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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

NATIONAL AFFAIR.....	1
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR .....	4
AWARD AND HONOUR .....	10
APPOINTMENT .....	15
OBITUARY.....	18
INITIATIVE/PROGRAMME/SCHEME/POLICY/CAMPAIGN/MISSION/PROJECT .....	19
MEETING/CONCLAVE/SUMMIT/EVENT/CONFERENCE .....	25
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.....	29
EXERCISE .....	33
ENVIRONMENT AFFAIRS .....	35
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.....	38
REPORT/RANK/INDEX/LIST.....	39
IMPORTANT DAY/WEEK/YEAR .....	42
FESTIVAL.....	45
SPORTS .....	46
BOOKS & AUTHORS.....	52
MISCELLANEOUS.....	53



## NATIONAL AFFAIR

**SC issues notice to Centre on Delhi Ordinance, Impleads L-G as a party in case.**

- The Supreme Court (SC) agreed to hear on July 17 an interim plea made by the Delhi government seeking a stay of Lieutenant- Governor (L-G.) V.K. Saxena's executive order "firing" 437 independent consultants of the Delhi Legislative Assembly.
- The interim application seeking relief for the 437 consultants was filed by the AAP government as part of its larger petition challenging the legality of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023.
- The writ petition challenges the Government of National Capital Territory (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, which was promulgated by the President on May 19. The Ordinance has the effect of depriving Delhi Government of the power over "services".

**SC agrees to list pleas to criminalise marital rape before 3-judge Bench**

- CJI D.Y. Chandrachud agreed to list early a series of petitions seeking the criminalisation of marital rape.
- The petitions are largely triggered by decisions from the Karnataka and Delhi High Courts, requiring an authoritative pronouncement from the apex court.

**Karnataka HC decision:**

- The Karnataka High Court had held that a husband was liable to be charged for rape if he had forcible sex with his wife. The Karnataka government had supported the High Court judgment in an affidavit in the apex court subsequently.
- Exception Two to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) decriminalises marital rape and holds that sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, who is not under 15 years of age, without her consent is not rape.
- "A man is a man; an act is an act; rape is a rape, be it performed by a man the 'husband' on the woman 'wife'," the Karnataka High Court had observed in its decision, saying an accused should be brought to trial regardless of the immunity in the penal code.

**Delhi HC decision:**

- A Division Bench of the Delhi High Court had, however, in May 2022, delivered a split verdict in a separate case on the identical issue. Justice Rajiv Shakdher, who headed the two judge Bench, had struck down as unconstitutional the Exception Two to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Split verdict in Delhi HC However, Justice C. Hari Shankar, the associate judge on the High Court Bench, had rejected the plea to criminalise marital rape, noting that any change in the law should be carried out by the legislature since the issue required consideration of various aspects, including social, cultural, and legal.
- The Karnataka government has referred to the report of the **Justice J.S. Verma Committee of 2013, which had recommended the removal of the exception for marital rape and proposed that the law should specify that "marital or other relationship between the perpetrator or victim is not a valid defence against the crimes of rape or sexual violation"**.

**ED director's tenure expansion declared illegal by Supreme Court.**

- The Supreme Court of India has declared the two term extension given as "not legally valid" to the Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) beyond the prescribed cut-off date.
- The current ED Director **Sanjay Kumar Mishra** was appointed for a period of two years in November 2018. His term was extended for three years in November 2020, which was later challenged through the petition.
- In 2021, the Supreme Court rejected the petition, but a specific mandate was issued in which further expansion was banned. Later, the government amended the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 and Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 to provide the powers of three -year term expansion to itself.
- The ED director is appointed under Section 25 of the CVC Act, 2003. The central government appoints the Director of ED on the recommendation of a selection committee. The committee consists of the CVC President, Vigilance Commissioner, Home Ministry, Ministry of Personnel and Secretary of the Finance Ministry of the Central Government.

**'EXTENDING TENURE OF ED DIRECTOR SK MISHRA ILLEGAL'**  
Supreme Court upholds amendments to CVC Act, DSPE Act





- In the year 1956, a 'enforcement unit' was formed. In the year 1957, the name of this unit was changed to 'Enforcement Directorate'.
- Its headquarters is in New Delhi and five regional offices are located in Mumbai, Chennai, Chandigarh, Kolkata and Delhi.

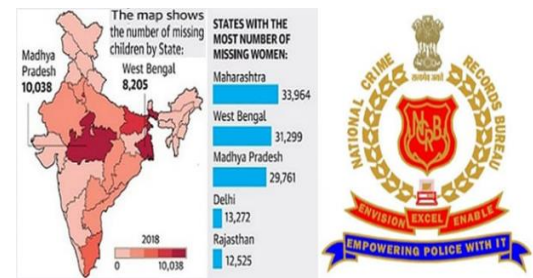
### Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Odisha, made the record of being the second longest serving Chief Minister of the country.

- A 5-time Chief Minister of Odisha, Mr. Patnaik assumed office on March 5, 2000 and held the position for 23 years and 138 days.
- He has broken the record of former West Bengal **CM Jyoti Basu**. Mr. Basu was the Chief Minister of West Bengal from June 21, 1977 to November 5, 2000, which was 23 years and 137 days.
- **longest serving Chief Minister title** is in the name of former Chief Minister of Sikkim, **Pawan Kumar Chamling**, who held the post for 24 years and 166 days.
- Mr. Naveen Patnaik successfully led a coalition government with the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2000. He was sworn in as the 14th Chief Minister of Odisha on 5 March 2000



### Maharashtra tops the list of missing women in India in the year 2021 as per NCRB data.

- Data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) in its publication 'Crime in India' showed that a total of 375,058 women (above 18 years) went missing in India in 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a press release. At least 90,113 girls (under the age of 18) were reported missing in 2021.
- According to the press release, in 2021, Maharashtra tops the list with the highest number of missing women at 56,498, followed by Madhya Pradesh (55,704), West Bengal (50,998), and Odisha (29,582). In 2020, 320,393 women and 71,204 girls went missing across the country.
- Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are the two states from where maximum girls and women went missing from 2019 to 2021. Collectively, a total of 10,61,648 women went missing from 2019 to 2021 across the country. In addition, 2,51,430 girls went missing during the same period.



### The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh declared 'Nagda' as the 54th district of the state.

- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan laid the foundation stone of development works worth Rs 261.14 crore in Tehsil Nagda of Ujjain district during Vikas Parv and announced to make Nagda a district.
- Fulfilling the long pending demand of Nagda region, the Chief Minister announced to make it a district. Those tehsils of Ujjain district who voluntarily want to be included in Nagda will be included in Nagda.



### SC 'deeply disturbed', orders Centre, Manipur govt. to act

[Taking *suo-motu* cognisance of sexual assault video, court issues ultimatum to governments to bring perpetrators to book or step aside for it to take action; S-G to convey concern to Centre]

- Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud summoned the government's top law officers — the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General — to convey that the court was "deeply disturbed" by a video showing two women being paraded naked and sexually assaulted in strife ridden Manipur.
- The Chief Justice, speaking for the court, gave the Union and Manipur governments an ultimatum to either bring the perpetrators to book or step aside for the judiciary to take action. "Using women as instruments of perpetrating violence in a charged atmosphere is simply unacceptable in a constitutional democracy," the court emphasised in its order.



**India's 1st construction innovation hub (CIH) to be set up in Kerala's Kochi with an aim** to promote cost-effective and sustainable building features to foster collaboration, innovation and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders.

- **Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM)** will be responsible for the overall program management of CIH, including identification and recruitment of start-ups as well as program design and facilitation, apart from providing them technical advice and connections on housing.
- Anoop Ambika, CEO, KSUM



- The **(CIH)** was established in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity India (HFHI), an American non-profit organization that builds homes and provides housing-related services to low income families.

### India's first 'Police Drone Unit' launched in Chennai with the cost ₹3.6 crore..

- Greater Chennai City Police (GCP) launched 'Police Drone Unit' on June 29, 2023 for aerial surveillance over vast areas and quick detection of criminal activities. Director General of Police (DGP) C. Sylendra Babu inaugurated the newly created special unit at Besant Avenue, Adyar.
- The unit has been set up in a two storey building and functions with over 20 trained police personnel. Currently, drones operate around the Marina and Elliots Beaches.
- In this Drone Police Unit, there are a total of nine drones under three categories - quick response surveillance drones, heavy lift multirotor drones and long range survey wing aircraft - are available and equipped with in-built artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities and can be controlled from a ground station. Can be operated up to a distance of 5-10 kms.



### Commercial operation of India's first indigenously built nuclear reactor begins in Gujarat.

- India's 1st indigenously developed 700 MW nuclear power reactor **KAPP-3** started commercial operation at the **Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP) in Gujarat**.
- Presently, the unit is operating at 90% of its total power.
- The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) is building two 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) at Kakrapar, which is also home to two 220 MW power plants.
- Various commissioning activities were underway at KAPP 4, which had achieved 96.92% progress by the end of May. NPCIL plans to build sixteen 700 MW PHWRs across the country.
- Nuclear Plant: **700 MW** nuclear power plants are *under construction* at **Rawatbhata (RAPS 7 & 8) in Rajasthan** and **Gorakhpur (GHAVP 1 & 2) in Haryana**.
- The Central Government has approved the construction of 10 indigenously developed PHWRs in fleet mode at four locations - Gorakhpur in Haryana, Chutka in Madhya Pradesh, Mahi Banswara in Rajasthan and Kaiga in Karnataka.



### Tamil Nadu's 'Author betel leaves' get GI tag

- Author betel leaves from Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu have been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) certificate by Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Board and NABARD Madurai Agribusiness Incubation Forum.
- It is known for its spicy and pungent taste, and is especially used during special occasions such as temple festivals, housewarmings and weddings.
- Author Betel leaves a unique paan exclusively found in the village of Athoor, located in the Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. The betel leaves, locally known as Vetrilai, are nourished by the water of the Thamirabarani river.
- World Intellectual Property Organization
- It was formed in 1967 to encourage creative activities and to promote intellectual property protection in the world. WIPO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. World Intellectual Property Day is celebrated every year on 26 April.



### India reports a record 93% DPT3 immunization coverage in 2022: WHO

- The coverage rate for DPT3, the third dose of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccines, in India rose to an all-time of 93% in 2022, surpassing the previous pre pandemic best of 91% recorded in 2019, and also marking a sharp increase from the 85% recorded in 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said.
- The WHO and UNICEF estimates for national immunization coverage for 2022, showed that in the WHO South- East Asia Region, the coverage rate for DPT3 recovered to the pre pandemic level of 91%, a sharp increase from the 82% recorded in 2021.
- The region also witnessed a 6% improvement in the coverage of the measles vaccine, rising to 92% in 2022 from 86% in 2021.
- The number of zero dose children (those that have not received even the first dose of DPT vaccine) halved to 2.3 million in 2022 from 4.6 million in 2021. Similarly, the number of partially vaccinated children (those that have received at least one dose of DPT vaccine but did not complete the primary series of three doses) reduced to 6.5 lakh in 2022 from 1.3 million in 2021.



- The region had the best immunisation recoveries among all the WHO regions.
- Indonesia reported a DPT3 coverage of 85% in 2022, the same as in 2019, but rising sharply from the 67% recorded in 2021.
- Bhutan recorded 98% and the Maldives 99%, surpassing their pre pandemic rates.
- Bangladesh with 98% and Thailand 97% demonstrated consistency in routine immunisation coverage throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

#### **Phangnon Konyak became the 1st woman MP from Nagaland to chair the Rajya Sabha.**

- Marking a significant moment in history, the first woman MP from Nagaland in the Rajya Sabha, Mrs. Phangnon Konyak, presided over the House on 25 July 2023. Earlier, she created history by becoming the first woman member to be appointed to the panel of vice presidents on July 17, 2023.
- Rajya Sabha Chairman, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar last week nominated four women members (50% of the total strength) to the panel of Vice Chairmen.
- It is also noteworthy that all the women members nominated to the panel are first time MPs. This is the first time in the history of the Upper House that equal representation has been given to women members in the panel of Vice Speakers.
- Prominent parliamentarian:
- Mrs. S. Phangnon Konyak: She is from Bharatiya Janata Party. She is the first woman to be elected as a Rajya Sabha member from Nagaland in April, 2022 and the second woman from the state to be elected to either House of Parliament or the State Legislative Assembly.
- Mrs. P.T. Usha: She is a Padma Shri awardee and a renowned athlete. She was nominated to Rajya Sabha in July, 2022. She is a member of the Defense Committee, Consultative Committee and Ethics Committee of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- Dr. Fauzia Khan: She is from the Nationalist Congress Party. She was elected to the Rajya Sabha in April, 2020. She is a member of the Committee on Women Empowerment, Consultative Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Law and Justice.
- Mrs. Sultan Devi: She is from Biju Janata Dal. She was elected to Rajya Sabha in July, 2022. She is a member of the Committee on Industries, Committee on Women Empowerment, Joint Committee on Office of Profit, Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) Committee and Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.



#### **World's 1st heritage riverfront built on the banks of Chambal river in Kota, Rajasthan.**

- Kota: is called the Kashi of education in Rajasthan.
- This heritage river front was built at a cost of Rs 1200 crores, which has been built for 6 km on both sides of the Chambal river.
- 26 ghats have been constructed on both sides of this river front. These ghats have been prepared on different themes. The World Heritage Ghat built on Chambal River Front has 9 famous buildings and architecture from different countries of the world.
- Here the country's largest Nandi idol has been made on the banks of Chambal river, while tourists will also be able to see 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Apart from this, tourists will also get to see the biggest statue of Chambal Mata and the biggest bell in the world.
- Barrage Garden has also been developed on the lines of Vrindavan Garden on the river bank. A fountain has also been built here on the lines of the Barcelona Fountain. Apart from this, the country's first LED garden has also been built here.



### **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR**

#### **India joins the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG) on the invitation of the UN Secretary General.**

- The GCRG was established in March 2022 to address urgent global issues in food security, energy and finance, and to coordinate the global response.
- India received an invitation from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to join the Champions Group of the GCRG.
- **Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs** has been designated **Sherpa for the GCRG process**.



**United Nations**



**Global Crisis Response Group**



**China launches indigenous computer operating system 'OpenKylin'.**

- China recently launched its 1st open-source desktop operating system (OS), named OpenKylin 1.0, to reduce its dependence on American technology and create China's independent software system.
- OpenKylin 1.0 is a Linux operating system that was created by a community of approximately 4,000 developers. The system, which is based on the open-source Linux platform, is used in various industries such as finance, energy and even its space program.

**Mongolian government grants a 2 license to SpaceX to operate as an internet service provider .**

- This development will provide wider access to high speed internet for internet users across the country.
- Starlink's rapidly growing network of more than 3,500 satellites in low Earth orbit enables reliable connectivity even in remote areas.

**India will import Japan's Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna 'Nora-50'.**

- India and Japan have signed a memorandum of cooperation during the 7th India-Japan Joint Working Group on Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation. The focus of this cooperation is military technology.
- Transfer of the Unicorn (United Combined Radio Antenna) system is a major area of cooperation between India and Japan. This advanced technology includes tactical data link, TACAN (Tactical Air Navigation System) and horn shaped antenna Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna (NORA-50) for communication.

**China protests Dalai Lama meeting U.S. officials in Delhi, calls it interference.**

- China protested the meeting between the Dalai Lama and officials of the "Central Tibetan Administration" (CTA) with visiting U.S. official Uzra Zeya in New Delhi, calling it an attempt to "interfere" in China's "internal affairs".
- Ahead of the meeting with Ms. Zeya, the Dalai Lama, who arrived in Delhi, said that Tibetans did not seek "independence" and he was open for talks with the Chinese government, which he said had sent feelers to him.
- Ms. Zeya, who is the U.S. Under Secretary for civilian security, democracy and human rights, and also the U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, met the Tibetan leader and the officials of the Dharmshala Based CTA. Last week, Ms. Zeya attended the Dalai Lama's 88th birthday celebrations, organized by the "Office of Tibet in Washington" as well.

