Trust To Create Institutional Framework For Rashtriya E-Pustakalaya

In New Delhi, the Department of School Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Book Trust to establish an institutional framework for Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya, the Digital Library Platform. Speaking at the event, Secretary of the Department of Higher Education K. Sanjay Murthy stated that the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya will be available throughout the time, regardless of the readers' geographic location, making books more accessible to them. He also added that the problem of last mile presence of a library for many states will be solved with Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya.



Axis Bank And Bajaj Allianz Forge Bancassurance Alliance

Axis Bank, a private sector bank, and Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, a private general insurer, have formed a strategic bancassurance relationship to increase insurance coverage and financial inclusion in the country. Axis Bank's network of over 5,250 branches will sell a

comprehensive suite of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance products as part of this Bancassurance collaboration. The suite of insurance solutions would include personal insurance products such as motor insurance, health insurance, home insurance, travel insurance, and commercial insurance products, including engineering and marine insurance.



India, S. Korea, US, Japan, EU Launch Biopharmaceutical Alliance

South Korea, India, the United States, Japan, and the European Union (EU) have formed an alliance to collaborate on the development of an efficient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector, the South Korean presidential office said in Seoul. The Biopharmaceutical Alliance's inaugural conference, held in San Diego at the Bio International Convention 2024, featured representatives from participating countries' governments as well as bio and pharmaceutical enterprises. The alliance was launched in response to the drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Adani Defence And EDGE Group Forge Global Defence Partnership

Adani Defence & Aerospace has signed a collaboration agreement with EDGE Group, one of the UAE's premier advanced technology and defence firms, to create a worldwide platform that combines defence and

aerospace capabilities. The agreement includes evaluating cooperation across core product domains, including missiles and weapons covering airborne, surface, infantry, ammunition, and air defence products, platforms & systems covering unmanned aerial systems (UAS), loitering munitions, counter drone systems, unmanned ground vehicles (UGV), as well as electronic warfare (EW) and cyber technologies.



Jammu & Kashmir Elevates Agricultural Partnership With New Zealand

In a significant step forward in the agriculture sector, Jammu and Kashmir has expanded its current Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with New Zealand into a full-fledged strategic partnership. The alliance leverages New Zealand's globally renowned expertise in sheep breeding technologies, sustainable farm management, and advanced disease control techniques. The collaboration is set to transform and revitalize both the sheep and goat sectors in the Union Territory through comprehensive training initiatives besides innovative and sustainable practices.



IGNCA Signs MoU With Sansad TV To Promote Indian Art And Culture

The Indra Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and Sansad TV have inked a significant collaboration to

make Indian art and culture more accessible to the general public. Under this agreement, IGNCAs-produced shows will be shown on Sansad TV, which will also have access to IGNCAs cultural archives. The programming will also be re-telecast when needed. The MoU was signed by Member Secretary, Dr Sachchidanand Joshi on behalf of IGNCAs and Chief Executive Officer, Rajat Punhani on behalf of Sansad TV.



MEA And SBI Sign MoU To Enhance Digital Payments For Migrant Workers Via EMigrate Portal

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the State Bank of India (SBI) have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for combining SBlePay, the payment gateway, with the eMigrate platform. Officials claimed that this connection will provide an extra digital payment facility to Indian migrant laborers, recruiting agents, and other portal users. The agreement aims to "further facilitate and enhance the ambit of safe and legal migration of Indian migrant workers," according to a statement issued by the MEA.



CERT-In And Mastercard India Sign MoU To Enhance Cyber-Resilience In Financial Sector

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has partnered with Mastercard to increase collaboration and information exchange in the field of cyber security in the banking industry. The two companies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under which they would combine their financial sector expertise in cybersecurity incident response, capacity building, cyber threat intelligence exchange, and advanced malware analysis. CERT-In is a Government of India organization under the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).



Indian Army signs MoU for 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies'

The Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE) of the Indian Army and the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER), a standalone Research and Development laboratory under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for further cooperation in 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies for Indian Army'. The MoU was signed by Commandant MCTE and Colonel Commandant Corps of Signals Lt Gen K H Gawas, and Director General SAMEER, Dr P H Rao.

3: Appointments



IRDAI Approves Sandeep Batra As ICICI Prudential Board Chairman

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has approved Sandeep Batra's appointment as Chairman of ICICI Prudential's Board of Directors, the firm announced. Batra has been with the ICICI group since September 2000 and is presently an Executive Director on the Board of ICICI Bank, in responsibility of the Corporate Centre, since July 2018. Batra has also served as Executive Director, CFO at ICICI Prudential life and Group Compliance officer at ICICI Bank. He is a Chartered Accountant and Company Secretary by qualification.



P Santhosh Takes The Helm As MD & CEO Of NARCL

The National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL), India's state-owned bad bank, has named P Santhosh as its new Managing Director and CEO. Santhosh's nomination comes after he served as NARCL's acting CEO since January 2024, when N Sundar unexpectedly departed before the end of his term. P Santhosh brings a wealth of experience to NARCL, having previously held the position of Chief General Manager at Canara Bank,

one of the sponsor institutions of the asset reconstruction company.



Rakesh Mohan Joshi Appointed As Vice-Chancellor Of IIFT

Rakesh Mohan Joshi, an international trade and management expert, has taken over as vice-chancellor of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), a business school run by the Ministry of Commerce. Joshi, the institute's previous Dean, was on deputation to the Indian Institute of Plantation Management in Bengaluru as director. Prof Joshi has received his education and training from Harvard Business School, Boston; IIFT, Rajasthan University and National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal. He has been associated with several multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNCTAD, International Dairy Federation and Asian Productivity Organisation among others.



Shri Kamal Kishore Soan Takes Over The Charge Of Director General, ESIC

Kamal Kishore Soan, a senior IAS officer from Jharkhand Cadre (Batch: 1998) who presently serves as Additional Secretary and Director General, Labour Welfare in the

Ministry of Labour & Employment, has taken on the additional responsibility of Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) under the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Soan comes with good experience of governance and management of various departments in the state of Jharkhand ranging from Land Revenue Management and District Administration, Agriculture & Cooperation, Health, Building Construction, Transport, Finance, Energy, Water Resources to Social Justice & Empowerment, etc.



Sameer Bansal Appointed CEO Of PNB MetLife

PNB MetLife India Insurance, a life insurer, confirmed the appointment of Sameer Bansal as Managing Director and CEO, beginning July 1, 2024, subject to regulatory approvals. According to a press statement, Sameer Bansal, who has been with PNB MetLife since 2007, adds over 25 years of financial services experience to his new post. Currently serving as Chief Distribution Officer and a key member of the leadership team, Bansal has a proven track record in leading various distribution channels including bancassurance, agency, digital, employee benefits, and direct marketing.



Raj Priy Singh Appointed Director In Department Of Rural Development

Raj Priy Singh, an Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer, the 2010 batch, has been appointed Director of the Department of Rural Development within the Ministry of Rural Development. The appointment was made according to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS). The DoPT order directs Mr. Singh to be relieved of his existing duties immediately, with instructions to begin his obligations in the Department of Rural Development. This appointment underscores Mr. Singh's expertise and the government's commitment to deploying skilled personnel in key positions to drive rural development initiatives.



InderPal Singh Bindra Appointed As CCI Secretary

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has a new Secretary, Inder Pal Singh Bindra, an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer. Bindra will succeed Anupama Anand, who resigned following a three-year term beginning in September 2023. Bindra worked as an income tax officer before becoming CCI Secretary. He has now been appointed as CCI Secretary on a delegation basis for three years. The Centre had in September last year appointed Anupama Anand, an IRS officer, as the Secretary of the CCI, the country's competition watchdog, for an initial period of three years that could later be extended to seven years.



Abhijit Kishore And Rahul Vatts Appointed As New Leadership Of COAI

The Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) finished its Annual General Body Meeting for the Fiscal Year 2023-24 by announcing its leadership for the term 2024-25, which begins in June 2024. The Association's Chairperson will be Abhijit Kishore, Chief Operating Officer of Vodafone Idea Limited, and its Vice Chairperson will be Mr. Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer of Bharti Airtel. Abhijit Kishore has over 30 years of expertise in the Indian telecom business, spanning jobs, organisations, and locations. Rahul Vatts is a telecom industry veteran with 29 years of experience and an expert on Telecom & Broadcasting Licensing, Economic Regulations, Spectrum Management and Regulatory Litigation.



Prem Prabhakar Appointed MD And CEO Of SBICAP Ventures Limited

SBICAP Ventures Limited (SVL) has named Prem Prabhakar as its new Managing Director and CEO, beginning June 4, 2024. Prabhakar's new responsibilities include monitoring the company's strategic direction, operational efficiency, and overall growth. Prabhakar has over 24 years of expertise in the banking field. He formerly worked as General Manager at State Bank of India (SBI). His notable assignments include serving as Deputy General Manager (B&O) managing retail business and operations, Chief Dealer (Forex) at SBI Global Markets, Mumbai and Chief Dealer at SBI New York.



Former IAS Officer P K Mishra To Continue As Principal Secretary To PM Modi

P K Mishra, a former IAS official, has been re-appointed as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Principal Secretary, according to a personnel ministry directive. His appointment was effective as of June 10, 2024, according to the statement. "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Dr P.K. Mishra, IAS (Retired) as Principal Secretary to Prime Minister with effect from 10.06.2024. His appointment will be co-terminus with the term of the Prime Minister or until further orders whichever is earlier," the order said.



Dr Kapil Dua Announced As President Of The Asian Association Of Hair Restoration Surgeons

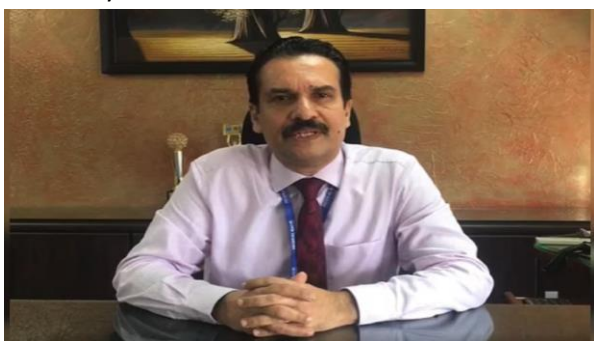
Dr. Kapil Dua, a leader in hair transplant surgery in India with over two decades of experience, has been named President of the Asian Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons (AAHRS). The remarks were made during the 8th Annual Scientific Meeting and Surgical Workshop of AAHRS, which was held in China. Dr. Dua is the only Indian hair transplant surgeon to have led national, global, and now Asian hair restoration organizations. He previously served as President of the International

Society of Hair Restoration Surgery (ISHRS) from 2022 to 2023 and the Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons (AHRs) India from 2016 to 2017.



Tesam Pongte Elected As The New Speaker Of Arunachal Pradesh Assembly

Tesam Pongte was unanimously elected Speaker of the Eighth Arunachal Pradesh Assembly. Pongte, who got elected from the Changlang North Assembly segment in the April 19 elections, informed the House that he would attempt to run the House impartially and provide all members an equal opportunity to participate in discussions and deliberations, regardless of political affiliation. BJP's Kardo Nyigyor was also elected uncontested as the Deputy Speaker of the House. Pongte was the Deputy Speaker in the previous Legislative Assembly.



Dhanlaxmi Bank Appoints Ajith Kumar KK As MD & CEO

Dhanlaxmi Bank, a private sector bank, announced the appointment of Ajith Kumar KK as its Managing Director (MD). He will take over on June 20, according to a regulatory filing from Kerala-based Dhanlaxmi Bank. At its meeting, the board accepted the appointment of Ajith Kumar KK as the bank's Managing Director & CEO for

three years beginning June 20, 2024, and on the salary agreed by the RBI in a letter dated April 18, according to the statement. He is presently the Chief Human Resources Officer at Federal Bank in the cadre of president, it said.



Ashwani Kumar Appointed MCD Commissioner

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has named Ashwani Kumar, an IAS official, as Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). Kumar, a 1992-batch AGMUT cadre IAS officer, is presently working as Delhi Divisional Commissioner and Principal Secretary (Home). He replaces Gyanesh Bharti, a 1998-batch Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre IAS officer who was promoted to Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development in March, just before the Lok Sabha elections.



Paytm Appoints Rajeev Agarwal As Non-Executive Independent Director

Paytm has appointed Rajeev Krishnamuralilal Agarwal as a non-executive independent director of the firm in the most recent change to its board of directors. Furthermore, the company's board accepted Neeraj Arora's resignation as a non-executive independent director due to pre-occupation and other personal commitments. Agarwal, an Engineering graduate from IIT-Roorkee, belongs to 1983 batch of Indian Revenue

Service and has got wide experience of securities markets, commodity markets and taxation, according to a company press release.



S. Tripathy Appointed As The First Director Of UVCE

S. Tripathy, a professor in the Indian Institute of Technology's Department of Geology and Geophysics in Kharagpur, West Bengal, has been named by the state government as the first director of the University of Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE). Prior to this, on March 8, 2023, the government named D. Manjunath, a professor at the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) Department of Electrical Engineering, as the inaugural director of UVCE. But, he did not take charge even after a year of his appointment.



7-time MP Bhartruhari Mahtab named pro tem speaker of Lok Sabha

In a remarkable step, Bhartruhari Mahtab, a seven-term Lok Sabha member, has been elected the Lower House's pro tem Speaker. Mahtab will chair the Lower House of Parliament's first sitting following the general elections in his capacity as pro tem Speaker. In addition, if the House is newly established, he shall preside over the session where the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are chosen. The BJP's outstanding electoral success in Odisha preceded Mahtab's appointment as pro tem Speaker. The seasoned politician, who had switched from the BJD

to the BJP before the polls, played a key role in the BJP's success in the state.



Manoj Jain Appointed As Chairman And Managing Director Of Bharat Electronics Limited

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a defence public sector undertaking, announced that Manoj Jain has taken over as chairman and managing director. Jain, a seasoned BEL veteran, has held a variety of significant positions throughout the course of his three-decade career. Prior to this assignment, Jain was Director (R&D) since September 2022, with additional responsibilities as Director (Bangalore complex) from August 2023 and Director (HR) from November 2022 till May 2023. He previously headed BEL's electronic warfare & avionics strategic business unit at the Bangalore Complex.



Government Appoints Atul Kumar Chaudhary As Secretary Of Telecom Regulatory Authority Of India

The government has nominated Atul Kumar Chaudhary as the new Secretary of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), a position that became vacant following V Raghunandan's retirement on May 31. Chaudhary is a 1989-batch Indian Telecom Service (ITS) officer who is currently the Deputy Director General (DDG) of the Unique Identification Authority of India

(UIDAI). He has worked in various capacities in Personnel, HR, Administration, Licencing, Vigilance wing of BSNL and Department of Telecommunications (DoT).



Pradeep Singh Kharola Has Been Assigned The Additional Charge Of NTA DG

Subodh Kumar Singh, NTA Director General, has been removed from the post and placed on "compulsory wait" in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). Pradeep Singh Kharola, Chairman and MD of the India Trade Promotion Organisation, has been appointed NTA DG in addition. This decision comes amid mounting concern over purported exam irregularities. Earlier, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan stated that the "top leadership" of the National Testing Agency is under scrutiny for alleged irregularities in competitive exams NEET and NET.



Sanjaya Mariwala Takes Over as President of the IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Sanjaya Mariwala has formally taken over as President of the IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IMC), succeeding Samir Somaiya, who has served his term. Mariwala, whose stellar career spans four decades, provides a lot of knowledge and skills to this new position. He is the current Chairman and Managing Director of OmniActive Health Technologies, which is

owned by TA Associates. In addition to his new role at IMC, Mariwala is the Founder President of the Association of Herbal and Nutraceuticals Manufacturers of India (AHNMI) and a member of the Nutraceuticals Task Force of the Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) – Government of India.



ESAF SFB Chief Paul Thomas Elected Chairperson Of Sa-Dhan

Paul Thomas, MD and CEO of ESAF Small Finance Bank, has been chosen Chairperson of the board of Sa-Dhan, a network of microfinance and impact financing organizations. So far, Thomas served as the Association's co-chair. Sadaf Sayeed, CEO of Muthoot Microfin, and Mukul Jaiswal, MD of Cashphor Micro Credit, are Co-Chairs of Sa-Dhan, with V N Salimath, Chairman of IDF Financial Services, serving as Treasurer, according to a statement from the Association, which is registered under the Societies Act of 1860. Sayeed has been re-elected for the second term on the board of Sa-Dhan at the Association's Annual General Body meeting held on June 21st.



Sony Pictures Networks India Appoints Gaurav Banerjee As New MD & CEO

Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI) has announced that Gaurav Banerjee will become the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on or before August 26,

2024, subject to regulatory approval. Banerjee will take over from N.P. Singh. Gaurav Banerjee has over 20 years of expertise in content production and strategic leadership. He previously served as Head of Content for Hindi Entertainment & Disney+ Hotstar and as Business Head for Star Bharat, Hindi & English Movies, Kids & Infotainment, and Regional (East).



Anuj Tyagi Appointed MD And CEO Of HDFC ERGO General Insurance

Anuj Tyagi has been appointed as HDFC ERGO General Insurance's new managing director and CEO. Tyagi will succeed Ritesh Kumar on July 1. Tyagi has been with the organization since 2008, handling a variety of positions over his tenure. He was promoted to joint managing director in April 2023. Kumar will join the board of ERGO International on October 4 and become the company's new deputy COO, with a focus on Asian growth areas such as China, Thailand, and Singapore. This appointment is subject to administrative approvals and consent of the supervisory board of ERGO International.



India's First AI University Appoints Award-Winning American Professor As VC

Universal AI University (UAIU), India's leading Artificial Intelligence institution, has appointed Simon Mak, an international strategist and award-winning academic, as vice chancellor. Mak's selection as founding vice chancellor is a notable milestone, as he is the first foreign national to lead an Indian institution. Mak, who has expertise in Silicon Valley businesses and academia, will work closely with the university's chancellor, Prof Tarundeep Singh Anand. His primary focus will be on elevating UAIU's global standing through an innovative AI-driven curriculum while maintaining ethical standards in education.



Vikram Misri appointed as India's Foreign Secretary

Deputy National Security Advisor Vikram Misri will be India's new foreign secretary, succeeding incumbent Vinay Kwatra. Misri, a 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, has been appointed to the post with effect from July 15, a government order stated. Misri, who has served as private secretary to prime ministers Inder Kumar Gujral, Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi, is one of the leading hands on China in the ministry of external affairs. His last ambassadorial posting was in Beijing.

4: Awards



NIMHANS Honoured With Prestigious Nelson Mandela Award For Health Promotion

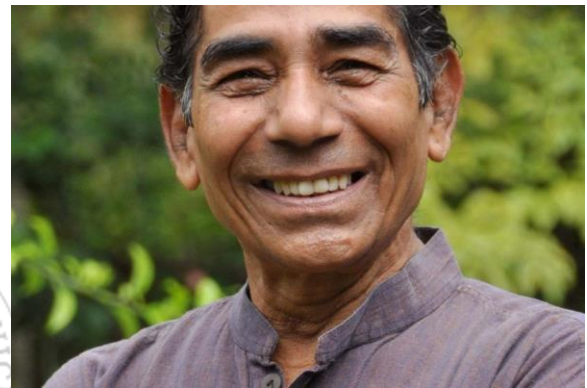
The World Health Organisation (WHO) has granted the Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion for 2024 to the National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru, an Institute of National Importance under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of India. The Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion, established by WHO in 2019, recognises individuals, institutions, and/or governmental or non-governmental organisations that have demonstrated remarkable contributions to health promotion.



Mumbai's Super Cop Krishna Prakash Honored With Hindi Sahitya Bharati Award

Krishna Prakash, the renowned chief of Mumbai Police's special counter-terrorism unit, Force One, has received the coveted Annual Hindi Sahitya Bharati Award. The award was given during the Sab Me Ram Shashwat Shri Ram multicultural event in Mumbai. The Hindi Sahitya

Bharati movement arose from the realization that gathering intellectuals on a unified platform might considerably boost cultural and literary activities. After extensive discussions and consensus among scholars, the name Hindi Sahitya Bharati was chosen to represent the initiative.



Siddhalinga Pattanashetti Wins Gudleppa Hallikeri Award 2024

The Gudleppa Hallikeri Memorial Foundation in Hosaritti (Haveri District), Karnataka, has nominated poet and playwright Siddhalinga Pattanashetti to receive the coveted Gudleppa Hallikeri Award for 2024. Veeranna Chekki, trustee of the Gudleppa Hallikeri Memorial Foundation, told reporters in Haveri that the prize would be awarded to the senior writer during a reception on June 6. Mr. Chekki said that Prof. Pattanashetti will be the 19th recipient of the award. The award comprises a purse of ₹25,000 and a memento.



Sanya Malhotra's "Mrs" Triumph At New York Indian Film Festival

At the renowned New York Indian Film Festival 2024, Sanya Malhotra won the Best Actress award for her mesmerizing performance in the film "Mrs." "Mrs" is a thought-provoking version of the Malayalam film "The Great Indian Kitchen," which explores the difficulties of cultural constraints and marital expectations. Malhotra's portrayal of a woman navigating the challenges of being a wife while yearning to discover her own path and express herself freely has struck a chord with audiences and critics alike.



C-DOT Wins UN WSIS Award For Disaster Resilience Technology

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), India's premier telecom R&D center, has received the UN's WSIS 2024 "Champion" Award for the project "Mobile-Enabled Disaster Resilience through Cell Broadcast Emergency Alerting," which was recognized under AI, C-7, E-environment, in the category of "Benefits in all aspects of life - E-environment." The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 Forum 2024, a High-Level Event, conducted by International Telecom Union (ITU) in Geneva, Switzerland from 27th May - 31st May, 2024, recognised the project of C-DOT's Cell Broadcast Emergency Alerting Platform for its outstanding contribution towards strengthening the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and underscores C-DOT's commitment to leveraging technology for societal impact.



SEBI Honoured With 'Best Conduct Of Business Regulator' Award By The Asian Banker

The Asian Banker has awarded Sebi the 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' award in Asia Pacific for its efforts to improve India's securities market regulatory structure. Kamlesh Chandra Varshney, Sebi's Whole Time Member, got the honor during an event in Hong Kong. "This authority (Sebi) has been actively working towards instantaneous settlement. In 2021, T+1 settlement was introduced in a phased manner, which was fully implemented from January 2023. This move has provided investors with faster access to their funds following trade execution and settlement, enhancing market efficiency and liquidity," The Asian Banker said in a statement.



Vellayan Subbiah Named EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024

Vellayan Subbiah, Executive Vice-Chairman of Tube Investments of India (TII) and Chairman of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co Ltd., has been selected EY's World Entrepreneur of the Year 2024. Subbiah is the fourth Indian to earn this prestigious prize.

Earlier, it was awarded to NR Narayana Murthy, Uday Kotak, and Kiran Majumdar Shaw. With this achievement, India has become the only country in the EY regions to receive the global entrepreneurship award four times. He was the Managing Director of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance between August 19, 2010 and August 18, 2017.



Gudakesh Motie And Chamari Athapaththu Named ICC Players Of The Month For May

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the winners of the ICC Player of the Month awards for May 2024: Gudakesh Motie of the West Indies and Chamari Athapaththu of Sri Lanka. Left-arm spinner Motie was inspiring as the West Indies enjoyed a promising build-up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 with an appealing series win over touring South Africa, while Sri Lankan skipper Athapaththu celebrates her second ICC Women's Player of the Month award after playing a key role in her team's surge to qualification for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 in Bangladesh later this year.



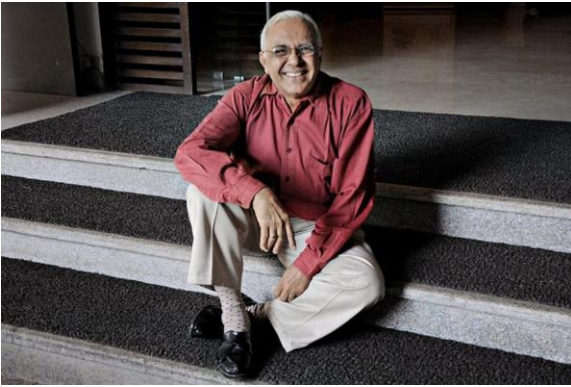
2024 Kavli Prize Awarded In Astrophysics, Nanoscience & Neuroscience

The winners of the 2024 Kavli Prize were recently revealed. Eight individuals were honored for their contributions to astrophysics, neuroscience, and nanoscience. This year's astrophysics prize has been awarded to David Charbonneau of Harvard University and Sara Seager of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Robert Langer of MIT, Armand Paul Alivisatos of the University of Chicago, and Chad Mirkin of Northwestern University received the nanoscience prize. The prize in neuroscience has been awarded to Nancy Kanwisher of MIT, Winrich Freiwald of Rockefeller University, and Doris Tsao of the University of California at Berkeley.



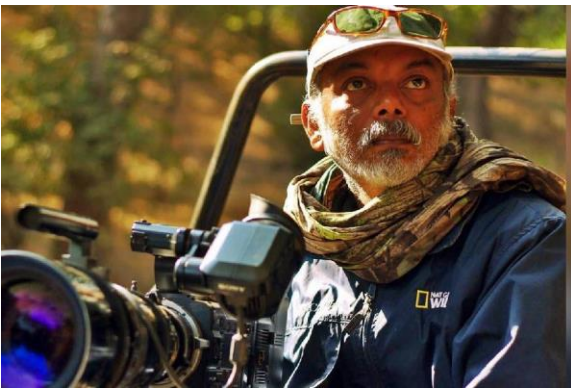
RBI Bags 'Risk Manager Of The Year Award 2024' By London's Central Banking Publication

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has earned the "Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024" from Central Banking, a respected publication based in London, UK. This award celebrates the RBI's outstanding progress in improving its risk culture and awareness, reaffirming its critical role in ensuring the stability of the Indian financial system. During the current global economic turmoil, the RBI maintained a cautious and measured approach to monetary policy. Unlike many other central banks that drastically increased interest rates, potentially stifling economic growth, the RBI maintained a holding stance, keeping rates steady while closely monitoring inflation levels.



Filmmaker Vinod Ganatra Honoured With Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award

Vinod Ganatra, a globally recognized filmmaker, has become the first Indian to receive South Africa's coveted 'Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award' for his contributions to film. He received the coveted award at the 7th Nelson Mandela Children's Film Festival in recognition of his significant contributions to the field of children's cinema. Ganatra has received 36 national and international honors, including the 'Janakinath Gaur Award' from Doordarshan for his children's show, 'Baingan Raja.' He became the only Indian filmmaker to receive the 'Liv Ullmann Peace Prize', in Chicago, for his Gujarati film, 'Harun-Arun'.



Wildlife Filmmaker Subbiah Nallamuthu Honored With V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award

The legendary wildlife filmmaker Shri Subbiah Nallamuthu has been honored by the 18th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) with the highly coveted V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award, according to Dr. L. Murugan, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting. Shri Subbiah Nallamuthu has made outstanding contributions to wildlife cinematography,

gaining him international recognition. An alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, he gained prominence with his work on Living on the Edge, India's longest-running Panda Award-winning environment series.



IIIT-Delhi Wins Prize for Antimicrobial Resistance Project

According to a press release, a project from the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi (IIIT-Delhi) achieved joint second place in Trinity Challenge's second competition, which focused on addressing the rising problem of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The Trinity Challenge is a charity that promotes the development of data-driven solutions to safeguard against global health problems. The project, 'AMRSense: Empowering Communities with a Proactive One Health Ecosystem,' was led by Tavpritesh Sethi of IIIT-Delhi in collaboration with CHRI-PATH, 1mg.com, and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).



GRSE Wins Sustainable Governance Champion Award

Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd. has received the "Sustainable Governance Champion Award"

at the Outlook Planet Sustainability Summit & Awards 2024. This accolade demonstrates GRSE's persistent commitment to sustainable practices and governance excellence. The Sustainable Governance Champion Award recognizes GRSE's efforts to integrate sustainability into its core operations, foster innovation, and promote environmental stewardship in the marine and defense sectors.



Arundhati Roy Wins PEN Pinter Prize Amid Indian Prosecution Threat

Indian writer Arundhati Roy has been awarded the PEN Pinter prize. The accolade was founded by English PEN in 2009 in tribute to the late playwright Harold Pinter, and is annually awarded to writers of "outstanding literary merit". Roy was selected as the 2024 recipient by English PEN chair Ruth Borthwick, actor Khalid Abdalla, and

writer Roger Robinson. She joins a list of literary giants who have also won the award, including Malorie Blackman, Margaret Atwood, and Salman Rushdie. Roy was also the first Indian writer to win The Booker Prize in 1997 for her novel *The God of Small Things*.



Dr. Usha Thakur Receives Prestigious 12th Vishwa Hindi Samman

Dr Usha Thakur was awarded 12th Vishwa Hindi Samman in an Hindi Samvad event organised by Embassy of India in Nepal recognising her contribution in development of Hindi literature. She has translated more than 40 literatures in Hindi and Nepali and strengthened Hindi language. This award is given by the Ministry of External Affairs. 12th World Hindi Conference was held in Fiji in 2023. As Dr Thakur could not attend the event in Fiji, she was given the award in an event organised in Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu.

5: Banking



RBI Imposes Business Restrictions On Edelweiss Group

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has placed business limitations on ECL Finance Ltd. (ECL) and Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd. (EARCL) of the Edelweiss Group due to serious supervisory concerns. ECL Finance Ltd. has been advised to immediately cease and desist from engaging in any structured transactions involving its wholesale exposures, other than repayment and/or account closure in the normal course of business.

Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company in exchange filing said the company takes note of RBI's guidance and will take necessary remedial steps as required immediately.



RBI Penalizes SBM Bank (India) With Rs 88.70 Lakh Fine

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 88.70 lakh on SBM Bank (India) for failing to comply with certain regulatory requirements. In a statement, the central banks stated that the penalty was issued for failing to comply with the RBI's licensing terms, as well as specific instructions to halt conducting Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) operations with immediate effect. The RBI said the bank was engaged business correspondents for establishing account-based relationship with customers from certain regions, despite its request being not acceded to by RBI.



Axis Bank And Mastercard Introduce NFC Soundbox

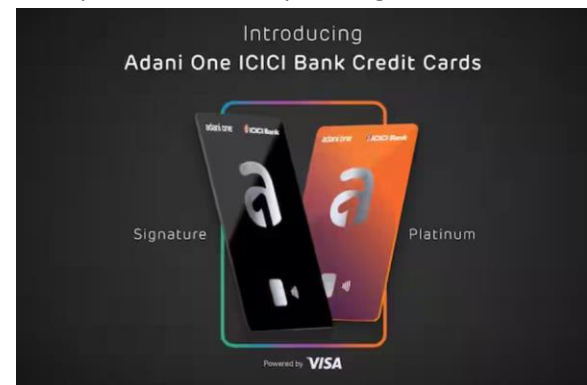
Axis Bank has announced the launch of the NFC Soundbox in cooperation with Mastercard. The new soundbox is expected to serve as an all-in-one solution for accepting Bharat QR, UPI, Tap & Pay, and Tap + Pin payments. Axis Bank claims that with this introduction, it will be the first bank in India to introduce a Soundbox that accepts Tap + Pin payments, allowing retailers to

accept transactions worth more than Rs 5000 using card instruments. The new device will also be available on all leading payment networks, such as Visa, RuPay, and American Express.



SEBI Launches Saathi 2.0 Personal Finance App For Investors

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has created the 'Saathi 2.0' mobile app on personal finance to help investors understand difficult financial concepts. The app features financial calculators and modules that introduce and explain KYC procedures, mutual funds, ETFs, buying and selling stock market shares, an investor grievance redressal mechanism, and the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform. Additionally, the app features a range of videos designed to assist investors in their personal finance planning.



Adani One Launches Two Variants Of Co-Branded Credit Cards With ICICI Bank

Adani One, the Adani Group's digital platform, and ICICI Bank have announced the launch of two kinds of co-branded credit cards in conjunction with card network Visa. The co-branded credit card arrangement marks the Adani Group's entry into the retail financial sector. Available in two variants – Adani One ICICI Bank

Signature Credit Card and Adani One ICICI Bank Platinum Credit Card – the credit cards will offer a reward programme to its customers. Cardholders can get up to 7 per cent Adani reward points on spends within the Adani Group ecosystem.



Muthoot Microfin And SBI Join Forces To Empower Rural Women Entrepreneurs

Muthoot Microfin has signed a co-lending arrangement with the State Bank of India (SBI) to help women entrepreneurs, the company said in a filing. Following the cooperation, Muthoot Microfin intends to expand its financial services to women businesses in rural and semi-urban areas across India. The agreement says that both entities (Muthoot Microfin and SBI) will co-lend to members of Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) who are engaged in agricultural and allied activities as well as other income-generating enterprises.



RBI Raises Bulk Fixed Deposit Limit To Rs 3 Crore From Rs 2 Crore

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has amended the definition of a bank's 'bulk deposit' to include deposits of Rs 3 crore or more. Currently, a bank FD of Rs 2 crore or more is considered a bulk FD. Banks frequently offer higher interest rates on bulk deposits than on individual accounts. As the threshold rises, banks may modify their

interest rates and deposit arrangements to reflect the higher ceiling. This will also affect those who retain FD deposits. After the RBI's latest 'bulk deposit' decision, those depositing between Rs 2 crore and Rs 3 crore in banks in a single go will now get lower interest rates as compared to those depositing above Rs 3 crore. Earlier, the threshold was Rs 2 crore.



SBI sanctioned loans amounting to ₹2,030 crore under co-lending tie-up with NBFCs

In order to expand its reach to the unserved and underserved population, the State Bank of India has so far entered into co-lending agreements with 23 non-banking finance companies (NBFCs)/housing finance companies (HFCs). Additionally, India's largest bank has established an end-to-end digital platform for loan underwriting, sanction, disbursement, and collections for NBFC co-lending. Under this model, SBI has sanctioned loans to more than 2.79 lakh borrowers amounting to ₹2,030 crore, according to the Bank's latest annual report.



SBI Revolutionizes SME Lending With 'SME Digital Business Loans'

State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a new SME digital business loans programme in which India's largest bank will use data from income tax and GST returns, as well as bank statements, to credit assess micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and sanction loans in

10 seconds after submitting the necessary details, with no human intervention. For loans up to ₹50 lakh, SBI has waived the requirement for financial statements, relying instead on transaction history and GST returns for appraisal.



FIU Imposes Fine On Axis Bank For Failure To Detect NSG Fraud

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) fined Axis Bank more than Rs 1.66 crore for "failing" to implement a mechanism to detect and report suspicious transactions at one of its branches by opening a "fraud" account in the name of counter-terrorist commando force NSG. On June 3, the federal agency issued an order under Section 13 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) authorizing its Director to impose a monetary penalty on a reporting entity (such as Axis Bank) if the agency determines that its designated director on the board or any of its employees failed to comply with the obligations mandated by the law.



India Post Payments Bank Partners With Ria Money Transfer To Revolutionize Rural Remittance Services

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has teamed up with Ria Money Transfer, a global leader in cross-border money transfers, to offer convenient and cheap doorstep banking services to consumers in remote locations across the country. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Communications, the partnership between

IPPB and Ria would improve access to financial services at clients' doorsteps, allowing them to withdraw only the amounts they require quickly. The Ministry said this initiative aims to mitigate the previous challenges and risks, fostering true financial inclusion.



Kotak Mahindra Bank Plans To Open Up To 200 New Branches In FY25

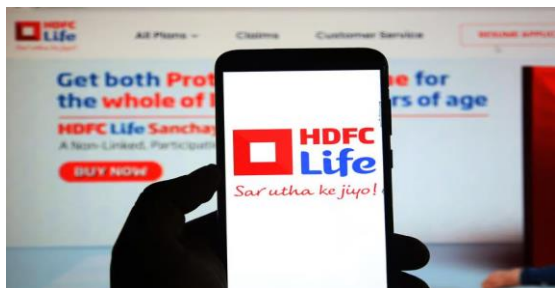
India's Kotak Mahindra Bank will accelerate the building of new branches, adding 175 to 200 in the fiscal year 2024-25, according to a senior bank executive, months after the central bank prevented the private lender from acquiring new clients digitally. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) prohibited Kotak from adding new customers through its online and mobile banking platforms, as well as issuing new credit cards, in April due to information technology problems. Prior to the RBI's ruling, Kotak relied largely on digital platforms to acquire new customers.



RBI announces the SAARC Currency Swap Framework

The Reserve Bank of India with the concurrence of the Government of India has decided to put in place a revised Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC countries for the period 2024 to 2027. Under this Framework, the Reserve Bank would enter into bilateral swap agreements with SAARC Central Banks, who want to avail of the swap facility. The total corpus of the Rupee support is ₹250 billion. The RBI will continue to offer

swap arrangements in US\$ and Euro under a separate US Dollar/ Euro Swap Window with an overall corpus of US\$ 2 billion.



HDFC Life Launches 'Bridge the Gap' Campaign to Boost Life Insurance Awareness

HDFC Life has introduced the 'Bridge the Gap' initiative to increase awareness about life insurance in India. The campaign involves various on-ground and digital activities to educate the public about the benefits and coverage of life insurance. Notably, HDFC Life has partnered with ET NOW to produce a series of informative chat shows. These shows feature discussions with HDFC Life leaders and their partners, covering various aspects of financial planning with life insurance, including protection, child plans, and retirement options.

6: Books and Author



MCA to release stamp, coffee table book on occasion of Wankhede's 50th year

The Mumbai Cricket Association will host a major event in November to commemorate the Wankhede Stadium's 50th anniversary. "To mark the special occasion, the MCA, in association with the postal department of the government of India, will release a special stamp. The association will also launch a coffee table book, which will have pictures of all the memorable cricketing moments at the Wankhede Stadium," a source said. In 1974-75, the Wankhede Stadium hosted its maiden Test against the West Indies. India lost the match by 201 runs.



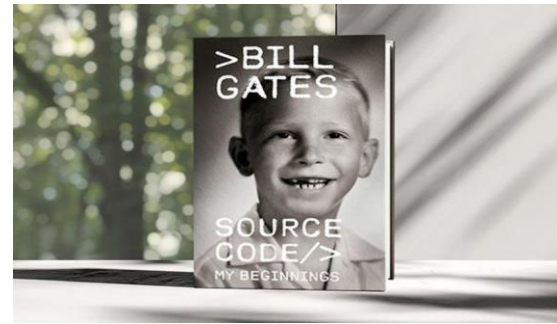
IAS officer Dr Raju Narayana Swamy's book on election experiences released

Dr. Raju Narayana Swamy, a Kerala Cadre IAS Officer, has launched his latest book, "From Bundelkhand to Jharkhand: Musings of an Observer," during a ceremony in Narsinghpur, Madhya Pradesh. Sheetla Patle, the District Collector, attended the occasion. The book is organized as a travelogue, taking readers on a journey through the heart of rural India. It also digs into the complexities of India's electoral system, including the specifics of election legislation. This is Dr. Swamy's 33rd book. Swamy was awarded the 2018 Satyendra K. Dubey Memorial Award by IIT Kanpur for his professional integrity in upholding human values.



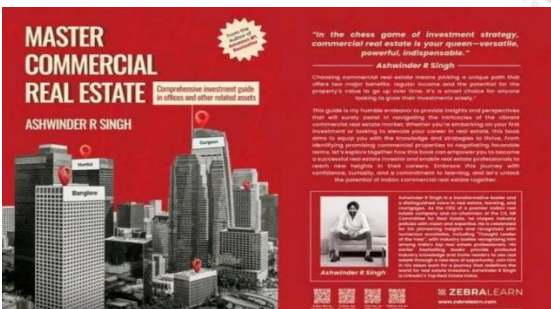
Book on Olive Ridleys released

As part of the World Environment Day celebrations, the Department of Posts released a philatelic book called Ridley's Rendezvous. A beach cleanup project was also arranged. T. Nirmala Devi, Postmaster General of Central Region Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu, released the book at MGR Thittu's turtle hatchery in Killai, Cuddalore District. The Department of Posts collaborated with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department to organize a beach cleanup initiative at MGR Thittu in Cuddalore, Koolaiyar in Mayiladuthurai district, and Vilunthamavadi in Nagapattinam district. The initiative is aimed at protecting and cleaning up areas where Olive Ridley turtles come ashore to breed.



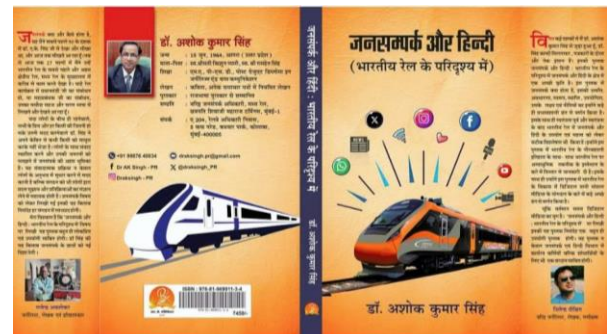
Bill Gates Announces New Memoir, 'Source Code'

Bill Gates has announced that his book, 'Source Code,' will be launched next February. This memoir chronicles his early life, from boyhood to his choice to leave college and co-found Microsoft with Paul Allen. Gates writes about the relationships, lessons, and experiences that shaped his life. Bill Gates has been in the public glare since his early twenties, but much about his life before that is unknown. Over the years, he has often been asked about his upbringing, his time at Harvard, and co-founding Microsoft. These questions made him realize that people might be interested in his journey and the factors that influenced it.