**US Supreme Court by 6:3 rejects President Biden's 'student loan forgiveness' proposal.**

- Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court John G. Roberts Jr. has rejected President Joe Biden's plan for \$400 billion in 'student loan forgiveness', which would be one of the costliest executive actions in US history.
- The Biden administration said its plan was to address the coronavirus pandemic and its long lasting effects and was authorized by the Higher Education Relief Opportunity for Students Act of 2003, commonly referred to as the Heroes Act.
- Six Republican-led states -- Nebraska, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas and South Carolina -- and two individuals filed suit to block the new plan.
- A day earlier, the Supreme Court had disallowed **caste-based admissions in colleges**. The Supreme Court directed two US universities, including Harvard, to stop race-based admissions.

**The World Health Organization has declared the artificial sweetener "Aspartame" as a possible carcinogenic substance.**

- The world's most common artificial sweetener, aspartame, has recently been declared a probable carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer research arm of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Aspartame is used as a sweetener in a wide range of beverage products. It can be found in diet soda, sugar-free chewing gum, yogurt, tabletop sweeteners, lowcalorie desserts, sugar-free cough medicines and many other processed foods labeled as 'sugar free' or 'diet'.



- Is an artificial sweetener used as a substitute for sugar in various food and beverage products. It is formed by a combination of two amino acids: aspartic acid and phenylalanine. Other artificial sweeteners are sucralose, saccharin, xylitol, and stevia.
- Aspartame was first approved for use as a food additive in the United States in 1981 by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- IARC: It was created in 1965 by a resolution of the World Health Assembly as the WHO's specialized agency for cancer. IARC aims to promote international cooperation in cancer research. Presently there are 27 member countries.

#### Canada launches "Digital nomad strategy" to attract foreign workers.

- Canada has taken a proactive approach to address the shortage of skilled workers, particularly in the technology industry. During Collision's tech conference in Toronto, the country's immigration minister announced the launch of a 'digital nomad strategy' aimed at attracting talented individuals from around the world.
- Under the 'digital nomad strategy', foreign workers are allowed to stay in Canada for up to six months. If they receive job offers during their stay, they will have the opportunity to extend their time in the country.
- Starting July 16, 2023, the government will establish an open work permit stream that will allow up to 10,000 US H-1B visa holders to work in Canada.



#### United States rejoins UNESCO

- The United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization agreed to re-admit the United States as a member on 30 June 2023. UNESCO's governing board voted 132-10 to accept a US proposal to rejoin the Paris-based agency.
- In addition to Russia, North Korea and the Palestinians, Belarus, China, Eritrea, Indonesia, Iran, Nicaragua and Syria voted against readmitting the US.
- The Trump administration pulled out of UNESCO in 2017, citing anti Israel bias. That decision took effect a year later in 2018. The US and Israel ceased funding to UNESCO in 2011 after they voted to admit Palestine as a member state. The US contributed 22% of the agency's total funding.
- The United States had previously pulled out of UNESCO in 1984 under the Reagan administration, rejoining in 2003 during the presidency of former President George W. Bush.
- USA independence day: Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, announcing the colonies' secession from Great Britain. The delegates began the process of signing the final Declaration of Independence on August 2.



#### China and India double global commercial services exports, according to a World Trade Organization report.

- China and India doubled their shares in global commercial services exports from 3.0% to 5.4% and 2.0% to 4.4% respectively from 2005 to 2022, according to World Bank and WTO report 'Trade in Services for Development'. For India's service companies, April 2023 was the best month in almost 13 years.
- The leading services exporters and importers are – China, Hong Kong, Singapore and India, the report said.
- "India has become a popular destination for medical travel and has hosted nearly 3.5 million foreign patients from 2009 to 2019," the report said.



#### Agreement between India Post and Canada Post for 'International Tracked Packet Service'.

- International Tracked Packet Service (ITPS) between the two countries to facilitate e-commerce exports. India Post already offers this service with 38 partner countries and Canada will be the 39th from 1 July 2023.
- ITPS is a competitive service for transmission and delivery of packets and is designed to meet cross border shipping requirements of e-commerce exporters including MSMEs, small businesses, traders etc. to promote export of their products using local post offices.
- "International Tracked Packet Service": service was extended from 16 countries to 38 countries by adding 22 new partners including UK, France, UAE, Egypt, Oman etc. from June 01, 2023.





**External Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar visits 'Kiduthani Project' in Tanzania.**

- India is building six projects in Zanzibar, which will provide drinking water to one million people.
- One of those projects, the Kiduthani project, was visited by Dr. S. Jaishankar. This project will provide drinking water to 30,000 households in Zanzibar, Tanzania.
- During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tanzania in July 2016, India and Tanzania signed an agreement for a USD 92 million LoC to rehabilitate and improve the water supply system in Zanzibar.
- Dr. Jaishankar co-chaired the 10th India-Tanzania Joint Commission Meeting with the top Tanzanian leadership and Foreign Minister in Dar-es-Salaam. An agreement was signed during the visit to set up an IIT campus in Tanzania.
- Dr. Jaishankar also visited Stone Town in Zanzibar. Shri Jaishankar also unveiled a statue of Swami Vivekananda in Dar-es-Salaam.
- India had earlier this year announced the setting up of the first overseas campus of India's National Forensic Science University (NFSU) in Africa in Jinja, Uganda.

**Iran President Raisi visits Kenya And Uganda to deepen relations.**

- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi visited Kenya and Uganda on a mission to strengthen ties as he embarked on the 1st trip by an Iranian leader to Africa in 11 years.
- The visit comes as Iran tries to shore up diplomatic support to ease its international isolation, with Raisi due to travel to Zimbabwe.
- Raisi met Kenyan President William Ruto, describing his visit to the East African powerhouse as "a turning point in the development of relations" between the two countries.

**In UNHRC vote, India stands against desecration of Quran.**

- India voted in favour of a draft resolution tabled in the UN Human Rights Council that condemns and strongly rejects recent "public and premeditated" acts of desecration of the Koran.
- The Geneva Based 47- member UN Human Rights Council adopted the draft resolution 'Countering religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence', with 28 members voting in favour, 7 abstentions and 12 nations voting against.
- India voted in favour of the resolution that "condemns and strongly rejects the recent public and premeditated acts of desecration of the Holy Koran, and underscores the need for holding the perpetrators of these acts of religious hatred to account in line with obligations of States arising from international human rights law".
- Those voting in favour of the resolution included Bangladesh, China, Cuba, Malaysia, the Maldives, Pakistan, Qatar, Ukraine and UAE.
- Nations voting against the resolution included Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S.
- The draft resolution was brought by Pakistan on "behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation" as well as by the State of Palestine.

**Government rejects EU Parliament move to discuss Manipur situation.**

- India rejected the European Parliament's plan to hold an "urgent debate" on the violence in Manipur, calling it an issue "totally internal" to India.
- The EU debate seeks to condemn the violence and direct the EU's top officials to speak to New Delhi about remedying the situation. At least 142 have been killed and more than 54,000 driven from their homes since violence erupted on May 3 this year.
- The move at the European Parliament follows days after U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti offered U.S. help in dealing with the situation in Manipur.

**Israel's parliament approves a bill to limit the Supreme Court's power.**

- Israel's parliament adopted a controversial bill that would limit the Supreme Court's oversight powers. Holding 64 of the Knesset's 120 seats, Netanyahu's coalition secured the first of three votes needed to turn the new bill into law.



- The bill, presented by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right governing coalition, won 56 out of 64 votes in favor.
- The bill was passed with the main objective of limiting the power of the Supreme Court to nullify the decisions made by the government, ministries and elected officials as unreasonable. Such a law can lead to corruption and abuse of power. Proponents claim that it will facilitate effective governance by reducing court interference.

#### **UAE becomes the first Arab country to become supervisor of Asian-Pacific Money Laundering Group.**

- UAE has participated in the full session of the **Asia-Pacific Group (APG)** on the Regional Body (FSRB) money laundering of the Financial Action Task Force held from 9 to 14 July in Vancouver, Canada.
- UAE is the first Arab country to be given a supervisor status in APG. The UAE has put its strategy and plans at the center to combat money laundering and terrorism financing.
- The UAE delegation is headed by Hamid Al Zabi in this session, who is the Director General of the Executive Office of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (EO AML/CTF).
- Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering (APG) Established in 1997, is an intergovernmental anti-money laundering body and is part of the global network of similar bodies known as the financial action task force-style regional bodies. It has 41 members.
- India joined the list of FATF 'Supervisor' countries in the year 2006 and became a full member of FATF in 2010. The Secretariat of FATF is located in Paris at the Economic Cooperation and Development Organization (OECD) headquarters.



#### **IIT Delhi campus to be set up in Abu Dhabi, UAE**

- PM Modi met the President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the prestigious Qasr Al Watan Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
- An important MoU was signed in the education sector between India and the United Arab Emirates. As part of the 'IIT Go Global' campaign, IITs in UAE were announced in August 2022. An agreement was reached between the Ministry of Education of India, the Department of Education and Knowledge of Abu Dhabi and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi to open the Delhi campus.
- IIT Delhi is the second IIT after IIT Madras to announce setting up an offshore campus.



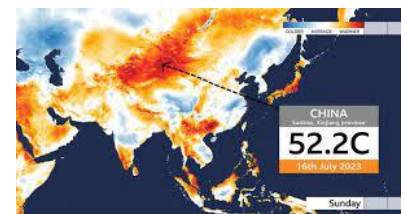
#### **Nigeria's President declares state of emergency to curb food shortages and rising prices**

- Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu has declared a state of emergency in the country to curb food shortages and rising prices. The government is providing fertilizers and seeds to farmers with the savings from withdrawal of fuel subsidy.
- In view of the incidents of kidnapping of farmers for ransom, their security has also been increased. The new security measures will mean farmers can return to the fields "without fear of attacks".



#### **China reports record temperature for mid-July: China Meteorological Administration**

- China said the mercury hit 52.2 degrees Celsius in the northwest of the country over the weekend, setting a record for mid-July.
- A weather station in the **Xinjiang region's Sanbao village** "recorded a temperature peak of **52.2 degrees Celsius** at 7pm on Jul 16, breaking the historic heat record for the same period of the year", the China Meteorological Administration.
- The previous record of 50.6 degrees Celsius was set in July 2017, according to the statement.



#### **Russia halts Ukraine grain deal to push its exports.**

- Russia halted a breakthrough major wartime deal that allows grain to flow from Ukraine to countries in Africa and Asia where high food prices have pushed more people into poverty.
- Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia would suspend the Black Sea Grain Initiative until its demands to get its own food and fertilizer to the world are met.



### Manufacturing ecosystem for Airbus C-295 aircraft taking shape in India

- In September, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will receive the first C-295 transport aircraft and ahead of it, 6 pilots have been trained in Seville by Airbus and training of a 20-member maintenance crew is currently underway.
- Work is under way for setting up the Final Assembly Line (FAL) at Vadodara in partnership with Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), according to Jorge Tamarit, head of C-295 India programme, Airbus. The first aircraft manufactured in India would be delivered in September 2026.
- The second C-295 will be delivered in May 2024 followed by seven aircraft in 2024 at the rate of one per month, said Jorge Madrid, head of C-295 India Version development programme.
- In September 2021, the Defence Ministry signed a ₹22,000-crore deal with Airbus and Space S.A., Spain, for procurement of 56 C-295MW transport aircraft to replace the Avro aircraft in service with the IAF. As per contract, 16 aircraft would come in fly away condition, manufactured at the Airbus facility in Seville, and 40 would be manufactured in India by Airbus jointly with TASL. Eventually, IAF will become the largest operator of the C-295.



### India supports U.N. on Black Sea initiative

- India voiced support for the UN's efforts in continuing the Black Sea Grain initiative, and expressed hope for an early resolution to the impasse.
- Russia on Monday had said it was terminating the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative – a UN-brokered deal that allowed food exports and fertilizers from Ukraine amid the ongoing conflict with Russia.
- India's Permanent Representative to the U.N. Ambassador, Ruchira Kamboj.



### Argentina to buy light and medium utility helicopters from HAL

- Argentina's Defense Minister signed a letter of intent (LOI) with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for the acquisition of light and medium utility helicopters 'ALH Dhruv' for the Argentine Armed Forces.
- Signed by Argentine Defence Minister Jorge Taiana and HAL Chairman and Managing Director CB Ananthakrishnan at the Bengaluru headquarters.



### Russia bans transgender marriage and sex change to protect 'traditional values'

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a new law which is a major blow to the LGBTQ+ community in the country. The Act, passed unanimously by both Houses of Parliament, strictly prohibits individuals from officially changing their gender in documents or public records or medically.
- only medical intervention will be allowed to treat congenital anomalies. In addition, the law voids marriages in which one of the partners has undergone a gender change, and it prevents transgender persons from becoming foster or adoptive parents.



### Military coup in African country Niger.

- On 26 July 2023, in the African country of Niger, the army removed President Mohamed Bazoum from power and soldiers announced a coup on national TV. They have dissolved the constitution, suspended all institutions and closed the country's borders.
- Colonel Major Amadou Abdramane said the soldiers were working for the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP).



Countries in Africa with the highest number of coups since 1952\*



\*Failed and successful coups  
Source: Jonathan Powell, Uni of Central Florida and Clayton Thyne, Uni of Kentucky



**PM Modi urges the Sri Lankan President to implement the 13th amendment.**

- During the Sri Lankan President's visit to India, PM Modi expressed hope of implementing the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, which comes from the India-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987.
- Under the 1978 constitution, Sri Lanka had a unitary government, with all power vested in the centre. The Tamil minority in Sri Lanka was concentrated in the northern and eastern provinces, and here the struggle for rights and greater autonomy escalated into a long and bloody civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government.
- The 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution was made following the signing of the India-Sri Lanka Accord between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President JR Jayawardene in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1987.
- Under this, by August 15, 1987, the emergency was removed from the 'Eastern and Northern Provinces'. Tamil and English are to be adopted as official languages along with Sinhalese.

**The World Health Organization declares Bhutan and Timor Leste rubella free.**

- (WHO) South-East Asia Region announced that Bhutan and Timor-Leste have successfully eliminated rubella by July 2023. According to WHO both the countries have controlled the transmission of rubella virus for more than 36 months.
- In 2014, Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia, designated measles elimination and rubella control as major priority programmes. The target was revised in 2019 to focus only on measles and rubella elimination by 2023.
- Six countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste – had achieved rubella control, and four – Bhutan, Maldives, DPR Korea and Timor-Leste – had eliminated measles.
- Measles / Rubella: It is an acute infectious disease caused by rubella virus in children who are not vaccinated. Due to this, spots on the body, blindness, complaints of pneumonia, encephalitis and death can also occur. Measles-rubella vaccine is used to prevent measles.

**AWARD AND HONOUR****Indian boxer Mary Kom was honored with 'Global Indian Icon of the Year Award' at UK-India Awards.**

- India's 1st Olympic medalist in women's boxing, Mary Kom has been honored with the Global Indian Icon of the Year award at the annual UK-India Awards in Windsor, southeast England.
- Lifetime Achievement Award to Shekhar Kapur, director of the Oscar nominated film 'Elizabeth: The Golden Age' for his contribution to the field of cinema in UK and India.
- Other awards:
- UK-India Awards - The Nehru Center of London, the cultural arm of the High Commission of India.
- Business Promotion Organization of the Year - FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) UK.
- Market Entrant of the Year - Startup Investment Platform Crowd Invest
- Consultancy of the Year - SannamS4
- Legal Practice of the Year - Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas
- Financial Services Organization of the Year - ICICI Bank
- Technology Company of the Year Award - Mphasis
- Social Impact Project of the Year - ActionAid UK
- Point of Light Award - 101 year old soldier Rajinder Singh Dhatt

**Michael Rosen gets PEN Pinter Prize 2023.**

- Renowned British children's author and performance poet Michael Rosen has been honored with the prestigious PEN Pinter Prize 2023. From 2007 to 2009, Michael Rosen held the prestigious position of British Children's Laureate.

- Rosen's first book of children's poems, *Mind Your Own Business*, appeared in 1974. Currently, he is Professor of Children's Literature at Goldsmiths, University of London.
- Pen Pinter Award: established in 2009 in memory of Nobel-prize winning playwright Harold Pinter.
- Some of the past award winning authors are Mallory Blackman (2022), Tsitsi Dangaremba (2021), Hanif Qureshi (2010), Salman Rushdie (2014), and Léman Cisse (2019).



#### India's Neeraj Chopra won a gold medal in Lausanne Diamond League.

- In the Lausanne Diamond League, Olympic champion Neeraj returned from injury by throwing the javelin to a distance of 87.66 meters. Neeraj started the year by winning the Doha Diamond League with a throw of 88.67m.
- The silver medal of the Lausanne Diamond League competition was won by Germany's Julian Weber (87.03 metres).
- Jakob Wadlich of the Czech Republic finished third.



Awards won by Neeraj Chopra:

- Arjuna Award for Athletics in 2018
- Major Dhyani Chand Khel Ratna Award in 2021
- In 2022 Padma Shri award

#### All India Football Federation chooses Lallianzuala Chhangte for 'AIFF Men's Footballer of the Year Award for 2022-23.

- **Manisha Kalyan** won her second Women's Footballer of the Year award for the second time in a row.
- Lallianzuala Chhangte won the award after some stellar performances for the Indian national team and Mumbai City FC. The winger made 12 appearances for the national team during the 2022-23 season, scoring two goals and providing one assist.
- Lallianzuala Chhangte became only the second player from **Mizoram**, after Jeje Lalpekhlua (2016), to win the AIFF Men's Player of the Year award.
- Manisha Kalyan became only the third Indian female footballer after Bala Devi (three) and Bembem Devi (two) to win the individual award two or more times.



#### King Charles III of UK confers 'Elephant Family Environment Award' to Kartiki Gonsalves.

- King Charles III and Queen Camilla of the United Kingdom presented the prestigious Elephant Family Environment Award to Kartiki Gonsalves and TREC at the Animal Ball celebration held at Lancaster House in London recently.
- Kartiki Gonsalves, director of the Oscar-winning documentary 'The Elephant Whispers' and creative of the Real Elephant Collective (TREC), a group of 70 tribal artists, was felicitated.
- The Real Elephant Collective (TREC) was awarded the Mark Shand Award, an international NGO dedicated to protecting the Asian elephant, for significant contributions made to conservation efforts by TREC.
- Mark Shand Award: founded in 2003 by Camilla's late brother Mark Shand, who had a deep passion for protecting and supporting elephants and Asian wildlife, and the Tara Prize is named after his elephant.
- This year's Animal Ball was a celebration of indigenous communities, organized by the Hathi family in partnership with the British Asian Trust, the charity founded by King Charles.



#### Lt Gen MU Nair takes over as National Cyber Security Coordinator.

- Lt Gen Nair, took over as the 28th Signal Officer-in-Chief in July 2022, has a wealth of experience and expertise in the areas of cyber warfare, signals intelligence and communications and information technology.
- Lt Gen Nair has now become the third person to hold the post of cyber security chief after Lt Gen Pant and the inaugural Chief Gulshan Rai.



- National Cyber Security Coordinator (NCSC), functioning under the National Security Council Secretariat, plays a key role in coordination with central level agencies on matters of national and critical importance relating to cyber security.

#### India joins the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG) on the invitation of the UN Secretary General.

- The GCRG was established in March 2022 to address urgent global issues in food security, energy and finance, and to coordinate the global response.
- India received an invitation from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to join the Champions Group of the GCRG.
- **Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs** has been designated **Sherpa for the GCRG process**.



Global Crisis Response Group

#### India will import Japan's Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna 'Nora-50'.

- India and Japan have signed a memorandum of cooperation during the 7th India-Japan Joint Working Group on Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation. The focus of this cooperation is military technology.
- Transfer of the Unicorn (United Combined Radio Antenna) system is a major area of cooperation between India and Japan. This advanced technology includes tactical data link, TACAN (Tactical Air Navigation System) and horn shaped antenna Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna (NORA-50) for communication.



#### Panama signs MoU with India for electoral cooperation.

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Electoral Tribunal (ET) of Panama, towards enhancing their cooperation in the field of election management and administration signed A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up an institutional framework.
- Under its 'International Cooperation Programme', ECI has earlier signed MoUs with Mexico, Brazil and Chile. This latest MoU is the fourth MoU signed in the Latin America region, taking the total number of MoUs between ECI and EMBs/International Organizations across the world to 31.



#### Foxconn pulls out of a \$19.5bn chip joint pact with Vedanta.

- The Taiwan Based Hon Hai Technology Group, better known as Foxconn, pulled out of a \$19.5- billion semiconductor joint venture with the Vedanta Group to “explore more diverse development opportunities”.
- Under the joint venture, the two firms were to invest in a semiconductor fabrication plant in Gujarat, which would make 28 nanometre semiconductors. “In order to explore more diverse development opportunities, according to mutual agreement, Foxconn has determined it will not move forward on the joint venture with Vedanta,” the company said in a statement.



#### China protests Dalai Lama meeting U.S. officials in Delhi, calls it interference.

- China protested the meeting between the Dalai Lama and officials of the “Central Tibetan Administration” (CTA) with visiting U.S. official Uzra Zeya in New Delhi, calling it an attempt to “interfere” in China’s “internal affairs”.
- Ahead of the meeting with Ms. Zeya, the Dalai Lama, who arrived in Delhi, said that Tibetans did not seek “independence” and he was open for talks with the Chinese government, which he said had sent feelers to him.
- Ms. Zeya, who is the U.S. Under Secretary for civilian security, democracy and human rights, and also the U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, met the Tibetan leader and the officials of the Dharmshala Based CTA. Last week, Ms. Zeya attended the Dalai Lama’s 88th birthday celebrations, organized by the “Office of Tibet in Washington” as well.



#### Uzra Zeya meets Kwatra, discusses Indo Pacific cooperation, civil rights.

- U.S. Under Secretary of State Uzra Zeya met Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra to discuss cooperation in the Indo Pacific region, as well as regional issues and “civilian security” or protecting civil rights.



- Ms. Zeya, who met with the Dalai Lama, is due to meet civil society organizations and human rights, free speech and minority rights activists during her visit to Delhi.
- Ms. Zeya is visiting India and Bangladesh on a weeklong trip that follows two weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington. The visiting U.S. delegation included U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu and USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator Anjali Kaur. They will leave for Dhaka on 11.7.2023.



#### 4 Indian-origin women included in the Forbes 2023 list of the 100 Most Successful Women in the United States.

- Four women of Indian origin Jayshree Ullal, Neerja Sethi, Neha Narkhede and Indira Nooyi have made it to the prestigious list, with a net worth of \$4.06 billion.
- Forbes released its 9th annual list, according to which the net worth of these 100 most successful women is a record US\$124 billion, up nearly 12% from 2022.
- Jayshree Ullal - 15th position, net worth US \$2.4 billion.
- Neerja Sethi - 25th position, net worth US \$990 million.
- Neha Narkhede - 50th position, net worth US \$520 million.
- Indra Nooyi - 77th position, net worth US \$350 million.



##### List of leading ladies

1. Dionne Hendrix \$15 Billion
2. Judy Love & Family \$10.2 Billion
3. Judy Faulkner \$7.4 Billion
4. Linda Resnick \$5.3 Billion
5. Thai Li \$4.8 Billion

#### IAU named the asteroid India's 1st professional meteorite scientist Ashwin Shekhar.

- IAU names the asteroid on India's first professional meteorite scientist Ashwin Sekhar (Kerala) by naming a minor planet/asteroid after him. The honor was presented to him at the 2023 edition of the Asteroid Comet Meteorite Conference held in Arizona.
- The minor planet named after Ashwin will now be known as (33928) Ashwin Shekhar = 2000LJ27. Aswin is currently associated with the Paris Observatory which comes under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Education of the French government.
- The recipients of this honor before them are Nobel laureates CV Raman and Subramaniam Chandrasekhar, great mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, eminent physicist and astronomer Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, great astronomer and former president of IAU Manali Kallat Venu Bappu and Wilson-Bappu.



#### Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be honored with this year's Lokmanya Tilak Award on 1 August 2023 in Pune, Maharashtra..

- On August 1, the 103rd death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, the Tilak Smarak Mandir Trust (Hind Swaraj Sangh) will honor the Prime Minister with the 41st National Award.
- Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2022 was presented to senior scientist **Tessy Thomas**, known as the **"Missile Lady" of India**. He served as the Project Director for Agni-IV and Agni-V missile systems. Apart from this, Indira Gandhi, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Sharad Pawar and Manmohan Singh have also got it.



#### PM Narendra Modi, became the first Indian Prime Minister to get France's supreme citizen and military honor "The Grand Cross of the Lion of Honor"

- The other prominent person who received this honor at the Elysee Palace is - former South African President Nelson Mandela, King Charles, Germany's Angela Merkel, former UN general secretary of UN, Boutros -Ghali.
- Established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, The Legion of Honor is divided into five classes (lower to higher). The color of the ribbon is red and the badge is a five cosmetics malter hanging on an oak and laurel flower.
- This is Prime Minister Modi's sixth visit to France. This year there is also the 25th anniversary of the India-France Strategic Partnership. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief guest at the Bustil Day Parade in Paris.

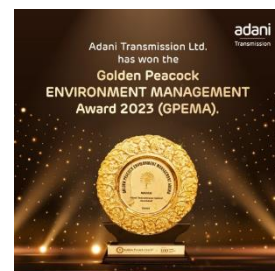


**MAJOR FACTS:**

- Both countries India's payment system U.P.I. Have agreed to use it in France. Shri Modi announced the opening of a new Indian consulate in Marseille, France.
- Indian students who do masters in France will now be given a five - year work visa after studying. Earlier, two years of work visa was given.
- With the aim of increasing India's naval capabilities, 26 Rafale maritime aircraft and three additional Scorpene submarines will be procured from the French government. These submarines will be produced by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL).

### **Adani Transmission Limited has received the 'Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2023 (GPEMA)' in the 'Power Transmission Sector' from the 'Institute of Directors'**

- Anil Sardana, Managing Director and CEO of Adani Transmission Limited received the award.
- Adani Transmission Limited (ATL) was declared the winner by its B2C arm i.e. Adani Electric Mumbai Limited for its unique strategic initiative to drive renewable energy in bulk power purchase for distribution in the Mumbai region.
- Golden Peacock Environment Management Award is given for reducing its ecological footprint through programs such as zero waste in landfills, single-use plastic free, water-positive operations, promotion of renewable energy integration and implementation of best-in-class environmental management strategies.



### **Annu Kapoor to be handed 'Neeraj Award'**

- Actor Annu Kapoor will be presented the second 'Mahakavi Neeraj Puruskar' at the Press Club of India.
- To mark the 5th death anniversary of Neeraj, an accomplished poet, lyricist, and Padma Bhushanawardee, the Mahakavi Gopal Das Neeraj Foundation Trust will also honour actor Rajpal Yadav at the event in the Capital, where a 'Kavi Sammelan' will also be held.



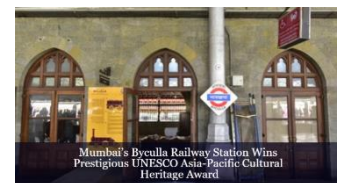
### **Professor Thalappil Pradeep will be honored with the prestigious 'International Annie Award'**

- Thalappil Pradeep Professor at Department of Chemistry at Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- 'International Annie Award' is a highly respected global recognition for scientific research in the field of energy and environment.
- Established in 2007, it is the 15th edition of the Annie Award. He is expected to be awarded the award by the President of Italy in the near future. In the previous awards, CNR Rao, Bharat Ratna has also been the award winner.



### **Byculla Railway Station gets 'UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award'.**

- The 169-year-old Byculla Railway Station in Mumbai received UNESCO's 'Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage Award' for restoring it to its original glory. The award was presented to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav
- In November 2022, UNESCO selected thirteen projects from six countries under the Asia-Pacific Prize 2022 for the protection of cultural heritage. India's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya - Mumbai, Golconda, Hyderabad's Stepwells, Domakonda Fort - Telangana, and Byculla Station, Mumbai were chosen in this.



### **Shankari Chandran wins Australia's highest literary honor 'Miles Franklin Literary Prize 2023.'**

- Sri Lankan-born Australian author Shankari Chandran has been announced as the winner of the 2023 Literary Prize for the novel 'Tea Time at Cinnamon Gardens'. This is Chandran's third novel. Chandran's award-winning novel Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens is a story about family, memories, community, race.
- It is an inter-generational epic that highlights Australia's difficult and complex equation with multiculturalism and the postcolonial traumas.



## APPOINTMENT

**SBI's CFO - Kameswara Rao Kodvanti: Kameswara Rao Kodvanti appointed as Chief Financial Officer of SBI as former CFO Charanjit Surinder Singh Attra resigned from the post.**

- Chairperson of SBI is: Dinesh Kumar Khara. State Bank of India celebrated its 68th Bank Day on 01 July 2023.
- SBI was established on: 1 July 1955.

**RBI appoints P Vasudevan as new executive director.**

- His appointment is effective from July 03, 2023.
- The Reserve Bank said in a statement that Vasudevan will look after the Department of Currency Management, Corporate Strategy and Budget (areas other than budget and funds) and Enforcement.
- Adhav Arjun - Basketball Federation of India (BFI): Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA) President Adhav Arjun has been elected as the President of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI).
- Aadhav defeated sitting Speaker K Govindaraj
- Kulwinder Singh Gill, a former player and president of the Madhya Pradesh Basketball Association, was elected general secretary.
- This time the election has been conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

**Longest Serving Dutch PM Rutte quits politics after 13 years in power.**

- Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced that he is quitting politics after nearly 13 years in power. He is the longest serving leader in the history of the Netherlands.
- He is the second longest serving leader in the European Union.

**IPS officer Ajay Bhatnagar appointed as Special Director in CBI.**

- Bhatnagar, a 1989 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Jharkhand cadre, is at present the Additional Director in the Federal Investigation Agency.
- He is appointed to the post till the date of his superannuation on November 20, 2024.
- Recently Karnataka Director General of Police **Praveen Sood** has been made the new **director of CBI**.
- Anurag**, Joint Director in CBI, has been made **Additional Director** in CBI.
- Manoj Shashidhar**, a 1994 batch IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, has also been appointed as **Additional Director in CBI** for a period of three years.
- Tushar Mehta became the Solicitor General of India for the second time.**

**Qu-Dongyu becomes Director General of FAO for the second time.**

- 43rd session of the Conference of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) held at FAO Headquarters, Rome. During this Qu-dongyu was re-elected as the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for a term of 4 years (from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2027).
- In 2019, Qu-dongyu was elected as the head of the UN agency and is the first Chinese national to serve in the position.
- The World Food Forum (WFF) was created in 2021 under the leadership of Qu-dongyu.
- FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Established: October 16, 1945. Headquarters: Located in Rome, Italy. Parent organization: United Nations Economic and Social Council. FAO consists of 194 countries and 195 members including the European Union.

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### **GK Satish becomes the first Indian to join the board of directors of Russian oil Company 'Rosneft'.**

- Satish is the 1st Indian to join the board of directors of this Russian company.
- GK Satish retired in the year 2021 as Director (Business Development) of public sector petroleum company IOC. IOC has partnerships with Rosneft in certain oil and gas fields in Russia.



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### **Preethi Aghalayam became the first woman director of IIT Madras campus being built in Tanzania.**

- The Zanzibar campus of IIT Madras will be the first IIT outside India.
- Preethi Aghalayam did her BTech from IIT Madras and MS in Chemical Engineering from the University of Rochester. Aghalayam joined IIT Madras in 2010 and is a professor of chemical engineering.