Ashwinder R. Singh Launches His Third Book, "Master Commercial Real Estate"

Ashwinder R. Singh, known for his profound contributions to real estate, has released his third book, "Master Commercial Real Estate". This detailed guide looks into the difficulties of investing in the commercial real estate market, providing helpful insights for both new and experienced investors. Building on the success of his prior bestsellers, "The A to Z of Residential Real Estate" and "Master Residential Real Estate," Singh's latest volume strengthens his position as an industry thought leader. His latest book addresses the growing commercial real estate sector.



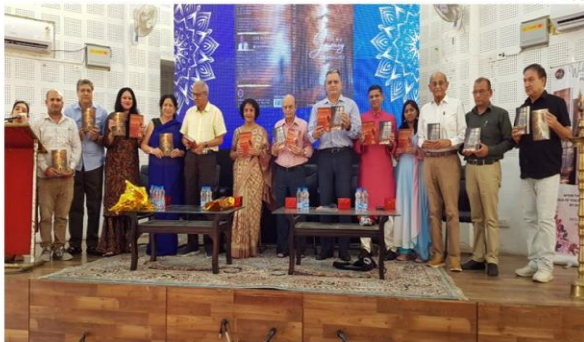
Mumbai: Governor Ramesh Bais Releases Dr. Ashok Kumar Singh's Book Jan Sampark Aur Hindi

His Excellency Governor Ramesh Bais released Dr. Ashok Kumar Singh's book "Jan Sampark Aur Hindi" at the Raj Bhavan premises. Dr. Swapnil Nila, Deputy Chief Public Relations Officer Anil Kumar Jain, Public Relations Officer Michael Manuel Raj, and publisher Ramkumar were all present. According to a senior author this book will prove to be a boon not only for the employees working in the Public Relations and Hindi Department but also for the researchers. This book has been published by the reputed Mumbai publisher RK Publications.



Alia Bhatt to launch her first children's picture book on June 16

Alia Bhatt is about to achieve a new milestone. She is releasing her debut children's picture book this week. The first in a series of children's picture books titled "Ed Finds A Home" is published by her children's clothing line Ed-a-Mamma. "Ed Finds A Home" is part of a children's book series "with a focus on inspiring love for nature in the coming generation." This is Ed-a-Mamma's first foray into publication, collaborating with Puffin, an imprint of Penguin Random House India. Alia will launch Ed Finds A Home at the children's literature festival, StoryVerse, taking place at Jio World Drive in Mumbai on June 16.



Books by Canada based Yog Rahi released At Jammu

At a celebration held at the Writer's Club in Jammu, the Writers' Group 'Qalamkaar' released three books: 'Life is a Journey', 'Jammu's Creative Canvas', and 'Other Side of The Border', all authored by Canadian litterateur Yog 'Rahi' Gupta. Padma Shri Dr. Jatinder Udhamपुरi was the chief guest, while Dr. Sucheta Pathania, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Jammu, presided over the event. Living in Canada for more than four decades, Yog Rahi Gupta had a desire to release his books at Jammu and

chose 'Qalamkaar: The Writers' Group for this purpose as last year.



A New Book Titled 'The Great Nicobar Betrayal' Launched

A book addressing the hazards of the projected ₹72,000-crore massive infrastructure development project in the Great Nicobar Island, the southernmost island in the Nicobar Islands, part of the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago, was released in Chennai. The book, titled 'The Great Nicobar Betrayal' and published by Frontline, was compiled by Pankaj Sekhsaria, an associate professor at the Centre for Technology Alternatives for Rural Areas, IIT Bombay, and a dedicated chronicler of the Andaman and Nicobar islands. It is a compilation of articles by different authors published in Frontline and other news publications.



Author CA Vikas Chordiya launched his book 'Subsidies for Manufacturers in Maharashtra'

Author CA Vikas Chordiya published his maiden book "Subsidies for Manufacturers in Maharashtra" in Jalgaon, Maharashtra, in front of notable visitors. Jalgaon's first CA-turned-author has written and self-published an instructional book titled How to Get a Subsidy, which is aimed at all MSME entrepreneurs. More than 400 MSME Manufacturers have actively participated in the book

launch event along with chief Guests - Shri Praful Ji Umare, Shri Ravindra Ji Laddha, Dt Krishna Ji Patil, Shri Deepak Ji Chaudhari, Pramod Ji Sancheti, and Shri Mahendra Ji Raisonni.



Book on plants mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib released at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

Guru Nanak Dev University's Center for Studies in Sri Guru Granth Sahib has published a new book about the flora referenced in the Guru Granth Sahib. Dr Pushpinder Jai Rup, a historian and archivist, wrote the book, 'Sri Guru Granth Sahib wih Paudian da Zikar'. The book was released by Prof Jaspal Singh Sandhu, Vice-Chancellor, Prof Jai Rup Singh, former Vice-Chancellor, Guru Nanak Dev University. Dr. Jai Rup Singh stated that this book contains entire information about the plants listed in the Shabads of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

7: Defence



IAF Contingent Joined 'Red Flag 24' Exercise In Alaska

The Indian Air Force has recently joined in a 16-day multi-nation major military exercise in Alaska, the United States, aimed to give realistic training to participating troops in a simulated combat environment. The IAF sent Rafale fighter jets to the 'Red Flag Alaska' exercise from May 30 to June 14. The US Pacific Air Forces expects around 3100 military members to fly, maintain, and support more than 100 aircraft during the exercise. Red Flag-Alaska training spans from individual skills to complex, large-scale joint engagements.



Sweden Boosts Ukraine's Defenses With Advanced Radar Planes

The Swedish government said, Sweden will provide two radar surveillance and command aircraft to Ukraine to strengthen its defenses in the conflict with Russia, as part of its largest aid package to Ukraine to date, totaling over 13.3 billion Swedish crowns (\$1.3 billion). The Saab Airborne Surveillance and Control (ASC) 890 aircraft facilitates long-range target detection and will boost Ukraine's planned introduction of F-16 fighter jets given by other Western countries, according to Sweden. "They will complement and reinforce the F-16 systems," Defence Minister Pal Jonson told a press briefing in Stockholm.



Sub-Lt Anamika Rajeev Becomes Indian Navy's 1st Woman Helicopter Pilot

Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev became the Indian Navy's first female helicopter pilot after receiving the renowned "Golden Wings" during a passing-out ceremony at a naval air station in Tamil Nadu's Arakkonam. In addition, Lt Jamyang Tsewang, the first commissioned navy officer from Ladakh, graduated as a certified helicopter pilot, according to the Indian Navy. Sub-Lieutenant Anamika Rajeev and Lt Tsewang are among 21 officers awarded the "Golden Wings" by Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command, at the passing-out parade at INS Rajali, the Navy said.



Army Launches Integrated Generator Monitoring, Control System 'Vidyut Rakshak'

A tech-based innovation 'Vidyut Rakshak', an integrated generator monitoring, protection and control system developed by the Army Design Bureau (ADB) was launched by the Army's Vice Chief Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi. Vidyut Rakshak is a fully integrated generator monitoring, protection, and control system that uses the Internet of Things. The Internet of Things (IoT) is a network of interconnected devices that communicate and share data with other IoT devices and the cloud.

Major Rajprasad R S invented Vidyut Rakshak, which was recently shown during the 'Exercise Bharat Shakti' and observed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



Japan-India Maritime Exercise JIMEX-24 Kicks Off In Yokosuka

The Indian Navy's indigenous Stealth Frigate INS Shivalik arrived in Yokosuka, Japan, to participate in the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2024 (JIMEX 24). This is JIMEX's seventh edition since its debut in 2012. VAdm ITO Hiroshi, Commander JMSDF Yokosuka District, and Ambassador Sibi George, India's Ambassador to Japan, welcomed the ship warmly. The practice consists of both harbour and marine aspects. The harbour phase will comprise professional, sports and social interactions, after which the two navies will jointly hone their war fighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains.



Lt General Upendra Dwivedi Named New Army Chief

The Centre has nominated Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi as the new Chief of Army Staff, putting an end to debate about the critical appointment. Dwivedi, currently Vice Chief of the Army Staff, will follow incumbent General

Manoj Pande, whose term has been extended by one month to June 30. Dwivedi was born on July 1, 1964, and commissioned into the Indian Army's Infantry (Jammu and Kashmir Rifles) on December 15, 1984. During his long service spanning nearly 40 years, he has served in a variety of Command, Staff, Instructional and Foreign appointments.



5th LSAM 13 missile cum ammunition barge inducted into Indian Navy

The commissioning of 'Missile cum Ammunition Barge, LSAM 13 (Yard 81)', the fifth barge of the 08 x Missile cum Ammunition Barge project developed by MSME Shipyard SECON Engineering Projects Pvt Ltd (SEPL), Visakhapatnam for the Indian Navy, took place at Vinayaga Marine Petro Ltd, Mira Bhayandar, Maharashtra (launch site of SECON). Cmde Manish Vig, General Manager (QA), ND(Mbi), presided over the launch ceremony. The contract for building 08 x Missile cum Ammunition Barge was signed between MoD and SECON Engineering Projects Pvt Ltd, Visakhapatnam on 19 Feb 2021.



Russia And Belarus Conduct Tactical Nuclear Weapons Drills Amid Tensions With West

Russia and Belarus have begun the second round of tactical nuclear weapons training, as part of Moscow's

efforts to deter the West from increasing its assistance for Ukraine. Drills have taken conducted in Russia's south, near the border with Ukraine. Russia announced the exercises last month, after French President Emmanuel Macron said he would not rule out deploying troops to Ukraine under certain conditions and the United States and some other NATO allies said Kyiv was allowed to use Western-supplied weapons on targets in border areas of Russia.



Indian Army receives first batch of 'Nagastra-1' suicide drones

Underscoring the growing relevance of drone technology in modern combat, the Indian Army has received its first batch of indigenously produced "suicide drones," known as "Nagastra-1." These cutting-edge drones, built for precise strikes on enemy targets, are a big step forward in India's defensive capabilities. Economic Explosives Limited (EEL), a subsidiary of Solar Industries, manufactures the Nagastra-1, a sort of "loitering munition." This means it can hover over a designated area, identifying and locking onto targets before launching a precise attack, even mid-flight.



Israeli Navy Receives Second Of New US-Built Landing Craft

The INS Komemiyut (Israel Navy Ship Independence) LSV (landing craft) has arrived in Israel and will be

operationally integrated with the Israeli Navy. The ship arrived at the Israeli Navy Base in Haifa after departing from the port of Pascagoula in the United States. It is the second naval landing boat bought by the Israel Navy from the United States in the last eight months. The vessel's entrance to the State of Israel's territorial waters was accompanied by Israeli Navy vessels in a "missing" formation, this in memory of the fallen soldiers from the "Swords of Iron" war.



India To Host Its First Multinational Air Exercise Tarang Shakti In August

Tarang Shakti-2024, the Indian Air Force's first global air exercise, is scheduled for August and is expected to involve ten countries, with a few others acting as observers. The exercise will now be held in two phases. The first will take place in southern India in the first two weeks of August, followed by the second in the western region from the end of August to mid-September, according to officials. Among the countries sending contingents are Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



Indian Army Inducts Indigenous ASMI Submachine Gun

Lokesh Machines Ltd., a Hyderabad-based producer of CNC machines, has reached a critical milestone with its

first small weapons invention. ASMI, the company's 9x19 mm calibre submachine gun, is the first weapon formally accepted into the Indian Army that was created, produced, and manufactured domestically. This historic feat demonstrates India's growth in indigenous defense manufacture. Lokesh Machines Ltd. has secured a substantial order worth Rs 4.26 crore from the Northern Command of the Army for 550 ASMI submachine guns.



Indian Army Opened Khalubar War Memorial To Tourists In Ladakh

The Indian Army has opened the Khalubar War Memorial in Ladakh to tourists in honor of the heroes of the Kargil War. This inauguration event was part of the 'Forever in Operations' Division's Pre-Kargil Vijay Diwas activities, as the country is set to mark the 25th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas on July 26. Located in the iconic Aryan Valley, this memorial honors the valiant efforts and sacrifices of soldiers who struggled to retake the valley during the war. Khalubar, a serene valley near the border, became a focal point during the Kargil War when enemy forces captured it.



DRDO's 'ABHYAS' Completes Six Successful Trials

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has completed six consecutive developmental trials of High Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT)

'ABHYAS' with improved booster configuration from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha. With this, ABHYAS has successfully completed 10 developmental trials demonstrating the reliability of the

system. ABHYAS has been designed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment, Bengaluru, and developed through Production Agencies - Hindustan Aeronautics Limited & Larsen & Toubro.

8: Economy



Canara Bank To Dilute 14.50% Stake In Canara HSBC Life Insurance Via IPO

Canara Bank, a public sector lender, has accepted a proposal to decrease its 14.50 percent interest in insurance business Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company through an initial public offering (IPO). "Canara Bank has accorded approval for initiating the process of diluting 14.50 percent stake of the Bank in its subsidiary M/s Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company Ltd by listing the Company in Stock Exchanges (BSE/NSE) through Initial Public Offer (IPO)," the bank said. The same shall be subject to approval of Reserve Bank of India and Department of Financial Services, Government of India, the bank said.



PNB Board Approves 10% Stake Dilution In Canara HSBC Life Insurance Via IPO

Punjab National Bank (PNB) announced that its board of directors has approved the process of diluting a 10% share in Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company through an initial public offering (IPO). This new PNB move follows the Board of Canara Bank's consent to begin the process of diluting a 14.50 percent share in its subsidiary Canara HSBC Life Insurance. Currently, Canara Bank has a 51 per cent stake in the life insurer, while HSBC has a 26 per cent stake in the joint venture.



RBI Approves Zurich Insurance's Acquisition Of 70% Stake In Kotak General

The Reserve Bank of India has approved Zurich Insurance Company's proposed acquisition of a 70% stake in Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company for Rs 5,560 crore, Kotak Mahindra Bank stated in an exchange filing. Kotak General is a 100% subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank. The bank stated that all necessary approvals had been secured and that the deal would be finalized "upon fulfillment of other conditions precedent". In February, the private bank had announced that Zurich Insurance would acquire a 70 percent stake in the insurance company for Rs 5,560 crore in a single tranche.



Bank Of India Acquires 6.1% Stake In CCIL IFSC

The Bank of India has bought a 6.125 percent share in the recently created Clearing Corporation of India Ltd. (IFSC), which is listed in Gujarat's GIFT SEZ. Subrat Kumar, Bank of India Executive Director (International Operations), made the announcement during a celebration commemorating the establishment of the bank's IFSC Banking Unit in GIFT City. Promoted by Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL), CCIL IFSC is the proposed entity to build and operate a real-time foreign currency settlement system at GIFT City. The entity will act as a clearing house and system operator at GIFT City.



Tata Communications Secures Five-Year Broadcasting Deal With World Athletics

Tata Communications has announced a five-year worldwide host broadcasting services agreement to cover World Athletics Series events beginning in 2025. Tata Communications, through its partnership with World Athletics, will be busy with a slew of competitions in 2025, including the World Athletics Championships, which will be hosted in Tokyo from September 13 to 21, 2025. Other sporting events set to be held in 2025 include the World Athletics Indoor Championships in Nanjing in March, World Athletics Relays in Guangzhou

in May, and World Athletics Road Running Championships in San Diego in September.



Jupiter Money Gets RBI Nod To Start Prepaid Wallet Business

Jupiter Money, a fintech business, has got final approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to begin issuing prepaid payment instruments. Jupiter will now be able to provide consumers with digital wallets that are tied to UPI applications. Jupiter now offers digital savings accounts in collaboration with Federal Bank and CSB Bank, with features such as UPI payments, co-branded credit cards, loans (co-lending), spend and asset trackers, and a personalized goal-saving tool. Jupiter — which competes with other neobanks, such as Slice and Fi Money — had received in-principle approval from the RBI last year.



RBI Grants Approval To Aurionpro Payments As Online Payment Aggregator

Aurionpro Payment Solutions (Aurionpro Payments), a unit of Aurionpro, announced that it has got final approval from the Reserve Bank of India to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator under the Payments Settlements Act of 2007 via its payment brand AuroPay. The company stated that gaining final RBI approval to operate as a full-fledged online payment aggregator is a

key milestone towards its long-term aspirations as a payment service provider. AuroPay simplifies payment processing for both receivables and payables, including settlement, in a secure, safe, and compliant environment, as per the press statement.



RBI Cancels Purvanchal Cooperative Bank's Licence

The Reserve Bank has revoked the licence of Purvanchal Co-operative Bank in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, due to a lack of adequate capital and earning potential. The Commissioner for Cooperation and Registrar of Cooperative Societies in Uttar Pradesh has also been ordered to issue an order to wind up the bank and appoint a liquidator, according to the RBI statement. On liquidation, every depositor would be entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to Rs 5 lakh only from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).



RBI Penalizes Central Bank Of India And Sonali Bank PLC For Violations

The RBI issued penalties of Rs 1.5 crore and Rs 9.4 lakh on the Central Bank of India and Bangladesh's Sonali Bank, respectively. The penalty imposed on the Central Bank is for failing to comply with RBI regulations on loans and advances, as well as client safety in electronic

transactions. Sonali Bank was fined for failing to implement periodic risk categorisation reviews, use robust software for transaction alerts inconsistent with risk categorisation, comply with Swift-related operational controls, and become a member of all credit information companies within the specified timelines.



IFC commits \$105 million for Brookfield's Bikaner solar power project

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank Group's private sector financing arm, has committed USD 105 million (about Rs 870 crore) to Brookfield's Bikaner Solar Power project through long-term non-convertible debentures. These debentures have been awarded to the project's special purpose vehicles, according to an IFC statement. The 550 MW solar power plant in Bikaner, Rajasthan, will contribute to India's renewable energy capacity and climate targets, according to an IFC statement. The project will be connected to the inter-state transmission system section of India's green energy corridor.



RBI Grants Payment Aggregator License To SabPaisa

SabPaisa (SRS Live Technologies Private Limited), a payment solutions provider, has announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted final approval to operate as a Payment Aggregator (PA) under the Payments and Settlement Systems Act of 2007. The

license would enable SabPaisa to provide complete payment aggregation services to merchants throughout the country. Since its establishment in 2016, SabPaisa has been offering innovative payment gateway solutions and related products such as Payouts and Subscriptions.



53rd GST Council Meeting

The 53rd GST Council meeting, headed by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, issued a slew of recommendations on taxation, tax exemptions for Indian Railways services, and biometric-based Aadhaar identification to prevent fraudulent invoicing. The council has proposed a consistent 12% GST on all solar cookers, whether they use a single or dual energy source. Hostels for students located outside of educational institutions are exempt from GST. The council has recommended a uniform rate of 12% on all milk cans, irrespective of the construction material.



Srinagar Named 4th Indian 'World Craft City' By World Craft Council

The World Crafts Council (WCC), a non-governmental organization dedicated to empowering artists and preserving craft traditions around the world, has designated Srinagar as a World Craft City (WCC). This is likely to reestablish Kashmir's centuries-old connections with craft centers in Central Asia and Iran. The renewed prominence for a city with over 4,000 years of written history has focused attention on a location that has produced masterpieces in various art fields, including shawls, carpets, papier mache, and so on. The craft scene witnessed a major change in the 14th Century, with the arrival of Persian and Central Asian preachers and artisans.



ICICI Bank M-Cap Tops \$100 Bn; Becomes Only Sixth Indian Co To Hit Milestone

On June 25, ICICI Bank's market value surpassed \$100 billion for the first time, making it only the sixth firm to do so. The private sector lender joins the ranks of Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, and Bharti Airtel, the four other domestically listed corporations with market capitalizations over \$100 billion. Previously, Infosys had attained the milestone. After hitting a record high of Rs 1,207, shares of ICICI Bank last closed at Rs 1,199, up 2.5 per cent, valuing the firm at Rs 8.44 trillion (\$100 billion).

9: International



ADB Commits \$2.6 Billion in Sovereign Lending to India

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pledged USD 2.6 billion (about Rs 21,500 crore) in sovereign lending to India in 2023 for a variety of projects. The fund's goals include strengthening urban development, supporting industrial corridor growth, promoting power sector reforms, increasing India's climate resilience, and improving connectivity. ADB also extended USD 23.53 million in technical assistance and USD 4.1 million in grants under the sovereign portfolio. In addition, ADB committed over USD 1 billion for private sector projects during the past year.



Mexico elects Claudia Sheinbaum as first woman president

Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexico's expected presidential winner, will become the country's first female president in its 200-year history. The climate scientist and former mayor of Mexico City stated that her two challengers had called her and conceded her victory. According to the head of the National Electoral Institute, Ms. Sheinbaum received between 58.3% and 60.7% of the vote based on statistical data. Opposition candidate Xóchitl Gálvez had

between 26.6% and 28.6% of the vote and Jorge Álvarez Máynez had between 9.9% and 10.8% of the vote.



King Charles III Currency Notes Introduced In UK

In the United Kingdom, banknotes picturing King Charles III have recently entered circulation. The Bank of England stated that Charles is just the second king, after his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, to appear on banknotes printed by the BoE. This is also the first time the bank has replaced the monarch on its notes. Charles' picture appears on £5, £10, £20, and £50 notes. Meanwhile, the rest of the design will be the same as the existing notes, which feature the late Queen Elizabeth II on the front. The Bank of England said in a press release that it expects the new notes to "enter circulation very gradually."



European Commission Excludes Tanzania From Conservation Grant

The European Commission (EC) has withdrawn Tanzania from the list of nations eligible for an 18 million Euro conservation award to be launched in East Africa as part of the NaturAfrica program. According to claims from the Maasai International Solidarity Alliance (MISA) and Survival International, the EC removed Tanzania from the list on World Environment Day (June 5), in response to

the Tanzanian government's recent spate of violent evictions of the Maasai. The semi-nomadic pastoralist group has been targeted by the government in order to remove them from their traditional lands in and around Loliondo in the iconic Ngorongoro Conservation Area, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the northern part of the country.



India Exim Bank Opens Nairobi Office To Boost East Africa Trade

The Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) opened its East Africa Representative Office in Nairobi, Kenya, with the goal of expanding India's business presence in East Africa, a resource-rich and demographically young continent. This program aims to strengthen economic and business connections between India, Kenya, and the wider East African area. Over the past decade, trade between India and East Africa has surged significantly, with merchandise trade reaching US\$12.9 billion in 2022, up from US\$9.7 billion in 2013. Notably, India's exports to East Africa rose from US\$8.6 billion in 2013 to US\$9.4 billion in 2022, indicating a strengthening of trade relations.



French President Dissolves Parliament After EU Election Defeat

Following France's far-right victory in the European Parliamentary elections, President Emmanuel Macron dissolved the country's National Assembly and called for new elections. The centre-right President's Renaissance party and its allies suffered significant losses in the European Parliamentary elections, obtaining a provisional 15.2% of the vote for French seats compared to the far-right Rassemblement National's (RN) provisional 31.5%. Far-right parties together won 40% of the available seats. Elections will be held on June 30 with a run-off round on July 7.



India Welcomes Egypt, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia And Ethiopia Joining BRICS

India welcomed Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Ethiopia as new members of the BRICS grouping, as their officials attended a critical conference of the bloc hosted by Russia, which took over the year-long membership of BRICS on January 1. Dammu Ravi, a senior diplomat, represented India's delegation in Nizhny Novgorod, western Russia. The meeting was the first ministerial meeting following BRICS expansion in 2023 when Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE joined Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa as full-fledged BRICS members.



Peter Pellegrini Sworn In As Slovakia's President Amid Political Tensions

Peter Pellegrini took office as President of Slovakia recently in a ceremony held amid increased security following the assassination attempt on his close partner, populist Prime Minister Robert Fico, a month earlier. Pellegrini, 48, defeated pro-Western career diplomat Ivan Korcok in the presidential runoff vote on April 6. His win strengthened Fico's hold on power by granting him and his allies control of key strategic positions. He succeeded Zuzana Caputova, the country's first female head of state and a staunch backer of neighbouring Ukraine in its fight against Russia's invasion. She didn't seek a second term in the largely ceremonial post.



Coal India Exploring Lithium Assets In Argentina With U.S. Firm: Report

An Indian source with firsthand information revealed that Coal India Ltd, a state-run corporation, is exploring lithium blocks in Argentina alongside a US company to ensure supply of battery material. The initiatives are part of India's participation in the United States-led Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), which New Delhi joined last year to assure adequate mineral supplies to satisfy zero-carbon targets. India has been looking into ways to ensure supplies of lithium, a vital raw ingredient required to produce electric vehicle batteries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government last year listed 30 minerals, including lithium, nickel, titanium, vanadium and tungsten, as critical to drive the adoption of clean energy.



India, Sri Lanka Commission Maritime Rescue Centre To Boost Security Ties

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar unveiled a virtual plaque commemorating the formal opening of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Sri Lanka. The centre will be created with a \$6 million contribution from India as part of attempts to strengthen maritime security partnerships in New Delhi's southern region. Wickremesinghe was among the seven top leaders from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region who attended the swearing in ceremony of PM Modi on June 9.



Indian Deposits In Swiss Banks Drop By 70% To Reach Four-Year Low Of ₹9,771 Crore

In 2023, funds deposited by Indian individuals and corporations in Swiss banks, including local branches and other financial institutions, plummeted drastically by 70% to a four-year low of 1.04 billion Swiss Francs (₹9,771 crore), according to yearly figures from Switzerland's central bank. After reaching a 14-year high of CHF 3.83 billion in 2021, aggregate funds held by Indian clients with Swiss banks fell for the second year in

a row, owing mostly to a steep drop in money held through bonds, securities, and various other financial instruments.



Tajikistan Government Bans Hijab And Other 'Alien Garments'

Tajikistan, a central Asian country bordering Afghanistan, is preparing to impose a hijab ban on its residents after the Tajik parliament's upper chamber, Majlisi Milli, enacted a law on June 19 forbidding "alien garments" and children's festivities. Lawmakers also agreed on new amendments to the procedures for breaking the legislation, including steep fines for those who do. The rules did not previously list wearing a hijab or other religious clothing as something citizens can't do. Government officials and religious leaders might have to pay even more if they're found guilty, with fines reaching 54,000 somonis for officials and 57,600 somonis for religious leaders.



Four AFMS Officers Create History At 43rd World Medical & Health Games In Saint-Tropez, France

Four Armed Forces Medical Service (AFMS) officers brought honors to India by winning a record 32 medals at the 43rd World Medical and Health Games, which took place in Saint-Tropez, France, from June 16 to 23, 2024.

These officers, Lt Col Sanjeev Malik, Maj Anish George, Capt Stephen Sebastian, and Capt Dania James, created history by earning 19 gold medals, 09 silver medals, and 04 bronze medals in the world's greatest health-care sports event. With a history dating back to 1978, the Games annually draw over 2500 participants from more than 50 countries.



World Bank Grants \$1.5 Billion for India's Green Energy Push

The World Bank has approved a \$1.5-billion loan to help India accelerate its low-carbon energy development. The funds will be used to promote a market for green hydrogen, electrolyzers, and increased renewable energy penetration. This is the second round of funding from the World Bank. In June 2023, the World Bank approved the \$1.5-billion to accelerate India's development of low-carbon energy. The Centre has set a target of achieving 500 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2070.



Antonio Costa of Portugal elected President of European Council

Former prime minister of Portugal, António Luís Santos da Costa, has been elected as the President of the European Council in Brussels. He became the first

Portuguese leader to hold this position. Born in 1961, António Costa is a lawyer turned politician. During his tenure as the prime minister of Portugal, he carried out packages to revitalize Lisbon and Portugal as a whole.

Nicknamed "Gandhi of Lisbon" for his frugal lifestyle and his Indian roots, in 2017, he was presented the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman by the President of India. He also holds an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card.

10: Miscellaneous



Badminton Star PV Sindhu Appointed Brand Ambassador For Tobacco Control

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, hosted an event to commemorate World No Tobacco Day 2024. Ms. PV Sindhu, an Indian badminton maestro, has been named the brand ambassador for Tobacco Control, in a significant attempt to encourage young children and youngsters to avoid all types of tobacco. Ms. Sindhu asked everyone to join the anti-tobacco campaign in a powerful video message, pushing people to live tobacco-free lives and make healthier choices today for a better tomorrow. The event also witnessed the unveiling of Operational Guidelines for Establishing Tobacco Cessation Centres in Medical Institutions.



Dinesh Karthik Announces Retirement From Representative Cricket

Dinesh Karthik, India and Tamil Nadu's wicketkeeper-batsman, has declared his retirement from competitive cricket. Karthik's final competition as a player was the Indian Premier League 2024, in which he represented Royal Challengers Bengaluru. The 39-year-old has played 94 ODIs, 60 T20Is, and 26 Tests for India, hitting 3,463 runs while also leading Tamil Nadu to many white-ball titles over the years. Veteran wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik cited mental challenges as the reason for stepping away from professional cricket, despite being physically fit to play for three more years.



RBI Launches Global Hackathon HaRBInger 2024 To Combat Financial Frauds

In an effort to improve the safety, security, and inclusivity of India's financial setting, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das announced the commencement of the third edition of the RBI's worldwide hackathon, "HaRBInger 2024 - Innovation for Transformation." Apex Bank has used its annual hackathons to encourage innovation in specific key areas. Governor Das stressed the significance of using technology to prevent financial fraud and expand the reach of financial institutions.



Bisleri Limonata Appoints Aditya Roy Kapur As Brand Ambassador

Bisleri International, an established player in India's carbonated soft drink sector, has launched an intriguing new campaign for their delicious beverage, Bisleri Limonata. The #DoubleTheChill campaign, which features the charismatic Aditya Roy Kapur as the brand ambassador, strives to capture the spirit of Limonata's distinctive taste blend while also establishing a strong connection with the Gen Z demographic. His association with Limonata solidifies the brand's image and appeal, making him the perfect ambassador to represent the beverage's unique and vibrant essence.



Rajaji Raghathi Biosphere: India's first private biosphere

The Rajaji Tiger Reserve (RTR) is planning to open its first private forest biosphere. The program, which was launched with the participation of Uttarakhand forest minister Subodh Uniyal, covers 35 acres of agricultural land in Baddiwala, on the southern side of RTR, which is home to a large elephant population as well as leopards, tigers, and ungulates. The brainchild of Delhi-based environmentalist Jai Dhar Gupta, founding member of

the citizens' movement, 'My Right to Breathe', Rajaji Raghathi Biosphere (RRB), as the project is called, intends to provide an additional buffer forest to Rajaji.



Oxford University Agrees To Return Stolen 500-Year-Old Bronze Idol To India

The famed Oxford University in the United Kingdom has agreed to give back a 500-year-old bronze figure of a saint to India after it was stolen from a temple in Tamil Nadu. "On 11 March 2024, the Council of the University of Oxford supported a claim from the Indian High Commission for the return of a 16th-century bronze sculpture of Saint Tirumankai Alvar from the Ashmolean Museum. This decision will now be submitted to the Charity Commission for approval," said a statement from the university's Ashmolean Museum.



WHO Recognises 3rd Indian Institute For Traditional Medicine Research

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH) in Hyderabad, which is part of the Ministry of Ayush, as a WHO Collaborating Center (CC) for traditional medicine research. The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) oversees NIIMH in Hyderabad. CCRAS-

NIIMH, Hyderabad, joins the ranks as the third WHO Collaborating Centre in the domain of traditional medicine, followed by the Institute for Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, and the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi.



Dhruva Space's Thybolt Satellites Complete 15,000 Orbits

Dhruva Space's first satellite mission, which included the Thybolt-1 and Thybolt-2 satellites, deorbited after 15,000 orbits. The mission was launched on November 26, 2022, on the tenth anniversary of the Hyderabad-based space start-up, on ISRO PSLV-C54. The Thybolt satellites carry a new Store-and-Forward payload that receives messages from sensor nodes or remote ground stations. It also stores the aforementioned messages on-board flash memory for downlinking them at a network connected ground station.



Indian Army Launches First Skin Bank For Advanced Care Of Personnel And Families

The Indian Army has announced the inauguration of a cutting-edge skin bank facility at the Army Hospital (Research and Referral). The facility provides the most advanced treatment for serious burn injuries sustained by military members and their families. This will be the first of its kind within the Armed Forces Medical Services, catering to the three types of patients seen in Army

hospitals: injuries from domestic fire accidents, electrical incidents, and kerosene warmers used by jawans and officers to stay warm at high altitudes.



NHAI To Use Miyawaki Plantation To Increase Green Cover Along N.H

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will follow the Japanese model for greening national highways. To begin, NHAI will establish Miyawaki plantations, a unique Japanese technique to ecological restoration and afforestation, on 53 acres of land near to national roads in Delhi and the national capital region. Based on the success of the Miyawaki plantation in Delhi-NCR, the NHAI stated that a similar pattern will be duplicated across the country. The Miyawaki method aims to create dense, native, and biodiverse forests in a short period of time.



Amit Shah Inaugurated The 'FTI-TTP' At Terminal-3 Of IGIA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the 'Fast Track Immigration - Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)' at Indra Gandhi International Airport's Terminal-3, a first-of-its-kind initiative in India to provide more amenities to Indian nationals and OCI passengers arriving from other countries. The objective of the programme is to make

international travel easy and secure by developing world-class immigration facilities through an accelerated immigration pathway for international travellers screened through automated gates (e-Gates).



Union Territory Of Ladakh Achieves Full Functional Literacy Under ULLAS

Ladakh has made history by obtaining a 97% literacy rate, making it a completely "functionally literate" Union Territory. This outstanding milestone was achieved upon the effective execution of the ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram initiative. Lieutenant Governor BD Mishra spoke at a festive event at the Sindhu Sanskritik Kendra (SSK) in Leh about the administration's dedication to Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). This term encompasses essential skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

11: National



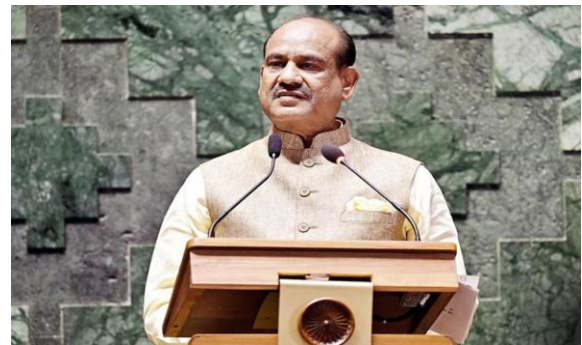
India's Core Sector Growth Rises 6.2% In April

In April 2024, India's core sectors increased by 6.2 percent, up from 6% in the previous month of March. According to official figures, the gain was driven by a healthy increase in natural gas, refinery products, and electricity output. Eight core sectors include coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity. The core sector growth had stood at 4.6 per cent in April 2023. The official data showed that fertiliser output recorded negative growth in April.



Lok Sabha Election Results 2024

The Election Commission of India has announced the results for 542 of the 543 Lok Sabha constituencies, with the BJP gaining 240 seats and the Congress 99. According to the results announced early on June 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to establish the government for a third straight term, with the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) securing a majority in the Lok Sabha. The BJP, whose candidates contested in the name of Modi, won in 240 seats, falling short of the 272 majority mark and needing the support of allies in the party-led NDA for government formation, a far cry from the 303 and 282 seats it had won in 2019 and 2014.



Om Birla Becomes First Lok Sabha Speaker In 20 Years To Be Re-Elected As MP

On June 4, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla won the Kota parliamentary seat by more than 41,139 votes, making him the first presiding officer to be re-elected to the Lower House in 20 years. The last Lok Sabha speaker to be re-elected to the Lower House was P A Sangma, who

served as the 11th Lok Sabha's presiding officer from 1996 to 1998. Sangma, then a Congress member, was re-elected from Tura in Meghalaya in the 1998 Lok Sabha election. In 2024, Birla defeated Congress's Prahlad Gunjal to retain the Kota parliamentary seat.



Air India-Vistara Merger Approved By NCLT

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has authorized the merger between Air India and Vistara. The merger resulted in the formation of one of the world's largest airline corporations. Under the merger agreement, Singapore Airlines will possess a 25.1% share in Air India. Vistara is a joint venture between the Tata Group and Singapore Airlines. The merger was announced in November 2022. In a detailed order, the Chandigarh branch of the NCLT has approved for composite scheme of arrangement which will bring Air India, Vistara, and Talace all under the Tata Group umbrella.



Narendra Modi took oath for the third time as the Prime Minister of India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the members of his new cabinet took their oaths on June 9. He is the first three-term Prime Minister since Congress icon Jawaharlal Nehru. The new cabinet decisions were made following a lengthy 11-hour meeting at the Prime

Minister's house on June 8. The swearing-in event was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in Delhi. The swearing-in ceremony witnessed the presence of leaders from neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, Mauritius, and Seychelles, in addition to the Maldives, as part of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy.



Priyanka Jarkiholi The Youngest Tribal Woman To Win In Lok Sabha

Priyanka Jarkiholi, the daughter of Congress nominee and Minister Satish Jarkiholi, won the Chikkodi seat, upsetting incumbent MP and BJP politician Annasaheb Jolle. Priyanka Jarkiholi of Chikkodi became the youngest tribal woman to enter Parliament from an unreserved seat in Karnataka since independence. On the contrary, the BJP has won all seats in Mumbai, Karnataka, with the exception of Chikkodi. She also became the second leader from a reserved community to win from a general seat, after Kotturu Hariharappa Ranganath who was a Lok Sabha member from Chitradurga during 1984-89.



Government Announces 3 Crore Additional Homes Under PMAY

The Indian government has agreed to provide aid for house construction to an additional 3 crore rural and urban households through the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). PMAY has been in place since 2015-16,

with the goal of providing housing support to eligible low-income families throughout the country. Over the last ten years, 4.21 crore homes have been built for these recipients through the initiative. All the houses constructed under PMAY are provided with basic amenities such as household toilets, LPG connections, electricity connections, and functional household tap connections, through convergence with other schemes of the Central and State Governments.



Ajit Doval Reappointed National Security Adviser (NSA)

The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet accepted Ajit Doval's appointment as National Security Advisor, beginning June 10, 2024. Doval, who became NSA for the first time in May 2014, just after PM Modi took office in his first term, remained in the position throughout the previous BJP-led NDA government. Doval, a 1968 IPS officer, is a well-known counterterrorism and nuclear expert. He has served in Punjab as IB's operational chief. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet also re-appointed PK Mishra as the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) Launches Mobile App 'NCRB Sankalan Of Criminal Laws'

NCRB has released a mobile app called "NCRB Sankalan of Criminal Laws" to act as a comprehensive guide,

delivering all of the information on the new criminal laws in one spot. The new criminal legislation will go into effect on the first of next month. This App contains a compendium of new criminal statutes titled Bharatiya Nayaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam. The App is designed to work in offline mode in the absence of connectivity. It is available on Google Play Store as well as the Apple App Store.



Vice President Inaugurates 'Perna Sthal' At Parliament House Complex

Rajya Sabha chairperson and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has inaugurated the 'Perna Sthal' in the Parliament complex, which now houses monuments of national icons and liberation warriors that were previously located elsewhere on the campus. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, and his deputies Arjun Ram Meghwal and L Murugan, as well as Information and Broadcasting and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, were all in attendance. The dignitaries offered floral tributes at the statues of the leaders after Dhankhar unveiled the plaque.



Chenab Bridge: Indian Railways Conducts Trial Run On World's Highest Steel Arch Rail Bridge

The Indian Railway Ministry has completed an electric engine testing from Sangaldan to Reasi. The testing included crossing Chenab, the world's highest steel arch rail bridge. The much-anticipated world's tallest railway bridge, purportedly 35 meters taller than Paris' Eiffel Tower, spans the Chenab River at a height of 359 metres. Northern Railway's Chief Public Relations Officer Deepak Kumar has scheduled the inspection for June 27 and 28. Kumar said that all necessary activities will be performed in time for the Commissioner of Railways Safety (CRS) inspection.



PM Modi Inaugurates New Campus Of Nalanda University In Bihar

The Prime Minister inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University, an international university located near the historic ruins of Nalanda in Rajgir, Bihar. Mr. Modi asserted that Nalanda is a symbol of India's intellectual tradition and active cultural interaction, saying, "Nalanda is the proclamation of this truth that books may burn in the flames of fire, but the flames of fire cannot destroy knowledge. Nalanda is an identity, respect, and pride." He expressed his pleasure at the attendance of representatives from several countries on the day of the inauguration.



Chirag Paswan And Shri Ravneet Singh Launch Website And Mobile App For World Food India 2024

Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan and Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways Ravneet Singh unveiled the World Food India 2024 website and mobile application in advance of the third edition of the event. World Food India 2023 was a resounding success witnessing 1,208 exhibitors, 715 international buyers from 90 countries, 24 states, and 75,000 attendees.