### **Michelle Bullock becomes the 1st female governor of the central bank of Australia**

- Australian Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced that 'Michelle Bullock' will lead the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) for the next seven years. Thus 'Michelle Bullock' will become the first female governor in the 63-year history of the Central Bank of Australia.
- Michelle will replace Philip Lowe. Philip Lowe will leave the bank on 17 September 2023, bringing an end to his 43-year career at the bank.
- It is the central bank and banknote issuing authority of Australia, established on 14 January 1960. It functions under the Reserve Bank Act 1959. Its headquarter is in Sydney.



### **Cognizant appoints six women SVPs**

- Cognizant, a New Jerseybased tech firm, has appointed 6 women Senior Vice Presidents (SVPs) to boost gender diversity.
- They include Elisa de Rocca-Serra, Thea Hayden, Patricia (Trish) Hunter Dennehy, Sailaja Josyula, **Archana Ramanakumar**, and Sandra Natardonato.
- Ms. Rocca-Serra has been promoted as SVP, EMEA General Counsel and Contract Lifecycle Risk Management (CLRM). Ms. Hayden is now the SVP, Global Marketing. Ms. Hunter -Dennehy will be SVP, Healthcare Provider/Payor Business Unit. Ms. Josyula has been promoted as SVP, Intuitive Operations & Automation (IOA) for the Banking, Financial Services, Insurance (BFSI) industry for the commercial markets in North America as well as global delivery. She will also be the Hyderabad Centre Head. Ms. Ramanakumar rejoined Cognizant as SVP, Industry Solutions Group while Ms. Natardonato joined Cognizant as SVP, Partnerships and Alliances.



### **Govt. picks Sat Pal Bhanoo as LIC Managing Director.**

- Sat Pal Bhanoo, Additional Zonal Manager (in-charge) of the Life Insurance Corporation of India's zonal office in Bhopal, has been appointed as Managing Director at the insurer.
- Mr. Bhanoo has been appointed as an MD vice Siddhartha Mohanty, who is presently serving as chairperson, with effect from the date of assumption of charge of office and up to the date of his superannuation on December 31, 2025, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.



**Priest Immanuel Lopez declared Servant of God**

- Catholic priest Monsignor Immanuel Lopez, born in May 1908 and brought up in the heart of Kochi, was declared Servant of God at his home Chathiath Mount Carmel parish by Varapuzha archbishop Joseph Kalathiparambil during a concelebrated mass.
- A person is declared Servant of God by the Catholic Church to indicate that the process of her or his being possibly declared a saint (canonisation) is on. It is the first of the four steps to canonisation.
- In the next step the Servant of God will be declared Venerable after which she or he may be beatified and declared Blessed and finally a Saint depending on the results of the inquiries by the Church authorities appointed for the purpose or the cause.
- The process of declaring a person a saint is directly supervised by the Congregation for the Causes Of Saints under the Catholic Church.
- Monsignor Lopez is often referred to as the Good Samaritan of Kochi or Kerala Vianney (the latter being a French saint of the Catholic Church). He was born into an Anglo-Indian family in the city of Kochi.
- He was ordained a priest in 1934. He passed away in Kochi at the age of 96 on March 20, 2004.

**Rakesh Pal becomes 25th Director General of Indian Coast Guard.**

- Joined the Indian Coast Guard in January 1989. Rakesh Pal has the distinction of being the first gunner of ICG. He received the Tatrakshak Medal in 2013 and President Tatrakshak Medal in 2018 for his distinguished service.

**Manoj Yadav - Director General of Railway Protection Force.**

- Former Haryana DGP Manoj Yadav has been appointed as the Director General of Railway Protection Force (RPF). Manoj Yadav will now serve on the same post till July 31, 2025, the day of his retirement.

**Satpal Bhanu - Life Insurance Corporation Managing Director.**

- Satpal Bhanu, currently working as Additional Regional Manager in Bhopal, has been appointed as the new Managing Director of the company. He will take over from Siddharth Mohanty, Satpal Bhanu has tenure till December 31, 2025.

**Shah Rukh Khan became the brand ambassador of ICC Cricket World Cup 2023**

- Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan launched the World Cup 2023 Campaign 'It Takes One Day' in his iconic voiceover.
- The ICC and Disney Star collaborated with Meta to launch a campaign at Meta's India headquarters in Mumbai. The World Cup 2023 will be held in India from 5 October to 19 November 2023.
- India will host the competition alone for the first time. In the past, India had co-condemned the World Cup in 1987, 1996 and 2011.
- 12 versions of the ICC World Cup have been played. The 1st edition was played in England in 1975 in which 8 teams participated. West Indies won the 1st World Cup by defeating Australia in the final.
- 4th edition was held in 1987 for the first time by India and Pakistan in joint hosting. For the first time in the tournament, 50 overs matches were watched in ODIs. Earlier, there were 60 overs in an ODI innings.

**President Biden picks Admiral Lisa Franchetti Nampiti as the first woman to lead the US Navy.**

- If confirmed by the Senate, the French will become the first female member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, including heads of the Army, Navy, Air Force and others. Last year, Mr. Biden chose Admiral Linda Fagan to lead the American coast guard, making her the first female commanding officer.
- Admiral Lisa Franchetti:
- Lisa Mary French is a United States Navy Admiral who has been working as the 42nd Deputy Chief of Navy Operations since September 2022. She is the second woman to be promoted as four star Admiral in the United States Navy.



**Justice Sunita Agarwal sworn in as Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court**

- The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Raj Bhavan in Gandhinagar, where Governor Acharya Devvrat administered him the oath of office.
- Justice Sunita Agarwal is currently the only woman Chief Justice of a High Court in the country.
- Justice Aggarwal will serve in her new post till the date of her superannuation on April 9, 2028.
- Justice Aggarwal is the second woman Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court. Prior to being promoted as the Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court, she was a judge in the Allahabad High Court.

**Justice Ashish Jitendra Desai - Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court**

- Justice Ashish Jitendra Desai was sworn in as the 38th Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court. Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan administered the oath of office to the newly appointed Chief Justice. He was previously a judge of the Gujarat High Court

**Justice Alok Arde - Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court**

- Justice Alok Arde took oath as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court. Telangana Governor Tamilisai Sundararajan administered the oath to the new Chief Justice at a ceremony held at the Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad. Justice Alok Arde has served as a judge in the Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh High Courts.

**TV Narendran becomes CEO and MD of Tata Steel.**

- Narendran's new term would be from September 19, 2023 to September 18, 2028.
- Tata Steel Limited, an Indian multinational steel-making company, is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, and operates out of Jamshedpur, Jharkhand.

**OBITUARY****Renowned painter KM Vasudevan Namboothiri passed away at a private hospital in Kerala**

- Born in Ponnani, Kerala in 1925, Namboothiri entered the world of painting and sculpture after being influenced by the idols of a temple near his home as a child. A disciple of renowned artist KCS Panicker, he also drew inspiration from leading painters such as Debi Prasad Roy Choudhury and S. Dhanapal.
- His famous work was 'Randamoozham' based on the epic Mahabharata. He was also awarded the Raja Ravi Varma Award of the Kerala Lalitha Kala Academy and the Kerala State Film Award for Best Art Director.

**Parimal Kumar Ghosh, the first Indian officer to help Bangladesh liberation fighters in 1971, passed.**

- Parimal Kumar Ghosh passed away at the age of 84 in New Delhi.
- Ghosh served as a commander in the 92nd Battalion of the BSF and was posted in Tripura when the independence movement began in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, Ghosh is considered a respected figure and is seen as one of the Indian commanders who fought for Bangladesh.
- Ghosh was instrumental in the early formation of the Mukti Shakti Mukti Vahini of Bangladesh.
- On March 26, 1971, West Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight across East Pakistan.
- On December 16, 1971, the 'Instrument of Surrender' was signed by Lieutenant General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, the commander of the army based in East Pakistan.

**Mangala Narlikar, mathematician and scientist, passes away at 80.**

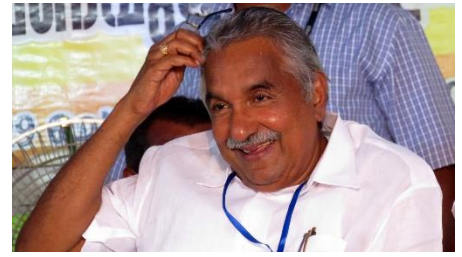
- Mathematician and scientist Mangala Narlikar, wife of astrophysicist Jayant Narlikar, passed away at her residence in Pune city after a prolonged illness.
- She was an associate researcher in the Mathematics School of the Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai between 1964 and 1966. She married Dr. Jayant Narlikar in 1965. Between 1967 and 1969, she taught mathematics at Cambridge University in England.
- Author of several books in English and Marathi, Dr. Narlikar was adept at demystifying mathematics to children. In 1989, she and her husband moved to Pune where she worked in the mathematics department of the University of Pune (now Savitribai Phule Pune University). The final rites were performed at the city's Vaikunth crematorium.





**Former Kerala CM Oommen Chandy no more; undergoing treatment for cancer.**

- Kerala's two-time Chief Minister and Congress veteran Oommen Chandy, MLA, 79, passed away at a private hospital in Bengaluru, bringing down the curtain on a five decades old era in Kerala politics.
- He is survived by his wife Mariamma and children Maria Oommen, Chandy Oommen and Achu Oommen.
- Oommen Chandy served as the chief minister of Kerala twice for a total of seven years, first from 2004–2006 and then again from 2011–2016.
- served as Minister of Labour (11 April 1977–25 April 1977 and 27 April 1977 – 27 October 1978), Home (28 December 1981–17 March 1982), and Finance (2 July 1991 – 22 June 1994) in various governments headed by K Karunakaran and A K Antony. He also served as the Leader of Opposition in the Kerala Assembly.
- Representing Puthuppally constituency in Kottayam district, Chandy served as the MLA for more than 50 years setting the record for the longest tenure.



**American singer Tony Bennett, winner of more than 20 Grammy Awards, passes away at the age of 96.**

- Anthony Dominic Benedetto was born on August 3, 1926, in New York City. Bennett released over 70 albums in his decades-long career. Bennett has won over 20 Grammy Awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award.
- He rose to fame with the 1962 ballad "I Left My Heart in San Francisco". The 1986 album "The Art of Excellence" was the first chart album. "MTV Unplugged" won the top Grammy Award for Album of the Year in 1995, as well as Best Traditional Pop Vocal Performance.
- In 2014, when he was 80, Bennett collaborated with Lady Gaga and went on a world tour with her in 2015. On her 2011 album "Duets II", Bennett also performed with Aretha Franklin, Paul McCartney of The Beatles and U2 frontman Bono.
- In 2016, a statue of Bennett was unveiled outside the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, where Bennett first performed the song nearly 55 years earlier.



**Indian-American policy expert Nisha Biswal has become the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the US International Development Finance Corporation-(USIDFC).**

- The US Senate confirmed Ms. Biswal's appointment.
- Ms. Biswal has worked in the US Foreign Policy and International Development Program, the US Congress and in the private sector and brings more than thirty years of experience.



**James Ferguson elected new chairman of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Nairobi, Kenya.**

- The election took place at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Program in Nairobi, where the IPCC is holding its 59th session.
- Skea defeated her nearest rival, Thelma Krug of Brazil, in a run-off vote of 90–69. Krug, vice-chair of the IPCC and a former researcher at Brazil's National Space Institute, missed out on becoming the first female chair of the IPCC.
- IPCC was established in 1988 by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Its headquarters is in Geneva.



**INITIATIVE/PROGRAMME/SCHEME/POLICY/CAMPAIGN/MISSION/PROJECT**

**External Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar visits 'Kid Uthani Project' in Tanzania.**

- India is building six projects in Zanzibar, which will provide drinking water to one million people.
- One of those projects, the Kiduthani project, was visited by Dr. S. Jaishankar. This project will provide drinking water to 30,000 households in Zanzibar, Tanzania.
- During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tanzania in July 2016, India and Tanzania signed an agreement for a USD 92 million LoC to rehabilitate and improve the water supply system in Zanzibar.
- Dr. Jaishankar co-chaired the 10th India-Tanzania Joint Commission Meeting with the top Tanzanian leadership and Foreign Minister in Dar-es-Salaam. An agreement was signed during the visit to set up an IIT campus in Tanzania.



- Dr. Jaishankar also visited Stone Town in Zanzibar. Shri Jaishankar also unveiled a statue of Swami Vivekananda in Dar-esSalaam.
- India had earlier this year announced the setting up of the first overseas campus of India's National Forensic Science University (NFSU) in Africa in Jinja, Uganda.

### Bank of India became the 1st bank to start the 'Mahila Samman Savings Certificate' (MSSC) scheme.

- The scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her budget speech 2023-2024. The scheme offers an interest rate of 7.5% per annum, compounded quarterly.
- Individual girls or women can open an account under Mahila Samman Savings Certificate Scheme or a guardian can open an account on behalf of a minor girl child. The account will mature after two years from the date of opening. Accounts under this scheme can be opened till March 31, 2025.
- minimum investment is Rs 1,000, any amount can be deposited in multiples of Rs 100 up to a maximum of Rs 2 lakh.



### The Odisha government launched 'Mo Jungle Jami Yojana'.

- Aims to promote forest rights among tribal communities and forest dwellers across the state.
- With this initiative, Odisha is set to become the 1st state in India to recognize individual and community forest rights.
- The Mo Jangal Jami Yojana scheme operates in conjunction with the Forest Rights Recognition Act (FRA) of 2006, which focuses on acknowledging the rights of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- The state is home to 62 types of tribes, out of which 13 are classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). They will benefit from this.



### Jharkhand will start 'Project Rail' to provide quality education.

- Project Rail (Regular Assessment for Improved Learning) will be started to provide quality education to children in Khunti district.
- Project Rail will be run in selected 14 middle schools of Khunti block and two middle and high schools from each block. It will start from 14th July.



### Panama signs MoU with India for electoral cooperation.

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Electoral Tribunal (ET) of Panama, towards enhancing their cooperation in the field of election management and administration signed A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up an institutional framework.
- Under its 'International Cooperation Programme', ECI has earlier signed MoUs with Mexico, Brazil and Chile. This latest MoU is the fourth MoU signed in the Latin America region, taking the total number of MoUs between ECI and EMBs/International Organizations across the world to 31.



### Odisha CM launches 'Ama Pokhari' scheme to revive ponds in cities.

- The scheme is to revive the unused ponds in urban areas of the state. Under the Ama Pokhari scheme, 2,000 large water bodies will be rejuvenated in 115 urban areas.
- This will be done in partnership with Mission Shakti WSHGs and college educated young men and women.



### Exhibition of UNESCO World Heritage Sites "Banking on World Heritage" will be organized in New Delhi.

- Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts (IGNCA) is all set to host an extraordinary exhibition titled "Banking on World Heritage". Banknotes featuring UNESCO listed World Heritage Sites will be displayed in this unique exhibition *curated by Ms. Rukmini Dahanukar, Founder of Money Talks and an independent scholar.*





- The exhibition aims to provide a fresh perspective on these cultural treasures and will be held at IGNCA from June 30 to July 9, 2023. The exhibition will be inaugurated by the Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi.
- “Banking on World Heritage”: The exhibition provides a remarkable opportunity to the visitors to see the depiction of UNESCO World Heritage Sites through banknotes.