DGCA issues advisory to increase women's representation in aviation sector

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has released an advising circular on 'Gender Equality in the Civil Aviation Sector' to aviation stakeholders. The Circular is published in accordance with the ideal of gender equality inherent in India's Constitution, as well as the International Civil Aviation Organization's aim of fostering equal opportunities to achieve gender equality in aviation. The Circular aims to increase the number of women in various positions to a desirable representation of 25 per cent by 2025 within the aviation industry in India.



Railway Ministry Announces 2500 New General Class Coaches Amid Overcrowding Crisis

In light of growing concerns about overcrowding in sleeper and general class coaches, the Railway Ministry has announced a significant increase in the number of general coaches on Mail and Express trains. This action intends to reduce the difficulties faced by millions of passengers, aggravated by viral videos demonstrating excessive overcrowding on social media platforms. During a recent meeting, the Railway Board resolved to manufacture an additional 2500 general class coaches beyond the current annual production schedule.



Dr. Jitendra Singh Launches "One Week One Theme" (OWOT) Campaign

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, has inaugurated the "One Week One Theme" (OWOT) campaign, which highlights India's recent success stories in several fields of science and technology. The Science and Technology Minister stated that the goal of this initiative is to raise awareness among citizens about the progress and development of laboratories, to benefit them by providing new avenues and opportunities for employment, and to empower stakeholders such as MSMEs, startups, SHGs, scientists, and researchers through integration and collaboration with industry.



Centre Notifies Anti-Paper Leak Law Amid NEET, NET Row

The Union Education Ministry cancelled the UGC-NET 2024 examination on June 19 in response to reports of probable test integrity breaches. The UGC-NET was held on June 18 in 317 cities across the country, with more than 1.1 million candidates taking part. The case has been sent to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for further investigation. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) law, 2024, popularly known as the 'anti-paper leak' law, was first introduced in the Lok Sabha on February 5, 2024. It was passed by the Lok Sabha on February 6 and the Rajya Sabha on February 9, 2024. Later that month, President Droupadi Murmu signed the bill into law. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, was designed to curb the use of dishonest methods in public examinations.



J.P. Nadda Appointed As Leader Of The House In Rajya Sabha

JP Nadda, the BJP national president and Union health minister, has been named the leader of the house in Rajya Sabha, succeeding party colleague Piyush Goyal, who was sworn in as a Lok Sabha MP after winning the Mumbai North constituency in the recently ended general elections. Goyal was elected as a Rajya Sabha MP on July 5, 2010, and was appointed Leader of the House

on July 14, 2021. He was elected as the Lok Sabha MP on June 4, and was sworn in the Lower House on June 24. JP Nadda was first elected to Rajya Sabha on April 3, 2012.



Bureau Of Indian Standards Introduces New Standards To Enhance EV Safety And Quality In India

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) issued two new rules to improve the safety of electric vehicles in the L, M, and N categories. L represents two-wheelers, whereas M and N represent four-wheelers and cargo trucks, respectively. These new sets of guidelines, known as IS 18590: 2024 and IS 18606: 2024, focus on the essential components of electric vehicles, buses, and trucks, particularly the powertrain (which comprises components such as the motor and transmission). These standards are crucial in driving the transition to a more sustainable, environmentally friendly, and efficient transportation system in the country.



Rahul Gandhi appointed leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

Congress party secretary KC Venugopal announced that Rahul Gandhi has been named Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Venugopal stated that the decision on the other office bearers will be made later. Congress

President Mallikarjun Kharge welcomed the decision, adding that in the 18th Lok Sabha, the House of the People will really reflect the aspirations of the last person standing, with Rahul Gandhi serving as their voice. Several leaders lauded and thanked Rahul Gandhi for accepting the position and hoped he would remain the voice of people in Parliament by raising their issues.



Bharat Centre Of Olympic Research And Education Launched

The Bharat Centre of Olympic Research and Education was established at Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) in Gandhinagar. Speaking during the event, Indian Olympic Association president and great sprinter P T Usha stated that the centre will act as a nexus of information, innovation, and performance in the Indian sports ecosystem. The centre will serve as a repository of knowledge, housing invaluable data and insights in Olympics, training methodologies, sports science and athlete development, Usha said.



India Contributes USD 1.169 Mn To Continue Promotion Of Hindi At UN

The Government of India has made a contribution of USD 1,169,746 for 'Hindi @ UN' project to expand the use of Hindi in the United Nations. The Government of India has

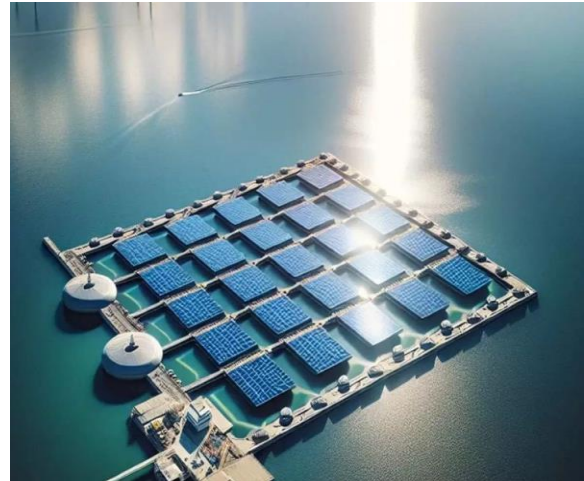
been making continuous efforts to expand the use of Hindi in the United Nations. As part of these efforts, 'Hindi @ UN' project, in collaboration with the UN Department of Public Information, was launched in 2018 with an objective to enhance the public outreach of the United Nations in Hindi language, and to spread greater awareness about global issues among millions of Hindi-speaking people around the world.



Minister Manjhi Launches New Schemes On World MSME Day

Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Jitan Ram Manjhi, launched two new schemes on World MSME Day in New Delhi. The MSME TEAM Initiative aims to facilitate five lakh micro and small enterprises for Open Network for Digital Commerce. The Yashasvini campaign focuses on mass awareness to formalize women-owned informal micro enterprises and provide necessary support and assistance. He stressed

that development for individuals from the most economically disadvantaged backgrounds is contingent upon fostering entrepreneurship.



Central Railway's takes Green Leap by installing Floating Solar Plant

In a step towards sustainability, the Central Railway has inaugurated its first-ever floating solar plant with a 10 MWp capacity in Igatpuri Lake, located in the Western Ghats. This innovative project is part of Indian Railways' broader strategy to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2030. This extensive use of rooftops for solar power generation not only optimises space but also significantly contributes to reducing the carbon footprint of railway operations. In addition to solar power, the Central Railway is also harnessing wind energy.

12: Obituaries



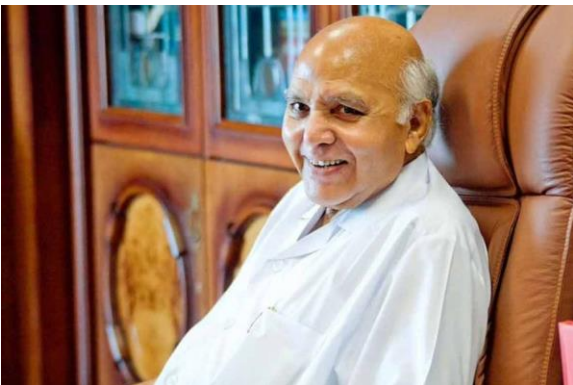
Rugby league player Rob Burrow dies aged 41

Rob Burrow, a rugby league great, has died at age 41. Burrow was diagnosed with motor neurone disease in 2019, two years after retiring from a 17-season rugby league career with the Leeds Rhinos. He earned eight Super League titles, two Challenge Cup trophies, and three World Club Challenges for Leeds, as well as international caps for England and Great Britain. After being diagnosed with the illness, he dedicated himself to raising awareness and funds for the MND community with the support of close friend and former Leeds teammate Kevin Sinfield.



A.J.T. Johnsingh, A Renowned Wildlife Field Biologist And Conservationist, Passes Away

Asir Jawahar Thomas Johnsingh (AJT Johnsingh), who was motivated by Jim Corbett's narrative to pursue a profession in wildlife biology and later became one of the country's most respected conservationists, died in his Bengaluru home. He was 79. In March 2017, Johnsingh submitted a paper to the forest department on the tiger landscape in Eastern Vidarbha, which displayed his brilliance and understanding of flora and fauna. The eight-day survey report explains nature at its best. The news of his passing was shared by his elder son Mike Johnsingh.



Ramoji Rao, Founder Of Eenadu Group & Ramoji Film City, Dies At 88

Ch Ramoji Rao, 88, a media figure and chairman of the Ramoji Group, died in a hospital in Hyderabad. Rao was best known as the CEO of the Ramoji Group, which includes Ramoji Film City, the world's largest film production facility, Eenadu daily, the ETV Network of TV networks, and the film production business Usha Kiram

Movies. As a businessman, film producer and media entrepreneur, Rao was honoured with the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian honour, for his contribution to literature, education and journalism.



William Anders, Apollo 8 Astronaut, Killed In Plane Crash

Retired astronaut William Anders, one of the first three humans to orbit the moon and capture the "Earthrise" photograph during NASA's Apollo 8 mission, died recently when the small plane he was operating crashed in Washington state, according to local media. Anders, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and an Air Force pilot, became a member of NASA's third astronaut class in 1963. He did not go into space until Dec. 21, 1968, when Apollo 8 lifted off on the first crewed mission to leave Earth orbit and travel 240,000 miles (386,000 km) to the moon.



Mumbai Cricket Association president Amol Kale passes away

Amol Kale, president of the Mumbai Cricket Association, died of a cardiac arrest in New York after attending the India-Pakistan T20 World Cup match. Kale, 47, became

MCA president after defeating former India and Mumbai cricketer Sandip Patil in the October 2022 elections. During his tenure, the MCA made key critical decisions, including agreeing to match the BCCI match price for all red-ball players in the forthcoming 2024-25 season. In a statement released on its social media pages, MCA wrote, "We are deeply saddened by the unexpected loss of our President, Shri. Amol Kale."



Sarod maestro Pandit Rajeev Taranath passes away

Sarod master Pandit Rajeev Taranath, who was being treated at a private hospital in Mysuru, died lately. Pandit Taranath, a famous exponent of Senia Maihar Gharana, was honored by the Government of India with the Padma Shri in 2019 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 2000. In Karnataka, he received the Rajyothsava Award in 1996, the Chowdaiah Memorial Award in 1998, the Sangeet Vidwan Award in 2018, and the Nadoja Award in 2019. Minister in charge of Mysuru district H C Mahadevappa and Minister for Kannada and Culture Shivaraj Tangadagi have condoled the death of the well-known Indian classical music exponent.



Tragic Plane Crash Claims Lives Of Malawi's Vice President And Others

Malawi's vice president, Saulos Chilima, and nine other persons were killed after their small military plane crashed in severe weather in a mountainous location in the country's north, according to the president. Chilima was 51. President Lazarus Chakwera stated in a live address on state television that the plane's wreckage had been discovered after a day-long search in dense woodlands and steep terrain near the northern city of Mzuzu. He said the wreckage was found near a hill and the plane had been "completely destroyed" and everyone onboard was killed on impact.



NBA legend Jerry West dies aged 86

Jerry West, a renowned NBA player who inspired the league's current emblem, has died, according to the Los Angeles Clippers. He was 86. West, nicknamed "Mr. Clutch" on the court, was drafted by the Minneapolis Lakers in 1960, just before the team migrated to Los Angeles. He played for the squad as a point guard and shooting guard until 1974, when he became a 14-time NBA All-Star and helped lead his team to nine NBA Finals appearances. West was also a co-captain of the US Olympic basketball team that went on to win the gold in 1960.



Malayalam Actor Pradeep K Vijayan Passes Away

On June 13, 2024, actor Pradeep K. Vijayan was discovered dead at his Palavakkam home under strange circumstances, according to the police. The 39-year-old actor was well known for his appearances in movies like Thegidi, Meyaadha Maan, Teddy (2021), Irumbu Thirai (2018), and Rudhran (2023). Police claimed he was a bachelor who lived alone in his house in Sankarapuram, Palavakkam. He had repeatedly complained of frequent bouts of dizziness followed by breathlessness and had sought treatment for the condition.



Srinivas Hegde, Chandrayaan-1 mission director, passes away

Former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientist and Mission Director for India's first deep space mission, Chandrayaan-1, Srinivas Hedge (71) died on June 14. Hegde's space mission, Chandrayaan-1, played a critical contribution in the identification of water molecules on the lunar surface. Hedge joined ISRO in 1978 and retired in 2014 after more than 36 years of

service. During his tenure, Hedge was part of many ISRO missions under the UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) formerly known as ISRO Satellite Centre (ISAC).



Eminent Kannada writer and scholar Kamala Hampana passes away at 88

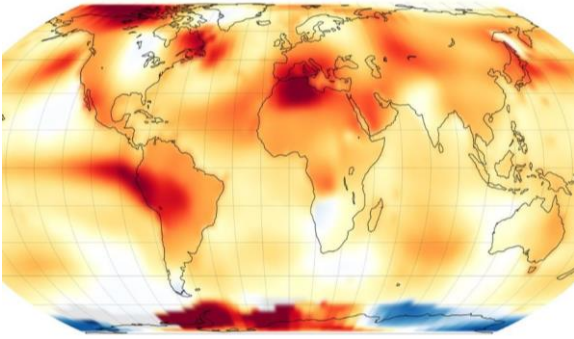
Kamala Hampana, a well-known writer and academic, died of a heart attack at her daughter's apartment in Bengaluru. She was 88 years old. Kamala Hampana, born in 1935, came from Devanahalli, just outside Bengaluru. Although she created fiction and poetry, she was best renowned for her extensive and revolutionary research into Jaina literature. Her research focused on ancient Kannada literature and Jainology. Kamala Hampana was the president of the 71st Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana, which was held in Moodabidri in 2003. She was awarded with Rajyotsava prashasti, Nadoja honorary doctorate by Hampi University apart from several other awards in the state.

13: Ranks & Reports



Reliance And Tata Groups Recognized Among TIME's World's Most Influential Companies

RIL was named to TIME's list of the 100 World's Most Influential firms of 2024 in the 'Titans' category, one of five categories into which the firms were divided (the others were Leaders, Disrupters, Innovators, and Pioneers). TIME dubbed Reliance as 'India's Juggernaut'. The list also includes Serum Institute, an Indian corporation. Tata was included under 'Titans' and Serum under 'Pioneers'. This is the second time Reliance Industries has made it to the TIME 100 list, making it the only Indian company to be recognised twice.



India Endures Second-Hottest Year on Record in 2023

In 2023, India saw its second-hottest year on record, with unusually warm winters, monsoons, and post-monsoon seasons. At least 102 meteorological stations in 26 states and the Union Territories recorded their greatest monthly 24-hour maximum temperature in 122 years. Ten of these stations were in million-plus cities — Bengaluru, Jamshedpur, Kochi, Kota, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Madurai, Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Visakhapatnam — showed the analysis in “State of India’s Environment In Figures: 2024” by Down to Earth and Delhi-based think tank Centre for Science and Environment.



IIT Bombay, Delhi listed under top 150 in QS World University Ranking 2025

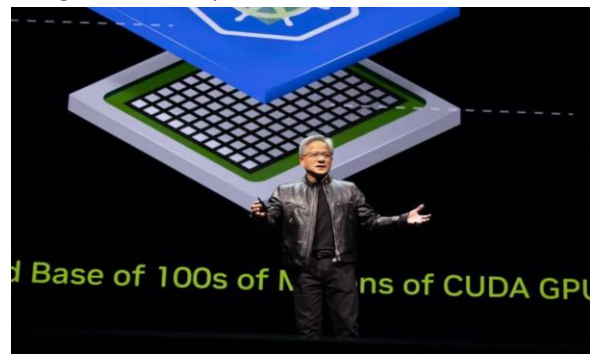
IIT Bombay has secured the top rank in India in the most recent QS World University Rankings 2025, which were issued early Wednesday (June 5). According to the worldwide university rating agency, 61% of Indian universities have increased their rankings since the previous year. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has retained its status as the greatest institute in the world for the 13th consecutive year. The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) has risen

from 149th in 2024 to 118th in the 2025 rankings, marking an improvement of 31 places. IIT Delhi advanced 47 positions, from 197 last year to 150 this year.



India Created World Record With 64.2 Crore People Voting In Lok Sabha Poll

According to Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, India set a world record by having 64.2 crore voters, including 31.2 crore women, participate in the Lok Sabha elections this year. During a press briefing, he stated that the world's largest election process encompassed over 68,000 monitoring teams and 1.5 crore polling and security personnel. Mr Kumar stated that approximately four lakh vehicles, 135 special trains, and 1,692 air flights were employed to conduct the 2024 Lok Sabha election. "Only 39 repolls took place in the 2024 general elections as against 540 repolls in 2019," he said.



Nvidia Surpasses Apple To Become Second Most Valuable Company

The rise in Nvidia's stock market value above Apple's reflects a shift in Silicon Valley, where the business co-founded by Steve Jobs has dominated since the iPhone was introduced in 2007. Microsoft, headquartered in Redmond, Washington, remained the world's most valuable company, with a market capitalization of \$3.14

trillion, as its stock rose 1.5%. Nvidia's stock has surged 147% so far in 2024. In trading session of 05 June, Nvidia's stock briefly hit an intra-day record high of \$1,223.59, giving it a value of \$3.010 trillion at a moment when Apple's stood at about \$3.005 trillion.



SBI Mutual Fund Becomes First To Top Rs 10 Trillion In Assets Under Management

SBI Mutual Fund (SBI MF) created history as the first fund firm in the country to reach Rs 10 trillion in assets under management (AUM). The industry leader has successfully navigated the post-pandemic equity boom and capitalised on growing interest in mutual fund investing. The sharp growth in SBI MF's AUM, alongside the overall industry, has been driven by the equity market rally and expanding MF investor base. The growth in MF AUM hinges on both the appreciation in assets held by schemes and fresh inflows.



India's Wholesale Prices Accelerate To 15-Month High Of 2.61% In May

Wholesale inflation in India, as measured by the Wholesale Price Index, reached a 15-month high of 2.61 percent on an annual basis in May, up from 1.26 percent in April 2023, according to government data. WPI fell by 3.48 percent in May 2023. The figure increased significantly to 7.4% in May from 5.5% in April and 4.82 percent in May 2023. Primary articles inflation quickened to 7.2 per cent in May from 5.01 per cent in April. Fuel and power inflation stayed muted at around 1.4 per cent in May.



India Surpasses Hong Kong To Reclaim Fourth Spot In Global Equity Market

Domestic equity markets have once again surpassed Hong Kong to recover the fourth-largest global market position. Following a dramatic comeback from election result day lows, India's market value has risen 10% to \$5.2 trillion, or Rs 435 trillion (BSE-listed businesses). In comparison, Hong Kong's market capitalization is \$5.17 trillion, down 5.4% from this year's high of \$5.47 trillion. India surpassed Hong Kong's market value for the first time in January. Since their market value has crisscrossed with each other a few times.



Indian Railways Enter Its Name Into Limca Book Of Records

The Ministry of Railways has made it into the "Limca Book of Records" for "most people at a public-service event - multiple venues." On February 26, 2024, the Railways Ministry organized an event that drew 40,19,516 individuals to 2,140 places. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the event to inaugurate road over/under railway bridges and lay the foundation stones for railway stations. The mammoth effort and mobilisation of Indian Railways have been recognised, and the same has entered the prestigious Limca Book of World Records.



Fitch Raises India's GDP Growth Forecast For FY25 To 7.2%

Fitch Ratings has upgraded India's FY25 growth prediction to 7.2% from 7% previously, citing higher consumer confidence, which is likely to stimulate spending and investments, but warned that the ongoing heatwave posed a danger to both growth and inflation. In its Global Economic Outlook (GEO), it increased its prediction for global growth in 2024 to 2.6% from 2.4% before. India's economy grew 8.2% in FY24. "We expect the Indian economy to expand by a strong 7.2% in FY25 (an upward revision of 0.2pp from the March GEO)," Fitch Ratings said.



Virat Kohli Reclaims Top Spot As India's Most Valued Celebrity Brand

Cricketer Virat Kohli regained his status as India's most valuable celebrity, with a brand worth of USD 227.9 million. This is an almost 29% increase from USD 176.9 million in 2022, although it still falls short of his peak value of USD 237.7 million in 2020, according to a report by consulting firm Kroll. Kohli's recovery propelled him above actor Ranveer Singh, who dropped to second place with a brand worth of USD 203.1 million. This report ranks India's most influential celebrity brands, using brand values calculated from their endorsement portfolios and social media presence.



Nvidia Becomes World's Most Valuable Company

On June 18, 2024, Nvidia surpassed other tech businesses to become the world's most valuable publicly traded company, in the latest demonstration of the power of artificial intelligence. Nvidia Corp's upward trend continues, lifting the chipmaker to the top of the global tech market capitalization leaderboard. The AI chipmaker has surpassed technological behemoths Apple and Microsoft to become the world's most valuable corporation. Nvidia's ascent to the top has been record-breaking, driven by significant revenue growth fueled by AI.



Sweden Tops, India At 63rd Rank On Global Energy Transition Index: WEF

The World Economic Forum has ranked India 63rd on its global Energy Transition Index, citing considerable improvements in energy equity, security, and sustainability. European nations dominated the top rankings, with Sweden leading the way, followed by Denmark, Finland, Switzerland, and France in the top five. Taking note of various initiatives taken in India, the World Economic Forum (WEF) said the country is leading the way in creating outcomes that can be replicated elsewhere.



India Ranks Third In Global Domestic Airline Market

According to a study of OAG data, India is now the world's third-largest domestic airline market, up from fifth place a decade ago. The numbers reveal that India's domestic airline capacity has doubled in a decade, from 7.9 million in April 2014 to 15.5 million in April 2024. India has risen to third place, replacing Brazil (now in fourth place with 9.7 million) and Indonesia (reduced to fifth place with 9.2 million). The United States (86.1 million) and China (67.8 million) are far ahead in the game, keeping the top two spots.



S&P Retains India FY25 GDP Growth Estimate At 6.8%

S&P Global Ratings has maintained its FY25 GDP prediction for India at 6.8 percent, citing high borrowing rates and a reduced fiscal boost dampening demand in non-agricultural industries. S&P upped China's GDP growth prediction to 4.8% from 4.6% in 2024, but predicted a sequential decline in the June quarter. The rating agency anticipates the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to lower its policy rate to 6% in the current fiscal year from 6.5 percent currently. Additionally, it anticipates further cuts in the lending rate to 5.5 per cent and 5.25 per cent in 2025-26 and 2026-27, respectively.



Uttar Pradesh Leads India in Compressed Biogas Production

Uttar Pradesh has the capacity to generate 24% of the country's compressed biogas (CBG), according to a report by the Delhi-based think tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). The experts pointed out that UP could potentially instal 1,000 CBG projects from the 5,000 plants envisioned nationwide under the Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation scheme, tapping into just 20 per cent of its surplus feedstock. Despite these promising statistics, the sector faces significant challenges.



Vienna secures its position as the world's most liveable city

Vienna has been named the world's most liveable city for the third year running, according to the results of EIU's latest annual Global Liveability Index. EIU is the world's leading resource for economic and business research, forecasting and analysis. The index ranks the liveability of 173 cities across five key categories, including stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure. Western Europe has retained its position as the most liveable region in the world.



Tata Group retains top spot as India's most valuable brand at US\$ 28.6 billion

Tata Group has retained its position as India's most valuable brand, with a value of US\$ 28.6 billion, reflecting a 9% increase from last year. Following Tata, Infosys holds the second position. At the same time, HDFC Group has made a significant leap to third place in Brand Value's "India 100 2024" ranking. Taj remains India's strongest brand, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 92.9 out of 100 and a prestigious AAA+ rating. The telecom sector saw a 61% growth in brand value, with Jio, Airtel, and Vi leading this surge.

14: Schemes & Committees



Government Raises Retirement & Death Gratuity Limits To Rs 25 Lakh

The Center's decision to enhance its employees' dearness allowance by 4% to 50% has resulted in significant revisions to other allowances, including retirement gratuity, which is a great benefit for government employees. The maximum ceiling for Retirement Gratuity and Death Gratuity has been enhanced by 25%, from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 25 lakh, effective January 1, 2024. The Central government increased the dearness allowance (DA) and dearness relief (DR) by 4% in March 2024. This was a major relief for millions of central government employees and pensioners.



Sikkim High Court introduces menstrual leave policy for its women employees

In a first-of-its-kind move, the Sikkim High Court has implemented a menstruation leave policy for its female staff in the registry. In a statement, the Sikkim High Court registry stated that female employees may take "2-3 days of menstrual leave" per month. However, such leave would be allowed only with the prior suggestion of the High Court's Medical Officer. "This leave will not be counted against the employee's overall leave account," the notification stated. The Sikkim High Court is the first High Court to introduce a menstrual leave policy.



Varanasi Ropeway: India's first urban ropeway to be ready by August 2024

The first urban ropeway in India will open in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, in August 2024. In addition to reducing travel time, this ropeway project will offer an aerial view of the city. Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially launched the ropeway on March 24, 2022. This project is being implemented as part of the 'Pravatmala Pariyojana' National Ropeways Development Programme. Phase 1 of this ropeway is projected to cost Rs 645 crore and be completed by 2025. The ropeway project is making considerable progress in implementing the initial phases of public transportation.



AICTE Comes Up With AI Certificate Course To Train Engineering Faculty Members

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has developed short-term courses to train key engineering faculty members as part of quality improvement projects in developing fields like artificial intelligence and data science. In Tamil Nadu, private colleges provide a variety of certification courses. As market demand grows, attempts have been made to offer additional courses in artificial intelligence and data science analytics. In this

academic year 25 thousand seats are being added for engineering colleges to Anna University.



Zupee Collaborates With Gurugram Cyber Police For Cyber Security Awareness

Zupee, India's largest skill-based Ludo platform, has teamed with the Gurugram Cyber Police to launch the 11th edition of the Cyber Security Summer Internship Program, known as 'Cyber Warriors', in an effort to boost the cyber security ecosystem. The Gurugram Police Cyber Security Summer Internship Program (GPCSSI 2024) has been the Gurugram Police's flagship event since 2013. The month-long internship started on 03 June, with Zupee as its knowledge partner. Few selected candidates will gain hands-on experience by working directly with the Gurugram Cyber Police, tackling real-world cybersecurity challenges.



Ashok Leyland Rolls Out 'Sarathi Suraksha' Policy

Ashok Leyland, a heavy commercial vehicle manufacturer, has launched the 'Sarathi Suraksha' Policy to protect the driver community, which provides insurance coverage of up to Rs 10 lakh. The policy, known as a 'Unnamed GPA (Group Personal Accident) policy', covers any driver operating an Ashok Leyland vehicle and provides complete coverage. The comprehensive

insurance policy covers accidental death, permanent and partial disability and also includes a special education bonus for children.



Haryana Government's Rs 10,000-Crore Project To Combat Air Pollution

Haryana Chief Secretary T V S N Prasad stated the state government will soon launch a Rs 10,000-crore World Bank-funded project to combat air pollution. The Haryana Clean Air Project for Sustainable Development will be implemented throughout the state in stages, with the first phase focusing on districts in the National Capital Region (NCR) and then expanding to the entire state, he stated. Underlining the significance of the project, Prasad emphasised the need of collective efforts by all stakeholders to eliminate the problem of air pollution.



SEBI Forms Committee To Review Clearing Corporations

SEBI, the financial market regulator, has constituted a committee to assess the ownership and economic structure of clearing organizations and recommend actions to guarantee that they perform as robust, independent, and unbiased risk managers. The ad hoc

committee will be chaired by Usha Thorat, a former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India. The market regulator said given the substantial growth of Indian securities markets in recent years, clearing corporations as central risk management institutions are important.



Over 1 Lakh Farmers Voluntarily Gave Up Their PM-Kisan Benefits Last Year(2023)

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan top the list of 1.16 lakh farmers who have deliberately opted out of the yearly Rs 6,000 Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) plan from June 2023 to May 2024. Last year, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare added a feature to the PM-Kisan mobile app and website that allows farmers to opt out of the system on their own. Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a Central Sector Scheme funded entirely by the Government of India. Launched in 2019, the Scheme initially provided income support to all Small and Marginal Farmers' families across the country, holding cultivable land upto 2 hectares.



Centre Releases ₹1.39 Lakh Crore To States

The Centre approved tax devolution of ₹1,39,750 crore to states for June. The Finance Ministry announced that, in addition to the regular delivery of the devolution amount for June 2024, one additional installment will be released. "This cumulatively amounts to ₹1,39,750 crore in the current month. This will enable State Governments to accelerate development and capital spending," it added. Currently, 41 per cent of taxes collected by the Centre is devolved in 14 instalments among states during a fiscal year.



India To Launch E-Medical Visa Facility For Bangladesh Nationals

India will launch an e-medical visa facility for Bangladeshi people seeking medical treatment in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared following a meeting of the two delegations in the national capital. Furthermore, India is going to establish a new consulate in Rangpur, Bangladesh, to better serve the country's northwest region. "India will start e-medical visas for Bangladeshi nationals coming to India for medical treatment. India has decided to open a new Assistant High Commission in Rangpur to benefit the people in the northwest part of Bangladesh," Prime Minister said.



J.P Nadda Launches National STOP Diarrhoea Campaign 2024

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Jagat Prakash Nadda launched the National STOP Diarrhoea Campaign 2024 at a ceremony in New Delhi. He kicked off the campaign by handing out oral rehydration salts (ORS) and zinc tablets to children in the presence of Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel and Patraprao Jadhav. The two-month promotion will begin on July 1 and run until August 31. The goal behind the STOP Diarrhoea Campaign is to attain zero child deaths due to childhood diarrhoea.



MoHUA Launches Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao Initiative For Monsoon Preparedness

Acknowledging the critical importance of proactive measures to reduce monsoon health risks, the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0, led by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), launches the Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao (SABB) initiative from July 1st to August 31st, 2024. This initiative seeks to enhance the preparedness of Urban Local Bodies, ensuring they are well-equipped to handle the challenges posed by heavy rainfall and heightened health risks during the months of June to August.

15: Science & Technology



Indian space startup Agnikul makes history with world's first 3D-printed rocket engine launch

In a historic feat for the Indian space sector, startup Agnikul Cosmos successfully launched "Agnibaan - SORteD," the world's first rocket propelled by a fully 3D-printed engine. The launch was place from India's first privately developed launchpad, "Dhanush," which Agnikul also established in Sriharikota. The event was witnessed by prominent figures in the Indian space community, including Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman Dr. S. Somanath and IN-SPACE Chairman Dr. Pawan Goenka.



NASA's Magellan Mission Discovers Ongoing Venus Volcanic Activity

According to researchers, Venus looks to be more volcanically active than previously thought, as evidenced by a recent examination of decades-old radar photos that discovered eruptions at two additional spots on the surface of Earth's inhospitable planetary neighbor. According to the researchers, radar photos taken by NASA's Magellan spacecraft between 1990 and 1992

showed massive lava flows in these two places in Venus's northern hemisphere at the time of the observations. These findings, coupled with previous studies, indicate that the planet's volcanic activity is comparable to Earth's, they added.



ISRO And Wipro 3D Collaborate On 3D-Printed Rocket Engine

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Wipro 3D have successfully constructed the PS4, a 3D-printed rocket engine designed to power the fourth stage of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). This unprecedented feat, commended by Dr. V. Narayanan, Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), represents a paradigm change in space manufacturing, ushering in an era of additive manufacturing for space exploration. The successful integration of the 3D-printed PS4 engine signifies a transformative step in enhancing the PSLV's capabilities.



OpenAI Unveils ChatGPT Edu for Universities

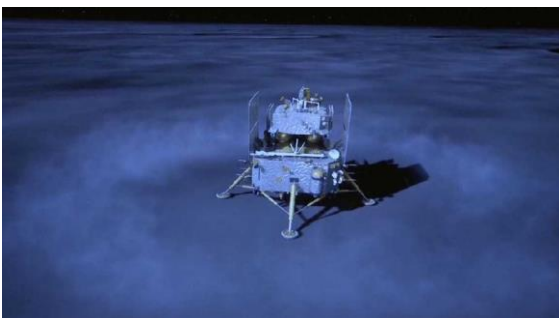
Even while GPT-4o continues to astound the globe with its innovative powers, OpenAI has released yet another model, ChatGPT Edu. This has been provided as an economical option for institutions looking to bring AI to campus safely. According to OpenAI, the new service

features enterprise-level security and controls while remaining cheap for educational institutions. The Sam Altman-led AI startup said the new model has been built following the success stories of the University of Oxford, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, University of Texas at Austin, Arizona State University, Columbia University in the City of New York in integrating ChatGPT Enterprise.



NASA, ESA To Develop Standardized Lunar Time System

NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are working together to develop a common time system for the moon as part of the Artemis mission, which intends to restore humans to the lunar surface. This new project will address the demand for a consistent timekeeping system to help coordinate missions from multiple countries and private organizations. With numerous lunar missions planned for the coming years, including those by China, India, and private companies, the lack of a standardized time zone on the moon poses logistical challenges.



China's Chang'e-6 Probe Lifts Off From Far Side Of Moon

China says a spacecraft carrying rock and soil samples from the moon's far side has blasted off from the lunar surface to begin its journey back to Earth. The ascender of the Chang'e-6 probe launched on June 4 AM Beijing

time and entered a predetermined orbit around the moon, according to the China National Space Administration. The Chang'e-6 probe was launched last month, and its lander landed on the far side of the moon on June 2. Xinhua News Agency cited the space agency as saying the spacecraft stowed the samples it had gathered in a container inside the ascender of the probe as planned.



Nvidia announces next-gen Rubin AI platform for 2026

Nvidia Chief Executive Jensen Huang announced that the company's next-generation artificial intelligence (AI) chip platform, Rubin, would be released in 2026. Huang announced the Rubin chip family, which will comprise new graphics (GPU), central processors (CPU), and networking chips, at National Taiwan University in Taipei as part of the Computex trade show. However, Huang offered few details. The new CPU will be called Versa and the new graphics chips that are used to power AI applications will bundle next generation high-bandwidth memory that is made by the likes of SK Hynix, Micron and Samsung.



IIT Dharwad Unveils Innovative Fire Rescue Drone

A team of lecturers and students from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Dharwad, lead by Sudheer

Siddapureddy and Ameer Mulla, created a fire rescue helper drone. The project was funded by TiHAN Foundation, IIT Hyderabad (NMICPS, Government of India). The fire rescue assistant drone was unveiled and shown during the two-day Drone Design and Autonomous Navigation in Fire Rescue (DDANFR 2024) workshop at IIT Dharwad. The event was organised by the Fire and Thermal Research Laboratory (FTRL) and the Control Systems and Robotics Laboratory.



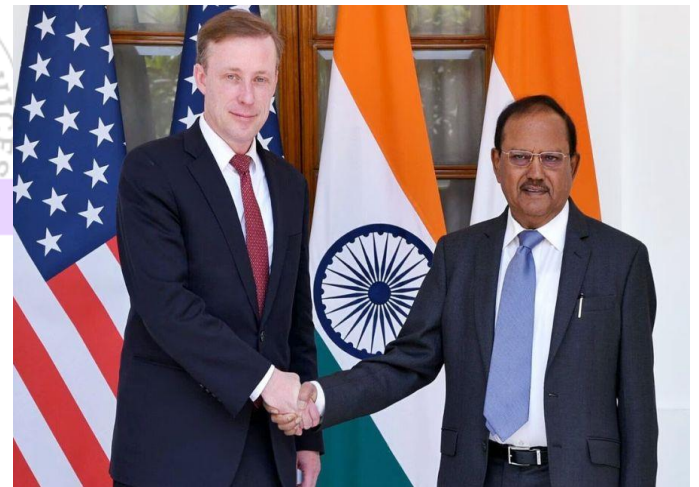
Wipro Launches Lab45 AI Platform To Boost Efficiency Across Business Functions

Wipro has announced the launch of the Lab45 Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform, which uses Generative AI (Gen AI), machine learning (ML), and deep learning technologies to help businesses improve economies, restructure business functions, and implement industry-specific solutions. "Lab45 is Wipro's Innovation Lab and the Lab45 AI platform is available to all Wipro employees and clients," the business said in a statement to the exchanges. The platform enables the seamless integration of language and visual processing to generate images from text prompts, as well as the capacity to index, parse, and summarise data.



India Set To Be The 6th Country To Have Its Own Deep Sea Mission

Union Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh announced that India will become the sixth country to launch its own deep-sea mission. Singh, who chaired a meeting to discuss the ministry's 100-day action plan, expressed pleasure and happiness over the deep-sea mission's development and India's status as one of the few nations to accomplish this achievement. He urged institutes to focus on building a robust blue economy to empower individuals who rely on the ocean and its energy for a living. He lauded the National Institute of Ocean Technology's (NIOT) efforts for the development of Matsyayaan 6000, which can dive 6,000 metres deep into the ocean.



US, India Set To Launch NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar To Combat Climate Change

India and the United States have made great progress in space collaboration, as indicated by the recent completion of the Strategic Framework for Human Spaceflight collaboration. This partnership intends to improve space interoperability and pave the road for enhanced Isro astronaut training at NASA's Johnson Space Center. The space agencies of India and the US are gearing up for the launch of the Nasa-Isro Synthetic Aperture Radar, a jointly developed satellite that will map the entire Earth's surface twice every 12 days, contributing to the fight against climate change and other global challenges.



SpaceX secures \$843 million NASA contract to de-orbit ISS

Elon Musk's SpaceX has won a \$843 million NASA contract to prepare for the safe and responsible deorbit of the International Space Station (ISS) in a controlled manner after the end of its operational life in 2030. As part of the contract, SpaceX will develop and deliver the US Deorbit Vehicle that will provide the capability to deorbit the space station and ensure avoidance of risk to populated areas. While SpaceX will make the deorbit spacecraft, NASA will operate it throughout its mission.



China Becomes First Country To Retrieve Rocks From The Moon's Far Side

China's Chang'e 6 spacecraft successfully returned samples from the moon's far side to Earth, marking the first time materials have been returned from this rarely visited lunar region. The momentous achievement reflects not just China's growing ambitions as a space-exploration superpower, but also the next stage of a new space race with the United States and its allies to create colonies at the strategically important lunar south pole. Packed inside the capsule are approximately two kilograms of rock and soil that were scooped or drilled from the surface and subsurface of Chang'e 6's lunar landing site in the northeastern quadrant of the moon's South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin.

16: Sports



England Cricketer Brydon Carse Slapped With Three-Month Ban

England paceman Brydon Carse has been suspended from all cricket for three months due to betting offenses. Following an anti-corruption probe by the English game's Cricket Regulator, the 28-year-old, who was named into

England's 50-over World Cup team six months ago, was handed a 16-month ban, 13 months of which are suspended. Carse, who signed an England central contract in October, accepted the charges of placing 303 bets on various cricket matches between 2017 and 2019, though not on games in which he was playing.



Indian-American Bruhat Soma Triumphs At Scripps National Spelling Bee

Bruhat Soma won the US National Spelling Bee, along with a Scripps Cup trophy and a USD 50,000 check, after properly spelling a 90-second word off against second-place finisher 12-year-old Faizan Zaki from Texas. The Scripps National Spelling Bee drew 11 million candidates from around the world, with Soma emerging as one of the most confident finalists. He is the 28th Indian-American to have held the title. The champions' parents and sisters were also present at the event and said that they were very proud of their son's accomplishment.



Nishant Dev Becomes 1st Indian Male Boxer To Qualify For 2024 Paris Olympic Games

Nishant Dev, the bronze winner at the World Championships, became the first Indian male to qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games after beating Moldova's Vasile Cebotari in a landslide 5-0 victory in the men's 71 kg category quarterfinal at the World Boxing Qualifiers. He will now become the fourth Indian pugilist to qualify for the Paris Olympics after Nikhat Zareen (women's 50kg), Preeti (54kg), and Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) confirmed their berths by winning bronze medals at the 2022 Asian Games.



Nar Singh, Rohini Lokhande Won Dilip Bose Lifetime Achievement Award

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has bestowed the Dilip Bose award for lifetime accomplishment on coach Nar Singh. The accolade and a cash prize of Rs.50,000 will be handed during the 11th National Coaches Workshop, which will take place on June 7 and 8 at the PYC Hindu Gymkhana in Pune. Anil Dhupar, the secretary general of AITA, has introduced a new lifetime achievement award for female trainers. The first award would be presented to the 69-year-old Rohini Lokhande who was a member of the national team along with Kiran Bedi, Nirupama Mankad, Susan Das and Udaya Kumar, before she took to coaching at a young age.



Rohit Sharma becomes first batter ever in international cricket to smash 600 sixes in international cricket

During India's match against Ireland in the ICC T20 World Cup 2024, Indian captain Rohit Sharma hit 600 sixes. Rohit scored 52 runs off 37 balls, with a strike rate of 140.54. He hammered four fours and three sixes in New York, but his knock was cut short by an injury that forced him to leave the crease after the 10th over. With these three in the match, Rohit completed 600 sixes in international cricket. During this match, the opener also became the second player to score 4000+ runs across all three formats after Virat Kohli.



Sarabjot Singh Shines At ISSF World Cup In Munich

Sarabjot Singh captured the gold medal in the men's 10m Air Pistol event at the ISSF World Cup in Munich. The Indian shooter concluded with 242.7 points, narrowly defeating Shuaihang Bu of China, who claimed silver with 242.5 points. Robin Walter of Germany won the bronze medal with 220.0 points. This is India's first medal at the ISSF World Cup in Munich, and it serves as a huge morale boost ahead of the Paris Olympics in July. Sarabjot had qualified for the finals with 588 points to take the top spot. In the process he became the third Indian to make the medal rounds at the World Cup, after Ramita and Esha Singh had finished sixth in earlier event finals in Air Rifle and Air Pistol.



Magnus Carlsen, Ju Wenjun Win Norway Chess Titles

Magnus Carlsen won the Norway Chess 2024 competition, defeating Fabiano Caruana in the Armageddon with white pieces. The rivals had played 52 moves in the Armageddon format before Caruana gave up. After 25 moves and a three-fold repetition on the board, their traditional game had ended in a draw. In the traditional event, Praggnanandhaa defeated Nakamura and finished third. Meanwhile, in the women's section of Norway Chess, Ju Wenjun claimed the title with 19 points ahead of Anna Muzychuk who was three points behind her in second place.



Puja Tomar Create History As First Indian Fighter To Win At UFC

Puja "The Cyclone" Tomar, a mixed martial arts competitor, made her UFC debut as India's first female combatant, and she won, making history. Tomar, who is from Uttar Pradesh, faced Rayanne dos Santos at strawweight in the first battle on the card. Tomar and dos Santos competed in all three rounds, which lasted 15 minutes and featured tough, fast-paced back and forth fighting. Santos used her height advantage and range to dictate the action, but Tomar went kicking and screaming to the final bell, causing damage in the process. When the scorecards were read, Tomar picked up a split decision win (30-27, 27-30, 29-28).



Sumit Nagal Wins His 6th ATP Challenger Tennis Title

Sumit Nagal, India's premier player, defeated Dalibor Svrčina of the Czech Republic in straight sets to win the Tampere Open in Finland in a major achievement. He won 6-4, 7-5 to claim his fourth ATP challenger title in five appearances. Nagal was initially behind 4-1 in the opening game. However, he quickly recovered to take a 5-3 lead and finally won the first set 6-4 thanks to some

excellent baseline strokes. After the break, Svrcline, on the other hand, was also in no mood to let it go either.



India Named Hosts For 2025 FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup

India is scheduled to host the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup in December 2025. It will be the first Junior Hockey World Cup to feature 24 teams. "Giving more opportunities to play to a larger and more diverse number of National Associations is one of the key pillars of our Empowerment and Engagement strategy. We saw at the FIH Hockey5s World Cup in Oman this year how more diversity brings a huge added value to our events," FIH President Tayyab Ikram said in a statement



UP To Organize 2025 Edition Of MotoGP Bharat In Noida

The Uttar Pradesh government has revealed its plans for the MotoGP event, which will take place in Noida city from 2025 to 2029. It has also announced a partnership with Fairstreet Sports, an Indian partner, and Dorna Sports, a sports company based in Spain. The event was originally scheduled for 2024, but bad weather forced a postponement, and it is now scheduled for March 2025. MotoGP is the pinnacle of World Championship Road Racing. It developed primarily in Europe after the FIM (Federation Internationale de

Motocyclisme) consolidated the regulations for motorcycle competition for the first time in 1949.



Lee Zii Jia Triumphs At BWF Australian Open 2024

Malaysian Lee Zii Jia defeated Japan's Kodai Naraoka in the men's singles final to become Australian Open badminton champion, while Aya Ohori of Japan won the women's title. With several of the top players missing the competition, World No. 8 Lee took advantage, defeating his sixth-ranked opponent 21-19, 11-21, 21-18 in Sydney. It was his sixth career win on the BWF World Tour, following his success at the Thailand Open last month. Ohori triumphed with a gutsy 17-21, 21-19, 21-16 comeback beating 35th-ranked Indonesian teenager Ester Nurumi Tri Wardoyo.



Neeraj Chopra Shines At Paavo Nurmi Games 2024

Neeraj Chopra of India won the gold medal in the men's javelin throw discipline at the Paavo Nurmi Games 2024 athletics meet in Turku, Finland. The Indian javelin thrower, whose personal best of 89.94m is the Indian men's national record, recorded his best throw of the night, a modest 85.97m, on his third try to top the podium. Finland's Toni Keränen won the silver medal with a personal best of 84.19m throw while his compatriot Oliver Helander, who had denied Neeraj the gold at the meet two years ago, took the bronze with 83.96m.



Olympics Medalist Bajrang Punia Suspended By NADA For Anti-Doping Rule Violation

Bajrang Punia, an Olympic medalist who had previously been suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), was again provisionally banned on June 23. It is vital to note that Bajrang's suspension was reversed by a disciplinary body because he did not receive a notice of charge. However, NADA has now issued the same decision, suspending the Olympic bronze medallist. As per NADA, Bajrang had refused to give his urine sample during the trials at Sonipat on March 10, after which he was suspended for a dope rule violation. Bajrang's Lawyer, Vishuspath Singania said.



Rutuja Bhosale-Fangran Tian Clinch ITF Women's World Tennis Tour In Tauste

Indian tennis player Rutuja Bhosale, partnering with China's Fangran Tian, secured a dominant victory in the doubles competition at the ITF W35 Tauste tournament in Spain. The duo cruised to a straight-sets win over the third-seeded pair of Alana Parnaby (Australia) and Victoria Rodriguez (Mexico), clinching the title with a score of 6-2, 6-4. This impressive win marks Bhosale's third doubles title of the year, adding to her victories at the W50 Wuning and W75 Fukuoka tournaments.



Indian Archers Triumph At Archery World Cup 2024 Stage 3

The Archery World Cup 2024 Stage 3 in Antalya, Turkey, ended recently, with Indian archers demonstrating their remarkable talents and winning many medals. This famous event, hosted by World Archer, saw India's team win four medals: one gold, one silver, and two bronze. Dhiraj Bommadevara, 22, emerged as India's outstanding performer, winning two bronze medals in recurve events. Teaming up with Bhajan Kaur, Bommadevara secured second bronze in the mixed recurve event.



India Wins 11 Medals At The U-17 Asian Wrestling Championship 2024

India finished their tournament at the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman, Jordan, on a high note. The young Indian contingent won a total of 11 medals, including four gold, two silver, and five bronze. Women wrestlers won all four gold medals. Dipanshi in 46 kg, Muskan in 53 kg, Rajnita in 61 kg, and Mansi Lather in 69 kg all made outstanding performances in their respective weight divisions to win the gold medal. Raja Bala had to settle for a silver in the 40 kg category, despite her valiant efforts. On the men's front, Samarth Gajanan Mhake bagged a silver medal in the fiercely contested 55 kg category.



Rohit Sharma Becomes First Batter To Hit 200 Sixes In T20Is

Rohit Sharma became the first player in T20I history to hit 200 sixes during the T20 World Cup 2024 Super Eight Group 1 match against Australia at St. Lucia's Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium. Rohit played 41 balls for 92 runs and smashed eight sixes in the innings, bringing his total to 203 maximums in the game's shortest version. During the innings, the Indian opener also became the second-highest six-hitter in T20 World Cup history, surpassing David Warner (40) and Jos Buttler (43). On that list, Rohit is second to only Chris Gayle's 63 sixes.



David Warner Retires From International Cricket

David Warner, one of the finest batters of all time, saw his international career end on a sour note after Australia failing to qualify for the T20 World Cup 2024 semi-finals, exiting in the Super 8. Warner finished his international career in stages, playing his final ODI during Australia's successful 2023 campaign in India, his final Test against Pakistan in early 2024, and retiring after the 2024 T20 World Cup. In 110 matches he scored 3277 runs including a century against Pakistan in 2019--third Aussie to score centuries in all three formats of the game, and 28 half-centuries.



India lifts trophy at T20 Cricket World Cup 2024

India's T20 World Cup triumph was celebrated far and wide across the country after Rohit Sharma and his team ended the country's global trophy drought in Barbados. Virat Kohli hit a match-winning 76 to set up India's seven-run win over South Africa in a thrilling final on 29 June 2024. Kohli won the Player of the Match and Jasprit Bumrah won the Player of the Series Award. The title victory comes after more than a decade of heartbreaks in knockout matches of ICC World Cups, including the recent ODI Final in 2023.



Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Ravindra Jadeja retire from T20 International Cricket

It was a fitting farewell to two of the most celebrated players in T20I cricket. Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma retired from the shortest format of the game after inspiring India to a T20 World Cup triumph in Barbados on Saturday, June 29. Rohit, the captain, led from the front throughout the campaign in the USA and the West Indies, while Virat Kohli, delivered when it mattered the most for the team. Seasoned India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has also announced his retirement from T20 Internationals, joining his illustrious teammates Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma.

17: State



Kerala Introduces Artificial Intelligence Learning In School Textbooks

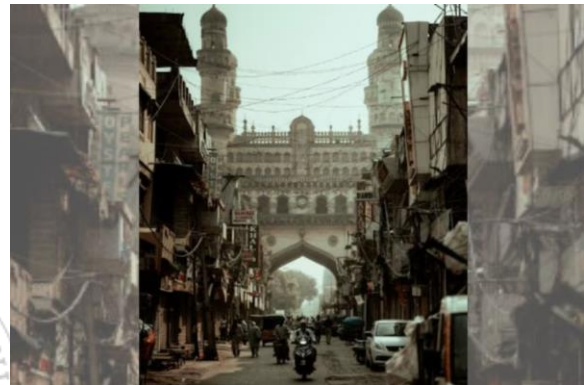
After training secondary school teachers in artificial intelligence (AI) over the summer, the Kerala State has taken a big step forward in adopting this quickly developing technology by incorporating AI into textbooks. In an attempt to guarantee that all students are exposed to the benefits of AI, rather than making it optional for a select few, AI has been incorporated into textbooks for class 7. Over 4 lakh students will get the opportunity to become familiar with AI in the new academic year with its introduction in the information and communications technology (ICT) textbook of Class 7.



Assam: Centre Approves New IIM Near Guwahati

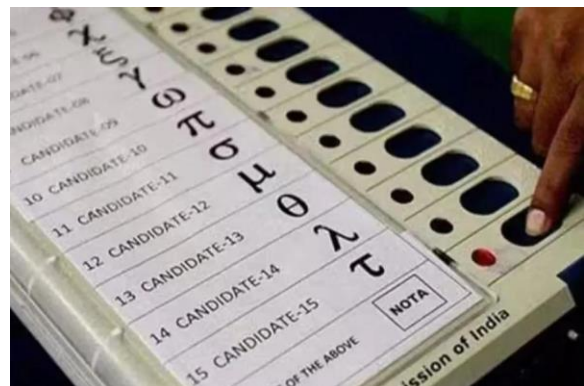
According to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Centre has approved the establishment of an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Assam, which will be located near Guwahati, making it one of the few towns in the country to house top educational institutions. He stated that the State government has been pursuing the

subject with the Centre for the past 18 months, and the new institute will be a "game changer" for higher education in the state. He said the State government had presented its case before Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and his Ministry, besides writing to PM Modi.



Hyderabad's Tenure As Joint Capital Of Telangana And Andhra Pradesh Ends

According to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act of 2014, Hyderabad, one of the country's busiest metropolitan cities, will no longer be the combined capital of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as of June 2. Beginning June 2, Hyderabad will be the sole capital city of Telangana. When undivided Andhra Pradesh was separated in 2014, Hyderabad was designated as the capital of the two states for a ten-year period. The formation of Telangana was the fulfilment of a decades-long demand when statehood was realised on June 2, 2014, following the passage of the AP Reorganisation bill in Parliament in February 2014.



NOTA Creates Record In MP's Indore Lok Sabha Seat

Shankar Lalwani, the BJP's sitting MP from Indore, won by a record margin of 11,75,092 votes in a fight in which NOTA set a record with 2.18 lakh voters voting for 'none of the above' in the Lok Sabha election. A BJP leader predicted that his victory margin is likely to be the largest in the country's electoral history. Union Minister Virendra Kumar won the Tikamgarh (SC) seat by 4,03,312 votes over his Congress challenger Pankaj Ahirwar. The Congress had received a jolt in the Indore Lok Sabha seat after its candidate Akshay Kanti Bam withdrew his nomination on April 29, the last date for the withdrawal of nominations.



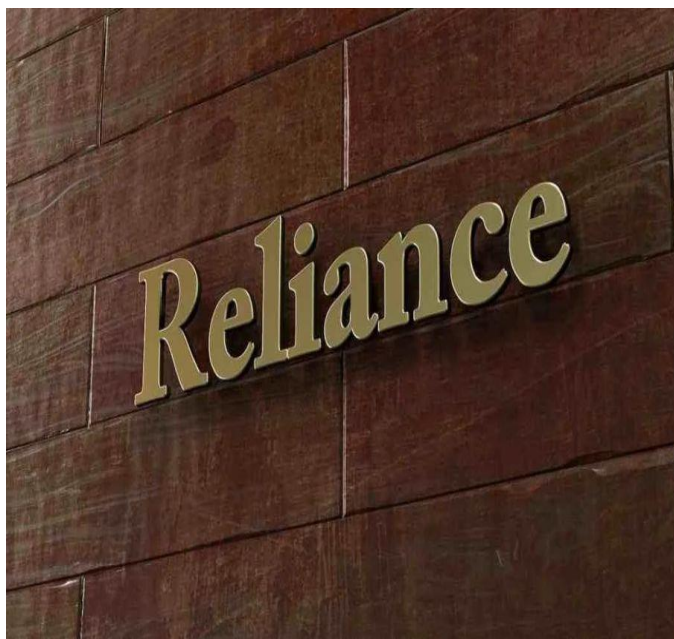
TDP President N. Chandrababu Naidu Set To Reclaim Andhra Pradesh CM Office

Nara Chandrababu Naidu is expected to become Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister for the fourth time in three decades. During his first nine-year term, from 1995 to 2004, Naidu established himself as the CEO of undivided Andhra Pradesh, transforming its economy, attracting investors, and constructing the IT zone in the capital city known as 'Cyberabad'. He spent the next decade in opposition while his political opponent and fellow, Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, took the reigns after capitalizing on public outrage. By the time Naidu came back in 2014, the state was divided with the formation of Telangana.



Rajasthan Govt To Invest Rs 100 Cr In Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma stated that the state government is spending Rs 100 crore to develop the Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit. Sharma made these remarks while inaugurating the Maharana Pratap Jayanti celebrations in Udaipur. The chief minister stated that Maharana Pratap inspires not only Rajasthan and India, but the entire world. His valour, bravery and patriotism cannot be bound by time and geographical



RIL To Build Global Economic Hub In Navi Mumbai

Reliance Industries has signed sub-lease agreements for 3,750 acres of property in Navi Mumbai for ₹13,400 crore, with plans to become a global economic hub. The lease is for 43 years and follows a memorandum of understanding struck between the firm and the Maharashtra government in 2018. The goal is to create a 'world-class' integrated digital services industrial region through worldwide cooperation. RIL pointed out that it had a proven track record of developing large integrated industrial complexes at Hazira, Jamnagar and Dahej smart city in Jhajjar district of Haryana.

boundaries, Sharma said and added that Maharana Pratap's life "inspires us to not step back even in adverse circumstances and to always follow the path of truth, religion and national interest".



Mohan Charan Majhi Took Oath As Chief Minister Of Odisha

On June 12, Mohan Charan Majhi, a four-time MLA, took oath as Odisha Chief Minister. The 52-year-old leader is a well-known tribal figure in the coastal state. Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida will be his deputies. Mohan Charan Manjhi won the election for the Keonjhar Assembly seat by over 11,000 votes. He defeated Biju Janata Dal's Mina Majhi and Congress' Prativa Manjari Naik. The BJP won 78 seats in the 147-member Odisha Assembly, while the BJD bagged 51. The BJD and the BJP were in alliance for 11 years between 1998 and 2009 and fought three Lok Sabha and two Assembly elections together.



GAIL (India) Limited

GAIL To Set Up India's Largest Ethane Cracker Project With Rs 60,000 Crore Investment In MP

GAIL, the country's largest gas supplier, has announced plans to build a 1500 KTA ethane cracker project in

Ashta, district Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, with a product slate including several ethylene derivatives. GAIL stated that the project will require an investment of Rs 60,000 crore. The MP Industrial Development Corporation Limited would supply approximately 800 hectares of land, and the state government has already begun the process. Investment approval from GAIL's Board shall be sought after favourable outcome on enablers.



PM Shri Tourism Air Service launched in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has created an intra-state flying service to boost tourism. It is known as 'PM Shri Paryatan Vayu Seva', and the inaugural flight took off from Bhopal to Jabalpur. The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) will run the service with two planes, connecting eight cities in the state: Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur, Gwalior, Khajuraho, Ujjain, Rewa, and Singrauli. A 50% discount has been offered for 30 days from launch to promote the service. The trip from Bhopal to Indore will take 55 minutes.



Cabinet Approves Development Of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi

The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the extension of the runway and apron at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varanasi, as well as the proposal for a new passenger terminal. The estimated cost of constructing the new passenger terminal, which will span 75,000 square meters and boost the airport's annual passenger handling capacity from 39 lakh to 99 lakh, is ₹2,869 crore. The design will reflect the cultural heritage of the city. The proposal also includes runway extension and an expanded apron to park 20 aircraft.



Cabinet Green Signals Greenfield Major Port At Vadhavan, Maharashtra

The Union Cabinet has given its approval the construction of a Rs 76,200-crore all-weather greenfield deep draft major port in Vadhavan, Maharashtra, according to an official statement. According to the release, the project would be built by Vadhavan Port Project Limited (VPPL), a joint venture founded by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), with 74% and 26% shareholdings. The port will be one of the top 10 ports in the world, it added. It will create employment opportunities for 12 lakh people.



Surama Padhy Elected As Odisha Assembly Speaker

Surama Padhy, a senior BJP leader, was elected unopposed as Speaker of the Odisha Assembly. Padhy, a two-term MLA from the Ranpur assembly sector in Nayagarh district, was the only candidate for the position. Pro-tem Speaker R P Swain declared her election and handed over the charge to her at the Assembly's extraordinary session. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, deputy chief ministers – KV Singh Deo, Pravati Parida, Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik and other members of the House greeted the new Speaker.



Punjab inks MoU with Microsoft to enhance skill of 10,000 youths

The Punjab Skill Development Mission (PSDM) has signed a memorandum of understanding with Microsoft to teach essential skills to at least 10,000 youngsters in the state each year. Aman Arora, Punjab's Minister of Employment Generation, Skill Development, and Training, stated that this collaboration will pave the way for 10,000 youth in the state to learn essential digital productivity skills, employability skills, English communication skills, entrepreneurship skills, and technology skills such as cloud, artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security, and sustainability.



Kozhikode Became India's First UNESCO City Of Literature

Kozhikode, in north Kerala, has been formally named India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature'. In October 2023, Kozhikode was named to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) 'Literature' list. The state government also declared that beginning next year, June 23 will be marked as the 'City of Literature' Day in Kozhikode, a city recognized for literary greats like as the late S K Pottakkad and Vaikom Muhammed Basheer. As part of the event, Tourism Minister P A Mohammed Riyas unveiled the logo of the 'City of Literature' by UNESCO.



MLA C. Ayyanna Patrudu Elected Speaker Of Andhra Assembly

In the absence of any other candidates for the coveted position, Narsipatnam MLA Ch. Ayyanna Patrudu was unanimously elected Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. His candidacy was proposed by Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan on behalf of the Jana Sena Party (JSP), as well as IT and HRD Minister Nara Lokesh and Health Minister Y. Satya Kumar on behalf of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), respectively. Pro-tem Speaker Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary declared Mr. Patrudu as elected unopposed and invited him to take his chair on the Speaker's podium.



World's First Asian King Vulture Conservation And Breeding Centre In Maharajganj, UP

In Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh, the world's first conservation and breeding center for Asian king vultures, also known as red-headed vultures, will open. Since 2007, the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list has included severely endangered species. The facility will help to boost their populations. The centre is called the Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre. Asian king vultures are endangered due to the loss of their habitats and the excessive use of diclofenac, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug, in domestic animals, which becomes poisonous for vultures.



M.P Govt Approves The Establishment Of One P.M College Of Excellence In All Districts Of State

On July 1, in Madhya Pradesh Prime Minister College of Excellence will be ceremoniously opened in all 55 districts of the state. The chief minister, while chairing a review meeting of the department of higher education at the ministry, stated that PM Excellence College will be the district's pride. He went on to say that the state will develop a drone policy. A strategy should be developed, and work should be done to implement drone technology in higher education, industry, and other areas. As interest of youths is increasing towards artificial intelligence and aviation, hence better teaching arrangements of these subjects should be ensured, said the CM.



Haryana Govt Increases Reservation For OBC Category From 15% To 27%

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has announced a rise in the yearly income ceiling for creamy layers from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh, claiming that it will bring "significant benefits" in employment for the OBC category. Saini was addressing attendees at the 'OBC Morcha Sarv Samaj Samrasta Sammelan' in Gurugram. The move comes months before the Haryana Assembly elections, which are expected to be place in October. The chief minister also announced that the reservation for the backward classes in Group-A and Group-B posts, currently at 15 per cent, will be increased to 27 per cent, "in line with the Central government's policy".



Madhya Pradesh Ministers To Pay Income Tax On Salaries And Allowances

The Madhya Pradesh cabinet has determined that state ministers will be required to pay their own income taxes, rather than the state government. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav stated in a statement that the cabinet has decided to repeal the 1972 rule that required the state government to pay income tax on ministers' salaries and benefits. The Congress criticised the BJP government's move, with the party's state president Jitu Patwari saying the government should actually be curbing wasteful expenditure on "purchasing aeroplanes, decorating official bungalows, and buying luxury cars".



UP Govt. to set up bioplastic park at a cost of ₹2,000 crore

Aiming to combat environmental pollution, the UP government is set to establish a bioplastic park at an investment of ₹2,000 crore. This park will be developed on 1,000 hectares of land in Kumbhi village, Gola Gokarnnath tehsil, Lakhimpur Kheri district. Bioplastic is a type of plastic made from natural materials such as corn, sunflower, or sugar beet, also known as natural plastic. It decomposes quickly, thereby reducing environmental pollution. Bioplastic can also be used in various industries such as packaging, ready-made garments, electronics, and other industrial products.

18: Summits & Conferences



For its third session, ET Make in India SME Regional Summit heads to Kolkata

The EconomicTimes.com will conduct the third session of the ET Make in India SME Regional Summit in Kolkata on June 8. This year's inaugural MSME summit took place on May 18 in Hyderabad, followed by the second on May 25 in Lucknow. Both events had a great turnout. This

endeavor will be undertaken under the topic “Empowering MSMEs: Driving India's Century of Sustainable Growth” to promote, acknowledge, and strengthen the Indian MSME sector. The ET SME summit is a series of on-the-ground events hosted throughout India that bring together local MSMEs, policymakers, enablers, and industry partners.



SC directs the Yamuna River Board to hold an urgent meeting on June 5 to address Delhi's water crisis

The Supreme Court has instructed the Centre to convene an emergency meeting of the Upper Yamuna River Board with the States of Delhi, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh to address water scarcity in the national capital as temperatures rise above 50 degrees Celsius. A Vacation Bench consisting of Justices P.K. Mishra and K.V. Viswanathan directed the meeting to be convened on June 5. It said the States, the Board and the Centre should address the issues raised by the Delhi government about water scarcity in the capital in “right earnest” during the June 5 meeting.



India To Host 81st IATA Annual General Meeting In 2025

After a 42-year break, India will host the world's largest aviation event, the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) annual general meeting (AGM) next

year. This will be the third time the IATA AGM – one of the most important events on the aviation industry calendar — has been held in Delhi, following 1958 and 1983. The chiefs and various other top executives of almost all global airlines, aircraft manufacturers, and other aviation sector stakeholders gather once a year at the IATA's AGM to discuss issues pertaining to the global aviation sector.



RBI MPC Meeting: Repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for 8th time in a row

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which began its meeting on June 5, has held the repo rate constant at 6.5% for the eighth straight time. This is the MPC's first meeting after the Lok Sabha election results were announced. During a press conference, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das increased the GDP (gross domestic growth) projection for FY 25 to 7.2 percent, up from the previously predicted 7%. The government has mandated the RBI to ensure CPI inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.



The 3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC) Held in Dehradun

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR-IIP) in Dehradun hosted the 3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC) from June 5 to June

7. The three-day International Conference and Exhibition IAC-2024 was co-organized by CSIR-IIP and the Indian Society of Analytical Scientists (ISAS-Delhi Chapter). "Role of Science and Technology in Green Transitions" was the theme of conference. The conference has provided a platform for industries, academia, scientists, and technologists in the Analytical Sciences to present the prevalent and upcoming solutions in this area.



Global Rice Summit Held in Hyderabad 04 - 08 June, 2024

Telangana and the International Commodity Institute (ICI) convened the world's rice conference to examine technology and markets for future food security, which took place in Hyderabad from June 4 to 8, 2024. The summit aimed to boost rice exports, highlight rice varieties from India and Telangana, and serve as a knowledge forum. Speaking on the occasion, G. Chinna Reddy, vice chairman of the Telangana State Planning Board, suggested that the Centre establish commodity boards, a collaborative front of farmers, scientists, and traders for deliberation of best practices, as is done in Israel, to increase farmers' direct profits.



Mega Plastics Exhibition Plexconnect 2024 Held In Mumbai

The Plastics Export Promotion Council (Plexconcil) hosted the giant plastics expo Plexconnect 2024 from June 7-9 at the Bombay expo Centre at NESCO,

Goregaon, Mumbai. It sought to establish India as the world's premier sourcing destination for plastics and machinery. The event was inaugurated by Ravish Kamath, Plexconcil chairman, in the presence of Hemant Minocha, vice chairman, Vikram Bhaduria, executive director, Sribash Dasmohapatra, past vice chairman, Arivin Goenka and Dhruv Sayani.



Indian Tripartite Delegation At The 112th Session Of International Labour Conference (ILC)

The Indian tripartite delegation, under the command of Ms. Sumita Dawra, Secretary (Labour & Employment), attended the 112th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland. India seized the occasion in the first week to emphasize the government's labor reforms, social security guarantees, and other upcoming initiatives. The International Labour Organization will hold its 112th annual International Labour Conference in Geneva from 3–14 June 2024.



PM Modi In Italy For G7 Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi left for Italy on 13 June to attend the 50th G7 leaders' summit. It will be his first travel abroad since taking over as Prime Minister for the third term. On June 14, Modi will attend an outreach session for the summit with a high-level group. The session will center on themes concerning artificial

intelligence, energy, Africa, and the Mediterranean. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra stated that it will be a bloc agenda item in which the G7 and Outreach Countries will exchange their perspectives and ideas.



G7 leaders agree to \$50bn loan for Ukraine at annual summit

G7 nations have reached an agreement on a \$50 billion arrangement to pay Ukraine with earnings from frozen Russian assets, according to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who is hosting the G7 this year. Meloni had invited President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to a special summit meeting on the Ukraine conflict with US President Joe Biden and the leaders of France, Germany, Canada, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Addressing the meeting Zelenskyy thanked the leaders for their support, which he said would go towards “both defence and reconstruction”, though he emphasised the need for more weapons.



SECTION 2

Practice Questions with Answers



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1) India's merchandise exports may grow to \$500-510 billion in FY-25 as per a report by _____.

- A) Federation of Indian Export Organisations
- B) UN Trade and Development
- C) World Bank
- D) World Trade Organization

2) Airbus Helicopters and _____ have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for financing the purchase of Airbus' helicopters in India.

- A) Bank of Baroda
- B) Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited
- C) Small Industries Development Bank of India
- D) State Bank of India

3) Which of the following TReDS platform crossed ₹1 lakh crore in MSME invoice financing?

- A) BSE
- B) National Stock Exchange of India Limited
- C) NCDEX e-Markets Limited
- D) Receivables Exchange of India Limited

4) RITES Limited has signed a contract with which of the following country to supply 200 broad-gauge passenger carriages, worth USD 111.26 million?

- A) Bangladesh
- B) Bhutan
- C) Guyana
- D) Philippines

5) _____ has topped the Bloomberg Billionaires Index (as of 20th May 2024) with a net worth of USD 220 billion.

- A) Elon Musk
- B) Gautam Adani
- C) Bernard Arnault
- D) Larry Page

6) What is the rank of India in the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024?

- A) 39
- B) 54
- C) 93
- D) 159

7) Global Carbon pricing revenues reached a record-high of \$104 billion last year, said a report released by _____.

- A) Asian Development Bank
- B) Niti Aayog
- C) Reserve Bank of India
- D) World Bank

8) _____ has officially become the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

- A) Algeria
- B) Brazil
- C) Morocco
- D) Spain

9) In 2024, which of the following company became the third unicorn of India?

- A) Swiggy
- B) Razorpay
- C) Porter
- D) Krutrim

10) Author Jenny Erpenbeck won the International Booker Prize 2024 for which of the following book?

- A) Kairos
- B) Night Watch
- C) Staliner Divan
- D) The Book Beautiful

11) Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari Inaugurated the First-Ever Emergency Medical Response System (EMRS) of the Indian Air Force (IAF) in _____.

- A) Bengaluru
- B) New Delhi
- C) Varanasi
- D) Visakhapatnam

12) The money flowing into Non-Resident Indians' (NRIs) deposits rose by 63.55 per cent to _____ in Financial Year 2024, said a report by the Reserve Bank of India.

- A) \$10.58 billion
- B) \$14.7 billion
- C) \$27.14 billion
- D) \$31.73 billion

13) _____ has approved the transfer of a record Rs 2,10,874 crore as surplus to the Union government for the accounting year 2023-24.

- A) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India
- B) Reserve Bank of India
- C) Small Industries Development Bank of India
- D) State Bank of India

14) The International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) has established an expert committee chaired by _____ to position GIFT-IFSC as global trading hub.

- A) Vinod Kumar Paul
- B) Rajeev Kher
- C) K. Rajaraman
- D) Devendra Jhajharia

15) _____ has obtained a corporate agency license from IRDAI recently.

- A) JM Financial Products Ltd
- B) Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited
- C) Paymart India Pvt. Ltd
- D) Sundaram Finance

16) In which of the following country the world's first fully biodegradable pen was launched?

- A) Bhutan
- B) India
- C) Myanmar
- D) Nepal

17) Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has signed a deal to modernize the core banking technology of _____.

- A) Axis Bank

- B) Burgan Bank
- C) Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
- D) Standard Chartered Bank

18) Who among the following won the prestigious Shaw Prize in astronomy for 2024?

- A) Peter Sarnak
- B) Shrinivas R. Kulkarni
- C) Stuart Orkin
- D) Swee Lay Thein

19) Which of the following airport has been honored as the first airport in India to attain the Zero Waste to Landfill (ZWL) certification?

- A) Begumpet Airport
- B) Delhi Airport
- C) Kempegowda International Airport
- D) Thiruvananthapuram International Airport

20) To oversee the administration of _____ the Delhi High Court has appointed retired judge Justice Najmi Waziri as the Chairperson of an ad-hoc Administrative Committee (AAC).

- A) All India Football Federation
- B) Equestrian Federation of India
- C) Hockey India
- D) Wrestling Federation of India

21) In May 2024 the Defence Cyber Agency has organized a comprehensive cyber defense exercise named _____.

- A) Bharat Shakti
- B) Cyber Bharat
- C) Cyber Suraksha
- D) Shanti Prayas IV

22) Who among the following was ranked second on The Wall Street Journal's 2023 list of highest-paid US CEOs?

- A) Ajaypal Singh Banga
- B) Nikesh Arora
- C) Satya Nadella
- D) Sundar Pichai

23) At the Prince's Trust Awards in London who among the following was presented with the Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award?

- A) Alok Shukla
- B) Arti
- C) Pavuluri Subba Rao
- D) Purnima Devi Barman

24) Kabak Yano of which of the following state has made history by becoming the first woman from the Nyishi tribe to successfully climb Mount Everest?

- A) Mizoram
- B) Bihar
- C) Assam
- D) Arunachal Pradesh

25) The Indian Air Force (IAF) achieved yet another milestone by successfully landing a _____ aircraft using Night Vision Goggles (NVG) at an Advanced Landing Ground in the Eastern sector.

- A) C-130J
- B) C-17
- C) C-295
- D) TU-142M

26) The Prudential Authority of the South African Reserve Bank has imposed a financial penalty of 10 million rand (₹4.5 crore) on which of the following bank?

- A) Indian Overseas Bank
- B) ICICI Bank
- C) State Bank of India
- D) Bank of Baroda

27) _____ has raised India's GDP growth forecast to 6.7 percent for calendar year 2024.

- A) Citigroup Inc
- B) Goldman Sachs
- C) Morgan Stanley
- D) World Bank

28) Who among the following took over as the Commandant of the National Defence Academy (NDA)?

- A) Gurcharan Singh
- B) Kamal Kishore
- C) Kishor Makwana
- D) Vivek Kumar Gupta

29) Who among the following was re-elected as the President of the Lithuania?

- A) Bjarni Benediktsson
- B) Gitanas Nauseda
- C) Peter Pellegrini
- D) Tamas Sulyok

30) Which of the following company has secured a contract to build advanced turbo engine for GTRE-DRDO defence programs?

- A) Azad Engineering Limited
- B) BEML Limited
- C) Mahindra Defence Systems Limited
- D) Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited

31) The Indian army is going to demonstrate trials of hydrogen fuel cell bus technology along with which of the following company?

- A) Tata Technologies Limited
- B) Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited
- C) Indian Oil Corporation Limited
- D) BEML Limited

32) At Vijaipur, Madhya Pradesh which of the following company has commissioned its first green hydrogen plant?

- A) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited
- B) Gas Authority of India Limited
- C) Jindal Stainless Limited
- D) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

33) The government is planning to launch a Unified portal named _____ which will process health insurance claims across hospitals all over the country.

- A) Anuvadini
- B) NHCX

- C) JanSamarth
D) Samman

34) Who among the following became the first person from India to clinch the prestigious Grand Prix at the 77th Cannes Film Festival?

- A) Anasuya Sengupta
B) Kartiki Gonsalves
C) Mansi Maheshwari
D) Payal Kapadia

35) Who among the following secured victory at the 2024 F1 Monaco Grand Prix?

- A) Carlos Sainz Jr.
B) Charles Leclerc
C) Max Verstappen
D) Oscar Piastri

36) When the World Menstrual Hygiene Day was observed?

- A) 26 May
B) 27 May
C) 28 May
D) 29 May

37) NSDC has collaborated with which of the following organisation to enhance skill development and lifelong learning in India and globally to empower individuals?

- A) Coal India Limited
B) International Labour Organization
C) ISCON
D) UNESCO

38) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched a secure and centralised web-based portal named _____ recently.

- A) PM-SURAJ portal
B) PRAVAAH portal
C) SARTHI portal
D) SWATI Portal

39) Poonawalla Fincorp Limited on May 28 said it has launched a co-branded credit card in collaboration with _____.

- A) State Bank of India

- B) Indian Bank
C) IndusInd Bank
D) Federal Bank

40) The Government of India has granted \$1 million as immediate assistance for _____, which has been hit by a devastating landslide.

- A) Bhutan
B) Kenya
C) Papua New Guinea
D) Sri Lanka

41) Along with CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd which of the following ministry has signed an MoU to provide eMigrate services through Common Services Centres (CSC)?

- A) Ministry of Home Affairs
B) Ministry of External Affairs
C) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
D) Both B & C

42) Which of the following IIT, in collaboration with the DRDO, has established a DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA CoE) on its campus?

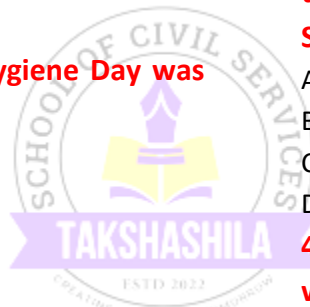
- A) IIT Bombay
B) IIT Kanpur
C) IIT Madras
D) IIT Patna

43) Who among the following was awarded the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for 2023?

- A) Sophia Qureshi
B) Radhika Sen
C) Priya Jhingan
D) Lakshmi Sehgal

44) _____ has notified a framework for issuance of subordinate units by privately placed infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs).

- A) Reserve Bank of India
B) Securities and Exchange Board of India



- C) International Financial Services Centres Authority
D) IRDA

45) Bank of Maharashtra launched which of the following scheme to support Food and Agro-Based industries & Agri Infrastructure Projects including Startups?

- A) Vikas Spoorty
B) Svyam Siddha
C) Mahatari Vandana Yojana
D) Maha Krishi Samrudhi Yojana

46) The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has launched a groundbreaking initiative called _____ to foster collaborative research and innovation in the field of Ayurveda.

- A) PRAGATI-2024
B) ODISERV
C) Meghayan-24
D) CDP-SURAKSHA

47) _____ has launched the 'Nifty EV and New Age Automotive index' India's first electric vehicle index.

- A) Jupiter Wagons Limited
B) National Highways Authority of India
C) NSE Indices Limited
D) Tata Mutual Fund

48) _____ has entered into a Bancassurance tie-up with ICICI Lombard General Insurance recently.

- A) AU Small Finance Bank
B) Capital Small Finance Bank Limited
C) ESAF Small Finance Bank
D) Jana Small Finance Bank Limited

49) _____ introduced secured lending products on its platform in collaboration with a network of trusted banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

- A) Tata Pay
B) PhonePe
C) Amazon Pay

- D) Airtel Payments Bank Limited

50) What is projected India's GDP growth in 2024 as per a report by Morgan Stanley?

- A) 7.6%
B) 7%
C) 6.8%
D) 6.5%

51) Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has transferred 100 tonnes of gold from its vaults in the _____ to its domestic vaults in India.

- A) United States of America
B) United Kingdom
C) Switzerland
D) Germany

52) _____ launched its Digital Banking App in beta mode to offer a cutting-edge platform for daily finances and digital banking.

- A) Jio Financial Services
B) Muthoot Finance Limited
C) Piramal Capital and Housing Finance
D) Tata Motors Finance

53) The Indian economy is expected to witness 6.8% growth this year and _____ in 2025, according to Moody's Ratings.

- A) 6.5%
B) 6.4%
C) 6.3%
D) 6.2%

54) _____ has increased its shareholding in PI Industries Limited from 4.95% to 5.00%

- A) Reliance Industries Limited
B) Life Insurance Corporation of India
C) Larsen & Toubro
D) Adani Group

55) The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has agreed to become a member of _____.

- A) World Boxing
B) National Sports Federation of India
C) International Boxing Association

D) Indian Olympic Association

56) Along with the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) _____ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to empower the inhabitants of coastal areas.

- A) Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited
- B) Reliance Foundation
- C) Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation
- D) Tata Sons

57) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has introduced a new numbering series _____ for making service/transactional calls.

- A) 120xxxxxxx series
- B) 150xxxxxxx series
- C) 160xxxxxxx series
- D) 180xxxxxxx series

58) _____ has launched the "Bank Clinic" initiative to assist bank customers with grievance redressal.

- A) All India Bank Employees Association
- B) Indian Banks' Association
- C) Indian Overseas Bank
- D) State Bank of India

59) India has received a total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow of USD 70.9 billion in the FY24. The largest contributor to the country's FDI inflow was _____.

- A) United States of America
- B) Singapore
- C) Mauritius
- D) Japan

60) India's first female Ambassador to the UN _____ retired after 35 years of service.

- A) Ruchira Kamboj
- B) Anita Singh
- C) Gita Sabharwal
- D) Meeta Bagchi

61) The Department of School Education has inked an agreement with _____ to create an institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya.

- A) University Grants Commission
- B) Sahitya Akademi
- C) National Book Trust
- D) All India Council of Technical Education

62) _____ entered into collaboration with Nokia, Plasser India and Jacobs to strengthen the partnership between industry and academia.

- A) University of Delhi
- B) Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya
- C) Central University of South Bihar
- D) Central University of Punjab

63) Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) launched which of the following mobile application aimed at simplifying complex financial concepts for investors?

- A) Sankalan
- B) Samman
- C) e-AMRIT
- D) Saarthi 2.0

64) Along with which of the following bank Adani One has launched India's first credit card which will have airport-linked benefits and other significant rewards?

- A) Axis Bank
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) IndusInd Bank

65) Who among the following was elected as Mexico's first female president?

- A) Zuzana Caputov
- B) Nadia Calviño Santamaría
- C) Mette Frederiksen
- D) Claudia Sheinbaum

66) Along with which of the following space agency NASA is collaborating to establish a standardized time system for the moon?