#### Cabinet approves PM PRANAM scheme to promote alternative fertilizers.

- Union Fertilizer Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has approved the **PM PRANAM (PM Program for Restoration, Awareness, Creation, Nurturing and Improvement of Earth)** scheme on 28 June 2023, to encourage States to promote alternative fertilizers and reduce the use of chemical fertilizers.
- Under the **PM PRANAM** scheme, a subsidy of Rs 1,500 per tonne will be provided for marketing the Fermented Organic Manure (FOM)/Liquid FOM/Phosphate Enriched Organic Manure produced by the Biogas (CBG) plant under the Gobardhan initiative.
- CCEA also decided to continue the existing urea subsidy scheme till March 2025 with an outlay of Rs 3.68 lakh crore.
- **CCEA also decided to introduce sulphur-coated urea (Urea Gold) for the first time in the country to address the sulfur deficiency in the soil.**
- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, **approved an outlay of Rs 1,451 crore subsidy for promotion of organic manure. This took the total package to over Rs 3.70 lakh crore.**



#### The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh launched the “Jagananna Amma Vodi” scheme.

- Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy released financial assistance of ₹6,392.94 crore under the Jagananna Amma Vodi scheme on 28 June 2023 at Kurupam in Parvathipuram Manyam district. The state government is providing financial assistance under this program for the fourth consecutive year.
- The objective of the scheme is to provide an amount of Rs 15,000 to mothers of students from classes I to XII, directly into their bank accounts, as financial assistance to help them meet their educational expenses.
- The scheme is open to all families living below the poverty line, the total monthly income of the family should be limited to 10,000 in rural areas and 12,000 in urban areas. The property owned by the family should be less than 1,000 square feet.
- The state government has made 75% attendance mandatory to avail benefits under Jagananna Amma Vodi to reduce the dropout rate in schools.



#### The Uttar Pradesh government started the 'One-Tap-One-Tree' campaign.

- 'One-Tap-One-Tree' campaign From 1st July 2023, which aims to expand the green cover of the state along with the provision of potable tap water in rural areas.
- Campaign is being jointly run by the **Namami Gange Program and the Rural Water Supply Department under the state government.** Under the campaign, the state government has set a target of planting 5 lakh saplings within a week of the launch of the initiative between July 1 and July 7, as part of the larger mission of a greener future for the state. Also providing safe drinking water to the people to protect their health.
- Jal Samitis and other organizations have been entrusted with the task of undertaking tree plantation drives at the district, block and gram panchayat levels. Awareness programs will also be organized educating the villagers about environment and water conservation.



#### Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'National Anemia Eradication Mission' in Madhya Pradesh.

- PM launched National Sickle Cell Anemia Treatment Campaign-2047 among people in Lalpur village of Madhya Pradesh.
- The Prime Minister also provided sickle cell colour-coded counseling cards to selected beneficiaries and personally handed over Ayushman cards and PVC Ayushman Bharat cards to the needy.





- The government had announced the National Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission (NSCAEM) in the Union Budget 2023.
- sickle cell disease (SCD) is a chronic single gene disease that causes a debilitating systemic syndrome characterized by anemia. Chronic anemia: This causes fatigue, weakness and pallor. Acute pain (also known as sickle cell crisis): This can cause sudden and severe pain in the bones, chest, back, arms, and legs.

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**[Vishwakarma Kamgar Kalyan Yojana] Rajasthan Government launched 'Vishwakarma Shramik Kalyan Yojana'**

- The scheme was announced by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in the budget presented for the year 2023- 24.
- The purpose of this scheme is to provide self -employment to women, workers and various classes such as handicrafts, hairstyle, earthen pot artisans and nomadic classes.
- 1 lakh people will be given assistance of Rs. 5000/- to buy essential kits, equipment, sewing machines etc. Applicants from minimum 18 years to maximum 40 years can get the benefit of this scheme.



**“Gajah Kotha Project” started to reduce human-elephant conflict in Assam**

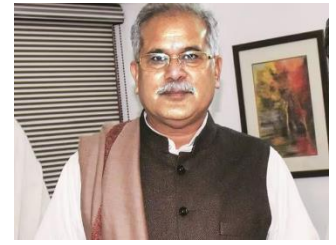
- To reduce the growing Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) in the state of Assam, Aranyak has launched an innovative outreach campaign called 'Gajah Kotha' (The Elephant Story).
- It promotes coexistence between local communities and the elephants, which includes more than 1,200 individuals.
- The initiative has been launched with the support of Aaranyak, a leading wildlife NGO based in Guwahati, and the Darwin Initiative, in collaboration with the British Asian Trust and the Assam Forest Department.



**Chhattisgarh's CM Baghel launches new rural housing scheme: 'Gramin Awas Nyay Yojana'**

(announced benefits worth Rs 1,764 crore for different segments of government employees and rural housing scheme 'Nyay Yojana', aimed at providing homes to the homeless rural people in the state)

- Bhupesh Baghel government announced an ambitious rural housing project that seeks to counter some of the criticism against his government.
- Gramin Awas Nyay Yojana will be funded by the State and is meant to ease the process of receiving grants for eligible beneficiaries.
- "Due to the determination of eligibility for Prime Minister's Rural Housing on the basis of the survey list of Socio-Economic Survey 2011 [Actual name: Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011], needy families are facing difficulty in getting housing approval. To overcome this, on the basis of a survey conducted by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, I have decided to start 'Gramin Awas Nyay Yojana' for eligible families from the resources of the state," tweeted Mr. Baghel.

**Rajasthan brings in Bill promising minimum income: Minimum Guaranteed Income Bill**

- The legislation, for the first time in the country, provides legislative backing for urban employment guarantee schemes and also makes pension a legal right with the provision of 15% annual increment.
- Ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections the Congress in its manifesto had promised Nyay – a minimum income guarantee programme which promises ₹72,000 each annually as a minimum income to the 20% families in the poorest of the poor category.

**Odisha CM approves Rs 126 crore 'Kharag River Basin Project'**

- The project will benefit over 20,000 people in the districts of Boudh, Bolangir and Kandhamal.
- Under this scheme, Nahar block in Boudh district, Baliguda block in Kandhamal district and Gudbhela block in Boudh district will get irrigation facilities. Apart from irrigation, this project will also conserve river water and improve ground water level.

**CM Sukhu of Himachal Pradesh started 'Sashakt Mahila loan Yojana'**

- **collateral-free loan scheme** named 'Sashakt Mahila loan Yojana' to empower women financially (20 July 2023)
- beneficiaries will get credit facilities of Rs 21,000, Rs 51,000 and Rs 1,01,000 at relatively low interest rates of 8.51%.
- It is an initiative of the Himachal Pradesh State Cooperative Bank (HPSCB) to provide loans to women to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams, engage in livelihood activities, meet their day-to-day needs and uplift their families.

**Jammu and Kashmir to lead India's first 'Cannabis Medicine Project'.**

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Dr. Jitendra Singh said that Jammu and Kashmir is going to lead India's 1st cannabis medicine project. The 'Cannabis Research Project' of CSIR-IIIM Chatha, Jammu is the first of its kind in India, undertaken in a private public partnership with a Canadian firm 'IndusScan'.
- The CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine Cannabis Research Center has received the 1st license for cannabis cultivation in the country. Under this project, export quality drugs for various types of neuropathy, diabetic pain etc. will be produced.
- Since J&K and Punjab are affected by drug abuse, such a project would spread awareness.
- There is a wonder plant that has FDA approved drugs like Meranol/nabilone and Cesamet for treating nausea and vomiting, Sativex for neuropathic pain and spasms, Epidiolex for epilepsy, Cannabidiol.
- Cannabis (also known as marijuana), tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), a psychoactive drug derived from the cannabis plant, has been used for centuries for recreational and medicinal purposes. Possession of banned drugs is an offense in India, but medical use is permitted.





### Odisha government approves 'Mission Shakti Scooter Scheme.

- aims to provide interest subvention on bank loans up to Rs 1,00,000 to the beneficiaries to enable them to buy scooters.
- The initiative provides affordable access to two-wheelers for Mission Shakti Federation Leaders and CSS (Community Support Staff).
- The scheme is expected to benefit around 75,000 community support staff members of SHGs (Self Help Groups) and around 1,25,000 federation leaders associated with SHGs.
- On March 8, 2001, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Mission Shakti, a state-sponsored program aimed at empowering women in Odisha through the Self Help Group approach.
- The program emphasizes the vital role of SHGs and their federations in providing social security and taking social action in areas such as health, nutrition, sanitation, gender and more.



### Uttar Pradesh government will start 'Mukhyamantri Khet Suraksha Yojana'

- The Agriculture Department of Uttar Pradesh is preparing to implement the 'Mukhyamantri Khet Suraksha Yojana' for the welfare of the farmers in the entire state. The plan involves setting up a solar fence with a low 12-volt current to deter the animals without harming them.
- When animals come in contact with the fence, there will be a slight shock and a siren will sound, which will effectively prevent animals such as nilgai, monkeys, pigs and wild boars from damaging the crops in the fields.
- The proposed budget for Mukhyamantri Khet Suraksha Yojana has been increased from Rs 75 crore to Rs 350 crore. For this, the government will also give a grant of 60 percent of the per hectare cost or Rs 1.43 lakh to small-marginal farmers.



### Rajasthan Government Passes Country's First Gig Workers Bill

- 'Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023'
- This is the first such bill in the country that seeks to guarantee social security to gig workers.
- A “welfare fee” will be charged from the aggregators (companies) in this “registered platform-based gig workers” fund. If an aggregator fails to comply with the law under this, there is a provision for fines and penalties. The state government can impose a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh for the first violation and up to Rs 50 lakh for subsequent violations. The bill will give gig workers a unique ID that will be applicable across all platforms.
- According to an estimate, there are currently 10 to 12 crore gig workers in the country. Most of the gig workers in India are associated with tasks like online food platforms, e-commerce companies and delivery of goods.



### Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicates the 'SAUNI project' to Gujarat.

- The Prime Minister gave a big gift to the people of Saurashtra, along with several development projects, the life-giving SAUNI scheme 'Saurashtra Narmada Avtaran Irrigation' scheme. Gujarat Government has completed the construction work of Package 8 and Package 9 of Link-3 under SAUNI scheme.
- The primary goal is to divert excess flood water from the Sardar Sarovar Dam on the banks of the Narmada River and use them to refill 115 major dams in drought prone areas.
- On completion of this project, more than 970 villages will get Narmada water facility for irrigation of 8,24,872 acres and drinking water for 82 lakh people. It is worth mentioning that 95% of the SAUNI project being built at a cost of Rs 18,563 crore.



### Haryana became the first state in the country to start “creche policy”.

- On July 26, 2023, Haryana Women and Child Development Department issued notification of Haryana State Creche Policy-2022. With this, Haryana has become the first state in the country to bring a crèche policy.
- The government has made this policy keeping in mind the working women, under which a child of six months to six years can be kept in the crèche for eight to ten hours.





- Skilled and trained personnel will be deployed in the crèche. In this, the crèche worker will be given a salary of Rs 15,000 and the helper will be given Rs 7,500 per month. It will be mandatory for all institutions with more than 50 employees to open crèches in the state.

#### The three-month-long "Doctor Aapke Gaon Mai" scheme started in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

- objective of providing quality medical care services to the people at their doorsteps. Whose objective is to provide comprehensive medical check-up services in remote villages of the district.
- The primary objective of this initiative is to bridge the healthcare gap between urban and rural areas, with a special emphasis on reaching the most vulnerable populations, who face limited access to medical resources.



### MEETING/CONCLAVE/SUMMIT/EVENT/CONFERENCE

#### The 50th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council was organized.

- Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, in its 50th meeting, decided rules for online gaming, casinos and horse racing, along with changes in tax rates on various items.
- The GST Council is a constitutional body that makes recommendations on issues related to the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax in India. As per Article 279A(1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council was constituted by the President.
- GST is a value added tax system levied on the supply of goods and services in India. It is a comprehensive indirect tax that was implemented in India on 1 July 2017 through the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016 with the slogan "One Nation One Tax".



#### Key facts:

- decided to levy a uniform tax of 28% on the full face value of bets placed for online gaming, casino and horse racing.
- Uncooked or fried snack pellets and fish soluble pastes: Tax rate reduced from 18% to 5%.
- Imitation zari thread or yarn: Tax rate reduced from 12% to 5%.
- Food and beverages consumed inside cinema halls: The tax rate on cinema services has been reduced from the previous 18% to 5%.
- The GST Council has exempted drugs for the treatment of cancer, drugs for rare diseases and food products for special medical purposes from GST.

#### The United Arab Emirates will chair the 13th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

- Dr. Thani Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Foreign Trade, has been elected President of the 13th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This conference will be held in Abu Dhabi in February 2024.
- The announcement was made by Director General Goji Okunjo Iweala at the General Assembly meeting of the World Trade Organization in Geneva.
- World trade organization: came into existence in 1995. The WTO is the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), established in the wake of World War II. It has 164 members, which account for 98% of world trade. Its secretariat is located in Geneva (Switzerland).



#### The 11th meeting of the Executive Board of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) was held in Colombia.

- The Chief Election Commissioner of India, Shri Rajeev Kumar, along with a delegation from the Election Commission of India (ECI), attended the 11th meeting of the Executive Board of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) in Cartagena, Colombia.
- During the meeting, CEC Shri Rajeev Kumar proposed two initiatives - setting up of an A-web portal to act as a repository of electoral best practices and A-web to recognize the significant contribution of EMBs to democratic processes Launch of Global Awards.
- A-web was established in October, 2013 in Seoul, Republic of Korea with a shared vision of strengthening election management processes in the member countries and achieving sustainable democracy around the world.



**India handed over the chairmanship of G-20 meeting to Brazil for the year 2024.**

- The Startup 20 Summit organized by the Startup 20 Engagement Group under the India G20 chairmanship concluded successfully in Gurugram. At the closing ceremony the official torch was handed over to Brazil, the next G20 Presidency country.
- Brazil will host the G20 annual meeting of heads of state and prime ministers in 2024 for the first time. Brazil, Latin America's largest economy, represents the region in the G20, along with Argentina and Mexico.
- Earlier Gurugram hosted the G20 Anti-Corruption and Agriculture Working Group meetings in March 2023.

**6th Urban-20 Mayors Summit held in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar.**

- Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Kaushal Kishore inaugurated the summit being held at the Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar.
- U20 is an engagement group under the G20 chairmanship of India. It is a city diplomacy initiative involving cities from G20 countries. Over 650 delegations from over 90 cities across the world participated in the two-day summit.

**23rd Shanghai Summit chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi; addressed the SCO summit through virtual means.**

- Theme: "Towards a SECURE SCO". It stands for SECURE, S: Security, E: Economic Development, C: Connectivity, U: Unity, R: Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, E: Environmental protection.
- As per SCO tradition, Turkmenistan has been invited as the guest chair. Iran, Belarus and Mongolia have been invited as observers. Pakistan and China also participated in this summit.
- The heads of two SCO bodies - the Secretariat and the SCO RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure) - also participated in the virtual summit.
- The current dialogue partners list of the SCO includes Azerbaijan, Armenia, Egypt, Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

**23rd Shanghai Summit:**

- The Prime Minister said that the S.C.O. has emerged as an important platform for peace, prosperity and development in the entire Eurasia region. India has created five new pillars of cooperation in SCO. These pillars are Startups and Innovation, Traditional Medicine, Youth Empowerment, Digital Inclusion and Shared Buddhist Heritage.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi described terrorism as a major threat to regional and global peace. The land of Afghanistan should not be used to spread instability in neighboring countries and promote terrorist ideology.

**Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO):**

- It emerged from a series of Shanghai Five (1996) border demarcation and demilitarization talks. Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were the members of the Shanghai Five.
- It was built in the year 2001. The SCO charter was signed in the year 2002 and came into force in the year 2003.
- Official languages: Russian and Chinese. SCO Secretariat in Beijing. Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.
- The Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO in 2001 after Uzbekistan joined the organization. India and Pakistan became its members in 2017. India was made an observer in SCO in the year 2005.
- 'Kashi' (Varanasi) has been designated as the first cultural capital of the SCO.

**Iran became the 9th permanent member in 23rd summit of SCO Council on 4 July 2023 held virtually.**

- Prior to Iran's joining, the SCO consisted of eight member states: China, Russia, India, Pakistan and four Central Asian countries Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017.
- Afghanistan, Belarus, and Mongolia have **observer status** in the SCO
- 6 countries **dialogue partner status** – Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka.