- A) JAXA



- B) ISRO
- C) ESA
- D) CNSA

67) _____ has developed an in-house Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software called PraVaHa.

- A) CNSA
- B) ESA
- C) ISRO
- D) JAXA

68) The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Ministerial meeting was held in which of the following country?

- A) Malaysia
- B) Mexico
- C) Singapore
- D) Vietnam

69) Which country has emerged as India's third largest export destination after the US and UAE during 2023-24?

- A) Malaysia
- B) Mexico
- C) Netherlands
- D) Singapore

70) Who among the following was awarded the prestigious Gudleppa Hallikeri Award for 2024 by the Gudleppa Hallikeri Memorial Foundation, Hosaritti?

- A) B Sriramulu
- B) Shirshendhu Mukyopadhyaya
- C) Siddalinga Pattanashetti
- D) V.K.Gokak

71) The Supreme Court has reconstituted its Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC) chaired by _____.

- A) Justice Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar
- B) Justice Anirudhha Bose
- C) Justice Hima Kohli
- D) Justice Sheel Nagu

72) The UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 Forum High-Level Event 2024 was held in which of the following city?

- A) Kampala, Uganda
- B) Geneva, Switzerland
- C) Dubai, the United Arab Emirates
- D) Davos, Switzerland

73) What is the projected global unemployment in 2024 as per a report by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)?

- A) 4.9%
- B) 5.8%
- C) 6.2%
- D) 6.7%

74) Along with India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) which of the following bank has inked an agreement to offer long-term financial support to viable infrastructure projects?

- A) Punjab & Sind Bank
- B) Punjab National Bank
- C) State Bank of India
- D) Union Bank of India

75) Who among the following was appointed as the Crown Prince of Kuwait?

- A) Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi
- B) Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al- Ahmad Al- Sabah
- C) Sheikh Sabah al-Khalid al-Sabah
- D) Sultan Ibrahim ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar

76) On the occasion of World Environment Day the government has launched which of the following mobile application for real-time Air Quality Index (AQI) monitoring?

- A) SARATHI
- B) Saksham
- C) Air-Pravah
- D) K-SMART

77) _____ has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Bank of India, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India and Utkarsh Small

Finance Bank to onboard them as SPARSH Service Centres.

- A) Defence Accounts Department
- B) Department of Land Resources
- C) Department of Pharmaceuticals
- D) Department of Posts

78) The market regulator SEBI has amended the Master Circular for _____ to relax timelines for disclosure of material.

- A) Alternative Investment Fund Managers
- B) Foreign Portfolio Investors
- C) Stock Brokers
- D) Stock Exchanges

79) A new theme "Insure today for a safe tomorrow" to raise awareness about the importance of insurance was launched by which of the following insurance company?

- A) Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company Limited
- B) Max Life Insurance Company Limited
- C) Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited
- D) Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Limited

80) Goldman Sachs Group Inc. has raised India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for the Calendar Year (CY) 2024 by _____.

- A) 7%
- B) 6.9%
- C) 6.6%
- D) 6.2%

81) Which ministry has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Central TB Division, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to work together on Tuberculosis Eradication in India by 2025?

- A) Ministry of Labour & Employment
- B) Ministry of Mines
- C) Ministry of Rural Development
- D) Ministry of Women and Child Development

82) A per a report by the Institute of International Finance, global debt (including borrowings of

households, businesses and governments) has reached _____ in 2024.

- A) USD 315 trillion
- B) USD 4.2 trillion
- C) USD 2443 billion
- D) USD 17.5 trillion

83) Which of the following country is 42nd country to sign the Artemis Accords of NASA?

- A) Switzerland
- B) Sweden
- C) Slovakia
- D) Germany

84) _____ has announced its collaboration with Sri Lankan ride hailing platform PickMe to enable UPI-based QR payments for Indian travellers in Sri Lanka.

- A) Google
- B) National Payments Corporation of India
- C) Paytm Money
- D) PhonePe

85) PNB MetLife India Insurance Co. Ltd. has announced the appointment of _____ as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.

- A) Sanjeev Nautiyal
- B) Sanjaya Kumar Mishra
- C) Sameer Bansal
- D) Rizwan Koita

86) _____ secured the 19th spot in the Container Port Performance Index 2023 by the World Bank.

- A) Mundra Port, Gujarat
- B) Pipavav Port, Gujarat
- C) Vadhavan Port, Maharashtra
- D) Visakhapatnam Port, Andhra Pradesh

87) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised its GDP growth forecast for FY25 to _____.

- A) 7.2%
- B) 7.0%
- C) 6.75%

D) 6.50%

88) Who among the following was elected as the President of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)?

- A) Gustavo Lino Adrianzen Olaya
- B) Judith Suminwa Tuluka
- C) Ousmane Sonko
- D) Philemon Yang

89) Who among the following was appointed as the Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)?

- A) Deepak Mohanty
- B) Kamal Kishore Soan
- C) Ravi Kumar Jha
- D) Vivek Kumar Gupta

90) Who among the following won the Norway Chess 2024 title?

- A) Wei Yi
- B) Magnus Carlsen
- C) Ju Wenjun
- D) Dommaraju Gukesh

91) Who among the following created history by becoming the Indian Navy's first woman helicopter pilot?

- A) Vishav Vandana
- B) Kavita Sahai
- C) Anamika B. Rajeev
- D) Akansha Gomes

92) India participated in the _____ Foreign Ministers' Meeting which began in Russia's Nizhny Novgorod on Monday, June 10.

- A) World Economic Forum
- B) Shanghai Cooperation Organization
- C) ASEAN
- D) BRICS

93) Global investment in clean energy is expected to exceed _____ in 2024, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in its annual World Energy Investment report.

- A) USD 6 trillion
- B) USD 5 trillion

C) USD 4 trillion

D) USD 2 trillion

94) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced creating a dedicated platform to address digital payment frauds in the country. To take this initiative forward, the RBI has constituted a committee, under the Chairmanship of _____ to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for the platform.

- A) AP Hota
- B) M Damodaran
- C) Rajeev Kher
- D) VSK Kaumudi

95) Who among the following took oath as the Chief Minister of Sikkim?

- A) Nayab Singh Saini
- B) Pema Khandu
- C) Prem Singh Tamang
- D) Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu

96) Prem Singh Tamang was sworn in as the Chief Minister of which of the following state?

- A) Arunachal Pradesh
- B) Meghalaya
- C) Sikkim
- D) Uttarakhand

97) In which of the following tiger reserve of Madhya Pradesh a rare four-horned antelope has been sighted for the first time?

- A) Kanha Tiger Reserve
- B) Panna Tiger Reserve
- C) Pench Tiger Reserve
- D) Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve

98) Which of the following country has launched its new "Deep Stand-off" long-range air-launched ballistic missile named "AIR LORA"?

- A) China
- B) India
- C) Israel
- D) Russia



99) 'AIM – ICDK Water Challenge 4.0' initiative aimed at fostering innovation and sustainability in India was launched by _____.

- A) Central Pollution Control Board
- B) Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- C) Ministry of Agriculture
- D) NITI Aayog

100) The UN has added the _____ to the global list of offenders who commit violations against children?

- A) Pakistan
- B) Maldives
- C) Israel
- D) Iran

101) Which of the following bank has launched 'SME Digital Business Loans', to sanction loans to MSME sectors?

- A) Yes Bank
- B) State Bank of India
- C) SIDBI
- D) Indian Bank

102) Which of the following company has signed a landmark defence deal with UAE's Edge Group?

- A) Adani Defence and Aerospace
- B) Defence Research and Development Organisation
- C) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- D) Mahindra Defence Systems Limited

103) _____ has entered into a strategic collaboration with Japan based advanced semiconductor solutions provider Renesas Electronics Corporation with an eye on boosting semiconductor innovation in the country.

- A) Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore (Bengaluru)
- B) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay
- C) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Hyderabad
- D) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee

104) The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has awarded the Dilip Bose award for lifetime achievement to _____.

- A) Nar Singh and Rohini Lokhande
- B) Neeraj Chopra and Sheetal Devi
- C) Novak Djokovic and Aitana Bonmati
- D) Shubam Gill and Deepti Sharma

105) On June 10, 2024, the Indian Army received the revolutionary Man Portable Counter Drone System (MPCDS) developed by _____.

- A) AXISCADES Technologies Limited
- B) Bharat Dynamics Limited
- C) Big Bang Boom Solutions Private Limited
- D) Marut Dronetech Private Limited

106) What is the rank of India in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap index 2024?

- A) 129
- B) 127
- C) 123
- D) 120

107) Which of the following maritime exercise was held between India and Japan at Yokosuka, Japan recently?

- A) Dharma Guardian
- B) JIMEX
- C) Sahyog Kaijin
- D) Shinyuu Maitri

108) _____ launched India's inaugural index fund centered on defense stocks.

- A) Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund
- B) Mirae Asset Mutual Fund
- C) ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund
- D) Groww Mutual Fund

109) _____ was elected as the first vice-chair of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Paris.

- A) Anil Kumar Lahoti
- B) Harsh Pati Singhania
- C) Mio Oka
- D) Philippe Varin

110) The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has authorized acquisition by _____ of Global Infrastructure Management, LLC.

- A) BlackRock Funding
- B) Dickey Alternative Investment Trust
- C) Minda Corporation Limited
- D) Piramal Alternatives Trust Fund

111) Pema Khandu was sworn in as the Chief Minister of which of the following state?

- A) Mizoram
- B) Manipur
- C) Assam
- D) Arunachal Pradesh

112) According to the recently released Global Economic Prospects Report by _____, India is predicted to remain the fastest-growing major economy globally, with a projected GDP growth rate of 6.6% for FY25.

- A) ILO
- B) UNDP
- C) UNEP
- D) World Bank

113) Which of the following state government has announced the "Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina" scheme recently?

- A) Sikkim
- B) Nagaland
- C) Manipur
- D) Assam

114) _____ and NASA researchers are studying Multidrug-Resistant Pathogens on the International Space Station (ISS).

- A) IIT Varanasi
- B) IIT Mumbai
- C) IIT Madras
- D) IIT Delhi

115) The Group of Seven (G7) summit was hosted by which of the following country?

- A) Canada
- B) France

- C) Italy
- D) Japan

116) Who among the following was re-elected as South Africa's president?

- A) Cyril Ramaphosa
- B) Jacob Zuma
- C) Julius Malema
- D) Thabo Mbeki

117) What is India's projected GDP growth in FY25 as per a report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)?

- A) 6.8%
- B) 7%
- C) 8%
- D) 8.3%

118) Which of the following company topped the Kantar BrandZ Most Valuable Global Brands 2024?

- A) Apple
- B) Google
- C) Microsoft
- D) TCS

119) _____ was awarded the Asia-Pacific region's 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' by The Asian Banker.

- A) SEBI
- B) Reserve Bank of India
- C) Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority
- D) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India

120) Indian Army has inducted _____ India's first indigenous suicide drone by Solar Industries from Nagpur.

- A) Nagastra-1
- B) Haeil-5-23
- C) FWD-200B
- D) Drishti 10 Starliner

121) Which of the following country has signed an MoU with the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) to advance weather forecasting and monitoring?

- A) Bhutan
- B) Dominican Republic
- C) Mauritius
- D) UAE

122) What is the rank of India in the 2024 Environment Performance Index?

- A) 176
- B) 150
- C) 113
- D) 39

123) The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has selected _____ as System Integrator (SI) for Digitisation Project.

- A) Centre for Development of Advanced Computing
- B) National Informatics Centre
- C) NEC Corporation
- D) Tata Consultancy Services

124) _____ won the FIDE under-20 Girl's World Chess Championship.

- A) Valentina Gunina
- B) Vaishali Rameshbabu
- C) Divya Deshmukh
- D) Anastasia Bodnaruk

125) When the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was observed?

- A) 17 June
- B) 16 June
- C) 15 June
- D) 14 June

126) Which of the following ministry launched the Environmental flows (E-flows) Monitoring System, ensuring the continuous and sustainable flow of the Ganga River?

- A) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare
- B) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- C) Ministry of Jal Shakti
- D) Ministry of Panchayati Raj

127) What is the rank of India in the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2024 released by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP)?

- A) 116
- B) 113
- C) 12
- D) 4

128) Adani Group has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with _____ for a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in Chukha province.

- A) Bhutan
- B) Mauritius
- C) Nepal
- D) Sri Lanka

129) The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with which of the following bank to increase digital payment services for users of the eMigrate portal?

- A) State Bank of India
- B) Reserve Bank of India
- C) Punjab National Bank
- D) Indian Overseas Bank

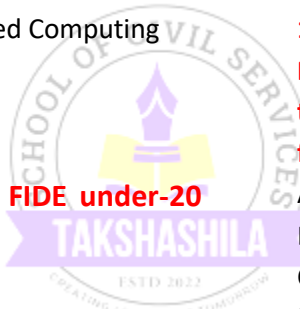
130) _____ has ventured into storytelling with her first picture book for children, "Ed Finds A Home".

- A) Alia Bhatt
- B) Anasuya Sengupta
- C) Payal Kapadia
- D) Priyanka Chopra Jonas

131) The Ministry of Defense has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to _____ for the acquisition of 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) named 'Prachand'.

- A) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- B) BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited
- C) Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited
- D) Bharat Electronics Limited

132) The central government has given a year-long extension to the Digital Health Incentive Scheme



(DHIS) recently. The scheme will now remain in effect till _____.

- A) 31 March 2025
- B) 31 May 2025
- C) 30 June 2025
- D) 31 July 2025

133) Fitch Ratings has raised India's GDP forecast to _____ in FY25.

- A) 6.7%
- B) 7.2%
- C) 7.5%
- D) 8%

134) Who among the following was named as the 'Land Hero' by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)?

- A) Siddesh Sakore
- B) Nahid Afrin
- C) Kartik Verma
- D) Gauranshi Sharma

135) UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has announced the appointment of who among the following as its newest global Goodwill Ambassador?

- A) Narendra Kumar Yadav
- B) Theo James
- C) Usain Bolt
- D) Vinícius Junior

136) As of January 2024, India has a total inventory of 172 nuclear warheads, as per a report released by which of the following organisation?

- A) Stockholm International Peace Institute
- B) Mercom India
- C) World Bank
- D) Worldline

137) Who among the following was appointed as the Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)?

- A) Abhishek Sinha
- B) Amit Pandey
- C) Ashwini Kumar

D) Rajeev Saxena

138) Which of the following company launched the world's first large-scale 100% hydrogen-ready engine power plant?

- A) Wartsila
- B) Reliance Industries Limited
- C) Mindgrove Technologies
- D) Adani Green Energy Limited

139) As per the Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2023 released by Kroll who among the following secured the top spot with a brand value of \$227.9 million?

- A) Yuvraj Singh
- B) Virat Kohli
- C) Shubman Gill
- D) Rashmika Mandana

140) Who among the following became the first Indian to win South Africa's 'Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award'?

- A) Vinod Ganatra
- B) Avantika Vandanapu
- C) Anish Kapoor
- D) Alok Shukla

141) Which ministry announced that "The Post Office Act, 2023" would take effect from June 18, 2024?

- A) Ministry of Communication
- B) Ministry of Home Affairs
- C) Ministry of Law and Justice
- D) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

142) The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has collaborated with _____ to energise agriculture sector of India with emerging skills.

- A) Australia
- B) Japan
- C) Thailand
- D) United Kingdom

143) ADB has approved a _____ policy-based loan to improve India's health system preparedness and capacity to respond to future pandemics.

- A) \$ 530 million
- B) \$ 181 Million
- C) \$ 170 million
- D) \$ 100 million

144) _____ launched RuPay Wave Credit Card with NPCI for UPI-powered transactions.

- A) Bank of India
- B) Federal Bank
- C) Indian Bank
- D) Union Bank of India

145) Along with Ria Money Transfer _____ has partnered to provide convenient and affordable financial services directly to the doorsteps of customers in remote areas.

- A) HDFC Bank
- B) India Post Payments Bank
- C) Indian Bank
- D) State Bank of India

146) _____ got final approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to function as a Payment Aggregator (PA).

- A) Fiserv India Pvt Ltd
- B) Hitachi Payment Services Private Ltd
- C) SabPaisa
- D) SBI Card and Payment Services Ltd

147) As per the June 2024 issue of RBI's monthly Bulletin what is India's growth forecast in the first quarter of FY25?

- A) 7.3%
- B) 6.8%
- C) 6.6%
- D) 6.5%

148) Who among the following was appointed as the Chairman of Bharti AXA Life Insurance?

- A) Aeratu S. Rajeev
- B) Akhil Gupta
- C) Raja Kumar
- D) Shashi Kumar Singh

149) Who among the following was appointed as the Pro tem Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha?

- A) Bhartruhari Mahtab
- B) Om Birla
- C) Rajnath Singh
- D) Ram Nath Kovind

150) When the World Refugee Day was observed?

- A) 19 June
- B) 20 June
- C) 21 June
- D) 22 June

ANSWERS

1) Correct Answer: A

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) expects India's merchandise exports increase around 14% to \$500-510 billion in FY25 from \$437 billion in 2023-24, led by technology driven sectors of exports such as machinery, electrical and electronic, automobile, pharma and biotechnology which have received a fillip from the production-linked incentive schemes.

2) Correct Answer: C

Airbus Helicopters and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) have signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) for financing the purchase of Airbus' helicopters in India. The collaboration marks a significant foray of SIDBI into helicopter financing and meeting the financial and development needs of India's fast-growing rotary wing sector.

3) Correct Answer: D

The Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform, the Receivables Exchange of India Ltd (RXIL), has financed over 50 lakh invoices totaling ₹1 lakh crore. The joint venture between SIDBI, NSE, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, and YES Bank, provides working capital

solutions for MSMEs by facilitating invoice financing on the platform.

4) Correct Answer: A

RITES Limited, a leading engineering consultancy firm has signed a contract agreement for supplying 200 broad gauge passenger carriages to Bangladesh Railways. The export arm of Indian Railways, RITES has won the USD 111.26 million (approximately Rs 915 crore) contract, funded by the European Investment Bank (EIB).

5) Correct Answer: C

According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index (as of 20th May 2024) Bernard Arnault, the founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, topped the world's richest list with a net worth of USD 220 billion.

6) Correct Answer: A

India's rank on the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024 has risen to 39th place, with global tourism activities returning to pre-pandemic levels. While the US topped the list, India is ranked highest in South Asia and among the lower-middle-income economies.

7) Correct Answer: D

Global carbon pricing revenues reached a record USD 104 billion in 2023, according to the World Bank's annual "State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2024" report. This milestone highlights the growing global commitment to using economic tools to combat climate change.

8) Correct Answer: D

Spain has become the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance. India and France jointly launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) during COP21 in Paris. The ISA aims to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement through the rapid and massive deployment of solar energy.

9) Correct Answer: C

Homegrown logistics services platform Porter has likely become the third unicorn (with valuation of \$1 billion and above) in India this year after a fresh internal round. Top investors like Tiger Global, Peak XV Partners,

Lightrock and the Mahindra Group have infused money in Porter.

10) Correct Answer: A

German author Jenny Erpenbeck and her translator Michael Hofmann have won the International Booker Prize 2024 for fiction for their novel 'Kairos.' The book, which delves into a complex love story set during East Germany's final years, was chosen as the winner from a shortlist of five other works, out of a total of 149 submitted novels.

11) Correct Answer: A

In order to provide expert guidance and definitive care during medical emergencies for serving personnel and their families of the Indian Air Force (IAF) across the nation, an Emergency Medical Response System (EMRS), was inaugurated by Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari at Command Hospital Air Force in Bengaluru.

12) Correct Answer: B

The money flowing into Non-Resident Indians' (NRIs') deposits rose by 63.55 per cent to \$ 14.7 billion in Financial Year 2024 (FY24), from \$ 8.98 billion FY23. The earlier high was \$ 15.97 billion in FY16, according to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

13) Correct Answer: B

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) board approved the transfer of Rs 2,10,874 crore as surplus to the Central Government for the accounting year 2023-24. The decision was taken at Apex Bank's 608th meeting of the Central Board of Directors.

14) Correct Answer: B

The International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) has set up an expert committee to position GIFT IFSC in Gujarat as a 'Global Trading Hub'. The 21-member expert committee will be chaired by Rajeev Kher, former commerce secretary, according to an official release.

15) Correct Answer: B

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd. (Mahindra Finance) said it had obtained a Certificate of Registration (Corporate Agency License) from IRDAI to act as a 'Corporate Agent (Composite)' under the Insurance Act,

1938. This license would enable the company to offer tailored insurance plans to its customer base, it said.

16) Correct Answer: B

Nearly 50 billion ballpoint pens are discarded each year, with 95% comprised of plastic. Saurabh H. Mehta from New Delhi developed the world's first fully biodegradable pen. He established bioQ, which focuses on eco-friendly stationery, and NOTE (No Offence to the Earth), which aims to eliminate plastic from pens.

17) Correct Answer: B

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) said it has signed a deal with Kuwait's commercial lender Burgan Bank to help modernise its core banking technology. The size and tenure of the deal were not disclosed. TCS BaNCS is a core banking software suite for retail banks developed by TCS, India's largest IT services firm.

18) Correct Answer: B

An Indian-origin professor of astronomy, Shrinivas R. Kulkarni from the US, will be awarded the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy in recognition of his pioneering discoveries on millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects.

19) Correct Answer: D

Thiruvananthapuram International Airport has made history by becoming the first airport in India to achieve the Zero Waste to Landfill (ZWL) accolade. This recognition, awarded by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII-ITC) Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, highlights the airport's exceptional waste management practices and commitment to sustainability.

20) Correct Answer: B

The Delhi High Court has appointed Justice Najmi Waziri (Retired) as Chairperson of an ad-hoc Administrative Committee to supervise the administration of the Equestrian Federation of India (EFI). The Committee shall take over charge of the day-to-day administration and functioning of the Equestrian Federation of India.

21) Correct Answer: C

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan attended 'Exercise Cyber Suraksha – 2024', on May 22, 2024 in New Delhi. The comprehensive cyber defence exercise was conducted by Defence Cyber Agency from 20 - 24 May 2024.

22) Correct Answer: B

Indian-born Nimesh Arora, the CEO of Palo Alto Networks, has landed the second spot on The Wall Street Journal's 2023 list of highest-paid CEOs in the US. With a compensation of \$151.43 million, the 56-year-old's earnings have surpassed those of many tech giants, like Meta's Mark Zuckerberg and Google's Sundar Pichai.

23) Correct Answer: B

Arti, an 18-year-old e-rickshaw driver from Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, recently had the honour of meeting King Charles III at Buckingham Palace. She was in London to receive the prestigious Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award at the Prince's Trust Awards.

24) Correct Answer: D

Mountaineer and cricketer Kabak Yano etched her name in history by becoming the fifth woman from Arunachal Pradesh to scale Mt Everest. She is also the first woman from the Nyishi tribe to do so. She has represented the Arunachal cricket team in the first-class domestic season, playing in the Women's U-23 T20 League (Plate Group) in New Delhi during the 2018-19 season.

25) Correct Answer: A

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has, for the first time, successfully landed an aircraft using night vision goggles (NVG) on an advanced landing ground in the Eastern sector. The IAF's official X account shared the news, stating an "IAF C-130J aircraft carried out a successful Night Vision Goggles aided landing at an Advanced Landing Ground in the Eastern sector."

26) Correct Answer: C

The Prudential Authority of the South African Reserve Bank has imposed a financial penalty of 10 million rand (₹4.5 crore) on the State Bank of India's South Africa branch. This penalty was imposed under Section 45C of the country's Financial Intelligence Centre Act 38 of 2001

(FIC Act) for non-compliance with certain provisions of the FIC Act or other related orders or directives.

27) Correct Answer: B

Global investment bank Goldman Sachs has raised India's GDP growth forecast to 6.7 percent for calendar year 2024. The latest data released by the bank said they expect a sustained growth momentum with additional fiscal space on account of a bumper dividend transfer from the RBI.

28) Correct Answer: A

Vice Admiral Gurcharan Singh assumed the appointment of Commandant, National Defence Academy from Vice Admiral Ajay Kocchar in Pune. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy (Khadakwasla), he was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 1st July 1990.

29) Correct Answer: B

Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda won re-election in a vote marked by defence concerns over neighbouring Russia, official results showed. The count published by the electoral commission showed that Nausėda won 76% of votes with 80% of ballots counted after polls closed in the second-round vote.

30) Correct Answer: A

Azad Engineering has bagged a DRDO laboratory Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) contract for end-to-end manufacturing, assembly and integration of completely-assembled advanced turbo gas generator engine. Deliveries of the first batch of the fully integrated turbo engines will begin early 2026.

31) Correct Answer: C

In an initiative to explore sustainable transport solutions, the Indian Army, in partnership with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), has started demonstration trials of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus. The event also saw the handover of a Hydrogen fuel cell bus to the Indian Army, marking the start of a partnership focused on pioneering sustainable transport technologies.

32) Correct Answer: B

State-owned Gas Authority of India Ltd's (GAIL) maiden green hydrogen plant at Vijaipur in Madhya Pradesh has been commissioned. The plant will produce about 4.3

tonnes of green hydrogen per day, with a purity of about 99.999 per cent by volume.

33) Correct Answer: B

The government is planning to launch a Unified portal that will process health insurance claims across hospitals all over the country. The National Health Claim Exchange (NHCE) one-stop-portal is likely to be launched in the next two-three months.

34) Correct Answer: D

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in a statement said that for the first time in 30 years an Indian film named 'All We Imagine as Light' of Payal Kapadia, which centers around the lives of two nurses, was nominated for the Palme d'or, the highest award in the festival. This film won the Grand Prix, the second position in the category.

35) Correct Answer: B

The Monaco Grand Prix (GP) 2024, was won by Monaco-born racer Charles Leclerc of Ferrari on May 26, 2024, at the Circuit de Monaco in Monte Carlo. With this triumph, Charles Leclerc ends a 39-race winless streak and wins for the first time since the 2022 Austrian GP.

36) Correct Answer: C

Every year May 28 is observed as World Menstruation Day to raise awareness of menstruation, commonly called periods. 28 May was chosen as the Menstrual Hygiene Day because it represents the average length of a menstrual cycle. The theme of World Menstrual Hygiene Day 2024 is #PeriodFriendlyWorld.

37) Correct Answer: B

Advancing the Skill Mission, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) has announced a strategic partnership to advance skill development and lifelong learning in India and globally.

38) Correct Answer: B

Reserve Bank of India has launched three major initiatives: the PRAVAAH portal, the Retail Direct Mobile App, and a FinTech Repository. Pravaah is a secure and centralised web-based portal for any individual or entity

to seek authorisation, license or regulatory approval on any reference made by it to the Reserve Bank.

39) Correct Answer: C

Poonawalla Fincorp Limited, in collaboration with IndusInd Bank, has launched the co-branded 'IndusInd Bank Poonawalla Fincorp eLITE RuPay Platinum Credit Card', a card designed to redefine and elevate the banking experience of customers.

40) Correct Answer: C

India has announced \$1 million in relief assistance to Papua New Guinea after a tragic landslide in the Enga Province. The Ministry of external affairs expressed solidarity and highlighted India's commitment to disaster risk reduction.

41) Correct Answer: D

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is entered into between Ministry External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India and CSC eGovernance Services India Limited to create a synergy between CSC SPV & MEA to provide the eMigrate services through CSCs in the country.

42) Correct Answer: B

The Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) in collaboration with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has established a DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA CoE) on its campus for interdisciplinary research in next-generation defense technologies.

43) Correct Answer: B

Major Radhika Sen, an Indian peacekeeper deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), has been named the United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year for 2023. The prestigious award recognizes her outstanding service and efforts to empower local communities, especially women and girls, during her tour of duty from March 2023 to April 2024.

44) Correct Answer: B

Capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has notified a framework for issuance of subordinate units by privately placed infrastructure

investment trusts (InvITs). It further said that InvIT would not raise funds through public issues if any subordinate units have been issued and are outstanding.

45) Correct Answer: D

Bank of Maharashtra has introduced the Maha Krishi Samrudhi Yojana (MKSRY), offering financial assistance to food and agro-based industries, agri-infrastructure projects involved in processing activities, and the development of agricultural infrastructure facilities.

46) Correct Answer: A

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Ayush, has launched "PRAGATI- 2024" (Pharma Research in AyurGyan And Techno Innovation). It offers a very useful opportunity for collaborative research in the field of Ayurveda.

47) Correct Answer: C

NSE Indices Ltd. has launched India's first index focused on electric mobility named 'Nifty EV and New Age Automotive index' to track the performance of companies, which form a part of the EV ecosystem or are involved in the development of new-age automotive vehicles or related technology

48) Correct Answer: B

Capital Small Finance Bank (CSFB), has forged a bancassurance tie-up with ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd.(ICICI Lombard). Through this collaboration, CSFB will leverage its network and customer base to distribute ICICI Lombard's suite of general insurance products, including health, motor, home, travel and rural insurance.

49) Correct Answer: B

PhonePe has launched secured lending products on its platform by partnering with banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and other fintech firms. Walmart-owned PhonePe said it has more than 535 million registered users and aims to create a "powerful and seamless user experience" in the secured loans category.

50) Correct Answer: C

The global investment bank, in its latest report '2024 Global Economic Midyear Outlook', attributed India's

firm growth to three megatrends -- global offshoring, digitalization, and energy transition. Morgan Stanley forecasts 6.8 per cent growth in 2024 (against RBI's 7 per cent), and 6.5 per cent the next, and thinks inflation will stay within policymakers' comfort zone.

51) Correct Answer: B

India has moved 100 metric tonnes of its gold stored in the U.K. to domestic vaults in FY24, sources said. This is one of the biggest movements of gold undertaken by the country since 1991, when pledging a substantial part of the gold holding to tide over a foreign exchange crisis resulted in its movement out of vaults. The country's overall gold holding increased 27.46 metric tonnes in FY24 and it stands at 822 metric tonnes, as per official data.

52) Correct Answer: A

Jio Financial Services announced the launch of beta version of 'JioFinance' app to offer UPI and digital banking among others. The company said that the app aims to integrate digital banking, UPI transactions, bill settlement and insurance advisory.

53) Correct Answer: A

Moody's Ratings projected India's GDP expansion at 6.8 percent in the current year, followed by 6.5 percent in 2025, on the back of strong economic expansion and policy continuity post-election. Driven by the Centre's robust capital spending and strong manufacturing activity, India's real GDP growth in 2023 stood at 7.7 percent, up from 6.5 percent in 2022.

54) Correct Answer: B

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India said its stake in PI Industries as an institutional investor has gone past the 5% mark after it acquired 72,000 shares of the agrochemicals firm from the open market at an average cost of ₹3,558.29 each. The holding was raised, as an investment function, from 4.95% (75,19,910 shares) to 5% (75,91,910 shares), LIC said.

55) Correct Answer: A

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has agreed to become a member of World Boxing, the International Federation established to ensure boxing remains at the

heart of the Olympic Movement. The membership application has been approved by the BFI's General Assembly, and will be ratified by World Boxing's Executive Board.

56) Correct Answer: B

The Reliance Foundation and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), an independent body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India, have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at empowering residents of coastal regions, as per a statement from the Foundation.

57) Correct Answer: C

Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has introduced a new numbering series, 160xxxxxx for making service/transactional calls. This initiative is a step towards providing citizens with a way to easily identify such legitimate calls.

58) Correct Answer: A

The Bank Clinic is an initiative by the All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBE) to help customers address their grievances amid rapid expansion in technology and a series of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines on retail banking.

59) Correct Answer: C

Maintaining consistency in attracting foreign investment inflows, India has received a total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow of USD 70.9 billion in the financial year 2023-24. The largest contributor to the country's FDI inflow was Mauritius with a total of 25 per cent, followed by Singapore which infused 24 per cent of the total FDI inflow in the country.

60) Correct Answer: A

India's first woman Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ruchira Kamboj retired after 35 years of service, during which she served as Indian envoy in Bhutan, South Africa and the UNESCO. She became Permanent Representative/Ambassador of India to New York, on August 2, 2022.

61) Correct Answer: C

The Department of School Education signed an MoU with the National Book Trust in New Delhi to create an

institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya. Speaking on the occasion, Secretary of the Department of Higher Education K. Sanjay Murthy said that the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya will be available round-the-clock, irrespective of the geographic location of the readers, making books more accessible to them.

62) Correct Answer: B

Indian Railways' Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) Vadodara entered into collaboration with Nokia, Plasser India and Jacobs to strengthen the partnership between industry and academia. Three MoUs were signed at Rail Bhawan, New Delhi.

63) Correct Answer: D

In an effort to make complex financial concepts accessible and straightforward for investors, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has launched an updated version of its personal finance app, Saarthi, now called Saarthi 2.0.

64) Correct Answer: C

Adani One and ICICI Bank has launched India's first cobranded credit cards with airport-linked benefits in collaboration with Visa. Available in two variants – Adani One ICICI Bank Signature Credit Card and Adani One ICICI Bank Platinum Credit Card – they offer a comprehensive and substantial reward programme.

65) Correct Answer: D

Claudia Sheinbaum has been elected as Mexico's first female president, in a historic landslide win. Mexico's official electoral authority said preliminary results showed the 61-year-old former mayor of Mexico City winning between 58% and 60% of the vote in election.

66) Correct Answer: C

NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are working on technologies to ensure accurate timekeeping and synchronization for lunar missions. Establishing a lunar time zone is a significant step towards fostering international collaboration and ensuring the success of multi-national lunar missions.

67) Correct Answer: C

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software named Parallel RANS Solver for Aerospace Vehicle Aero-thermo-dynamic Analysis (PraVaHa). This software was developed in ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).

68) Correct Answer: C

Indian delegation led by Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Sunil Barthwal participated in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Ministerial meeting held in Singapore on 6 June 2024. IPEF was launched on 23 May 2022 at Tokyo, Japan, comprising of 14 countries – Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and USA.

69) Correct Answer: C

The Netherlands has emerged as India's third largest export destination after the U.S. and UAE during 2023-24, according to the Commerce Ministry data. India's trade surplus with the Netherlands has increased to \$17.4 billion in the last fiscal from \$13 billion in 2022-23.

70) Correct Answer: C

Poet and playwright Siddhalinga Pattanashetti was awarded the prestigious Gudleppa Hallikeri Award for 2024 by the Gudleppa Hallikeri Memorial Foundation, Hosaritti (Haveri District). Prof. Pattanashetti is the 19th recipient of the award. The award comprises a purse of ₹25,000 and a memento.

71) Correct Answer: C

Supreme Court judge, Justice Hima Kohli will continue to head the Supreme Court Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC). She has been heading the committee for the past one year. The panel also comprises Justice B.V. Nagarathna, Additional Registrar Sukhda Pritam and senior advocates Meenakshi Arora and Mahalakshmi Pavani.

72) Correct Answer: B

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), the premier Telecom R&D centre of the Government of India, awarded UN's WSIS 2024 "Champion" Award. The

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 Forum 2024, a High-Level Event was conducted by International Telecom Union (ITU) in Geneva, Switzerland from 27th May - 31st May, 2024.

73) Correct Answer: A

Global unemployment is set to fall slightly this year, a United Nations agency said on May 29, reversing its previous prediction of a rise while warning of "slow progress" on tackling inequalities. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) expects a global unemployment rate of 4.9% in 2024.

74) Correct Answer: B

Punjab National Bank (PNB) and India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) has signed an agreement to offer long-term financial assistance to viable infrastructure projects. With this, both the institutions will collaborate to fund the infrastructure projects wherein the parties can mutually participate under consortium/multiple lending arrangements to provide financial support to the prospective borrowers subject to due diligence and on a case-to-case basis

75) Correct Answer: C

Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah issued a decree nominating Sheikh Sabah al-Khalid al-Sabah as crown prince. Sheikh Sabah al-Khalid previously served as Prime Minister from 2019 until 2022, when he resigned after facing a combative legislature as the head of successive cabinets, with opposition MPs bent on questioning him over issues including perceived corruption.

76) Correct Answer: C

Secretary, MeitY, S. Krishnan has inaugurated indigenous air quality monitoring system AQ-AIMS and launched Air-Pravah app on the occasion of World Environment Day in New Delhi. These are developed under MeitY supported technologies.

77) Correct Answer: A

Defence Accounts Department (DAD) has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Bank of India, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India and Utkarsh Small Finance Bank in New Delhi to onboard them as

SPARSH [System for Pension Administration (Raksha)] service centres across 1,128 branches of the four banks.

78) Correct Answer: B

The market regulator Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has issued guidelines that make it easier for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to deal with their securities holdings after their FPI registration has expired. Type 1 material changes needs to be now informed within seven days and supported documents to be provided within 30 days.

79) Correct Answer: D

Universal Sompo has launched a new theme, "Insure today for a safe tomorrow," to raise awareness about the importance of insurance in safeguarding against unforeseen risks. Universal Sompo offers a wide range of insurance products, including motor, health, personal accident, fire, and burglary insurance.

80) Correct Answer: B

Foreign brokerage Goldman Sachs has upped India GDP growth forecast by 20 basis points to 6.9 per cent this Calendar Year (CY) from an earlier projection of 6.7 per cent. This follows the stronger-than-expected GDP growth print of 7.8 per cent for the January-March 2024 quarter.

81) Correct Answer: B

Ministry of Mines and Central TB Division of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi for collaborative and convergent action towards elimination of Tuberculosis. The MoU will forge inter-ministerial collaboration and strategic partnerships to achieve the target of Eliminating Tuberculosis (TB) in India by 2025.

82) Correct Answer: A

According to the Institute of International Finance, global debt (including borrowings of households, businesses and governments) has reached \$315 trillion in 2024. This is three times the global gross domestic product (GDP).

83) Correct Answer: C

Slovakia is the 42nd country to sign the Artemis Accords, which establish a practical set of principles to guide space exploration cooperation among nations participating in

NASA's Artemis program. Earlier, Peru became the 41st country to sign the Artemis Accords.

84) Correct Answer: D

Fintech firm PhonePe has partnered with ride-hailing platform PickMe to enable UPI-based payments for Indian travellers in Sri Lanka, the Walmart group firm said. Last month, PhonePe entered into a partnership with LankaPay to allow its users to pay using UPI across Sri Lanka.

85) Correct Answer: C

Private life insurer, PNB MetLife India Insurance has appointed Sameer Bansal as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company effective from July 1, 2024. The appointment is subject to regulatory approvals.

86) Correct Answer: D

State-owned Visakhapatnam Port has broken into the top 20 rankings in the Container Port Performance Index 2023 (CPPI 2023), developed by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence. Visakhapatnam Port was ranked 19 in the Index, higher than Mundra Port (ranked 27) run by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ).

87) Correct Answer: A

The Reserve Bank of India on June 7 raised projection of real gross domestic product for the financial year 2024-25 to 7.2 percent, from 7 percent estimated previously, said the governor Shaktikanta Das. The governor said the GDP growth in the first quarter is likely to be at 7.3 percent, 7.2 percent in Q2, 7.3 percent in Q3 and 7.2 percent in the last quarter.

88) Correct Answer: D

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) has elected former Cameroonian prime minister Philemon Yang as president of the 79th UNGA session. Yang will succeed Denis Francis of Trinidad and Tobago, president of the 78th UNGA session, when the 79th UNGA session opens on Sept. 10 at the UN headquarters in New York.

89) Correct Answer: B

Shri Kamal Kishore Soan, a senior IAS officer from Jharkhand Cadre (Batch : 1998), who is currently serving

as an Additional Secretary and Director General, Labour Welfare in the Ministry of Labour & Employment, has taken over the additional charge of Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).

90) Correct Answer: B

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa finished third in the Open Section of Norway Chess 2024 despite beating Hikaru Nakamura in the 10th and final round of the prestigious tournament. Magnus Carlsen, the World No. 1, won the title at his home in Stavanger.

91) Correct Answer: C

Sub Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev became the Indian Navy's first woman helicopter pilot during a passing out parade held in the naval air station INS Rajali at Arakkonam in Ranipet district. A total of 21 officers were awarded the prestigious 'Golden Wings' by Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command.

92) Correct Answer: D

India participated in the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting, which commenced on 10 June in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. Dammu Ravi, Secretary (Economic Relations) at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), led the Indian delegation at the meeting.

93) Correct Answer: D

Global investment in clean energy technology and infrastructure is set to hit \$2 trillion this year, twice the amount going into fossil fuels, an International Energy Agency (IEA) report showed. Total energy investment is expected to exceed \$3 trillion for the first time in 2024, the IEA said in its annual World Energy Investment report.

94) Correct Answer: A

The Reserve Bank has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of former MD and CEO of National Payments Corporation of India, Mr. AP Hota to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for Digital Payments Intelligence Platform.

95) Correct Answer: C

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) supremo Prem Singh Tamang on June 10 took oath as the Chief Minister of the

Himalayan state for the second consecutive term. The 56-year-old politician was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya at a function held in Paljor Stadium in Gangtok.

96) Correct Answer: C

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) supremo Prem Singh Tamang took oath as chief minister of the Himalayan state for a second straight term. Tamang, 56, who spearheaded the SKM's landslide victory in the assembly polls and the lone Lok Sabha seat in Sikkim, was unanimously elected the leader of the legislature party during a meeting on June 2.