- The SCO came into existence in Shanghai in 2001 with 6 members excluding India and Pakistan. Its primary objective was to enhance regional cooperation in efforts to curb terrorism, separatism and extremism in the Central Asian region.

### India handed over the chairmanship of G-20 meeting to Brazil for the year 2024.

- The Startup 20 Summit organized by the Startup 20 Engagement Group under the India G20 chairmanship concluded successfully in Gurugram. At the closing ceremony the official torch was handed over to Brazil, the next G20 Presidency country.
- Brazil will host the G20 annual meeting of heads of state and prime ministers in 2024 for the first time. Brazil, Latin America's largest economy, represents the region in the G20, along with Argentina and Mexico.
- Earlier Gurugram hosted the G20 Anti-Corruption and Agriculture Working Group meetings in March 2023.



### 6th Urban-20 Mayors Summit held in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar.

- Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Kaushal Kishore inaugurated the summit being held at the Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar.
- U20 is an engagement group under the G20 chairmanship of India. It is a city diplomacy initiative involving cities from G20 countries. Over 650 delegations from over 90 cities across the world participated in the two-day summit.



### 34th International Biology Olympiad held in UAE.

- India topped the medal tally on the basis of gold medals won per student in the 34th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) 2023 held at Al Ain, United Arab Emirates from 3rd July to 11th July 2023. This is the first time that India has won in IBO. With a golden performance, they have topped the medal tally.
- This is the second World Olympiad hosted by the UAE, as the UAE hosted the Junior Science Olympiad in December 2021. The last Olympiad was held in Armenia in 2022, while in the year 2024 this event will be held in Kazakhstan.
- Indian student:
  - Dhruv Advani from Bangalore, Karnataka
  - Ishan Pednekar from Kota, Rajasthan
  - Megh Chhabda from Jalna, Maharashtra
  - Rohit Panda from Risali, Chhattisgarh



### Putin will not travel to South Africa for BRICS summit [Johannesburg summit that will be held during August 22--24]

- Russian President Vladimir Putin will not travel to South Africa to attend the upcoming BRICS summit.
- Instead, Mr. Putin will participate in the summit through video conference, Russian President's spokesperson Dmitry Peskov declared in a statement.
- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will attend the summit in person.
- South Africa is a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) which issued a warrant against Mr. Putin in March 2023. The action of the ICC put South Africa in a difficult position as it is expected to carry out its obligations as an ICC member.
- President Putin had attended the Bali G-20 summit 2022 virtually
- The Johannesburg BRICS summit will include discussion on increasing the number of member states. That apart, the war in Ukraine is likely to feature prominently as BRICS has emerged as a major forum for dealing with the concerns of the developing economies. President Cyril Ramaphosa said "many countries" were interested in joining the organisation and added.



### Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandavia inaugurated the first global food regulatory conference-2023 in New Delhi

- Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandavia and Chief Guest Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Tomar first inaugurated the global food regulatory summit 2023 on 20 July 2023.
- The summit is an attempt by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the aegis of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW).





- First Global Food Regulatory Conference-2023: Dr. Mandavia said, "This conference is fully matched and complementary with this year's G20 Presidency: " Vasudev Kutumbakam: Ek Earth, Ek Nation ". WHO Director General Dr. Tedros Adnom Ghebreyesus Congratulations to the Union Ministry of Health and FSSAI through a video message.

#### **Fourth 'G-20 Employment Working Group Meeting' held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.**

- The meeting was presided over by the Union Labor and Employment Minister Shri Bhupendra Yadav and was attended by 24 ministers from different countries. During this, representatives of G-20 members and guest countries, international and regional organizations and groups like Business-20, Labor-20, Startup-20, Think-20 and Youth-20 participated.
- The three priority issues are addressing the global skills gap, adequate social security and decent working conditions for workers in the gig platform economy, and sustainable funding for adequate social security for all.
- The first EWG meeting was held in Jodhpur, Rajasthan on February 2-4, 2023, the second EWG meeting in Assam's Guwahati city from April 03 to 05, 2023 and the third phase in Geneva from May 31 to June 2, 2023.



#### **National Security Advisor Ajit Doval attends Friends of BRICS meeting in Johannesburg.**

- The issue of cyber security was discussed in detail in the meeting. The BRICS summit will be held next month from August 22 to August 24 at the Sandton Convention Center in the South African capital, Johannesburg.
- The meeting was chaired by South African minister Khumbudzo Ntshavheni. Russian NSA Nikolai Patrushev, Chinese diplomat Wang Yi and NSAs of other member states were invited.
- The participating BRICS friendly countries are Belarus, Burundi, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kazakhstan and Cuba.
- Algeria's application for membership in the BRICS group: Algeria wants to join the BRICS grouping to open up new economic opportunities, for which it has also applied. Algeria has also requested to become a shareholder member of the BRICS Bank with an amount of US\$ 1.5 billion for this.



#### **Third and final meeting of G-20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group held in Chennai.**

- The G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group, under the chairmanship of India, held its third and final meeting in Chennai, Tamil Nadu from 24 to 26 July 2023. The inaugural session was addressed by Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, India's G-20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister P.K. Mishra addressed.
- The G-20 has already identified "Early Warning and Early Action" as one of five priorities. These include global coverage of early warning systems, disaster and climate resilient infrastructure, financing frameworks for disaster risk reduction, disaster response systems and ecosystem-based approaches to DRR.



#### **Fourth meeting of the G20 Energy Transition Working Group held in Goa.**

- Theme: "Advancing Clean Energy Together"
- Six priority areas have been outlined under India's G20 presidency, including addressing the technology gap, low-cost financing, energy security and diverse supply chains, energy efficiency, industrial low-carbon transition and responsible consumption, fuels for the future (3Fs) and universal access to clean energy and inclusive energy transition pathways.
- The first Energy Transition Working Group meeting was held in Bengaluru in February 2023, the second meeting in Gandhinagar in April 2023 and the third in Mumbai in May.
- The 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM14) and the 8th Mission Innovation (MI8) were also inaugurated.



### Bengaluru becomes the first Indian city to join the 'World Cities Culture Forum'.

- World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF), a global network of cities that share research and intelligence to explore the role of culture in future prosperity.
- Bengaluru became the 41st city to join the Forum and the network currently comprises 40 cities across six continents. The Forum includes cities such as New York, London, Paris, Tokyo and Dubai.
- World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) founded in 2012 by the Deputy Mayor of London for Culture and Creative Industries, *Justin Simmons*. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth in 2015 for his services to culture in London.



### Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the G20 Engagement Group 'Civil-20' summit in Jaipur.

- The C20, launched in 2013 as the official G20 Engagement Group, provides a platform for CSOs to bring forward nongovernmental perspectives on issues.
- C20 President Mata Amritanandamayi.
- The G20, which was formed in 1999, was upgraded to the level of heads of state or government in the wake of the 2008 global economic and financial crisis. Since then its scope has expanded considerably. Then covering various fields ranging from sustainable development, health, energy, environment to anti-corruption, it is still primarily designated as the premier forum for international economic cooperation.



## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

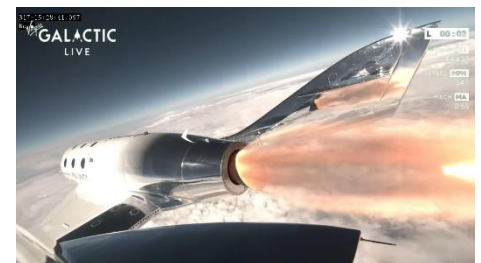
### France successfully tested a domestic hypersonic glide vehicle 'V-Max' for the first time.

- 'V-Max', a French glider, was launched from a sounding rocket from the Bisqueros missile test over the Bay of Biscay in southwestern France. High-speed ground vehicles (HGVs) can reach extraordinary speeds of up to Mach 20 with the help of rocket boosters.
- Once the rockets separate, the HGVs use the remaining momentum to propel themselves at hypersonic speeds toward their targets.
- VMaX stands for Vehicle Maneuvering Experimental. Capable of exceeding Mach 5, or 6,000 kilometers per hour (3,730 mph).
- The hypersonic glider is designed to carry nuclear or conventional warheads. Unlike ballistic missiles, hypersonic gliders can change direction at high speed, allowing them to evade air defense systems.



### Virgin Galactic completes its first commercial manned mission to space with "Galactic 01"

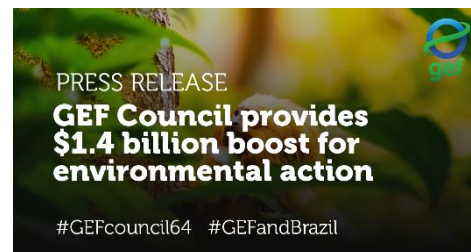
- Virgin Galactic successfully completed Galactic 01, its first commercial manned mission to the edge of space marking a significant milestone for the space enterprise.
- VSS Unity space plane launched from the New Mexico desert.
- After floating for a few minutes at an altitude of 52.9 miles (85.1 kilometers), the spacecraft then returned to Spaceport America. The entire operation lasted for about 90 minutes. The spacecraft is propelled into space at nearly three times the speed of sound (Mach 3).
- Virgin has become the latest commercial venture, along with Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin and billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX.
- Virgin Galactic: American spaceflight company founded by Richard Branson in 2004.
- The US space agency, NASA, and the US Air Force define an astronaut as someone who has flown at least 80 km (50 mi) above Earth.



### 64th Global Environment Facility Council (GEF) meeting held in Brazil.

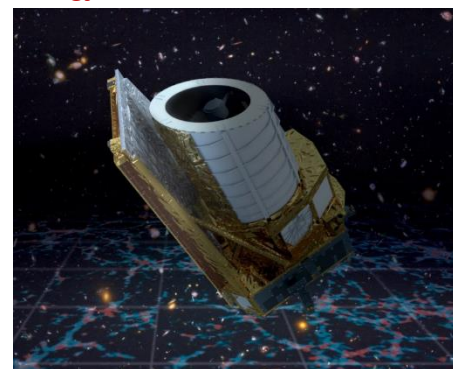
- Recently, at the 64th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council meeting to be held in Brazil, the governing body approved the disbursement of US\$ 1.4 billion to accelerate efforts to combat climate, biodiversity and pollution.
- It also approved the establishment of a new fund, the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), to finance the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

- This is the 2nd action plan of the GEF-8 funding period (2022 to 2026). This fund is significant because approximately 50% of resources will be allocated to biodiversity-related activities during the GEF-8 period.
- The fund will be allocated 20% to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC), 25% to GEF agencies, 36% to SIDS (Small Island Developing States) and 3% to LDCs (Least Developed Countries).
- Global Environment Facility (GEF): The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established a day before the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. It is a type of fund dedicated to combating biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution and the degradation of land and ocean health.
- 184 countries including India are its members. Its secretariat is in Washington, D.C. is located in The World Bank serves as the trustee of the GEF, which manages the GEF Trust Fund (contributions by donors).
- It provides financial support for five major international conferences:
- Minamata Convention on Mercury (signed in 2013 and entered into force in 2017). Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (signed in 2001 and entered into force in 2004). United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) (came into force in the year 1993). United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (adopted in the year 1994). United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (signed in 1992 and entered into force in 1994).



### The European Space Agency launches 'Euclid Space Telescope' mission to study dark energy and dark matter.

- €1.4 billion Euclid Space Telescope on July 1, 2023, to search and study dark energy and dark matter.
- Telescope has been launched for six years to chart the largest ever map of the universe.
- SpaceX launched a Falcon 9 rocket from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station towards its final destination, the European Space Agency's (ESA) Euclid Observatory, 1.5 million km away, where the James Webb Space Telescope is in orbit.
- The James Webb Space Telescope is located at Lagrange Point Two, or L2, which is the position of gravitational stability between the Earth and the Sun.
- NASA, too, is coming up with its own mission, the 'Roman Space Telescope', which will launch in 2027, to better understand dark energy and dark matter.
- Scientists estimate that dark energy and dark matter together make up 95% of the universe, while the normal matter we can see makes up only 5%.
- 'Euclid Space Telescope': It is named after the ancient Greek mathematician known as the "Father of Geometry". By pinpointing the location and size of galaxies up to 10 billion light-years away – roughly as far back as the Big Bang that created the universe, scientists hope to glean information about the dark energy and dark matter that make up the majority of the universe.



### Dell Technologies and Intel have joined hands to set up an artificial intelligence (AI) lab at the Lord's Institute of Engineering and Technology in Telangana.

- Partnership aims to bridge the digital skills gap and empower students by integrating Intel's 'AI for Youth' program into their curriculum.
- The lab is powered by a Dell Optiplex to enable students to run projects in computer vision, Natural Language Processing (NLP), OpenVino, and Intel's Neural Compute Stick 2.



### North Korea fires a new missile in response to U.S. military activity.

- North Korea test fired its 1st intercontinental ballistic missile in three months, days after it threatened “shocking” consequences to protest what it called provocative U.S. military activity near its territory.
- The Hwasong18 ICBM flew about 1,000 km before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.
- The missile, fired from North Korea’s capital region around 10 a.m., flew about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) at a maximum altitude of 6,000 kilometers (3,730 miles) before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan





**NASA celebrates Webb telescope anniversary with new image.**

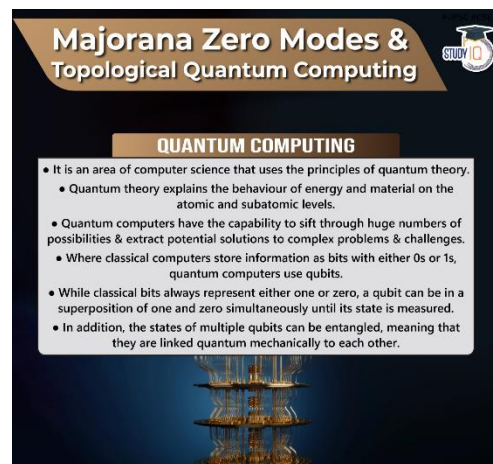
- Jets of red gas bursting into the cosmos, and a glowing cave of dust: NASA marked a year of discovery by the James Webb Space Telescope on July 12, 2023 with a spectacular new image of sunlike stars being born. The picture is of the ***Rho Ophiuchi cloud complex, the nearest stellar nursery to Earth*** located about 390 light-years away. The region seemingly contains about 50 young stars, “all of them similar in mass to the Sun, or smaller.”
- The Webb telescope delivered its 1st images from space on July 12, 2022. Since then, the telescope's spectroscopic instruments have helped astronomers understand the universe in greater detail – from confirming the distances “of some of the farthest galaxies ever observed” to discovering “the earliest, most distant supermassive black holes.”

**Elon Musk launched his artificial intelligence based startup 'xAI'.**

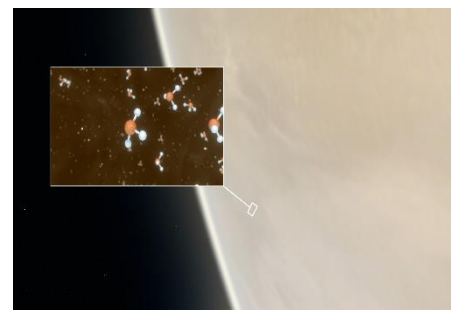
- SpaceX founder, Elon Musk has introduced his much-anticipated artificial intelligence startup, "xAI". The company's primary objective is to increase the dominance of major technology corporations in the AI industry, with a specific focus on developing an alternative to OpenAI's ChatGPT.
- Musk has consistently advocated for discretion and regulation in the advancement of AI technology. He has repeatedly expressed concern about the potential risks of uncontrolled progress, stressing the possibility of "civilizational destruction". In response to these concerns, XAI will take a different approach to prioritizing the security of its AI systems. Earlier, Musk registered a new company named X.AI Corp, based in Nevada, in which he is the sole director.