97) Correct Answer: D

A rare four-horned antelope has been sighted for the first time in Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve (Sagar district), Madhya Pradesh. Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve field director AA Ansari said photo of four-horned antelope was captured in camera trap. Before this, there was no information about its presence.

98) Correct Answer: C

Israel Aerospace Industries, a world-class aerospace and defence leader, has unveiled its new "Deep Stand-off" long-range air launched ballistic missile named "AIR LORA." The new missile demonstrated its game-changing capabilities in a fire test launched from an F16.

99) Correct Answer: D

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has announced the launch of two initiatives aimed at fostering innovation and sustainability in India: the 'AIM-ICDK Water Challenge 4.0' and the fifth edition of 'Innovations for You' handbook, spotlighting SDG entrepreneurs of India.

100) Correct Answer: C

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has added Israel's military to a global list of offenders that have committed violations against children, his spokesman confirmed. Israel's inclusion on the list comes after eight months of war in Gaza, in which more than 15,500 children have been killed.

101) Correct Answer: B

State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a new SME digital business loans programme where India's largest bank will use data from income tax and GST returns and bank statements for credit assessment of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and sanction loans in 10 seconds after submitting the required details without any human intervention.

102) Correct Answer: A

Adani Defence and Aerospace has signed a cooperation agreement with EDGE Group, a global technology and defence organisation based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The agreement will create a global platform that utilises the defence and aerospace strengths of both companies by combining product portfolios.

103) Correct Answer: C

The Indian Institute of Technology - Hyderabad (IIT-H) and Japanese advanced semiconductor solutions provider Renesas Electronics Corporation have entered into a three-year memorandum of understanding to undertake research and collaborate in the field of very-large-scale-integration (VLSI) and embedded semiconductor systems.

104) Correct Answer: A

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has awarded the Dilip Bose award for lifetime achievement to coach Nar Singh and Rohini Lokhande. The award along with a cash prize of Rs.50,000 was presented during the 11th National coaches workshop held at the PYC Hindu Gymkhana in Pune on June 7 and 8.

105) Correct Answer: A

AXISCADES Technologies Ltd, has started delivering the first-of-its-kind Man Portable Counter Drone System (MPCDS) in India to the armed forces under a Landmark Order of Rs 100 Crores from the Indian Army. Uniquely designed and entirely Made in India, the MPCDS is compact, portable, and operates on both battery and mains power.

106) Correct Answer: A

India has slipped two places on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap index to 129th place, while Iceland retained its top position in the rankings.

Globally, Sudan was ranked last on the index of 146 countries, while Pakistan slipped three places to 145th.

107) Correct Answer: B

Japan-India maritime exercise (JIMEX 24) was held at Yokosuka in Japan. Indian Navy said that JIMEX 24 provides an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and facilitates operational interactions between India and Japan.

108) Correct Answer: A

Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund has introduced the Motilal Oswal Nifty India Defence Index Fund, an open-ended fund designed to mirror the total returns of the Nifty India Defence Index. The new fund offer (NFO) for this scheme will be open for subscription from June 13 until June 24.

109) Correct Answer: B

Harsh Pati Singhania, Chairman and Managing Director of JK Paper Ltd and Director of JK Organisation, has been elected as First Vice-Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Paris. The election took place during the World Council meeting on June 11 in Paris, France.

110) Correct Answer: A

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved acquisition of Global Infrastructure Management, LLC by BlackRock Funding, Inc. BlackRock is a U.S. publicly traded company active in the provision of global investment management, risk management and advisory services to institutional and retail clients around the world.

111) Correct Answer: D

BJP leader Pema Khandu took oath as the chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh for the third consecutive term on June 13. Apart from Mr. Khandu, Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt Gen (retired) K.T. Parnaik administered the oath of office and secrecy to Chowna Mein as the Deputy Chief Minister.

112) Correct Answer: D

The World Bank has predicted that India is set to remain the fastest-growing major economy globally, though its growth rate is expected to slow. The June 'Global

Economic Prospects' report maintained the GDP growth forecast for India at 6.6 per cent for FY25.

113) Correct Answer: D

The Assam government cabinet approved the Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina (MMNM) initiative, which was introduced by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on June 12, 2024. By providing financial incentives and government assistance for education, the program seeks to empower girls in the state.

114) Correct Answer: C

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) Researchers are studying multi-drug resistant pathogens on the International Space Station (ISS), which could have key applications for astronauts' health as well on earth.

115) Correct Answer: C

Italy hosted the annual summit of leaders from the Group of Seven (G7) major democracies on June 13-15. The G7 comprises the United States, Japan, Canada, Germany, France, Italy and Britain. The meeting was held in Borgo Egnazia in the southern region of Puglia - a luxury hotel with a Michelin starred restaurant.

116) Correct Answer: A

Cyril Ramaphosa has been re-elected as South Africa's president for a second term after his party struck a last-minute deal with political rivals. Ramaphosa's African National Congress, which came to power in 1994 after waging a decades-long battle against apartheid, lost its majority for the first time in an election last month and spent two weeks locked in intensive behind-the-scenes talks with other parties.

117) Correct Answer: C

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has estimated India's GDP to record a robust 8 percent growth, the newly elected CII President Sanjiv Puri said while showing optimism about India's economic growth. He pointed out that several sectors including agriculture, information technology, services, and global trade are poised for further improvement.

118) Correct Answer: A

TCS and Infosys – India’s first and second largest IT services companies (respectively) – have been ranked among the Top 100 most valuable brands in the world. Telecom giant Airtel has also made it to the list, which is led by tech giants Apple, Google, Microsoft and Amazon.

119) Correct Answer: A

SEBI has been given 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' award in Asia Pacific by The Asian Banker for its role in enhancing the regulatory framework for securities markets in India. The award was received by SEBI's Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney in a ceremony held in Hong Kong.

120) Correct Answer: A

In a boost for India’s defence preparedness, the Indian Army has received its first batch of indigenously developed man-portable suicide drones, known as Nagastra 1 loitering munition. These new drones are designed to carry out precision strikes on enemy training camps, launch pads, and infiltrators, without putting the lives of soldiers at risk.

121) Correct Answer: B

India and the Dominican Republic are joining forces to enhance the technical capabilities of the National Meteorological Office (Onamet). This collaboration is cemented by a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) and Onamet, aimed at improving weather forecasting and monitoring.

122) Correct Answer: A

Despite the Union government’s claims on improving the environment, India remains one of the world’s worst five in an environmental performance index consisting of 180 nations prepared by two leading US institutions. The Environmental Performance Index of 2024 released earlier this month positioned India at 176th spot.

123) Correct Answer: C

NEC Corporation has been selected as System Integrator (SI) for a period of six years, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has said. NEC Corporation India is expected to play a crucial and pivotal role in PFRDA’s digital transformation journey.

124) Correct Answer: C

Divya Deshmukh added another significant title to her already impressive collection. The 18-year-old from Nagpur won the World junior girls’ chess championship after beating Bulgaria’s Beloslava Krasteva in the final round at the Gift City Club, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

125) Correct Answer: C

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is observed on June 15 every year to raise awareness about the abuse, neglect and exploitation of older adults. This year’s World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) focuses on the theme “Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies.”

126) Correct Answer: C

The Environmental flows (E-flows) Monitoring System has been developed by the National Mission for Clean Ganga, an arm of the Jal Shakti Ministry. This will aid the planning and monitoring of projects, river water quality, and other key parameters, according to officials.

127) Correct Answer: A

India, in particular, has shown a slight improvement in its ranking in the Institute for Economics and Peace’s annual Global Peace Index. In 2024, India ranked 116 out of 163 countries. In previous rankings, it stood at 139 in GPI 2020 and 141 in GPI 2019.

128) Correct Answer: A

Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani has met Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the country's Druk Green Power Corporation for a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in Chukha province. Further, he praised Bhutan's efforts to develop infrastructure under the vision of King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

129) Correct Answer: A

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the State Bank of India (SBI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance digital payment services for users of the eMigrate portal. This MoU will become operational following the successful integration of SBI's payment gateway, SBlePay, with the eMigrate portal.

130) Correct Answer: A

Alia Bhatt has ventured into storytelling with her first picture book for children, *Ed Finds A Home*. Alia revealed the first book in a series of children's picture books titled "Ed Finds A Home," under her children's wear brand Ed-a-Mamma.

131) Correct Answer: A

The Ministry of Defense has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the acquisition of 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) named 'Prachand'. This substantial procurement, valued at approximately Rs 45,000 crores, includes 90 helicopters for the Indian Army and 66 for the Indian Air Force.

132) Correct Answer: C

The central government has given a year-long extension to the Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS) meant for digitising patients' health records and linking them with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Account (ABHA ID). The scheme, which was launched on January 1, 2023, will now remain in effect till June 30, 2025.

133) Correct Answer: B

Fitch Ratings has upped India's growth forecast, measured in terms of GDP (Gross Domestic Products) to 7.2 per cent during fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25), from the earlier print of 7 per cent. The economy grew by 8.2 per cent during FY24.

134) Correct Answer: A

Siddhesh Sakore, a farmer and the founder of AGRO RANGERS, from Maharashtra, has been named Land Hero by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). On the occasion of World Desertification and Drought Day, the UNCCD announced the names of 10 Land Heroes in a programme in Bonn, Germany.

135) Correct Answer: B

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) named British actor Theo James as a global goodwill ambassador. James, who acted in television series "The Gentlemen" and "The White Lotus", has supported UNHCR since 2016, and has travelled to

Greece, France and Jordan to meet asylum seekers and refugees, the agency said.

136) Correct Answer: A

China now has 500 nuclear warheads, up from 410 in January 2023, while India has 172 (from 164 in 2023) and Pakistan 170 (unchanged from 2023), as per the latest assessment by the Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI).

137) Correct Answer: C

Senior IAS officer Ashwani Kumar has been appointed as the new Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). IAS officer Amit Yadav, previously the Chairperson of the New Delhi Municipal Council, was transferred as per the Home Ministry's directive.

138) Correct Answer: A

Wartsila has launched the world's first large-scale 100% hydrogen-ready engine power plant, the company announced in a press release. The 100% hydrogen-ready engine is expected to be available for orders in 2025, and available for delivery from 2026.

139) Correct Answer: B

Cricketer Virat Kohli has reclaimed the top position in brand value, now reaching \$227.9 million, surpassing Bollywood star Ranveer Singh, who holds the second spot with \$203.1 million, according to Kroll's 'Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2023: Brands, Business, Bollywood'.

140) Correct Answer: A

Globally acclaimed film-maker Vinod Ganatra has become the first Indian to be conferred the prestigious 'Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award' of South Africa for his contribution to films. He was honoured with the coveted award at the 7th Nelson Mandela Children's Film Festival.

141) Correct Answer: A

The Ministry of Communications announced that "The Post Office Act, 2023" became effective on June 18, 2024. The Post Office Act of 2023 repealed the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act of 1898. The Act seeks to establish a clear legislative framework for the provision of citizen-centric services, banking services, and other

government advantages to the country's most remote places.

142) Correct Answer: A

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), in collaboration with the Australian Government, hosted a comprehensive and productive roundtable to discuss the learnings from the Australia-India Critical Agriculture Skills Pilot Project. The scheme seeks to transform the agricultural sector by finding and developing emergent career opportunities.

143) Correct Answer: C

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$170 million loan to strengthen India's health systems by aiding in the implementation of the National Health Policy 2017. This policy-based loan is part of ADB's efforts to provide quality healthcare services to all, in line with the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.

144) Correct Answer: B

Federal Bank, in collaboration with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has launched RuPay Wave Credit Card to offer customers UPI-powered transactions on RuPay network. A press release said that the bank's cardholders can now link their RuPay Wave credit card to their preferred UPI applications.

145) Correct Answer: B

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has partnered with Ria Money Transfer, a global leader in cross-border money transfers to provide convenient and affordable doorstep financial services to customers in remote areas across the country.

146) Correct Answer: C

SabPaisa (SRS Live Technologies Private Limited), a payment solutions provider has announced that it has received final approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to function as a Payment Aggregator (PA) under the Payments and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

147) Correct Answer: A

According to the RBI's June 2024 issue of its monthly Bulletin, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow by 7.3% in the first quarter of FY25 (2024-25). This GDP is consistent with the projections stated by the RBI in its second bi-monthly Monetary Policy issued on June 7, 2024.

148) Correct Answer: B

Bharti AXA Life Insurance, a wholly owned by Bharti Group, on June 19 announced the appointment of Akhil Gupta, currently the Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, as its new Chairman. With over 40 years of professional experience, Gupta has played a crucial role in the growth of Bharti Airtel since its inception, the company said in a statement.

149) Correct Answer: A

Bhartruhari Mahtab, seven-term MP from Cuttack was appointed by President Droupadi Murmu as the pro tem Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha. Mahtab's selection for the pro tem Speaker post comes on the heels of the BJP's impressive electoral performance in Odisha.

150) Correct Answer: B

World Refugee Day is an international day designated by the United Nations to honor refugees around the globe. It falls each year on 20 June and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution.

SECTION 3

Detailed Analysis of Important Events



Economics

RBI launches PRAVAAH, Retail Direct mobile app and FinTech Repository



Why in the News?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently launched three significant initiatives: the PRAVAAH portal, the RBI Retail Direct smartphone application, and the FinTech Repository.
- These initiatives aim to provide retail investors with more leverage, speed up regulatory processes, and provide information about the fintech sector.

1. PRAVAAH Portal:

- People and organizations can apply for RBI regulatory clearances through the centralized web-based Platform for Regulatory Application, Validation, and Authorization, or PRAVAAH site.
- With features like online application submission and progress tracking, the site covers 60 different application forms from multiple regulatory departments, ensuring efficiency and transparency in the permission process.

2. RBI Retail Direct Mobile App:

- With the RBI Retail Direct Mobile App, retail investors can conveniently access government securities (G-Secs) trading directly from their cellphones.
- Individual investors can participate more actively in the securities market thanks to the program, which is compatible with both Android and iOS platforms and facilitates transactions in primary and secondary markets.

3. FinTech Repository:

The FinTech Repository aims to provide **comprehensive data on Indian fintech firms**, facilitating better regulatory understanding and policy formulation in the rapidly evolving fintech landscape.

Other initiatives launched:

- **EmTech Repository:** It provides policymakers and industry stakeholders with informative data on how AI, ML, cloud computing, and quantum technology are being embraced by RBI-regulated companies.
- Both repositories are under the management of the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), a testament to the central bank's commitment to encouraging innovation and collaboration in the financial sector.

What Grade of Coal does India Produce?



Why in the News?

Report alleges Adani Group sold inflated-value 'low-grade' coal to Tamil Nadu's TANGEDCO in 2014, according to documents by "Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project".

Coal Gradation in India

- These terms are relative and depend on the coal's Gross Calorific Value (GCV denoted in kilocalories per kg), which indicates its energy generation potential. Higher GCV denotes better quality coal.
1. High-Grade (GCV > 7,000 kcal/kg) to
 2. Low-Grade (GCV 2,200-2,500 kcal/kg).

- Overall there are 17 grades of coal according to the Coal Ministry's classification.

Characteristics of Indian Coal:

- Historically, Indian coal is *high in ash content* and *low in calorific value* compared to imports.
- Higher ash content leads to *increased emissions* of particulate matter and pollutants.

Clean Coal Technologies:

- Coal Washing: On-site processes such as coal washing are employed to reduce ash and moisture content, thereby improving energy efficiency and reducing environmental impact.

Coal Gasification: Another approach is coal gasification, where coal is converted into syngas through an integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC). This process enhances efficiency and reduces emissions compared to traditional coal-burning methods.

Coal Reserves in India

- India boasts the fourth-largest coal reserves globally, totaling nearly 319.02 billion tonnes.
- Geological Distribution: These reserves are primarily located in:
 - Older Gondwana Formations: in Peninsular India, about 250 million years old.
 - Younger Tertiary Formations: in the North-Eastern region, 15 to 60 million years old.
- Gondwana coal constitutes 99% of India's coal production.
- The top 5 States in terms of total coal reserves in India are: Jharkhand > Odisha > Chhattisgarh > West Bengal > Madhya Pradesh.

Types of Coal found:

- Anthracite: Found in lower quantities in some areas of Jammu and Kashmir, anthracite is the highest-grade coal, containing 80–95% carbon.
- Bituminous coal: Found in large quantities in Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh, this medium-grade coal has a carbon content of 60 to 80%.
- Lignite: With a 40–55% carbon concentration, lignite is the lowest-grade coal and is found in

parts of Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, and Jammu & Kashmir.

Status of Coal in India

- India produced 997 million tonnes of coal at its high in the fiscal year 2023–2024, mostly from the state-owned Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries. Of that amount, 58 million tons were coking coal.
- In the initial quarter of 2024, renewable energy accounted for 71.5% of India's remarkable 13.6 GW increase in power generation capacity, indicating a significant shift away from coal dependency.

Coal Import Trends:

- Reduction in Share: From April 2023 to January 2024, India's total coal consumption fell to 21% from 22.48% during the same time the previous year. This was due to a fall in the share of imported coal.
- Blending and Power Plant Imports: During the same period, there was a notable decrease of 36.69% in the imports of coal for thermal power plants to use for blending, but there was a substantial increase of 94.21% in imports for coal-based power plants.

Reasons for Coal Imports:

- Quality Restrictions: Importing coal is necessary to meet industrial demands due to the lack of high-quality coking coal, which is necessary for the production of steel.
- Growing Energy Demand: Since coal continues to be a crucial part of India's energy mix, imports are becoming more and more necessary to meet the country's expanding energy needs.
- Infrastructure Obstacles: Obstacles such as geological limitations, problems acquiring land, and environmental laws prevent the development of coal domestically.
- Cost and Quality Factors to Consider: When compared to native sources, importing coal can provide access to higher-quality coal at a lower cost.

FSSAI Directive on Fruit Juices



Why in the News?

- FSSAI has mandated the *immediate removal* of any claims stating '100% fruit juices' from labels and advertisements of reconstituted fruit juices by all Food Business Operators (FBOs).

Compliance Guidelines on Fruit Juices

- The 2020 Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations must be followed when labeling products that fall under this standard.
- For juices reconstituted from concentrate, the term "reconstituted" needs to be mentioned in the ingredient list.

Additionally, if the product contains added nutritive sweeteners exceeding 15 gm/kg, it must be *labelled as 'Sweetened juice'*.

Issues with such 'Sweetened juice'

- Deceptive Marketing Practices:** The FSSAI has seen a lot of FBOs mislabel different kinds of reconstituted fruit juices as being made entirely of fruit juice.
- Regulatory Assessment:** After conducting an evaluation, the FSSAI concluded that these statements are deceptive, particularly in cases where water is the main ingredient and the primary ingredient is only present in trace amounts or when the juice is reconstituted with water, pulp, or fruit concentrates.

About Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- The FSSAI is an independent organization that was founded by the Indian government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- It was founded in accordance with the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which combines a number of laws and directives that up until then have been used by different ministries and agencies to handle food-related matters.
- By regulating and overseeing food safety, FSSAI is in charge of safeguarding and advancing public health.

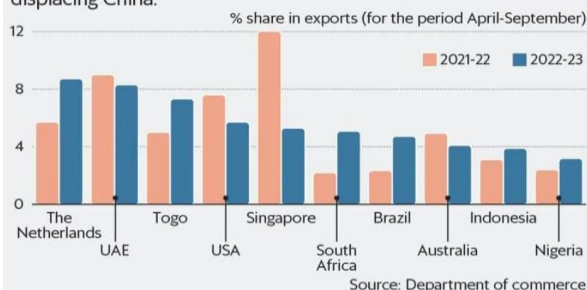
Functions of FSSAI include:

- Creating Standards:** To guarantee that food products are safe for consumption, the Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) creates standards and controls the production, storage, distribution, sale, and import of food items.
- Food firms can obtain licenses and registrations from the FSSAI in accordance with their adherence to food safety standards and laws.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) carries out inspections, surveillance, and monitoring of food products and food enterprises to make sure that food safety regulations are being followed.
- Education and Awareness:** The FSSAI aims to educate consumers and food businesses about food safety and cleanliness. It offers educational initiatives and informational materials to support safe food handling techniques.
- Research and Development:** In order to better understand food safety and standards, FSSAI conducts research and development projects.

Netherlands becomes India's 3rd Largest Export Destination in 2023-24

New destination

The Netherlands has become India's No. 3 export destination, displacing China.



Why in the News?

During fiscal year 2023-24, the **Netherlands** emerged as India's **third-largest export market**, with a trade surplus expanding to \$17.4 billion.

India's Trade with the Netherlands

- **Important Export Commodities:** The Netherlands imports a significant amount of petroleum products (\$14.29 billion), electrical goods, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals, all of which are seeing strong development.
- **Continuous Growth:** From 2023 to 2024, India's exports to the Netherlands increased by 3.5% on average, showing a sustained growth momentum of \$22.36 billion.
- **Mutual Investment:** During the previous fiscal year, the Netherlands made approximately \$5 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) in India, making it a major investor in the country.
- **Corporate Presence:** TCS, HCL, and Sun Pharmaceuticals are among the many Indian companies with a significant presence in the Netherlands. Over 200 Dutch companies, including industrial giants like Philips, Akzo Nobel, and KLM, operate in India.

Shift in Trade Dynamics

- **Surpassing Major Destinations:** When it comes to India's export priorities, the Netherlands has outperformed long-standing trading partners like the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, and Germany.
- **Long-term Growth:** Since 2000–01, when India's exports to the Netherlands were only \$880 million, export data have consistently increased.

Significance: Gateway to Europe

- **Strategic Positioning:** The Netherlands is positioned as a key entry point to the European market thanks to its effective ports and wide network of highways, railroads, and canals connecting it to the EU.
- **Solid Ties:** Since their establishment as diplomatic relations in 1947, India and the

Netherlands have grown into significant political, business, and economic alliances.

India's Trade Dynamics**Export Figures:**

- Estimated to come to over US\$776.68 billion in fiscal year 2023–2024.
- Exceeded by a small margin the US\$776.40 billion realized in the preceding fiscal year.
- Concluded in March 2024 with the largest monthly export of goods, totaling US\$41.68 billion.

Import Figures:

- Total goods imports decreased by 5.66 percent to US\$675.44 billion.

Global Merchandise Export Ranking:

- India moved up to the 17th rank from the 19th.
- Share grows somewhat from 1.70 percent in 2014 to 1.82 percent in 2023.
- exported to 238 destinations in total during FY 2023–2024, including 115 countries.

Key Export Markets:

- Include the US, UAE, Netherlands, China, UK, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Germany, and Italy.
- Represent 46.5 percent of India's export portfolio.

Diversification Strategy:

- Concentrate on growing outside of established industries like iron ore and agricultural products.
- The electronics, pharmaceutical, engineering, and food industries are among the target areas.
- Make plans to roll out products including desserts, alcoholic drinks, prepared foods, bananas, and jackfruit.

Trade Partners:

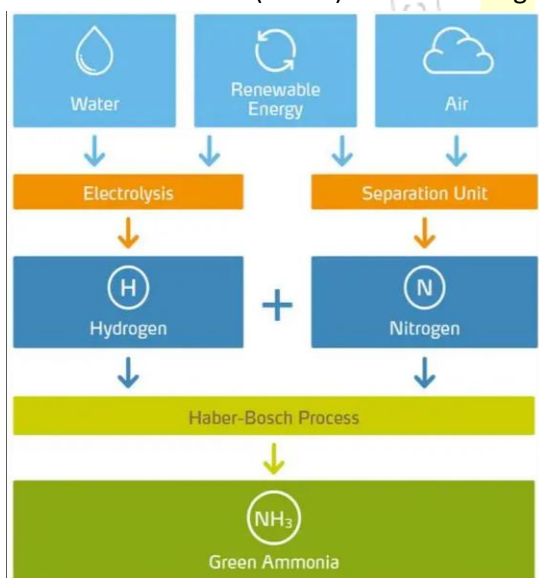
- A focus on market study and research in order to customize products.
- China surpassed the US to become India's biggest commercial partner.
- In FY 2023–2024, bilateral trade with China amounted to US\$118.4 billion.

- During the same time frame, bilateral trade with the US was US\$118.3 billion.
- India's exports to China rose by 8.7% in FY24 due to a number of industries.
- China's imports increased somewhat, coming to \$101.7 billion in total.

Green Ammonia Production under SIGHT Program

Why in the News?

- The Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has opened bidding for the manufacture of green ammonia, with a total annual capacity of 5.39 lakh Metric Tonnes (MT).
- The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy's (MNRE) National Green Hydrogen Mission includes the initiative under Mode 2A of the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Program.



What is Green Ammonia?

- Renewable ammonia, sometimes referred to as green ammonia, is a type of ammonia made from renewable energy sources. It is suggested as an environmentally friendly, sustainable substitute with a wide range of uses in business and other areas.
- Ammonia is created by reacting nitrogen and hydrogen—which is produced via the use of

renewable energy—at high temperatures and pressures. The hydrogen and nitrogen are first combined.

About the National Green Hydrogen Mission

- In January 2023, the National Green Hydrogen Mission was introduced.
- The goal is to establish India as a "global hub" for the production, use, and export of green hydrogen.
- Prior to this, on August 15, 2021, the National Hydrogen Mission was introduced with the goal of reducing carbon emissions and boosting the usage of renewable energy sources.
- Guidelines for the scheme are developed by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in order to carry out these missions.

Key features of the NGHM

- Power capacity: By 2030, the mission aims to support the establishment of a nationwide green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT annually and an additional 125 GW of renewable energy capacity.
- Employment creation: By 2030, more than 6 lakh jobs are expected to be created with an investment of more than ₹8 lakh crore.
- Lowering the energy import bill: By 2030, it will also reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by almost 50 MMT and cumulatively cut imports of fossil fuels by more by ₹1 lakh crore.
- Export promotion: The goal is to make it easier to create demand for, produce, use, and export green hydrogen.
- Incentivization: Specific financial incentive mechanisms are made available under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT).
- Green Hydrogen Hubs: Areas that can sustain the large-scale production and/or use of hydrogen will be designated as such and will receive development support.

What is the SIGHT Program?

- In the initial stage, two distinct financial incentive mechanisms proposed with an outlay of ₹ 17,490 crore up to 2029-30:
 1. Incentive for manufacturing of electrolyzers
 2. Incentive for production of green hydrogen.
- Depending upon the markets and technology development, specific incentive schemes and programmes will continue to evolve as the Mission progresses.

Critical Minerals under iCET



Why in the News?

- In the context of the Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) conversation, India and the United States seek to expeditiously reach a bilateral agreement on cooperation in critical minerals.
- To fortify supply networks, attention should be paid to germanium, gallium, and graphite.

What are Critical Minerals?

- Essential minerals are those that are necessary for contemporary technologies and are vulnerable to supply chain interruptions.
- The majority of electrical devices, including computers, cellphones, electric cars, batteries, solar panels, and wind turbines, are made from these minerals.
- A large number of these are necessary to fulfill the production demands of advanced technologies, national defense, aircraft, and green technology.

List of critical minerals includes:

The centre has released a list of 30 critical minerals for India in 2023:

1. **Identified Minerals:** Antimony, Beryllium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Molybdenum, Niobium, Nickel, Platinum Group elements (PGE), Phosphorous, Potash, Rare Earth Elements (REE), Rhenium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Vanadium, Zirconium, Selenium and Cadmium.
2. **Fertilizer Minerals:** Two minerals critical for fertilizer production, phosphorous and potash, are also included in the above list.

Critical Mineral Blocks in India

- **Distribution:** Across eight states—Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir—there are twenty blocks.
- **License Types:** A Mining License (ML), which permits instant mining following clearance, consists of four blocks. The last sixteen blocks pertain to a Composite License (CL), which allows for additional investigation prior to possibly transitioning to an ML.
- **Needed Approvals:** License holders need to get a number of clearances, such as environmental and forest clearance.
- **Forest Land:** 1,234 hectares, or around 17% of the concession's overall area, is made up of forest land.

India's Critical Mineral Imports

- **Imports of Lithium:** India spent Rs 732 crore importing 2,145 tonnes of lithium oxide and carbonate in FY23.
- **Imports of Copper and Nickel:** At a cost of Rs 27,374 crore and Rs 6,549 crore, respectively, the nation purchased 1.2 million tonnes of copper ore and 32,000 tonnes of unwrought nickel.
- **Dependency on Imports:** India imports 93% of its copper and all of its nickel and lithium.

Country-wise dependence:

1. China: India imports a significant amount of vital minerals from China, including lithium, cobalt, nickel, and graphite.
2. Australia: In order to safeguard its supply chain for essential minerals, India is aggressively negotiating with Australia to purchase mineral assets, namely cobalt and lithium.
3. India is collaborating with Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina—three nations noted for their lithium and cobalt reserves—in an effort to diversify its sources of vital minerals.

Proposed Amendments to Insolvency Resolution Process by IBBI



Why in the News?

- To improve efficiency, lower costs, and boost transparency, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has suggested revisions to the Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Process laws.
- This is an attempt to simplify the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) and bring it into compliance with the Companies (Registered Valuers and Valuation) Rules.

Proposed amendments by IBBI

- **Simplified Valuation:** One thorough valuation report covering the entire organization will replace several studies for various asset kinds. This aids in maintaining clarity and consistency in value.
- **Single Valuer for Small Businesses:** Unless there is a compelling need for more than one valuer, only one will be chosen to assess the value of

smaller businesses with assets up to ₹1,000 crore and MSMEs.

- **Option for Two Valuers:** In order to handle difficult instances, the creditors' committee may decide to assign two valuers, but they must provide justification for their decision.
- **Faster Appointment of Representatives:** In order to minimize delays, representatives nominated to represent creditors may begin attending meetings as soon as their application is received.
- **Guarantees in Resolution Plans:** Release of guarantees in accordance with a resolution plan's recommendations does not prevent creditors from pursuing guarantors or from using the guarantees in accordance with their agreements.

About Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)

	Details
Establishment	Established on 1st October 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective: To promote a creditor-driven insolvency resolution process and enhance India's credit culture and business environment.
Responsibility	Responsible for implementing and enforcing the IBC, IBC consolidated laws related to insolvency resolution for individuals, partnership firms, and corporate entities.
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls insolvency practitioners and procedures. • Oversees professional agencies, entities, and information utilities related to insolvency. • Enforces laws pertaining to bankruptcy, liquidation, and

	<p>corporate and individual insolvency resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes the qualifications and training requirements for insolvency specialists. Keeps track of insolvency instances, gathers information about them, and shares it.
Composition	<p>Total 10 members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson chosen by the Central Administration. Three officials from the central government (Ministries of Law, Corporate Affairs, and Finance). One individual designated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The Central Government has nominated five additional members, three of whom must be full-time employees. The term is 5 years or until age 65, with reappointment possible.

Under the IBC, two primary adjudicating authorities handle insolvency cases based on the nature of the entity:

- The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) is responsible for making decisions in matters of insolvency pertaining to corporate and other limited liability companies.
- Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT): Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) are not subject to DRT's jurisdiction in cases of insolvency involving individuals and partnership firms.

Recent Amendments to the IBC:

- Approval of resolution plans or segregated asset sales.
- To expedite adjudication, the number of NCLT benches has been increased to 16.
- extending the deadlines for submitting claims in order to account for complicated procedures.
- modifications relevant to a given industry and designed to tackle particular problems in different fields.
- changes made to procedural forms, like Form G2, to improve the efficiency and clarity of insolvency proceedings.

Adjudicating Authorities under the IBC:

Environment & Diversity

In news: Sharavathi River

Why in the News?

The State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and the Department of Mines and Geology have been instructed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to cease any illicit sand mining in the coastal zone of the Sharavathi River.



About National Green Tribunal (NGT)

	Description
Establishment	Formed in 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act as a statutory body.
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To handle matters involving environmental concerns and make sure that decisions are carried out quickly. accountable for making a number of significant choices that have a direct impact on the environment, such as tackling Delhi's air pollution and rescinding coal block clearances.

Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headquartered in Delhi, chaired by a retired Supreme Court judge Included Judicial Members and Expert Panel.
Powers	<p>Empowered to decide on questions related to various environmental laws and hear civil cases concerning environmental issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974; The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977; The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981; The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991; The Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
Exceptions	<p>Prohibited to hear any issues which are covered under:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Indian Forest Act, 1927, The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and Any other laws made by States which are related to protection of trees, forests, etc.
Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal bench in Delhi; Additional benches in Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai.
Governing Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governed by principles of natural justice, not bound by Indian Evidence Act. Applies principles of sustainable development, precautionary, and polluter pays.

Review and Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGT orders can be reviewed as per Rule 22 of NGT Rules. Can be challenged before the Supreme Court within 90 days.
Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority to hear any civil lawsuit involving a significant environmental matter. The same powers as in a civil court under the 1908 Code of Civil Procedure are vested. Decisions have legal force behind them.
Disposal of Cases	Disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of filing of the same.

About Sharavathi River

- It starts in Karnataka and flows through the whole state.
- It is one of the few rivers in the nation that flow westward, and the Western Ghats make up a sizable portion of its basin.
- Origin: In the Thirthahalli taluk, the river begins in Ambutheertha.
- mythology: An old mythology states that the god Rama shot his bride Sita a thirst-quenching arrow called an Ambu into the earth. The river called "Sharavati" got its name from the name of the water that spurted out, "Thirtha," where "Shara" means arrow.

Geography and Length:

- The river empties into the Arabian Sea near Honnavar in the Uttara Kannada district after a distance of roughly 128 km (80 mi).
- The Sharavati River created Jog Falls, which are about 25 km away from Siddapura.

Tributaries and Basin:

- Nandihole, Haridravathi, Mavinahole, Hilkunji, Yennehole, Hurlihole, and Nagodihole are some of the principal tributaries.
- River basin: split across the districts of Uttara Kannada and Shimoga.

- The basin is dominated by pre-Cambrian rocks, such as the peninsular gneiss and Dharwar system.

Soils and Agriculture:

- The basin's soils range from clay loamy to loamy, with a lateritic predominance and a tendency toward acidity.
- There are four types of soil orders: entisols, alfisols, inceptisols, and ultisols.

Dams:

- Built in 1964, the Linganamakki Dam spans the Sharavati River and has a catchment area of around 1,991.71 km³.
- After it was finished in 2002, the Gerusoppa Dam is mostly used to generate electricity.

Flora and Fauna:

- Established in 1972, the Sharavati Valley Wildlife Sanctuary safeguards a variety of ecosystems as well as threatened animals.
- The river basin supports unique species of both plants and animals, making it a haven for biodiversity.

Protecting Mangroves in Tamil Nadu

Why in the News?

In its first global evaluation of mangrove ecosystems, the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) has classified mangroves as "critically endangered" in coastal regions that include Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.

Red List of Mangrove Ecosystems: Study by IUCN



- An evaluation of the world's mangrove ecosystems indicates a 50% chance of failure. If conservation efforts continue, 7,065 sq km

additional mangroves will disappear and 23,672 sq km will be underwater by 2050.

If we let this happen, the world is at risk of losing:

- Based on the social cost of carbon, 1.8 billion tons of stored carbon would have cost society \$336 billion. keeps \$36 billion worth of property and 2.1 million persons safe from coastal flooding.

Sea-level rise is the main threat affecting mangrove ecosystems.

- Within the next 50 years, it is expected that 25% of the world's mangrove acreage will be underwater.
- A third of the world's provinces with mangrove ecosystems will be significantly impacted by sea level rise.



Tamil Nadu's Efforts for Mangroves Conservation

- As per the Indian State of Forest Report, the mangrove cover from 23 sq km in 2001 to 45 sq km in 2021 has been doubled by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department.
- Projects to restore mangroves have been started in the districts of Nagapattinam, Thiruvavarur, Cuddalore, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Thiruvallur, and Villupuram. Plans are in place to restore a further 15 square kilometers as part of the World Bank-funded Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission.

TN-SHORE: World Bank-funded Coastal Restoration Mission

- Launched in January 2024, the TN-SHORE program of Tamil Nadu intends to alleviate environmental issues along the coastline. Its investment, which totals Rs 1,675 crore and includes 70% from the World Bank, is directed on sequestering blue carbon.

Two bird sanctuaries of Bihar added to Ramsar List

Why in the News?

The "Ramsar Convention" has added two wetlands in Bihar, the Nagi and Nakti bird sanctuaries, to the list of wetlands of international importance worldwide, increasing the number of Ramsar sites in India to 82.

Do you know?

- At the moment, the UK has the most of these sites (175), followed by Mexico (144).
- Over the past ten years, the number of Indian sites on the list has grown from 26 to 82, with 40 of those additions occurring in the last three years.

About Nagi-Nakti Wetland

- Situated in the Jhajha forest range in Bihar's Jamui district, these wetlands are artificial ponds surrounded by hills and dry deciduous forests.
- By building dams, both sanctuaries were transformed into artificial reservoirs used mostly for irrigation.
- More than 150 different species of birds, animals, fish, aquatic plants, reptiles, and amphibians can be found in these wetlands.



Nakti Bird Sanctuary:

- The main purpose of its development was irrigation, achieved by building the Nakti dam.
- With approximately 20,000 birds congregating there over the winter, the wetland's significance as a wintering habitat for various migratory species was highlighted in 1984 when it was declared as a bird sanctuary.
- Among these is one of the Indo-Gangetic plain's biggest concentrations of red-crested pochard..

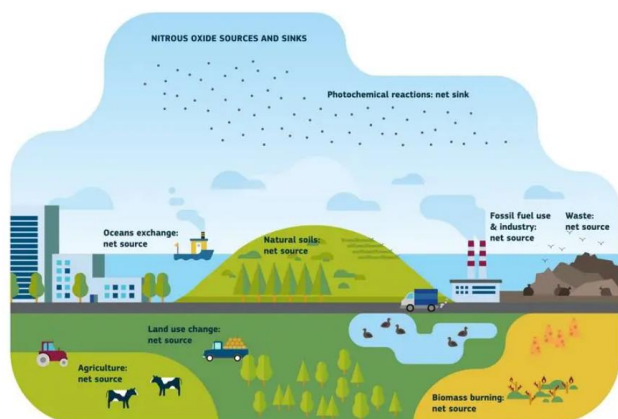
Nagi Bird Sanctuary:

- On the other side, it was produced by the Nagi River's damming, which made it possible for water bodies with clean water and aquatic flora to gradually form.
- Thirty-three fish, twelve aquatic plant species, and more than 75 bird species find home in the marsh and its borders.
- Interestingly, one of the biggest groups of bar-headed geese in the Indo-Gangetic plain may be found at this location.

Ecological Significance

- Migratory Bird Haven:** Drawing approximately 20,000 birds in the winter, the sanctuaries provide important wintering habitats for a wide variety of migrating bird species.
- Diversity of Species:** The sanctuaries of Nagi and Nakti are home to more than 75 species of birds, 33 kinds of fish, and 12 species of water plants.
- Bar-headed Geese Congregation:** The wetlands are important migratory bird habitats since they are home to one of the largest congregations of bar-headed geese on the Indo-Gangetic plain.

India is the World's Second Largest emitter of Nitrous Oxide



Why in the News?

- According to data published in the journal Earth System Science Data, India is the world's second-largest emitter (behind China) of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a strong greenhouse gas (GHG), contributing over 11% of global man-made emissions in 2020.
- By volume of anthropogenic N₂O emissions in 2020, China (16.7%), India (10.9%), the United States (5.7%), Brazil (5.3%), and Russia (4.6%), were the top five countries emitters.

About Nitrous Oxide

- 300 times more potent than CO₂, nitrous oxide (N₂O) is a colorless and odorless gas that is a significant greenhouse gas. After CO₂ and methane (CH₄), it is the third most concentrated gas despite having a minor atmospheric percentage. For environmental studies and initiatives to lessen the effects of climate change, it is an essential target.

Sources of Emission:

1. Natural Sources: Volcanic activity, burning of biomass, and microbial nitrogen cycling in soil and water bodies are some of the activities that naturally produce N₂O.
2. Anthropogenic Activities: The following are the main human activities that cause a large amount of N₂O emissions:
 - Agricultural practices, including the use of nitrogen-based fertilizers and animal manure.

- Industrial processes such as combustion of fossil fuels and wastewater treatment.
- Combustion of biomass and waste.
- Use of nitrous oxide in medical and dental procedures (as a sedative) and in food packaging.

Impact on Climate Change:

- Gas that causes global warming: N₂O has a global warming potential (GWP) that is significantly larger than that of carbon dioxide (CO₂).
- Ozone Depletion: N₂O exacerbates environmental concerns by contributing to stratospheric ozone depletion in addition to its impact in climate change.

Environmental and Health Effects:

- Environmental Pollution: N₂O emissions have the potential to contaminate the air, water, and soil, which can have an impact on human health and ecosystems.
- Health Risks: N₂O is generally not harmful at ambient levels, but extended exposure or high concentrations can have negative effects on the nervous system and cause respiratory problems.

Global Nitrous Oxide Emissions

- Atmospheric Concentration: In 2022, the atmospheric concentration of N₂O was 336 parts per billion, which is a 25% increase over pre-industrial levels.
- Next to Carbon Emissions: In 2022, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 417 parts per million.
- Persistent Lifespan: N₂O has long-lasting effects on the climate and ozone layer because it remains in the atmosphere after emission for a period of time longer than the typical human lifetime (117 years).
- Contribution to Climate Change: The present global warming has increased by roughly 0.1°C due to these emissions, which account for 6.4% of the effective radiative forcing of greenhouse gases.
- Impact of Nitrogen Fertilizers: Over the previous ten years, anthropogenic N₂O emissions have

increased by 40% due to human activities. Agricultural production, which uses nitrogen fertilizers and animal manure, has contributed 74% of these emissions.

Call for Action and Future Outlook

- Scientists caution that in order to comply with net-zero emission paths outlined in the Paris Agreement, human N₂O emissions must decrease by at least 20% from 2019 levels by 2050.
- In India, nitrogen fertilizers receive substantial subsidies, which greatly increase the country's emissions of N₂O. Reforms must be implemented quickly in order to encourage alternative production methods and reduce emissions.

India's Policy Initiatives to Curb Nitrogen Pollution

- The Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) (2010) policy aims to improve the effectiveness of nutrient management by promoting the use of controlled-release fertilizers.
- 2015's Soil Health Cards: These cards, which are given to farmers, encourage balanced nutrient application by providing information on soil nutrient levels and customized fertilizer recommendations.
- Bharat Stage (BS VI) Emission Standards (2016): The goal of these strict guidelines for industry and automobiles is to lessen particulate matter and nitrogen oxide emissions, which will help to mitigate air and water pollution.
- 2021's Nano Urea: A proprietary fertilizer certified for commercial use, Nano Urea is marketed by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) with the goal of increasing agricultural yields while reducing wasteful and indiscriminate usage of conventional urea.

'Cold Lava' Rivers flow in Philippines after Mount Canlaon eruption



Why in the News?

- Cold lava began pouring through streets and waterways in the Philippines following the eruption of Mount Canlaon.
- Ashfall and downstream hazards like mudflows and floods came next.

What is Cold Lava?

- Cold lava, sometimes referred to as "lahar," is a mixture of rock fragments and water that rushes down a volcano's slopes when there is a strong downpour or volcanic explosion.
- The mixture turns into a material that resembles concrete and obliterates everything in its path.

Another example of cold Lava in the world

- **Mount Merapi, Indonesia (2023):** An eruption of Mount Merapi resulted in the deaths of at least 23 climbers and spewed ash up to 3,000 meters into the air, covering towns and villages



How harmful is Cold Lava?

- Rough and jagged textures as well as glossy, smooth textures can be included in this.

- During an eruption, rain can transport icy lava down a volcano's slopes and into the vicinity of adjacent towns or villages.
- The United States Geological Survey claims that objects in its path might be crushed and buried by cold lava.
- Like wet concrete, it flows swiftly and is said to be more damaging than molten lava.

- Situated in Karnataka's Western Ghats, the area encompasses more than 643 square kilometers.
- designated as a tiger reserve in 1999 and a wildlife sanctuary in 1955.
- An Important Bird Area (IBA) and a Project Tiger, Project Elephant reserve are recognized for a portion of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- overseen by the Karnataka Forest Department, which focuses on community involvement, ecotourism, and conservation.
- Numerous rivers, including the Moyar, Lakshmana Tirtha, and Kabini rivers, intersect the reserve.
- Flora & Fauna: renowned for its varied ecology, which includes moist and tropical deciduous woods and is home to a wide range of wildlife, including birds, tigers, leopards, elephants, and gaurs, among other species of deer.

About Mount Canlaon

- Active stratovolcano Mount Canlaon is situated in the Philippines and is well-known for its regular volcanic outbursts.
- It is located in the Philippines' Visayas region on the island of Negros.
- Prestigious for its intense volcanic activity, it is a segment of the Pacific Ring of Fire.
- It presents risks such pyroclastic flows, ash falls, lava flows, and lahars (mudflows), which can jeopardize agriculture and neighboring towns.

Protective Measures: Project Elephant

- It was launched in the year 1992 as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** with the following objectives:
 - To protect elephants, their habitat & corridors
 - To address issues of man-animal conflict
 - The welfare of captive elephants
- It includes 23 Indian states.
- Through the project, the nation's key elephant range states receive financial and technical help from the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change.
- It helped to explain why the population of wild elephants increased from approximately 25,000 in 1992 to approximately 30,000 in 2021.

In news: Nagarhole Tiger Reserve

Why in the News?

- An elephant named Ashwatthama, 38, passed away from electrocution close to the Nagarhole Tiger Reserve in Karnataka.
- Suo motu, the Karnataka High Court filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) to investigate this incidence, which the relevant authorities had reported as the result of carelessness.



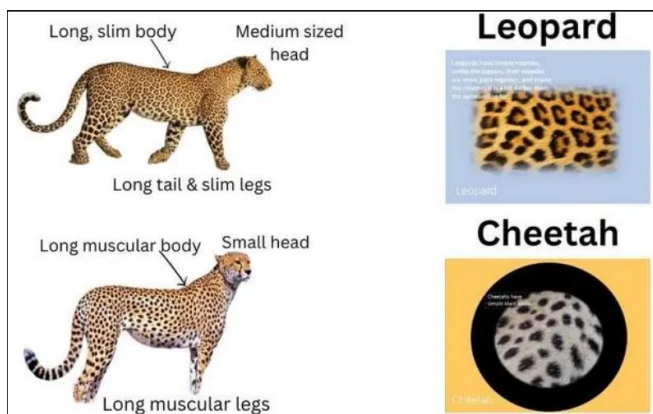
Nagarhole Tiger Reserve

Status of Elephant Conservation in India

	Details
Population Estimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India hosts the largest population of wild Asian Elephants (<i>Elephas maximus</i>), with around 29,964 individuals,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 60% of the global population (2017 census).
Leading States	Karnataka holds the highest number of elephants, followed by Assam and Kerala.
Conservation Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN Red List: Endangered. CMS: Appendix I. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Listed under Schedule I, CITES: Appendix I.

Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary: India's New Cheetah Habitat



Why in the News?

- After Kuno National Park, Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary will house cheetahs in India for the second time. To reduce the risk of infection, the ultimate decision to import cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa will be taken after the monsoon season.

Cheetah Reintroduction in India:

- Cheetahs in India went extinct in the early 1950s as a result of habitat loss and hunting.
- The "Project Cheetah (2022): Action Plan for Reintroduction of Cheetah in India" intends to introduce cheetahs from African nations into multiple national parks.
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is in charge of it.
- Namibian cheetahs have just been reintroduced in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park.

About Cheetah:

- The cheetah is a swift big cat that is indigenous to central Iran and Africa. It can run between 80 and 128 km/h.
- They inhabit a variety of environments, including steep deserts, arid highlands, and savannahs.
- They favor dawn and nightfall, and they hunt during the day.
- As of 2021, there were 6,500 mature cheetahs worldwide, according to the most recent IUCN assessment.
- The IUCN has classified them as VULNERABLE.

One of the five cheetah subspecies, the Asiatic Cheetah is highly endangered and only found in Iran.

THE CHEETAHS ARE COMING

HOW MANY?
20
8 from Namibia + 12 from SA

WHERE?
Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh
(Kuno National Park will have a 600-hectare fenced enclosure to house the Cheetahs)

What is the long-term population size expected? 50+

Are there similar relocation programmes? South Africa to Malawi, Mozambique

What is the carrying capacity of Kuno? 21 Cheetahs

Could it share its space? Yes, with Asiatic lions

Are there threats? Yes, with Kuno's existing leopard population

About Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary

- The Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary is a 368.62 sq km region in western Madhya Pradesh.
- It borders Rajasthan and extends across the districts of Mandsaur (187.12 sq km) and Neemuch (181.5 sq km).
- Located on a rocky plateau that is level and has exposed sheetrock and shallow dirt.
- The Gandhi Sagar dam and reservoir lie inside its borders, and the Chambal River divides it.
- Flora and Fauna:**
 - Flora: The refuge is home to a savannah ecosystem, which is made up of open grasslands and dry deciduous trees scattered throughout. Within the

sanctuary, riverine valleys are home to evergreen vegetation.

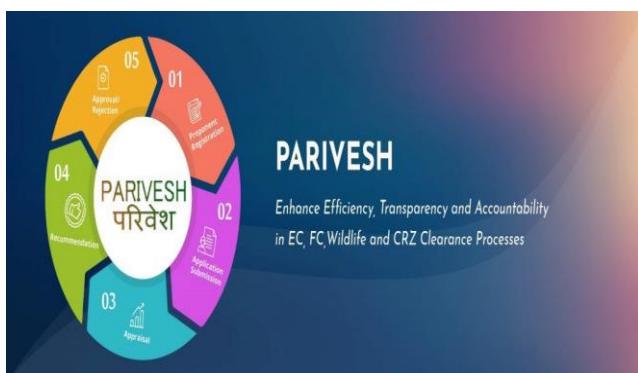
- Fauna: A wide variety of animals can be found in the sanctuary, such as leopards, Indian foxes, sloth bears, striped hyenas, grey wolves, golden jackals, jungle cats, and marsh crocodiles.



Habitat Suitability for Cheetahs

- Gandhi Sagar is said by officials to have a cheetah-friendly habitat that is similar to Maasai Mara, a national park in Kenya.
- The habitat of cheetahs is to be expanded to around 2,000 square kilometers, subject to collaboration with Rajasthan's Bhainsrodgarh sanctuary.

In news: PARIVESH Portal



Why in the News?

- Kerala plans to build a ropeway in Sabarimala by giving the Forest Department alternative property in Idukki's Chinnakkanal.

- The goal of the 2.7-kilometer ropeway is to move cargo from the Sabarimala Sannidhanam to the Pampa base station.
- Following the land transfer for compensatory afforestation, a request for clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests will be made via the PARIVESH site.

What is PARIVESH Portal?

- Pro-Active and Responsive Facilitation by Interactive Virtuous & Environmental Single-window Hub is known as PARIVESH.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change created the web portal.
- It is intended to simplify and hasten the process of gaining approvals from federal, state, and local authorities in relation to the environment, forests, wildlife, and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ).
- **Purpose and Scope**
 - The goal of PARIVESH is to improve the environment, forests, wildlife, and CRZ clearance systems' effectiveness, accountability, and transparency.
 - The objective is to enhance responsiveness and decrease the time it takes to receive clearances by automating workflows and providing real-time access to information.
- **Functionality**
 - It functions as an online process program that is role-based and allows user agencies to submit proposals for approvals online.
 - It uses the .NET framework, SQL Server as the database server, and IIS as the application server to run on a web architecture.

Benefits to Users:

- Enhances compliance monitoring by enabling the submission and tracking of compliance reports online and providing geotagged photos of locations via a mobile app.

- Incorporates a Geographic Information System (GIS) interface to enable Appraisal Committees to quickly and effectively review proposals.
- Available around-the-clock on any PC with internet access, guaranteeing customers' constant accessibility from various places and time zones.

67th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council meet



Why in the News?

- The Global Environment Facility (GEF) recently convened for its 67th meeting in Washington, DC. At its conclusion, funding for 34 projects related to nature protection and rejuvenation totaling \$736.4 million was approved.

About Global Environment Facility (GEF)

	Details
Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pilot program in 1991 by the World Bank • Restructured after the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.
Objective	Grants and blended finance for environmental projects
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over \$1 billion annually; \$22 billion grants to date • World Bank serves as the GEF Trustee
Replenishment	\$5.33 billion pledged for 2022-2026
Member Countries	184 countries

Main Governing Bodies

- **Assembly:** Held at the ministerial level every three to four years, it is made up of all 184 member nations. Examines and approves changes to operations and policies.
- **Council:** 32 members from member nations make up the main governing body (there are 2 economies in transition, 16 developing, and 14 developed nations). meets every two years to discuss policy development, project approval, and operational assessment.
- Together, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives have established a Permanent Constituency in the GEF Executive Council.
- **Secretariat:** Washington, D.C.-based, it reports to the Assembly and Council and is in charge of project execution and policy compliance.
- The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, or STAP for short, is a group of six globally renowned professionals who offer scientific input on policies, strategies, and initiatives.
- The Independent Evaluation Office, or GEF IEO, provides reports to the Council, assesses the efficacy and impact of GEF, and disseminates best practices and lessons discovered.

Operational Agencies	18 agencies including UNDP, UNEP, World Bank
Financial Mechanism for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1994)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (1991) • United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (1994) • Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001) • Minamata Convention on Mercury (2013) • Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987)
Focus Areas	Biodiversity, Climate Change (Mitigation & Adaptation), Chemicals & Waste, International Waters, Land Degradation, Sustainable Forest Management
Additional Initiatives	Circular Economy, Capacity Development, Debt-for-Nature Swaps, Gender Equality, Indigenous Peoples

Outcomes of the 67th GEF Council Meeting

[1] Funding Approval:

- 34 projects across the globe received approval for a total of \$736.4 million.
- These initiatives cover a range of environmental sectors and are funded by the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), the Multi-Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the GEF Trust Fund.

[2] GBFF Initiatives:

- With a special allocation of \$37.8 million for improving protected area management in Brazil and Mexico, the GBFF approved its first work program.

- With an emphasis on conservation initiatives led by indigenous people, this strategy seeks to encourage sustainable practices over more than 30 million hectares of protected areas.

[3] GEF Trust Fund Projects:

Several projects were funded under the GEF Trust Fund, including:

1. Sustainable Cities Integrated Program.
2. Initiatives targeting chemical and waste pollution in Bolivia’s cement, textile, brick, and glass sectors, as well as Brazil’s cement industry.

[4] Projects in India:

India secured funding for two significant projects:

1. \$6.7 million will be used to support the expansion of protected areas and community-led conservation initiatives in order to improve biodiversity protection and fulfill global commitments.
2. \$10.7 million will be used for the sustainable management and conservation of wetlands, forests, and grasslands in the Central Asian Flyway.

[5] Global Impact and Targets:

- Several programs, including ones in Argentina, Central Asia, and Namibia, are in line with the 30X30 aim of the Global Biodiversity Framework, which calls for the preservation of 30% of Earth's land and sea by 2030.
- These initiatives seek to improve protected area management, stop biodiversity loss, and lessen environmental damage.

[6] Future Plans (GEF-9):

- Plans for the ninth replenishment funding cycle (GEF-9) from 2026 to 2030 were addressed by the Council.
- This time frame corresponds with international accords such as the Biodiversity Plan's worldwide environmental goals and aims.

Governance

Andhra's Koya tribe faces brewing conflict over sacred Mahua flower



Why in the news?

The **Koya tribe** resides in Andhra Pradesh. They face a cultural crisis due to intensified enforcement of liquor regulations by the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB).

About Koya tribe

- One of the few multilingual and multiracial tribal communities in India is the Koya.
- They inhabit the plains, valleys, and woods that border the Godavari River in Andhra Pradesh on both sides. Numerous people also reside in the states of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.
- They think that their principal deity is still in a cave somewhere in the Bastar area.

Cultural Crisis (Disruption of Traditions):

- Mahua liquor, which is made from the blooms of the Mahua tree, is an essential part of Koya marriages, funeral anniversaries, and other cultural and religious rituals.
- These customs are disturbed by police raids and the seizure of Mahua liquor, which disturbs the community's culture. For instance, because of SEB raids, the naming ceremony for Madakam Janakamma's child was recently held without Mahua liquor.

Tribal Rights (Legal Challenges and Rights):

- Despite its traditional significance, the Koya tribe is not immune from the Andhra Pradesh Prohibition Act, 1995 when it comes to producing and storing Mahua liquor.
- Although the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 gives the gram sabha more authority to safeguard tribal customs and culture, its actual application is dubious given the persistence of SEB raids.
- The conflict between law enforcement and tribal rights is brought to light by the frequent coercion of Koya villagers into paying bribes in order to avoid facing accusations.

Impact on Collection (Economic Consequences):

- Fearing police raids, many Koya households have stopped collecting Mahua flowers, which has severely impacted their main source of income.
- The destruction of recently harvested Mahua flowers during raids further deters people from collecting, which diminishes the quantity of Mahua flowers available for exchange for necessities during weekly markets, or "shandies."

Guardians of Culture (Preservation of Heritage):

- The Koya tribe is revered as the stewards of their culture, particularly those who have not been uprooted by the Polavaram irrigation project. Their cultural identity is threatened, meanwhile, by assimilation and relocation with non-tribal communities.
- Local leaders and activists contend that rather than damaging Koya women's customs and economic endeavors, training should be provided to enable them to produce value-added items using Mahua flowers.

Legal and Policy Measures

- Modify the 1995 Andhra Pradesh Prohibition Act: Establish exemptions or special rules that acknowledge and safeguard the Koya tribe's

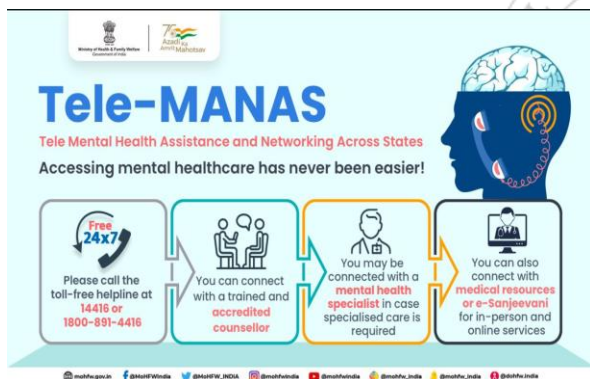
custom of making and using Mahua liquor for religious and cultural reasons.

- Enhance PESA Act Implementation: Make certain that the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996, is carried out in its entirety. Give Gram Sabhas more authority to safeguard tribal customs, such as the production of Mahua whiskey.

Conclusion

Although the SEB's enforcement activities are intended to regulate alcohol, they also seriously jeopardize the Koya tribe's economic stability and cultural legacy. It is essential to strike a balance between legal requirements and respect for tribal customs and rights in order to maintain the Koya way of life.

Tele MANAS cell for Armed Forces



Why in the News?

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to promote cooperation in running a special cell of Tele MANAS.
- The goal of this two-year partnership is to launch a pilot program at Pune's Armed Forces Medical College.

Suicides and Fratricides in Armed Forces: A Global Issue

- There were two occurrences of fratricide annually from 2019 to 2021 and one case in 2021, according to information presented in Parliament in April 2022.
- Regarding suspected suicide instances in the Army, the Government stated in a previous reply

to the Rajya Sabha that there were, in fact, 104, 75, and 80 incidents between 2016 and 2018.

- A 2018 study found that prolonged deployment in the U.S. military was associated with a 15% higher risk of suicide. In 2019, the U.S. Department of Defense reported 503 suicides among active-duty soldiers.
- **Common reasons** that forces an individual to take extreme steps are:
 - Family issues,
 - Family separation,
 - Prolonged deployment in difficult areas,
 - Continuous exposure to hazardous situations,
 - Traumas originated in Counter Insurgency or Counter Terrorism operations and
 - Wide range of Human Resource management issues.

Preventive Measures: According to the Army's most recent advise, which was published in August 2023, religious instructors and officers—at least one Pandit, Maulvi, Granthi, or Pastor—are assigned to each unit, and a subset of other ranks is receiving training on the subtleties of counseling.

What is the Tele MANAS Initiative?

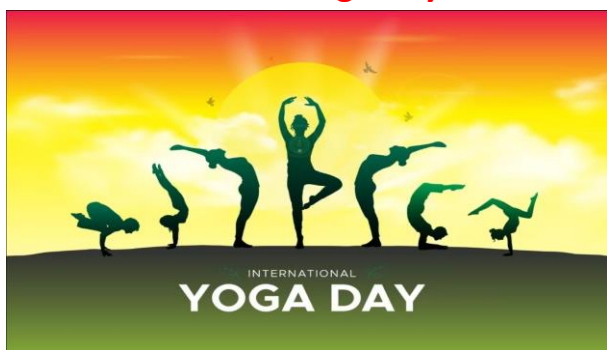
- India's National Tele Mental Health Programme is known as Tele MANAS, or Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking across States.
- It is intended to be the District Mental Health Programme's (DMHP) digital extension.
- The Union Budget for 2022 contained the announcement of it.
- Its implementation is supervised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), which acts as the nodal agency.
- The main goal is to provide 24/7 telemental health services so that everyone has equitable, cheap, accessible, and high-quality mental health care.

- The technical partner is the International Institute of Information technical, located in Bengaluru.
- NIMHANS in Bengaluru is the location of the Tele MANAS nodal center.
- Within the sphere of health systems is where the National Health Systems Resource Center functions.
- The numbers 18008914416 and 14416 are helpline numbers.
- The implementation structure comprises two tiers:
 - Tier 1: consists of mental health specialists and trained counselors from the State Tele MANAS cells
 - Tier 2: consists of resources from medical colleges and the District Mental Health Program (DMHP).

Reach and Impact

- **Nationwide Presence:** Currently, 51 operational Tele MANAS cells operate across all 36 States and UTs, delivering services in 20+ diverse languages.
- **Remarkable Response:** Since its inception in October 2022, Tele MANAS has received over 10 lakh calls and manages a daily average of more than 3,500 calls.

10th International Yoga Day



Why in the News?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lead the celebrations of the 10th International Day of Yoga at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar.

About International Day of Yoga

- Since 2014, June 21 has been marked globally as the International Day of Yoga, a celebration of the ancient Indian art form.
- Worldwide, yoga is well known for its positive effects on mental and physical health.
- In September 2014, PM Modi introduced the concept of a Yoga Day during his UN speech.
- India's Permanent Representative to the UN presented the draft resolution to the UN General Assembly in December 2014.
- Without a vote, 177 nations supported its adoption.
- On June 21, 2015, the inaugural International Day of Yoga was successfully observed in several locations across the globe, including Beijing, New Delhi, Paris, New York, and so on.

Why 21st June was chosen for this day?

- Since June 21st is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and has spiritual importance in many civilizations, it was selected as the date.
- According to Hindu mythology, this day signifies the change from the previous cycle to the Dakshinayana and is linked to Shiva, the first yogi who started imparting yoga to people.

Yoga :

- Yoga has its origins in Indian philosophy, spirituality, and culture, all of which date back to ancient India.
- Yuj, which meaning "to join" or "to unite," is the Sanskrit word from which the term "yoga" is derived. It represents the fusion of the body, mind, and spirit.
- **Historical References:**
 - The Rig-Veda is an ancient Hindu literature that dates back to roughly 1500 BCE. It mentions activities similar to yoga.
 - The intellectual writings known as the Upanishads, which date from approximately 800 to 400 BCE, also mention yoga.

- **Contributions of Sage Patanjali:**

- It is believed that Patanjali founded traditional yoga.
- He wrote the core Yoga Sutras, which offer a methodical and philosophical basis for practicing yoga.
- The Yoga Sutras date to approximately the second century BCE.

2. Positive duties or observances (**niyamas**)
3. Physical postures (**asanas**),
4. Breath control (**pranayama**),
5. Sense withdrawal (**pratyahara**),
6. Concentration (**dharana**),
7. Meditation (**dhyana**), and
8. Self-realization (**samadhi**).

Eight Limbs of Yoga:

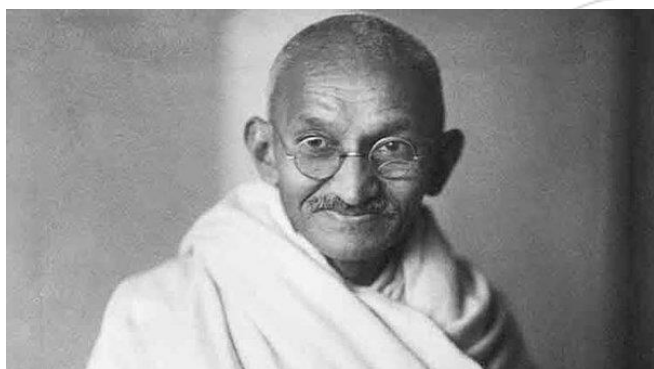
Patanjali's Yoga Sutras outline the eight limbs or stages of yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga. These limbs include:

1. Ethical principles (**yamas**),

Schools and Styles: There are numerous yoga schools and styles, each with a unique focus and methodology. Hatha, Vinyasa, Ashtanga, Iyengar, Bikram, Kundalini, and Yin yoga are a few of the well-liked forms.

History

131 years of Gandhiji's Natal Satyagraha



Why in the News?

- Mahatma Gandhi encountered racial prejudice on June 7, 1893, when he was ejected from a first-class train cabin at the "Pietermaritzburg railway station" in South Africa.
- This incident gave rise to his first peaceful protest in the "Natal Satyagraha," which gave him the inspiration to engage in civil disobedience.

History of 'Satyagraha'

- In 1906, a competition in the South African newsheet Indian Opinion gave rise to the words.
- The winner of the prize was Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, the grandson of one of Mahatma Gandhi's uncles, who coined the term "Sadagraha."

- Gandhi then modified it to Satyagraha in order to make it more understandable.

About the Pietermaritzburg Incident

- Gandhi's resolve to oppose racial prejudice was sparked by his forcible eviction from a first-class train compartment in 1893.
- He was motivated by this experience to engage in peaceful resistance, which laid the groundwork for his Satyagraha ideology.

Its' Aftermath

- **Formation of Natal Indian Congress and Advocacy**
 - Establishment: In order to fight for their rights, Gandhi united the Indian community and established the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) in Durban in 1894.
 - initiatives: He started a number of initiatives to oppose discriminatory laws and practices in South Africa, such as boycotts and petition drives.
- **Natal Satyagraha**
 - The Natal Satyagraha was started in 1906 as a protest against the discriminatory Asiatic Registration Act.
 - Gandhi became the movement's leader, promoting civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance.

- The core message of satyagraha was to resist injustice by using moral courage, integrity, and nonviolent means.

Characteristics and Impact of Natal Satyagraha

- **Mass Participation:** The Indian community gave the cause a lot of support, and thousands of people participated in the peaceful demonstrations.
 - In 1903, he organized the Transvaal British Indian Association in Johannesburg to promote the welfare of Indians.
- **Arrests and Imprisonment:** For their acts of civil disobedience, Gandhi and numerous others were subject to arrests and imprisonment. Because of his peaceful demonstrations, he was imprisoned several times, most notably during the Volkrust Satyagraha in 1913.
- brought about negotiations that resulted in the Indian Relief Act of 1914 as a result of the Satyagraha's international prominence.

124th Death Anniversary of Birsa Munda



Why in the News?

The chief minister of Jharkhand paid his respects on the 124th anniversary of the revolutionary tribal leader "Birsa Munda's" death.

Who was Birsa Munda (1875-1900)?

- On November 15, 1875, Birsa Munda was born into a community of Mundas who lived in the Chotanagpur area of modern-day Jharkhand. This was a time of great change for the Mundas.

- Early in life, Birsa Munda traveled with his parents and attended Jaipal Nag's primary school.
- Birsa became a well-known leader supporting tribal rights after being influenced by the nonviolent Sardari uprising against British control.

Causes of the Rebellion

- **Impact of Colonial Policies:** Traditional land ownership structures were upset by colonial policies, such as the Permanent Settlement Act (1793), which resulted in the eviction and exploitation of indigenous tribes.
- **Erosion of Khuntkattidar System:** Jagirdars and thikadars undermined the Mundas' traditional land rights system, known as khuntkatti, which resulted in land alienation.
- **Land Alienation and Exploitation:** During British administration, non-tribal migration into tribal areas increased, leading to forced labor and high-interest loan exploitation.
- **Missionary Activity:** As a result of missionary efforts to disseminate knowledge, tribal people were more conscious of their surroundings, which exacerbated social divisions but also sparked movements for tribal reconstruction.

Major Activities:

1. New faith 'Birsait' against religious conversion

- Birsa founded the "Birsait" creed after learning about the British colonial ruler and the missionaries' attempts to convert tribal people to Christianity.
- The Birsait sect quickly gained followers among the Munda and Oraon people, posing a threat to British conversion efforts.
- He was referred to by the Mundas as Dharati Aaba, the earth's father.

2. The Birsa Movement: Ulgulan

- The Munda Rebellion, which took place in the area south of Ranchi between 1899 and 1900, was a tribal uprising led by Birsa Munda.

- It was mostly concentrated in Khunti, Tamar, Sarwada, and Bandgaon, which make up the Munda belt.
- The Ulgulan, or "Great Tumult," as Munda tribals called the uprising, aimed to create Munda Raj and independence.
- Birsa Munda's death and the British forces' crushing of the uprising marked the end of the insurrection.

Significant Outcomes

- Impact: The mobilization of tribal tribes by Birsa Munda had a long-lasting effect, leading to the adoption of the Tenancy Act (1903) and the dismantling of the Begar system.
- His Death: On June 9, 1900, Birsa Munda passed away in prison as a result of the movement's brutal suppression.

Unsolved issue of the Buddha Relics from Bavikonda



Why in the News?

- Ten years after Telangana separated from the unified Andhra Pradesh, disputes still surround the distribution of antiques, manuscripts, and cultural artifacts.
- This controversy includes custody of items such as the Buddha Relics from Bavikonda.

About Bavikonda Buddhist Complex

- Situated near Visakhapatnam on the Eastern Coast of Andhra Pradesh, Bavikonda is a noteworthy ancient Buddhist site that dates back to the 3rd century BC and 3rd century AD. It is accessible by road from Bheemunipatnam.

- It is close to historic ports and situated on an old commercial route that connects Andhradesa with North India via Kalinga.
- This historical background is further supported by the discovery of Roman silver coins.
- Site features also include Buddhapada stones on the platforms around the Mahachaitya, which are finely carved with Ashtamangala motifs.

About Buddha Relics from Bavikonda

- The artifacts were found in 1993 while the Andhra Pradesh Department of Archaeology and Museums (DAM) was conducting archaeological digs.
- Our knowledge of how Buddhism expanded throughout the Krishna River basin during the post-Ashoka period has greatly benefited from these discoveries.
- **Nature of Relics:**
 1. Several earthen containers bearing gold artifacts and precious beads were found at the Bavikonda site.
 2. These relics are thought to comprise gold and silver caskets as well as the Buddha's physical remains, maybe related to his head.
 3. These were discovered next to a Samudgaka, a clay urn or container filled with burnt charcoal and ashy deposits.

Noted Buddhavanam Sites in Andhra Region

- Another well-known Buddhist site, Thotlakonda is close to Visakhapatnam and dates from the third century BC to the third century AD. It is made up of a university, chaityas, stupas, viharas, and monastery complexes. Relics and artifacts unearthed during excavations show that it was a significant hub for Buddhist study and trade.
- Salihundam: Salihundam, which is close to Srikakulam, was inhabited from the second century BC to the twelfth century AD. It has sculptures, votive stupas, monastery complex ruins, and stupa fragments. The location is renowned for its sculpture and architecture,

which combine centuries-old Hindu and Buddhist influences.

- Pavurallakonda: Located near Bheemunipatnam, this Buddhist hilltop monastery was established between the first and second centuries AD. It dates from the third century BC. It consists of chaityas, viharas, and relic caskets. The location's expansive views of the coastline contribute to its meditative atmosphere.
- Ghantasala: From the second century BC to the second century AD, this ancient Buddhist site—which is close to the Krishna district—was in use. Its stupas, viharas, and artifacts attest to its importance as a hub for trade and the dissemination of Buddhist doctrines.
- Nagarjunakonda: An island on the Krishna River in the Guntur district, Nagarjunakonda flourished from the third century BC to the third century AD. It has an abundance of sculptures, stupas, chaityas, and Buddhist monasteries. The location is well-known for its massive archaeological discoveries and impressive architecture.

PM inaugurates Nalanda University



Why in the News?

The new campus of Nalanda University, an international university situated next to the historic Nalanda ruins in Rajgir, Bihar, has been officially opened by the prime minister.

Revival of Nalanda University

- Former president Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam put up the notion to resurrect Nalanda University in 2006,

and it was through his proposal that the Nalanda University Bill was passed in 2010.

- 2014 saw the official opening of the university's rebirth in a temporary location.
- The permanent campus was first proposed in 2016 by former president Pranab Mukherjee. Work on the project began in 2017 and was completed in time for today's inauguration.
- The university was founded by the Parliament in response to decisions made at the Second East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2007 and the Fourth East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2009.

International Collaboration and Courses

- 17 nations have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to help Nalanda University, including Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Indonesia, and others.
- The ASEAN-India Fund, BIMSTEC, and the Ministry of External Affairs of Bhutan are the sponsors of this program, which provides 137 scholarships to international students.
- The institution offers short-term certificate courses in addition to postgraduate and doctorate research courses.

Historical Background

- The world's first residential university, Nalanda University was founded in the fifth century CE in the ancient kingdom of Magadha (modern-day Bihar).
- Establishment and Patronage:
 - Nalanda University was founded in 427 AD by the Gupta dynasty, led by Emperor Kumaragupta I, who aimed to establish it as a leading hub for Buddhist research.
 - Monarchs such as King Harsha and the Pala Empire bestowed significant endowments upon it, augmenting its stature and sway throughout Asia.
- Countries: Scholars from Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Mongolia were drawn to it.

- Medicine, Ayurveda, Buddhism, mathematics, grammar, astronomy, and Indian philosophy were among the subjects covered in the classroom.
- During the eighth and ninth century CE, the institution flourished under the Pala dynasty's patronage, making important contributions to astronomy and mathematics.
- One of the renowned teachers of Nalanda was Aryabhata, the creator of zero and a pioneer in Indian mathematics.

Admission and Academic Rigor

- Nalanda's admissions process was extremely tough, much like that of today's elite universities like IIT, IIM, or Ivy League colleges.
- Scholars and Buddhist masters such as Dharmapala and Silabhadra coached the students and subjected them to rigorous interviews.
- The university's library, dubbed the "Mountain of Truth" or "Dharma Gunj," held the biggest collection of Buddhist knowledge with its nine million handwritten palm-leaf manuscripts.

Destruction and Rediscovery

- A Turko-Afghan military commander named Bakhtiyar Khilji set Nalanda University on fire in the 1190s, causing it to burn for three months and destroying priceless Buddhist writings.
- The Yarlung Museum in Tibet and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art both house some of the remaining manuscripts.
- Scottish surveyor Francis Buchanan-Hamilton made a new discovery of the university in 1812, and Sir Alexander Cunningham formally recognized it in 1861.

Scholarly Influence

- Scholars like Nagarjuna, renowned for his groundbreaking work in the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism, and his pupil Aryadeva have contributed to Nalanda's intellectual heritage.
- Buddhist doctrine was further refined by Dharmapala's commentary.
- These intellectuals' contributions to metaphysics and epistemology increased the impact of Nalanda, influencing religious and philosophical ideas throughout Asia and influencing the ideas of later generations of intellectuals.

International Relations

India to Chair 'Colombo Process'



Why in the News?

India has become chair of the regional grouping "Colombo Process" for the first time since its inception in 2003.

What is the Colombo Process?

- The Colombo Process is a regional consultation project that was founded on March 19, 2003, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, to address issues pertaining to migrant workers from South and Southeast Asia.
- The main objective of the Colombo Process is to improve the administration of labor migration from Asian countries that is contracted.
- Focus: It aims to maximize the advantages of labor migration for sending and receiving countries while defending the rights and welfare of migrant workers.

Consensus is used to make decisions, and the Process is non-binding.

- Consensus is used to make decisions, and the Process is non-binding.

Membership:

- First Composition: Originally made up of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, among other member countries.
- Expansion: Since then, other nations like Cambodia and Myanmar have been included in the Process.

Five Thematic Area Working Groups (TAWGs) i.e.

1. Skills and Qualification Recognition (chaired by Sri Lanka);
2. Fostering Ethical Recruitment (chaired by Bangladesh);
3. Pre-Departure Orientation and Empowerment (chaired by the Philippines);
4. Remittances (chaired by Pakistan) and
5. Labour Market Analysis (chaired by Thailand).

Key Focus Areas:

- Policy Development: Covering a range of labor migration-related topics, such as gathering data, developing capacity, exchanging best practices, and developing policies.
- Protection of Rights: Ensuring the rights of migrant workers are protected, acknowledging their skills, hiring ethically, and fighting irregular migration and human trafficking.

Activities and Initiatives:

- Platforms for Dialogue: The member nations' regular gatherings, conferences, and seminars provide as forums for communication and collaboration.
- Policies and Resources: creation of policy frameworks, toolkits, and guidelines to help member nations manage labor migration.
- Cooperation: Working together to accomplish joint efforts and projects with international organizations like the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Second Phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**Why in the News?**

The prime minister of Pakistan was in China for the official unveiling of the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC-II).

About CPEC-II

- CPEC's The second phase of the CPEC will concentrate on areas other than infrastructure and energy, such as agriculture, the realignment of the Karakorum Highway, and the renovation of Pakistan Railways' Main Line-I (ML-1).
- As a component of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), CPEC was launched in 2015.

**Why CPEC-II?**

- It will provide Pakistan a tactical edge in terms of business and trade.
- Significant energy sector investments are part of CPEC-II, which will assist Pakistan overcome its ongoing power shortages and provide a steady supply of electricity.
- Gives China a quicker way to enter the Persian Gulf, ensuring oil imports, and boosts Pakistan's industrial and economic growth.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

- The Chinese government launched the Belt and Road Initiative, originally known as One Belt One Road, in 2013 as a global infrastructure development plan.
- It plans to make investments in over 70 nations and global institutions.

- Ports, railroads, roadways, power plants, aviation, and telecommunications are examples of infrastructure developments.
- The term "road" refers to the sea channels, or the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, while "belt" refers to the overland networks for road and rail traffic, known as "the Silk Road Economic Belt."
- The project is scheduled to be completed in 2049, which also happens to be the People's Republic of China's 100th anniversary.

India's Concerns

- India raises concerns about sovereignty as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), raising issues with territorial sovereignty and possibly strengthening Pakistan's claim to the area.
- Geopolitical Implications: China's "String of Pearls" is being extended around India with the CPEC's expansion of Gwadar Port, raising questions about the balance of power in the area.

CPEC's Progress so Far

- Mixed Results: While progress has been uneven, the first phase of CPEC mainly focused on port, energy, and infrastructure development projects.
- Project Status: Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and transportation-related projects continue to face major delays and difficulties, despite the completion of a number of power projects.

Challenges and Roadblocks

- Slow pace: Gwadar lacks basic amenities like dependable access to electricity and water, let alone other facilities, even in the midst of multibillion-dollar developments.
- Another obstacle to the project that has halted is the Baloch liberation movement, which calls for the killing of Chinese officials.
- Persistent security threat: Pakistan has objected to China's plans to use its Army in the CPEC projects.

BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting



Why in the News?

- India attended the BRICS foreign ministers' summit, which took place in Russia. This was the first gathering of the BRICS since Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates became as full-time members in 2023.

What is BRICS?

	Details
Members	BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)
Origin	Coined by economist Jim O'Neill in 2001 as BRIC, formalized as BRICS in 2010
Formation	First meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers in 2006
South Africa's Inclusion	Invited to join BRIC in December 2010
Global share of BRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population: 41% • GDP: 24% • Global trade: 16%
Chairmanship	Rotated annually among members, following sequence B-R-I-C-S
India's Hosting	Hosted the 2021 BRICS Summit
Key Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2014, the New Development Bank (NDB) was founded. 70 projects for sustainable development and

	<p>infrastructure have been approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014-signed Contingent Reserve Agreement: intends to enhance financial stability and prevent short-term strains on the balance of payments. • signed customs agreements to facilitate trade • Initiated in 2021, the BRICS constellation of remote sensing satellites involves six current satellites that members have developed.
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Objective of BRICS

- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, or BRICS, have as their main goals the advancement of economic cooperation, development, and influence in international affairs.
- Principal objectives encompass cultivating economic expansion and collaboration among participating countries, establishing establishments for funding development, and fortifying political synchronization and discourse on global matters.

BRICS-11 Expansion

- In celebration of its 15th summit, BRICS expanded from five to eleven countries with the admission of six additional members. This action seeks to increase its influence worldwide.
- With the addition of Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, and Argentina, BRICS now spans multiple continents.
- The first day of these nations' full participation was January 1, 2024.

Challenges within BRICS

- Lack of a Unified Vision: Coordination of action is hampered by BRICS's lack of a distinct and cohesive vision for tackling global concerns.
- Bilateral problems: The unity and cooperation of the BRICS are threatened by tensions between its members, such as the border disputes

between China and India and the problems in Russia.

- Economic Disparities: Fair decision-making and collaboration are hampered by the economic disparities among the group's members, with China leading the way.
- Trade Imbalances: BRICS trade and economic integration initiatives are hampered by trade imbalances among member members.
- Heterogeneity: The creation of shared goals and strategies is hampered by the political, linguistic, and cultural differences among the member countries.
- Restricted Institutional Framework: In order to effectively coordinate and carry out group actions, BRICS needs strong institutional frameworks.

In news: G-7 Outreach Summit Apulia, Italy



Why in the News?