**Microsoft researchers announced a significant breakthrough in the creation of “Majorana zero” modes, a type of particle that could revolutionize quantum computing.**

- Under this, a topological superconductor was constructed from an aluminum superconductor and indium arsenide semiconductor. The Majorana zero mode has unique properties that make quantum computers more robust and computationally efficient.
- “Majorana zero” modes” Their unique characteristics make them promising for topological quantum computing. Topology is the study of the properties of materials that do not change when subjected to continuous deformation, i.e. materials that do not break or stick when stretched or bent.
- All the subatomic particles that make up matter are called fermions. Fermions have four quantum numbers, one of which is the spin quantum, which has only a half-integer value. The bound states of fermions that are their own antiparticles are called Majorana zero modes.

**Phosphine gas discovered in the atmosphere of Venus.**

- This has sparked debate about the possibility of life on the planet. Greaves and his team made the in depth study using the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope (JCMT) located at the Mauna Kea Observatory in Hawaii for more than a year.
- Phosphine on Earth is evolved by bacteria that live in environments with very little oxygen. In contrast, phosphine has been found deep in the clouds of Venus.
- The surface of Venus is incredibly inhospitable, with temperatures reaching nearly 900 °F (475 °C). One rotation is equal to 243.0226 Earth days. This means that a day on Venus is longer than a year on Earth, which takes 225 days to orbit the Sun.
- The tilt of Venus on its axis is 2.64 degrees, while the Earth is tilted on its axis at 23.5 degrees. Missions to Venus so far - Akatsuki (2015- Japan), Venus Express (2005- European Space Agency) and NASA's Magellan (1989).



**Chandrayaan-3 successfully launched from Satish Dhawan Space Center of Sriharikota.**

- India's third mission of **Rs 615 crore** or \$ 75 million was successfully launched on 14 July 2023. Chandrayaan-3 is India's 3rd Moon Mission and followed by **Chandrayaan-2 of July 2019**, aimed at sending a rover to the **southern pole** of the moon.
- The mission was launched by the **LVM3-M4 (Fetman) launch vehicle** from the **Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota**. The mission will have three major modules: **propulsion modules, lander modules and rover**.
- The **landing on the moon of its lander (Vikram) and Rover (Pragyan)** is to be **held on 23-24 August**. The **location located at about 70 degrees near the southern pole** of the moon was selected because there are many craters here that live permanently and can contain water, ice and precious minerals. **The Chandrayaan-3 does not have an orbiter - it will use the data of Chandrayaan -2 orbiter**.
- There are **2 payloads on the rover**, designed to study the chemical and mineral composition of the lunar surface and **determine the composition of elements such as magnesium, aluminum and iron in lunar soil and rocks**. A new experiment has been done on the propulsion module, which will remain in the Moon orbit for 3 to 6 months.
- A successful soft landing will make India the fourth country to achieve this feat after the United States (Apollo Mission), Russia (Luna Mission) and China.
- Israel's 'Beresheet' in 2019 and India's missions crashed and Japan's Hakuto-R Moon Mission and UAE's 'Rashid' Rover failed in 2022.
- Chang'i 4 of China was the first spacecraft to land on the southern pole of the moon. Launched on 8 December 2018, Chang'i-4 made a soft landing for the first time on the Von Karman Crater in the far south pole-Aitken basin of the moon on 3 January 2019.
- Chandrayaan 2:
  - Chandrayaan-2 of 978 crores was successfully launched on July 22, 2019 from Satish Dhawan Space Center at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, a Geo-Synchronous satellite launch vehicle was successfully launched from GSLV Mark III M1. This was a 3,850 kg mission of India on the Moon. It uses a completely indigenous orbiter, lander (Vikram) and Rover (Pragyan).
- Chandrayaan-1
  - On 22 October 2008, the successful launch of Chandrayaan-1 from PSLV-C11 rocket was made from Satish Dhawan Space Center Shri Harikota. Its budget was Rs 386 crore and the load was 1380 kg. It reached the moon on October 27, 2008, five days later.

**Chandrayaan completes third orbit raising manoeuvre: ISRO**

- The 3rd orbit raising manoeuvre (earthbound perigee firing) of the Chandrayaan-3 mission was performed successfully at ISTRAC, Bengaluru on July 18.
- The next manoeuvre is planned for July 20, between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. The ISRO said that the moon mission is on schedule.
- On July 17, ISRO successfully performed the second orbit raising manoeuvre (earthbound apogee firing) to place the Chandrayaan 3 spacecraft in the 41,603 km x 226 km orbit.

**SpaceX launches the world's largest private communication satellite 'Jupiter 3'.**

- SpaceX on July 27, 2023, launched the largest private communication satellite 'Jupiter 3' aboard a Falcon Heavy rocket from Launch Complex-39A of NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- Developed by Maxar Technologies in Palo Alto, California, the Jupiter3 satellite is the largest commercial communications satellite ever built. This is the seventh launch for SpaceX's triple-booster rocket, the Falcon Heavy, which first made headlines in 2018 with its debut
- The size of the satellite will be comparable to the wingspan of a commercial airliner, measuring between 130-160 feet (40-50 m). This will double the current internet capacity to 500 Gbps. Especially in areas where cable and fiber connectivity is unavailable or unreliable.



**ISRO successfully launched 7 satellites of Singapore with PSLV-C56 rocket from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.**

- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C56) placed these satellites in a circular orbit of 535 km.
- The DS-SAR satellite, developed under a partnership between DSTA (representing the Government of Singapore) and ST Engineering, carries a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).
- Also other satellites are VELOX-AM, a 23 kg technology demonstration microsatellite, ARCADE Atmospheric Coupling and Dynamics Explorer (ARCADE) which is an experimental satellite, SGOOB-II, a 3U nanosatellite flying a technology demonstrator payload, NuLiON by NuSpace, An advanced 3U Nanosatellite that enables seamless IoT connectivity in both urban and remote locations.
- Galasia-2, a 3U nanosatellite that will orbit the Earth in low orbit and ORB-12 STRIDER, a satellite developed under an international collaboration.
- The Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) was started in 1962 under the leadership of Dr. Sarabhai and Dr. Ramanathan. In the year 1969, this INCOSPAR took the form of 'Indian Space Research Organization' (ISRO). It is headquartered in the city of Bengaluru in the state of Karnataka. Shri S. Somnath is the current chairman of ISRO.

**EXERCISE****India to host the largest ever multilateral First multilateral Air Force exercise, "Tarang Shakti".**

- 'Tarang Shakti', will be conducted in the Rajasthan sector, aims to enhance coordination, interoperability and integration between the participating air forces, thereby sending a strong message to potential adversaries in the region.
- 'Tarang Shakti' will have participation from 12 countries, with 6 countries participating with their aircraft and the remaining six as observers.
- Quad nations - the United States, Japan, Australia, France and the United Kingdom, among others, are among those sending their aircraft to the historic site.

**Aleph Aeronautics' Model A becomes the world's first electric flying car approved by the USA government.**

- The flying car 'Model A' developed by Alef Aeronautics has become the world's 1st flying car to get approval from the US government. It has received special airworthiness certification from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).
- The company was founded in 2015 by Dukhovny, Konstantin Kisly, Pavel Markin, Oleg Petrov in Palo Alto, California.
- Aleph Aeronautics built its first prototype in 2016. Has been testing its prototype since 2019. The company claims the Model A has a driving range of 200 miles and a flying range of up to 110 miles.
- In addition, the company is planning a four-person sedan called the Model Z, which will launch in 2035 with a starting price of \$35,000. The Model Z is expected to have a flying range of over 300 miles and a driving range of over 200 miles.

**Indian and French navies conduct 'IN-FN' maritime partnership exercise in Visakhapatnam.**

- Indian Navy warships **Rana** and **Sumedha** have conducted the 'IN-FN' Maritime Partnership exercise with French Navy warship **Surcouf** in the Bay of Bengal.
- The 'IN-FN' included tactical manoeuvres, Replenishment at Sea (RAS) approaches, air defense against fighter aircraft and cross deck helicopter operations. The visit of FS Surcouf to India is symbolic of the strong Navy-to-Navy ties, interoperability and strong ties between the Indian Navy and the French Navy.
- Earlier this year, FS La Fayette, a frigate and FS Dixmude, a Mistralclass amphibious assault class ship participated in an MPX with INS Sahyadri, a guided missile frigate, from 10 to 11 March 2023.





**India and the United States launched 'Operation Broader Sword'.**

- It was a multiagency operation aimed at preventing illegal shipments of pharmaceuticals, devices and precursor chemicals through the International Mail System (IMS).
- The operation focused on packages entering the United States from India through the New York (JFK International Airport) and Chicago (ORD International Airport) International Mail Facilities (IMF).
- During the operation, investigators examined more than 1,500 shipments originating in India, taking action on nearly 500 products, including illegal drugs designed to treat serious diseases. Opioids and other controlled substances were found in several shipments.

**India's three armies participated in France's Bastille Day Parade.**

- Every year on July 14, France celebrates an important event known as Bastille Day / Fête Nationale Française. The day holds great significance in French history and marks the anniversary of the Bastille demolition in 1789 during the French Revolution.
- This year both the countries are celebrating 25 years of strategic partnership. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been invited as the guest of honor at the Bastille Day Parade in France this year. Along with this, all the three armies of India will participate in this.
- The **Indian Army** contingent comprises 77 marching personnel and 38 band members, led by **Captain Aman Jagtap**. The **Indian Navy** contingent is led by **Commander Vrat Baghel** and the **Indian Air Force** contingent is led by **Squadron Leader Sindhu Reddy**.
- The army contingent is being represented by the **Punjab Regiment** which is one of the oldest regiments of the Indian Army. In France, he took part in an offensive near Neuve Chapelle in September 1915 and earned the Battle Honors 'Loose' and 'France and Flanders'. In World War II, he earned 16 battle honors and 14 theater honors.

**Indian 'INS Sunayna' participated in Joint Marine Force Practice "Operation Southern Ready- 2023"**

- The Indian ship 'INS Sunayna' was in Seychelles, Mauritius to participate in 'Operation Southern Ready 2023' organized by Joint Marine Force (CMF). This joint maritime force practice is a biennial exercise.
- It is a multinational initiative that aims to compete with piracy to increase marine security, safety and navigation freedom in the region. During this visit, the United States, Italy, Britain, Seychelles Defense Forces and Member Countries of Marine Police, Eunavfor participated.
- CMF Commander US Navy Vice Admiral and Deputy Commander United Kingdom Royal Navy Commodore is located in Bahrain. CMF has 38 member countries.

**15th 'Nomadic Elephant' military exercise will be held between India and Mongolia at Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia**

- Troops from the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 and 43 Indian Army troops from the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regiment will participate in the exercise.
- Joint exercises are conducted alternately in both the countries. The previous edition was conducted in October 2019 at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.
- In June 2023, the Indian Army participated in the multinational peacekeeping joint exercise 'X Khan Quest 2023' in Mongolia. India established diplomatic relations with Mongolia in the year 1955, the Indian Resident Mission in Ulaanbaatar was opened in the year 1971.

**India and Indonesian Navy organized bilateral 'maritime partnership exercises (MPX)'**

- Two major ships of the Indian Navy, INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata, arrived in Jakarta on 17 July 2023 to participate in the bilateral maritime exercise 'sea partnership exercises (MPX)' with Indonesian Navy forces.
- INS Sahyadri Project-17 is the third indigenously designed and manufactured stealth warship and INS Kolkata is the first indigenously designed and built stealth destroyer of Project-15A category. Both ships have been constructed at Majgaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai.



- Recently, the Indian and Indonesian naval forces organized their bilateral exercises called Samudra Power 2023 in the South China Sea 17 to 19 May, 2023. Apart from this, both countries also organize a joint military exercise called 'Garuda Shakti'.

## ENVIRONMENT AFFAIRS

### Indore Municipal Corporation will be the 1st urban body to get EPR credit.

- 1st urban body in the country to receive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) credits for recycling banned single-use plastic items.
- Indore has implemented a complete ban on single use plastic items within the city. In the recent past, the IMC seized about eight tonnes of such plastic, thereby stopping its spread.
- EPR is an environmental policy approach in which the producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the consumer stage of the product's life cycle. Indore's EPR credit is Rs 8,100, acknowledging IMC's commitment to responsible waste management and sustainable practices.



### Tomato crops suffered maximum damage due to mosaic virus in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

- Maharashtra farmers' tomato crops were adversely affected by 'Cucumber mosaic virus' (CMV), while growers in Karnataka and other south Indian states attributed their losses to 'Tomato mosaic virus' (ToMV).
- ToMV is mainly spread through infected seeds, plants, farm equipment and often through the hands of nursery workers who fail to clean themselves properly before entering the fields. It is a member of the Virgaviridae family and shares a close relationship with tobacco mosaic virus (ToMV). It affects a variety of plants including tomatoes, tobacco, peppers and some ornamental plants.
- High temperature conditions and subsequent intermittent rains, which allow aphids to thrive, are responsible for the spread of CMV.



### Record rainfall: Chandigarh, Kullu see wettest days in history. Chandigarh records the highest-ever rainfall in history.

- Over the last few days, torrential rainfall has wreaked havoc in north India, particularly in parts of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and Chandigarh. It has triggered landslides and flash floods, leaving hundreds of people stranded.
- Chandigarh received 322.2 mm of rain on July 9, 2023. It had previously recorded the highest-ever rainfall of 262 mm on July 8, 2000.
- The interaction of a western disturbance and monsoonal winds is causing an intense rainstorm throughout northwest India, including Delhi, which received the season's first "very heavy" rainfall.



### World's largest high grade phosphate reserves found in Norway.

- Anglo-Norwegian company Norge Mining this month announced the discovery of large deposits of 70 billion metric tons of ultra-rich phosphate rock, vanadium and titanium in southwest Norway. Which is believed to be the world's largest reservoir.
- This reserve is enough to meet the growing global demand for fertilizers, solar panels and electric cars for at least the next 100 years. It was first discovered in 2018 when it was estimated that the reserves extend up to 300 meters underground. However, it was later discovered that the deposits were up to 4,500 meters deep.
- Prior to this the largest phosphate rock reserves are mainly concentrated in the Western Sahara region of Morocco (50 billion tons), followed by China (3.2 billion tons), Egypt (2.8 billion tons), and Algeria (2.2 billion tons).
- Phosphate: essential element used for production in the fertilizer industry. phosphorus is used to manufacture next-generation lithium batteries for solar panels and electric cars, semiconductors and computer chips, which are characterized by their higher energy density, increased safety and longer shelf life than their lithium-ion counterparts





**New Zealand becomes the 1st country to ban thin plastic bags including Plastic straws and silverware.**

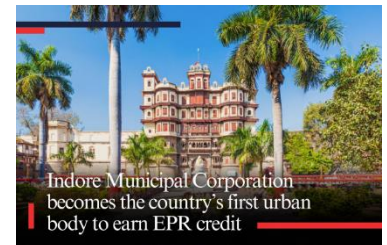
- The move, which comes into force on 01 July 2023, marks a significant progress in the government's massive drive against single-use plastic.
- The ban bans the manufacture, sale and distribution of single-use plastic product bags, plastic plates, bowls and cutlery.
- Some establishments, such as supermarkets, pharmacies, hospitality venues and health and disability services, are exempt and can still sell and provide plastic straws to people with disabilities.
- The Indian government is expanding a campaign against single-use plastics that it launched in 2019, when it banned the thick plastic shopping bags that customers used to carry their grocery items home.

**Power Minister R.K. Singh inaugurated the 1st International Green Hydrogen Conference (ICGH-2023) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, to discuss the progress and emerging technologies in the green hydrogen sector and to bring together global scientific, policy, academic and industrial leaders.**

- The conference was organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry.
- Apart from domain-specific research interactions on hydrogen production, storage, distribution and downstream applications, the conference will also discuss green financing, human resource upskilling and startup initiatives in this area.
- This mission was launched by the Government of India to help India achieve its net zero goal by the year 2070.