- PM Modi took center stage for a group photo taken during the Italian G-7 Outreach Summit.
- PM Modi is attending the G7 Summit for the fifth time in a row, and this is India's eleventh time participating.

About G-7 (Group of Seven)

- The United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom (UK) make up the informal G7 bloc of industrialized democracies.
- It meets once a year to discuss topics of international security, global economic

governance, and, more recently, artificial intelligence (AI).

- **Formation and Expansion:**

- The United States, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and West Germany initially created the Group of Six in 1975; Canada joined in 1976.
- It was established in response to the oil crisis with the goal of balancing international relations and global economic policy.
- The group was formed in response to economic issues during the Cold War, including the recession and inflation made worse by the OPEC oil embargo.

- **Key statistics about G7 countries:**

- Wealth: Their share of the world's net worth is 60%.
- Growth: 46% of the world GDP is driven by them.
- Population: Ten percent of the world's population consists of them.

Russia's Joining and Suspension

- When Russia joined in 1998, it changed its name to the G8, with the intention of promoting stronger ties with Western countries and raising its international stature.
- Following its invasion of Crimea, Russia was suspended in 2014, which resulted in continued tensions and difficulties with China as well as Russia.

Functioning of the G7

- The G7 is an informal organization without a secretariat or charter, unlike formal organizations like the UN or NATO.
- Its presidency, which goes to Canada in 2025, is tasked with organizing the summit's schedule and logistics.
- Ministers and envoys, referred to as Sherpas, draft policy objectives and arrange talks and agreements prior to the yearly conference.

- G7 gatherings occasionally extend invitations to non-member nations to attend.

Why G7 needs India?

- India's involvement in G7 meetings on a regular basis serves as evidence of both its economic significance and stable democratic system.
- Growing Economic Power: India's participation in international affairs is becoming more and more important as it prepares to become the fourth-largest economy in the world.
- Global South Leadership: Modi's programs, such as the Voice of the Global South Summit, have improved India's standing internationally.
- G20 leadership: India's most recent G20 leadership showed off its capacity to forge agreements on divisive international matters.
- Strategic Partnerships and Neutrality: India's alliances with the G7 countries are strengthened by its impartial response to Western worries over China's operations in the South China Sea and its economic policies.
- Keeping a diplomatic balance with Russia and the West: India's neutral posture makes it a valuable partner in the West's confrontation with Russia over Ukraine.

Divergence within G7

- Geopolitical Tensions: The G7 countries frequently differ and are tense about geopolitical issues, including how to respond to Russian aggression, what to do about crises in areas like Ukraine, and how to form strategic partnerships with developing nations.
- Economic Policies: Within the G7, discussions about trade relations and economic policies are common. Trade tariffs, market laws, financial stability, and economic cooperation in the face of international economic difficulties are among the issues.
- Climate Change: The G7's top priorities include mitigating climate change and attaining environmental sustainability. Conversations usually center on international collaboration on

climate legislation, investments in renewable energy, and vows to take action on climate change.

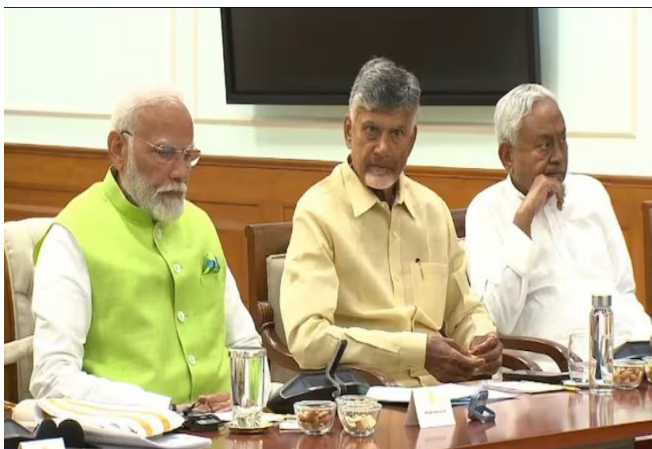
- Security and Defense: Key themes on the G7 agenda include security and defense cooperation, which includes reactions to international terrorism, cybersecurity concerns, and military alliances.
- Technology and Innovation: Another area of concentration is managing technological

advancements, which includes cybersecurity standards, digital governance, AI legislation, and technological innovation regulations.

- Social Issues: Reflecting broader societal concerns and international commitments, social issues including gender equality, human rights, immigration regulations, and global development aid are also included in the G7 agenda.

Polity

What are the powers of the Speaker, why is the post crucial for BJP, its allies



Why in the news?

The pivotal role of the Speaker in parliamentary democracy is underscored as both the TDP and JD(U), crucial allies within the NDA, compete for the position, highlighting its significance.

Constitutional mandate:

- Article 93 of the Constitution provides for the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, with the Speaker being chosen by a simple majority.
- When the House dissolves, the Speaker's tenure comes to an end, and a motion of no confidence in the Speaker may be made.
- There are no special requirements for the Speaker, who is not like the other members.

Powers of the Speaker

- The Speaker is in charge of overseeing House behavior and official business, making sure that the rules are followed, which is essential for the involvement of the opposition. The House operates by a set of rules and procedures, but the Speaker has extensive authority to choose how these rules are to be followed.
- Questions and Records: The Speaker is in charge of judging the merits of member inquiries and supervising the dissemination of House records. The Speaker has the authority to strike down any or all of the remarks that are considered to be unparliamentary.
- Voice Votes and Division: These are two essential legislative processes that the speaker can use to advance bills: division and voice vote.
 - The Speaker may "unnecessarily claim" anything, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha, by simply asking the members who support "Aye" and "No," respectively, to stand up and make a decision.
- No-Confidence Motion: When a motion of no-confidence against the government is presented, it is a crucial instance in which the Speaker's impartiality has a substantial impact on the opposition.
 - The YSRCP and TDP filed notices of a motion of no confidence in 2018, and

Speaker Sumitra Mahajan repeatedly adjourned the House before accepting the motion and holding a vote on it.

- Voting: In accordance with Article 100 of the Constitution, which deals with voting in the Houses, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, or any other person functioning in such a role, “must cast a deciding vote in the event of a tie” instead of casting a ballot in the first place.

Disqualification of members

- Power of the Speaker: In accordance with the Tenth Schedule, the Speaker of the House has the power to remove lawmakers who leave their party.
- Introduction of the Anti-Defection Law: In 1985, the Fifty-Second (Amendment) Act introduced the Tenth Schedule, commonly referred to as the anti-defection law, into the Constitution.
- Judicial Review: In the seminal 1992 case of Kihoto Hollohan versus Zachillhu, the Supreme Court maintained the Speaker's authority to make decisions about defection cases. It decided that the only order that can be reviewed by the courts is the Speaker's final one.
- Effect on Government Stability: If a sizable number of members defect, it may alter the numerical strength of political parties in the House and cause governments to become unstable. It is imperative that the Speaker takes prompt action to reject members who exhibit defects in order to preserve the integrity of the Tenth Schedule and guarantee governments' majority.
- Supreme Court Orders: The Supreme Court has made it clear in its orders that Speakers must move quickly to remove candidates from office. For example, in 2020, it decided that, barring extraordinary circumstances, Speakers must make a decision on disqualification pleas within three months.

- Impact on Government Formation: As seen by the instances in which administrations have fallen because of protracted delays in resolving defection-related matters, delays in ruling on disqualification petitions can have serious political repercussions.
- Example Case: The Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly was ordered by the Supreme Court in 2023 to expedite the disqualification process against members of the Shiv Sena party's factions. Extended postponements in these legal processes played a role in the downfall of the Uddhav Thackeray government.

Conclusion

- The Speaker has broad authority over how the House is run, rules are followed, important decisions are made (such as no-confidence resolutions), and political stability is kept when these powers are used wisely.

What are the functions of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State?

Why in the News?

- President Droupadi Murmu administered oaths to the Central Council of Ministers (CoM) of the new NDA government, comprising a larger team compared to the previous term.
- The Council includes 30 cabinet ministers, five Ministers of State (Independent Charge), and 36 Ministers of State, with the Prime Minister leading the team.

About Central Council of Ministers

- The Central CoM is a crucial part of India's governance system.
- Members: It consists of the Prime Minister (Head), Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, and Deputy Ministers.
- History:
 - Portfolio System: The system of the CoM finds its roots in the *Indian Councils Act of 1861*, introduced by Lord

Canning going parallel with the British Parliamentary System.

Constitutional Provisions

Articles 74 to 78 in Part V of the Indian Constitution broadly deal with the Central Council of Ministers.



Union Executive: The President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Union Council of Ministers, and Attorney General of India are all members of the Union Executive, which is in charge of running the nation's government.

Role of the Prime Minister

- As the leader of the Central Council of Ministers, the prime minister has administrative authority and decision-making authority over important policy matters and unallocated portfolios.
- Accountabilities: In addition to heading government organizations like the Cabinet Secretariat and NITI Aayog, Prime Minister Modi is in charge of important ministries like Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy, and Department of Space.

Functions and Duties of CoM

1. Policy Formulation and Implementation:

- **Creating Policies:** Creating policies that are essential to the welfare and growth of the country is within the purview of the Council of Ministers, especially the Cabinet.
- **Policy Coordination:** It makes sure that different government agencies and departments work together to implement policies in an efficient manner.

2. Executive Functions:

- **Actual Executive Authority:** The President delegated executive powers to the Council of Ministers, which functions as the actual executive authority.
- **Administration:** It is responsible for monitoring the nation's daily operations and making sure that government matters run smoothly.
- **Emergency Powers:** The Council of Ministers counsels the President on the use of emergency powers and crisis resolution in times of crisis.

3. Legislative Functions:

- **Bills and Legislation:** By presenting bills, guiding them through Parliament, and guaranteeing their passage, ministers take an active role in the legislative process.
- **Policy Advocacy:** They participate in talks and debates to gain support for government policies and proposals in Parliament.
- **Budgetary Process:** The yearly budget, which directs fiscal policies and financial allocations, is prepared and presented by the Council of Ministers.

4. Financial Management:

- **Budget Preparation:** It's important for creating the national budget and laying out the plans for spending and income for the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Financial Administration:** The Council is in charge of overseeing financial administration, making sure that budgetary requirements are followed and resources are used effectively.
- **Fiscal Policy and Taxation:** To encourage stability and economic growth, ministers create fiscal policies and suggest tax measures.

Who are the Cabinet Ministers?

- Senior members of the Central Council of Ministers who oversee important government ministries or departments are known as Cabinet Ministers.

- Cabinet Ministers are members of the Cabinet, the main government decision-making body, and are often nominated by the prime minister.
- Usually, each Cabinet Minister oversees a certain portfolio that is in line with the duties and goals of the government.
- Examples: Ministers of Finance, Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Health, and Education are a few examples. There are more.

Ministers of State (Independent Charge) and Ministers of State:

	Ministers of State (Independent Charge)	Ministers of State
Authority	Have independent portfolios	Assist Cabinet Ministers
Reporting Structure	Directly report to PM/President	Report to and assist Cabinet Ministers
Accountability	Fully responsible for their departments	Assist Cabinet Ministers in tasks
Protocol Status	Equivalent to Cabinet Ministers in status	Lower protocol status
Attendance in Cabinet Meetings	May attend if their portfolios are discussed	Not regular attendees

NHRC Notice to Centre on Worker Rights Violation in Haryana



Why in the News?

- The Center received a notice from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) regarding reports pertaining to an Amazon company's warehouse located in Manesar, Haryana.
- Workers claimed to have been coerced into promising not to use the restroom or water breaks until six trucks had been unloaded during a 30-minute tea break.

NHRC's Observations and Actions

- According to the NHRC, this is a grave infringement of human rights that can also go against Ministry directives and labor legislation.
- A request for a thorough report within a week was made to the Secretary of the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment.

About National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

	Details
Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Statutory Body; • Established under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquire into any violation of human rights • Recommend immediate interim relief to victims or their families • Intervene in court proceedings involving human rights violations • Review constitutional and legal safeguards for human rights • Study international instruments on human rights • Promote human rights literacy • Support the efforts of NGOs working in the field of human rights
Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate its own procedure • Possess all the powers of a civil court • Proceedings have a judicial character

Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a former Justice of the Supreme Court or Chief Justice of the Supreme Court • Appointed by the President of India
Members	<p>Four full-time members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson: former Supreme Court Justice or Chief Justice; • Other Member: former Judge of the Supreme Court; • Other Member: former Chief Justice of a High Court; • Three Members: with knowledge or experience in human rights, including at least one woman – <p>Seven ex-officio members: Chairpersons of National Commissions viz., National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Women, National Commission for Minorities, National Commission for Backward Classes, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights; and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.</p>
Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed by the President, based on a committee recommendation including the Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Home Minister, Leaders of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, and others • Consultation with the Chief Justice of India for judicial appointments
Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal by order of the President of India • Consultation with the Supreme Court before removal

Terms of Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold office for a term of three years or until the age of 70 • Ineligibility for further government employment after office • Eligible for reappointment
Salaries	Determined by the Central government
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submits annual or special reports to the Central government and the concerned State government • Reports laid before the respective legislatures, along with a memorandum of action taken on the recommendations and reasons for non-acceptance of any recommendations
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commission is not empowered to inquire into any matter after the expiry of one year from the date on which the act constituting the violation of human rights is alleged to have been committed • Functions are recommendatory in nature, with no power to punish or award relief to violators • Limited role concerning armed forces violations

Government Initiatives for Worker Welfare in India:

	Description
Constitutional Framework	Labour falls under the Concurrent List, allowing both Central and State governments to enact laws. Articles 14, 16, and 39(c) ensure equality and welfare principles.
Judicial Interpretation under <i>Randhir Singh vs Union of India</i> (1982)	Upholds 'Equal pay for Equal work' through constitutional articles, promoting fairness in employment.

Legislative Framework	<p>Introduction of 4 labour codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Wages, 2019: Standardizes wage payments across sectors. • Industrial Relations Code, 2020: Consolidates laws related to industrial disputes and trade unions. • Social Security Code, 2020: Expands social security benefits coverage for workers.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Ensures safety and welfare standards in workplaces.
“Shramev Jayate” Initiative	Launched in 2014 to maximize benefits for workers through enhanced welfare initiatives.
Maternity Benefit Amendment Act, 2017	Increases paid maternity leave from 12 to 26 weeks, supporting maternal health and childcare.

Science, Technology, Art & Culture

First Human Case of Avian H5N2 Infection



Why in the News?

- The first verified case of human infection with the H5N2 form has been confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO), who has confirmed the death of a resident of Mexico from bird flu.
- This H5N2 virus is distinct from the H5N1 avian flu strain that recently affected humans in America.

What is Avian Influenza A (H5N2)?

- H5N2, often known as avian influenza A, is a subtype of influenza A virus that mainly affects birds but can also infect people under specific situations.
- The zoonotic character of the virus is demonstrated by the fact that human infections

usually arise from direct contact with diseased birds or polluted settings.

Symptoms of H5N2

- H5N2 infection can be deadly and cause upper respiratory tract illnesses ranging from moderate to severe.
- There have also been reports of encephalitis, encephalopathy, conjunctivitis, and gastrointestinal problems.

Diagnostic and Treatment Protocols

- **Laboratory Diagnosis:** Laboratory testing is required to establish the presence of the virus in order to identify avian influenza in people.
- **WHO Advice:** To improve the identification of zoonotic influenza, the World Health Organization regularly updates technical guidelines, such as RT-PCR techniques.
- **Treatment Plans:** Antiviral drugs, particularly neuraminidase inhibitors such as zanamivir and oseltamivir, are effective in shortening the time of viral replication and increasing the chances of survival for those who are infected.

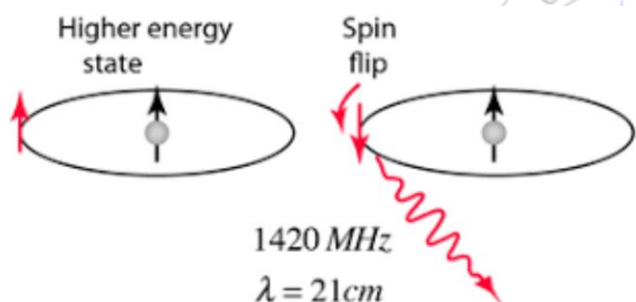
Influenza A Viruses

- The alphanumeric codes of H and N are used to subdivide the viruses according to what kinds

of **proteins are on the surface** of the virus based on 2 types:

1. **Hemagglutinin (HA)**
2. **Neuraminidase (NA)**
 - 11 NA subtypes and 18 HA subtypes are known.
 - There are 16 HA and 9 NA subtypes known in birds. (Two more subtypes in bats have been identified: H17N10 and H18N11.)
 - It is feasible to combine HA and NA proteins in a wide variety of ways.
 - For instance, an influenza A virus subtype with a HA 7 protein and a NA 2 protein is referred to as a "A(H7N2) virus."
 - Similar to this, the "A(H5N1)" virus possesses the HA 5 and NA 1 proteins.

Hydrogen Line: A Unique Signal



Why in the News?

In modern astronomy, the hydrogen line is an essential tool that is used for everything from researching distant stars to looking for extraterrestrial life.

What is a Hydrogen Line?

- One unique kind of light that hydrogen atoms produce is called the hydrogen line.
- It occurs when an electron, a little particle that circling the hydrogen atom's nucleus, changes its energy level from higher to lower.
- Light with a wavelength of roughly 21 centimeters is released as a result of this leap. The hydrogen line is the name given by scientists to this wavelength.

Why is it Important?

- In the universe, hydrogen is present everywhere. Comprising approximately 75% of the elemental

mass of the universe, it is the most plentiful and simplest element.

- Thus, we may learn a great deal about the makeup and distribution of stuff in the cosmos by examining the hydrogen line.
- Astronomers can produce maps that illustrate the locations of hydrogen gas by studying the emission of the hydrogen line from various parts of space.
- Hidden mysteries of the early universe Secrets about the early cosmos can also be found in the hydrogen line. Hydrogen gas permeated the universe soon after the Big Bang.
- Astronomers can learn about the circumstances and history of the hydrogen line billions of years ago by examining it in remote regions of the universe.

How Do We Interpret Hydrogen Line?

- Understanding the origin and evolution of galaxies and galaxy clusters depends on knowing the positions of hydrogen clouds, which may be mapped using data from radio telescopes.
- By monitoring hydrogen line emission from various galactic components, one can investigate internal dynamics and features, such as rotation curves, which provide information about the distribution of mass within galaxies.
- Understanding the early stages of cosmic history is aided by the observation of hydrogen lines from far-off galaxies, which reveals early cosmos conditions.

What's Next?

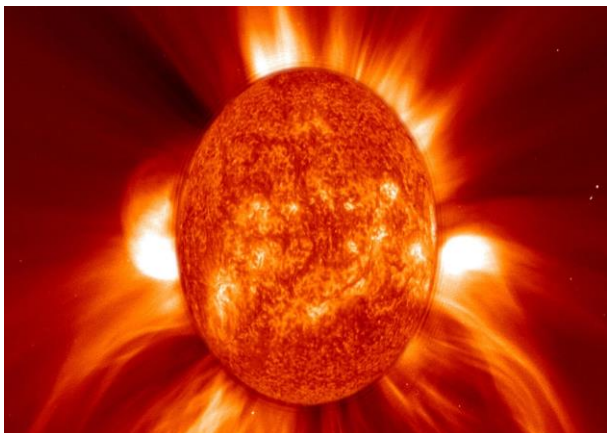
- **New Findings:** To increase the sensitivity and resolution of radio telescopes, scientists are always creating new tools and methods.
- This allows them to find fresh information about the amount of hydrogen in the universe and detect fainter signals.
- **Investigating Dark Matter:** The measurements of the hydrogen line may also help us learn more about dark matter, an invisible material that

accounts for around 27% of the mass-energy content of the universe.

- Scientists seek to learn more about dark matter by examining the hydrogen distribution in connection to the gravitational forces seen in galaxies.

- While not all CMEs connect with Earth, those that do have the potential to interfere with power systems and satellite communications.
- Halo coronagraph images reveal Earth-directed coronal mass ellipses (CMEs), which appear as rings.

What are Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)?



Why in the News?

- Images of the Sun and its Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) were recently taken by India's solar mission Aditya-L1 during a solar storm in May.
- Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) were linked to many X-class and M-class flare eruptions from the Sun's Active zone AR13664.

Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)

- After being found in 1971, CMEs came to be recognized as significant in solar-terrestrial relations later in the 1980s.
- Massive clouds of solar plasma and magnetic field lines make up this structure.
- It usually coincides with filament eruptions and solar flares.
- About one CME per week is recorded during solar minimum, whereas two to three CMEs on average per day are reported during solar maximum. The frequency of CMEs varies with the 11-year solar cycle.
- Their speed is hundreds of kilometers per hour.
- Aurorae, geomagnetic storms, and in severe situations, harm to electrical power grids can result from them.

About Aditya-L1:

- India's first space mission to monitor the Sun is called Aditya-L1.
- This is ISRO's second space-based astronomy mission, following the 2015 launch of AstroSat.
- On September 2, 2023, it was launched with the goal of observing the Sun and solar corona.
- A spacecraft can "hover" in a stable orbit at the L1 point, which is a place in space where the gravitational pull of two enormous objects, like the Earth and the Sun, balances each other out.

Launch Details:

- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) with 7 payloads (instruments) on board.

The 7 payloads include:

1. Images of the solar corona taken in visible light are used to research the dynamics and structure of the visual emission line corona (VELC).
2. The Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) collects ultraviolet light images of the solar chromosphere and transition area in order to study dynamics and heating.
3. In order to investigate solar flares and coronal mass ejections, the Solar Low Energy X-ray Spectrometer (SoLEXS) measures the solar X-ray spectrum.
4. High-energy solar X-rays are measured by the High Energy L1 Orbiting X-ray Spectrometer (HEL1OS) in order to comprehend particle acceleration.
5. Measures solar wind plasma parameters with the Plasma Analyser Package for Aditya (PAPA) in order to investigate

how it interacts with Earth's magnetosphere.

- The Aditya Solar Wind Particle Experiment (ASPEX) measures the characteristics of energetic particles in the solar wind in order to investigate how they affect the atmosphere of Earth.

Solar Irradiance Monitor (SIM): Measures solar irradiance variations and their impact on Earth's climate.

Objectives:

- Aditya L1 will study the coronal heating, solar wind acceleration, coronal magnetometry, origin and monitoring of near-UV solar radiation and continuously observe the photosphere, chromosphere and corona, solar energetic particles and the magnetic field of the Sun.

Location:

- Aditya is situated approximately 1.5 million kilometers from Earth in the L1 Halo orbit. The mission can continuously observe the Sun thanks to its orbit.
- Lagrangian/Lagrange Point 1, or L1, is one of the five locations in the Earth-Sun system's orbital plane.
- Lagrange points are locations in space where heightened zones of attraction and repulsion are produced by the gravitational forces of a two-body system, such as the Sun and Earth.

Portable Optical Atomic Clock for accurate timekeeping at Sea



Why in the News?

- GPS systems rely on atomic clocks to provide guidance during military operations, emergencies, and navigation.
- Researchers are working on optical atomic clocks to improve Navies' ability to tell time.

What are Atomic Clocks?

- Atomic clocks are precise timekeeping devices that measure time precisely by observing vibrations in atoms.
- They rely on the incredibly steady and predictable natural oscillations of atoms, often those of Caesium or Rubidium.
- Because of their remarkable accuracy in keeping time over millions of years, atomic clocks are able to lose or gain less than a second due to their stability.
- However, because of their size, power requirements, and cost, they are mostly utilized at large research facilities.

Working Principle:

- Use of Stable Atoms:** To maintain extremely accurate time, atomic clocks employ stable atoms such as Cs-133.
- Atom Energy Levels:** When an atom is excited, it moves between its energy levels, which like steps on a ladder.
- Establishing Resonance:** By employing microwave radiation at a specific frequency, caesium atomic clocks cause caesium atoms to vibrate.
- Defining Time:** The standard for time is the number of times it takes for caesium atoms to vibrate, which is one second.
- Accuracy Control:** Atomic clocks maintain their accuracy by varying their vibration frequency on a regular basis.

Portable Optical Atomic Clocks for Maritime Use

- New portable optical atomic clocks for ships are more accurate and durable, making them suitable for use at sea.

- These clocks are the best at sea, which is a big deal for keeping time on ships.

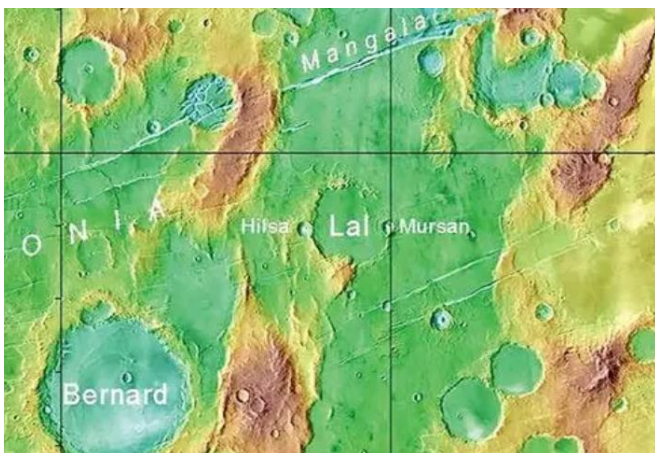
How Optical Atomic Clocks Are Different?

- Use of Laser: By using lasers rather than microwaves, optical atomic clocks are significantly more accurate.
- Operating Frequency: Because they operate at higher frequencies, they have greater accuracy when measuring shorter time intervals.
- limited Linewidths: The limited frequency range of optical atomic clocks contributes to their stability and accuracy.

Testing and Applications of Portable Optical Atomic Clocks

- Initial Testing: The new clocks proved to be extremely accurate and steady, which is important for keeping time, according to scientists testing them.
- Comparative Performance: These updated clocks outperformed their predecessors, demonstrating their potential to revolutionize timekeeping.
- Sea Trials: The clocks performed admirably during tests at sea, even while the ship was moving, demonstrating their applicability for navigation and other critical duties.

Lal Crater on Mars



Why in the News?

- Three new craters on Mars have been discovered by researchers from the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) in Ahmedabad. The

craters are located in the Tharsis volcanic region, roughly at 21.0 S and 209 W.

- PRL recommended that the three craters on Mars be given names, and the Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) accepted the suggestion.
- On July 28, 1919, at the Constitutive Assembly in Brussels, Belgium, the IAU was established.
- The need for worldwide cooperation in astronomy, particularly in light of the destruction wrought by World War I, led to its founding.
- It seeks to use worldwide cooperation to advance and protect astronomy in all of its forms.
- Currently, IAU's main office is in Paris, France.

Major Activities and Initiatives

- General Assembly: Professional astronomers gather to debate research, new collaborative projects, and other topics of professional interest at the International Astronomical Union's (IAU) general assembly, which is held every three years in different areas of the world.
- IAU standardizes the names of celestial bodies, characteristics, and phenomena in astronomy. It keeps up a number of working groups tasked with creating naming guidelines for planets, stars, asteroids, and other objects.
- Research and Collaboration: It encourages global collaboration in astronomy by supporting programs like cooperative projects, data sharing, and observational campaigns.
- Education and Public Outreach: It actively supports global initiatives for astronomy education and public outreach. It provides materials, workshops, and instructional activities for educators, students, and the general public.

Membership

1. There are 92 nations that are members of IAU. Of those nations, eighty-five are National Members.

- The Astronomical Society of India (ASI) represents India.
- Professional astronomers at the D. level and above from all around the world who are engaged in outreach, teaching, and professional research in astronomy make up its membership.

Crater Names and Significance

- Lal Crater:** Located at -20.98° and 209.34° , this 65 km wide crater bears the name of Prof. Devendra Lal, the previous director of PRL.
- Mursan Crater:** On the eastern edge of the Lal crater's rim, this about 10-kilometer-wide crater bears the name of a town in Uttar Pradesh, India.
- Hilsa Crater:** This approximately 10-kilometer-wide crater is located on the western edge of the Lal crater's rim and is named after a town in Bihar, India.

Scientific Importance of Lal Crater

- Lava Coverage:** The Tharsis volcanic region of Mars, which includes the Lal crater area, is entirely covered with lava.
- Evidence of Water:** There may be water beneath the surface of the Lal Crater based on geophysical data, which includes a sedimentary layer that is 45 meters thick. This discovery lends credence to the idea that water previously flowed on Mars' surface.
- Infilling Process:** The craters Mursan and Hilsa, which are located on either side of the Lal crater, provide information about the Lal crater's infilling process. Their existence suggests that infilling happened gradually and in episodes.

India's 2nd Quest for Mars

- Mangalyaan-2, also known as Mars Orbiter Mission 2 (MOM 2), is scheduled for launch by the ISRO in 2025.
- The mission's year-long goal is to conduct research on the Red Planet.
- Mangalyaan-2, the replacement for Mangalyaan-1, also known as Mars Orbiter Mission 1 (MOM 1), will launch from Satish

Dhawan Space Centre on a GSLV Mark III rocket with a single orbiter.

Other missions to Mars

- The European Space Agency's ExoMars rover (2022) is on a mission to investigate Mars.
- China's Mars mission, Tianwen-1 (2021), intends to investigate and learn more about the Martian surface.
- UAE's first interplanetary project, the Hope Mars project (2021), was designed to investigate the Martian atmosphere.
- NASA's Mars Insight (2018) is a lander intended to investigate Mars' innards.
- NASA's rovers Perseverance (2020) and Curiosity (2012) are investigating the Martian surface.
- NASA's Mars Odyssey (2001), MAVEN (2013), and Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (2005) are examples of orbiters that have studied Mars from space.
- Soviet Union's Mars 2 and Mars 3 (1971) missions, which comprised lander and orbiter parts.

Kavli Prize, 2024 Announced



Why in the News?

The winners of the **2024 Kavli Prize** were announced, recognising achievements in astrophysics, neuroscience, and nanoscience.

About Kavli Prize

- The Kavli Prize honors exceptional contributions to neurology, nanoscience, and astrophysics.

- It was founded in honor of philanthropist and Norwegian-American businessman Fred Kavli (1927–2013).
- The prize, which is given out every two years, honors scientists whose work expands our grasp of the cosmos, the human brain, and nanoscale phenomena.

About Fred Kavli

- Born in Erejsford, Norway, Fred Kavli moved to California in 1956 and became well-known in the engineering community right away.
- His entrepreneurial career started in 1958 when he founded Kavlico, a trailblazing business renowned for its precise pressure sensors used in consumer electronics and aviation, among other fields.

The Kavli Foundation:

- The Kavli Foundation was founded in 2000 by Fred Kavli following the \$340 million sale of Kavlico.
- This charitable organization funds basic research meant to raise the standard of living for everyone on the planet.

The foundation runs 20 institutes in the fields of theoretical physics, neurology, astronomy, and nanoscience around the world.

Prize Structure and Prestige:

1. Comparison with the Nobel Prize: The Kavli Prize is similar to the Nobel Prize in terms of prestige and worldwide recognition, but it is different in that it does not restrict awards to accomplishments from the previous year, allowing for a wider range and more durable selection criteria.
2. Prize Ceremony: A 7 cm diameter medal, a scroll, and a \$1 million cash prize are all included in each Kavli Prize category. Leading figures in science from around the world attended the ceremony, which took place at the Oslo Concert Hall and featured a red carpet event to highlight its importance to the scientific community.
3. **Selection Process:**

- Committees: The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters receives a unanimous recommendation from three worldwide committees that evaluate and nominate candidates.
- Nominees: A broad and thorough examination process is ensured by the nominations, which originate from esteemed institutions across the globe.

Winners of the 2024 Kavli Prize:

Field	Winners	Contributions
Astrophysics	David Charbonneau (Harvard University), Sara Seager (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)	Pioneering methods for detecting atomic species in planetary atmospheres and measuring their thermal infrared emission, are crucial for identifying molecular fingerprints in atmospheres of exoplanets.
Nanoscience	Robert Langer (MIT), Armand Alivisatos (University of Chicago), Chad Mirkin (Northwestern University)	Langer: Nano-engineering for controlled drug delivery systems. Alivisatos: Development of semiconductor quantum dots for bio-imaging. Mirkin: Concept of spherical nucleic acids (SNAs) for applications in gene regulation and immunotherapy.
Neuroscience	Nancy Kanwisher (MIT), Winrich Freiwald (Rockefeller University), Doris	Mapping brain functions related to facial recognition using neuroimaging and neuronal

	Tsao (University of California, Berkeley)	recording techniques, identifying brain centers and neural architectures involved in face processing.
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Valentina Tereshkova: The First Woman in Space



Why in the News?

Valentina Tereshkova became history on June 16, 1963, when she became the first woman to travel into space. Her accomplishment was a crucial turning point in the Cold War Space Race between the USSR and the USA.

About Valentina Tereshkova's Space Journey

- In an attempt to attain "gender equality" in space travel, Tereshkova was chosen in 1962 from a group of five women for the Soviet space program.
- The goal to outperform the US in space accomplishments and the success of Yuri Gagarin's 1961 expedition had a role in the USSR's decision to send a woman into space.
- The Communist Party membership and her parachute expertise played a role in Tereshkova's selection for the Vostok 6 mission.

The Mission – Vostok 6

- When Tereshkova flew Vostok 6 on June 16, 1963, she became the first woman in Earth's orbit.

- During her mission, she completed 48 orbits of the Earth and spent 71 hours in space.

Impact and Legacy

- After prior victories in the Space Race, such as the 1957 launch of Sputnik-1 and the 1961 historic flight by Yuri Gagarin, Tereshkova's mission enhanced Soviet prestige.
- Even though she was a pioneer, the USA would go on to overtake the Soviet Union in human space flights with accomplishments like the Apollo moon landings.
- In addition to holding significant roles in Soviet politics and the Air Force, Tereshkova persisted in advocating for women's participation in space exploration.

Indian Women in Space

Indian women have made significant contributions to space exploration, marking milestones and inspiring future generations. Here are notable Indian women who have ventured into space:

- **Kalpana Chawla:** The first Indian woman in space, Kalpana Chawla was born in Karnal, Haryana. She participated in two Space Shuttle flights, one of which being STS-87 in 1997. Sadly, she passed away in 2003 as the Space Shuttle Columbia was reentering the atmosphere.
- **Sunita Williams:** A Slovenian-Indian astronaut from the United States, Sunita Williams worked as a flight engineer on the International Space Station (ISS) and set records for spacewalk duration. She has spent more than 322 days in space on various missions.
- **Sirisha Bandla:** On the Virgin Galactic Unity 22 trip in 2021, Sirisha Bandla—an aeronautical engineer and vice president at Virgin Galactic—became the second woman born in India to travel to space.

Women Pioneers of ISRO:

- **Lalitha Ramachandran** was one of the first female chemical engineers hired by ISRO when she joined the organization in 1969 and worked as a technical assistant at the Vikram Sarabhai

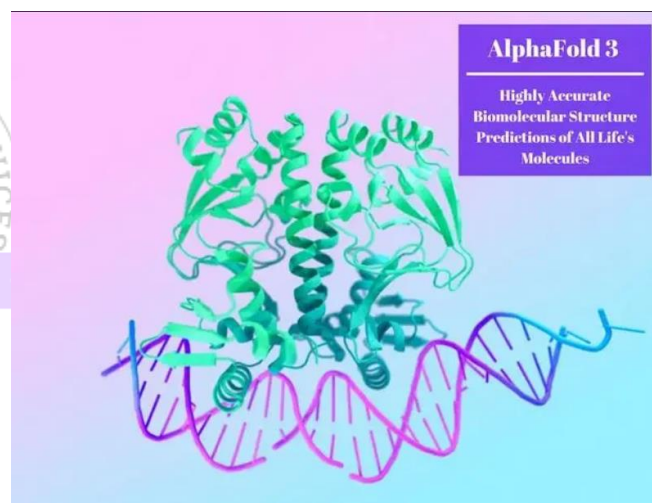
Space Centre (VSSC). She left the Cryogenic Upper Stage Project as an associate project director.

- **J Geetha:** After working at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, he joined ISRO in 1972. She remembers the difficulties in collecting data before the internet and the guidance she got from industry veterans like Satish Dhawan and Vasant R Gowariker.
- **Radhika Ramachandran** joined ISRO in 1984 and held a number of positions, including director of the Space Physics Laboratory and technical liaison officer at the ISRO office in New Delhi. She draws attention to the merit-based culture and the encouragement of candid conversations and recommendations.
- **T S Ramadevi:** After earning her BTech from CET, Thiruvananthapuram, she joined ISRO in 1970. She helped develop ISRO's transmission technology while working in the communications unit. As assistant director of management systems, she retired.
- **Athula Devi** was a member of the team that created the foundational software systems for the Gaganyaan launch. She joined ISRO in 1987 and retired in January 2024. She places more emphasis on the team's commitment to projects than individual accolades and ISRO's development via mistakes.
- **J Geetha:** Joined ISRO in 1972 after working at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. She reminisces about the challenges of data gathering in the pre-internet era and the mentorship she received from stalwarts like Satish Dhawan and Vasant R Gowariker.
- **Radhika Ramachandran:** Joined ISRO in 1984 and served in various roles, including technical

liaison officer at ISRO's New Delhi office and director of the Space Physics Laboratory. She highlights the merit-based culture and the support for open discussions and suggestions.

- **T S Ramadevi:** Joined ISRO in 1970 after completing her BTech from CET, Thiruvananthapuram. She was part of the communications unit and contributed to the growth of ISRO's transmission technologies. She retired as deputy director of management systems.

How will AlphaFold 3 change life sciences research?



Why in the News?

AlphaFold 3, an AI System introduced in a May 2024 Nature paper, extends capabilities to predict protein-protein interactions, DNA, RNA structures, and their interactions.

Importance of Proteins

- Proteins are essential molecules that control almost all cellular processes.
- Their shape and function are determined by the amino acids that make them up.
- Understanding the functioning of cells and organisms requires an understanding of protein folding.

The Protein-Folding Problem

- The protein-folding challenge refers to the intricate and poorly understood process of protein folding.
- It is essential for understanding the workings of organisms, cells, and life itself.
- The importance of comprehending protein structure for molecular biology is emphasized by Frank Uhlmann.

What is AlphaFold?

- AlphaFold, a product of Google DeepMind, made its debut in 2020 and predicts protein shapes using AI and machine learning.
- The 2021 release of AlphaFold 2 saw a considerable improvement in protein structure prediction accuracy.
- Derek Lowe notes that while AlphaFold has been successful in accurately predicting structures, more research needs to be done on the underlying biological principles.

AlphaFold 3's Advancements

- By providing easily used structure prediction tools, even for non-experts, it democratizes research.

Technology behind AlphaFold 3

- AlphaFold 3 uses a diffusion model similar to image-generating software, unlike its predecessors.

- This method uses de-noising after training on noisy data to accurately predict protein structures.

Working

- AlphaFold 3 produces the joint 3D structure of a given list of molecules as input, showing how they fit together.
- It simulates both small compounds, or ligands, which include a wide range of pharmaceuticals, and major macromolecules like proteins, DNA, and RNA.

Applications of AlphaFold 3

- Drug development efforts are aided by AlphaFold 3's exceptional prediction of protein structures and interactions.
- AlphaFold 3 is used by Isomorphic Labs, a DeepMind spin-off, to identify potential medication candidates.

Challenges

- Researchers have criticized the model's code restriction for impeding openness and collaboration in science.
- When DeepMind first refused to provide AlphaFold 3's complete code, the scientific community demanded free access.
- DeepMind intends to share the full code in six months in response to criticism.

Security Issues

Tarang Shakti-2024: Indian Air Force's First Multinational Air Exercise



Why in the News?

- Tarang Shakti-2024, the Indian Air Force's first multinational air exercise, is scheduled for August.
- It draws inspiration from the US-hosted Red Flag drill.

Tarang Shakti-2024

- Originally planned for late 2023, the exercise was postponed.
- The exercise will be conducted in two distinct phases:
 1. Phase One: Scheduled in southern India during the first two weeks of August.

2. Phase Two: To be held in the western sector from late August to mid-September.
- Some countries will partake in both phases, facilitating comprehensive training scenarios, while others will engage in specific phases based on operational objectives.
- Confirmed Participants:
 - Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, UAE, UK, USA, among others.

Red Flag Exercise

- Hosted by USAF: A wide range of foreign participants took part in the recently finished Red Flag exercise at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska.
- IAF Deployment: Eight Rafale fighters were deployed, backed by C-17 Globemaster planes and IL-78 mid-air refuellers.

- Combat Simulations: Red and Blue Forces simulated offensive and defensive duties, respectively, in air combat situations.

Significance of the Exercise

- The exercise offers a stage for showcasing cutting edge military equipment, such as aerial refueling systems, combat jets, and transport aircraft.
- This gives participants the chance to showcase the efficiency and compatibility of their equipment in cross-border environments.
- It would support collective security and improve regional stability in the Indo-Pacific area.
- It improves diplomatic ties with participating nations and solidifies India's position as a crucial ally in international security projects.



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**Unit- 6B & C, Unique Avenue,
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