**Indore Municipal Corporation will be the 1st urban body to get EPR credit.**

- 1st urban body in the country to receive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) credits for recycling banned single-use plastic items.
- Indore has implemented a complete ban on single use plastic items within the city. In the recent past, the IMC seized about eight tonnes of such plastic, thereby stopping its spread.
- EPR is an environmental policy approach in which the producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the consumer stage of the product's life cycle. Indore's EPR credit is Rs 8,100, acknowledging IMC's commitment to responsible waste management and sustainable practices.

**India's first Vedic-theme park 'Ved Van Park' inaugurated in Noida sector 78 Uttar Pradesh.**

- Inaugurated by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- Ved Van Park, this place is home to more than 50,000 plants like banyan, kalpa- vriksha and coconut, which have been mentioned in Vedic literature.
- Built with a budget of Rs 27 crore, the park displays a variety of attractions including laser and sound shows as well as wall paintings and sculptures depicting excerpts from the four Vedic literary works: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharva.

**Record rainfall: Chandigarh, Kullu see wettest days in history. Chandigarh records the highest-ever rainfall in history.**

- Over the last few days, torrential rainfall has wreaked havoc in north India, particularly in parts of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and Chandigarh. It has triggered landslides and flash floods, leaving hundreds of people stranded.
- Chandigarh received 322.2 mm of rain on July 9, 2023. It had previously recorded the highest-ever rainfall of 262 mm on July 8, 2000.
- The interaction of a western disturbance and monsoonal winds is causing an intense rainstorm throughout northwest India, including Delhi, which received the season's first "very heavy" rainfall.





**UP government approves construction of state's first ultra-supercritical plant of 800 MW.**

- 2 power plants of 800 MW each will be set up at Obra, Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh in collaboration with NTPC at a cost of ₹18,000 crore and will be the 1st ultra-super critical plant in the state.
- The Government of Uttar Pradesh, in partnership with NTPC, will execute the projects on a 50:50 basis. While 30% equity will be provided for project implementation, the remaining 70% will be sourced from financial institutions. The first unit is targeted to be ready in 50 months and the second unit in 56 months.

**Other decisions:**

Ranipur Tiger Reserve will be the 4th tiger reserve in the state of Uttar Pradesh. A comprehensive action plan was made in the cabinet meeting to plant 35 crore saplings.

Children living in all types of homes run by voluntary organizations will now be given Rs 4000 per month. Regular 267 Class IV employees of Jal Nigam Urban will be accommodated on vacant posts in municipal bodies.

**Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) developed 'PBW RS1' wheat variety to control obesity and diabetes.**

- 'PBW RS1' wheat variety will keep obesity, diabetes under control, which contains high levels of amylose starch which is a heart disease with type-2 diabetes with type-2 diabetes is known to reduce the danger.
- variety has been given by Dr. VS, Head of the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics. A team led by Sohu has been developed by a team over a period of 10 years. The PAU is the first to combine five new alleles (genes) affecting the resistant starch level to develop this variety.
- PBW RS1 has a total starch material (66–70%) similar to other wheat varieties, but has a significant 30.3% resistant starch material compared to 7.5–10% found in other varieties.

**Injured tigress dies in M.P. 's Bandhavgarh tiger reserve.**

- An injured tigress died while undergoing treatment at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Madhya Pradesh's Umaria district.
- A patrolling team found the big cat in an injured state near Madhau village under Deori beat of the reserve and rescued her, Manpur forest ranger Mukesh Ahirwar said.
- The tigress was treated by BTR's veterinarians, but she died after two hours, he said. As per preliminary information, an injury mark was found on the animal's back. The cause of the injury will be known once the post mortem and forensic reports arrive, the official said.

**The world's largest permafrost crater 'Batygaika' is expanding at an alarming rate due to global warming in Russia.**

- Aerial footage of the world's largest permafrost crater, Batagaica Crater, has revealed its details. This crater has been observed in the Far East Siberian Taiga (i.e. the boreal forest). It is a rapidly expanding 1 km (0.6 mi) crater.
- Scientists have called this pit a 'mega-slump' which highlights the rapid changes taking place in the Earth's geology. The crater first formed in the 1960s after the area was cleared for timber and is now expanding at a rate of about 10 meters per year.
- Batagaika Crater, also known as the "Gateway to the Underworld", is a huge crater in the landscape approximately one km long.
- Russia is warming at least 2.5 times faster than the rest of the world, and its long-frozen **tundra** is melting.
- Permafrost is completely frozen or cold ground for at least two consecutive years.



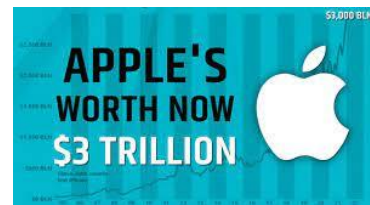
## ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**Foxconn pulls out of a \$19.5bn chip joint pact with Vedanta.**

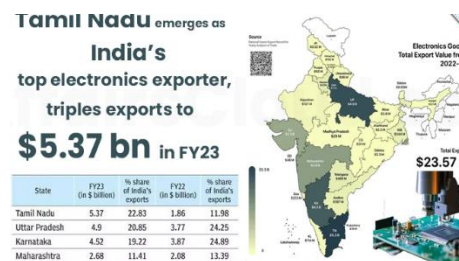
- The Taiwan Based Hon Hai Technology Group, better known as Foxconn, pulled out of a \$19.5- billion semiconductor joint venture with the Vedanta Group to “explore more diverse development opportunities”.
- Under the joint venture, the two firms were to invest in a semiconductor fabrication plant in Gujarat, which would make 28 nanometre semiconductors. “In order to explore more diverse development opportunities, according to mutual agreement, Foxconn has determined it will not move forward on the joint venture with Vedanta,” the company said in a statement.

**Apple becomes the world's most valuable company with a market capitalization of \$3 trillion.**

- Apple has achieved the market capitalization of \$3 trillion for the second time and before that the company did so in January 2023. Due to which it became the most valuable company in the world. So far, 2023, the stock has gained 49%.
- Apple shares closed at \$193.97 per share in morning trading on June 30, 2023, with a market cap of \$3.05 trillion.
- Apple Computer, Inc. was founded on April 1, 1976 by college dropouts Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak.
- Currently 4 other US companies Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon and Nvidia also have a market capitalization of more than \$1 trillion. Oil and gas major Saudi Aramco is the only non-tech company with a market capitalization of more than \$2 trillion.

**Tamil Nadu becomes India's top electronics exporter in FY 2023-24.**

- Tamil Nadu emerges as India's top electronics exporter for the first time in the fiscal year ending March 2023, overtaking Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.
- Tamil Nadu's electronics exports almost tripled in the last fiscal to \$5.37 billion from \$1.86 billion in the previous year.
- Tamil Nadu top position in FY2023 from the fourth position in FY2022.
- In FY23, Uttar Pradesh ranked second in electronics exports with exports of \$4.90 billion and Karnataka ranked third with \$4.52 billion.
- Tamil Nadu: Global giants Foxconn and Pegatron ramped up iPhone exports last year and exports from other EMS players such as Salcomp, Sanmina and others have also picked up.

**India's external debt at the end of March 2023 reached \$ 624.7 billion.**

- India's external debt saw a marginal increase, reaching US\$ 624.7 billion at the end of March 2023. India's external debt increased by US\$ 5.6 billion over the previous year, when it stood at US\$ 619.1 billion by March 2022.
- The proportion of short-term debt (original maturity) to foreign exchange reserves also increased from 20% in March 2022 to 22.2% in March 2023. The largest component of India's external debt remained US dollar denominated debt, accounting for 54.6%. It is followed by loans denominated in Indian rupee (29.8%), SDR (6.1%), yen (5.7%), and euro (3.2%).

**Loan Structure:**

- As of March 2023, long-term debt (with original maturity of more than one year) stood at US\$ 496.3 billion, registering a decline of US\$ 1.1 billion as compared to March 2022.
- The share of short-term debt (up to one year) in total external debt increased from 19.7% in March 2022 to 20.6% in March 2023.
- External debt is the largest component of India's external debt, accounting for 32.5%, followed by currency and deposits (22.6%) and trade loans and advances (19.9%).

**India pips China as the best emerging market for investing.**

- India has overtaken China as the most attractive emerging market for investing for sovereign wealth funds in 2023 due to its solid demographics, political stability and proactive regulation, according to a report published.

- **The Invesco Global Sovereign Asset Management report** has captured the views of 142 chief investment officers, heads of asset classes, and senior portfolio strategists from 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks. Collectively, these institutions manage about \$21 trillion in assets. As per the report, India is a better story now in terms of business and political stability. Fast Growing demographics, good regulation initiatives, and a ‘very’ friendly environment for sovereign investors are positives for the country.
- Invesco noted that India is benefitting from increased foreign corporate investment. In addition, India and South Korea continue to be the best destinations for increasing exposure.



#### According to the UNESCAP report, India is the top nation in the effort to facilitate digital trade worldwide.

- India has become the leading country in the effort to provide trade facilitation, leaving behind 140 countries. In the survey, 60 types of facilities were evaluated, on the basis of which the report was issued.
- In the survey conducted for the year 2023, India got 93.55% marks. In the year 2021, India got 90.32% marks in this survey of UNESCO.
- The country has achieved a perfect score of 100% in 4 key areas: transparency, formalities, institutional arrangements and cooperation, and paperless trade.



#### Wipro to invest \$1 bn to boost AI capabilities.

- Wipro said it would invest \$1 billion over the next 3 years to advance its Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities. “Artificial Intelligence is a fast moving field.
- With the emergence of generative AI, we expect a fundamental shift up ahead for all industries,” said Thierry Delaporte, CEO and MD of Wipro Limited.
- The company would train all 2,50,000 of its employees on AI fundamentals and the responsible use of AI over the course of the next 12 months.



#### Pakistan gets final IMF nod for \$3bn loan in standby arrangement.

- In a relief to cash strapped Pakistan, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave a final nod to a \$3 billion “standby arrangement” for the country to support the government’s efforts to stabilise the ailing economy.
- “The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a 9 month Stand By Arrangement (SBA) for Pakistan for an amount of SDR 2,250 million (about \$3 billion, or 111% of quota) to support the authorities’ economic stabilisation programme,” the global lender said in a statement.
- The Dawn newspaper reported that the approval allows for an immediate disbursement of \$1.2 billion. “The remaining amount will be phased over the programme’s duration, subject to two quarterly reviews,” it added.
- IMF said that the programme would focus on the “implementation of the FY24 budget to facilitate Pakistan’s needed fiscal adjustment and ensure debt sustainability”. Funds from West Asia The development came after Pakistan received \$2 billion from Saudi Arabia and \$1 billion from the UAE as per conditions of the fund.
- Pakistan has been struggling to get IMF support for its ailing economy. It is believed that the new loan will improve the country’s foreign exchange reserve and also open the door to multilateral loan agreements with institutions and countries.



### REPORT/RANK/INDEX/LIST

#### [Henley Passport Index, 2023] India climbs seven points to 80 on Passport Index; Singapore at top position

- India has climbed seven places to the 80th rank from 87 last year; though the number of countries allowed visa free access to Indian passport holders remains unchanged.
- The Henley Passport Index is the ranking of all the world’s passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. The index includes 199 passports and 227 travel destinations. The index is brought out by Henley and Partners.
- At the bottom of the Index were four countries for scoring zero for not permitting visa free access for any passport – namely, Afghanistan, North Korea, Papua New Guinea, and Turkmenistan.



- In 2014, India ranked 76 with 52 countries allowing Indian passport holders visa free access, but its performance has not been linear. It ranked 88 in 2015 (visa free access to 51 countries), 85 in 2016, 87 in 2017, 81 in 2018, 82 in 2019 and 2020, and 81 in 2021.
- Japan, which occupied the top position on the Henley Passport Index for five years, dropped to the 3rd place. It was replaced by Singapore, which is now officially the most powerful passport in the world, with its citizens able to visit 192 travel destinations out of 227 around the world visa free.
- Germany, Italy, and Spain occupied the 2nd place. Alongside Japan at the third position are Austria, Finland, France, Luxembourg, South Korea, and Sweden. The U.K. climbed two places to occupy the fourth place, while the U.S. continued its decades-long slide down the index, dropping two places to the eighth spot. Both the U.K. and the U.S. jointly held the first place on the index nearly 10 years ago in 2014.



#### India ranked 99th in latest FIFA rankings

- FIFA Men's World Rankings update, India has been placed at the 99th position. The Indian team, known as the Blue Tigers, won the Tri-Nation Series in March 2023, the Intercontinental Cup in June and the SAFF Championship in early July.
- The Indian men's football team is currently coached by Igor Stimac and led by Sunil Chhetri. With 85 goals in 133 matches, Chhetri is the highest goalscorer in the history of the Indian national team. He is also the fourth highest goalscorer in international matches after Lionel Messi.
- India's best FIFA ranking has been 94, which was achieved in 1996. He was last ranked in the top 100 in 2018 at world No. 96. In March 2015, India reached its lowest ever FIFA ranking position of 173.



#### For the first time Since 2010, India has been excluded from the 'Report on Children and Armed Conflict 2023' for the work done to protect children.

- The report calls for strengthening mechanisms to protect children affected by armed conflict, raising awareness, promoting information collection about the plight of children affected by war, and promoting international cooperation to improve their protection. The report also mentions the detention, killing etc. of children by various security forces.
- Globally in 2022, children continued to be disproportionately affected by armed conflict, and the number of children verified to be affected by serious violations increased compared to 2021.
- The most disputed countries were the Democratic Republic of Congo, Israel, Palestine, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan and Yemen.



#### India ranked 67th in WEF's Energy Transition Index.

- India has jumped 20 places to rank 67th among 120 countries, with significant improvements in key parameters of energy equity and security and environmental sustainability, according to a report released by the World Economic Forum.
- In 2021, India was ranked 87 out of 115 countries.
- The list of 120 countries is topped by Sweden followed by Denmark, Norway, Finland and Switzerland in the top five. France (7) was the only G20 country in the top 10, followed by Germany (11), the United States (12), and the UK (13).
- World Economic Forum: Swiss non-profit foundation established in 1971, based in Geneva, Switzerland. Major reports published by WEF: Global Competitiveness Report, Global IT Report, Global Gender Gap Report, Global Risks Report, Global Travel and Tourism Report.



**Iceland became the world's most peaceful country for the 15th consecutive time in the Global Peace Index. (17th 'Global Peace Index' of the Institute for Economics and Peace)**

- GPI evaluates a total of 23 indicators to compile this list. These can be sorted into three distinct categories: the level of social security and safety, militarization and security, and domestic and international conflict.
- It is a study of 163 independent countries and territories around the world, covering approximately 99.7% of the world's total population.
- The leading countries are Japan 9th, Finland 13th, Bhutan 17th, UK 37th, Nepal 79th, China 80th, US 131st, and Russia 158th.
- India is the **126th** most peaceful nation in the 2023 Global Peace Index.
- Most peaceful country:
  - 1. Iceland 2. Denmark 3. Ireland 4. New Zealand
- Most troubled country:
  - 163. Afghanistan 162. Yemen 161. Syria 160. South Sudan.
- The largest improvement in peace was recorded in Libya this year, improving the overall score of the 2023 GPI by 7.1 percent. Libya now ranks 137th on the GPI.

### South Asia

Regional Rank	Country	Overall Score	Score Change	Overall Rank
1	Bhutan	1.51	-0.013	22
2	Nepal	2.033	0.018	85
3	Bangladesh	2.068	-0.034	91
4	Sri Lanka	2.083	0.096	95
5	India	2.553	-0.017	135
6	Pakistan	2.868	-0.055	150
7	Afghanistan	3.631	-0.017	163
REGIONAL AVERAGE		2.392	-0.003	

### India has the fourth most powerful army in the world in the Global Firepower Index 2023.

- Global Firepower, a data website that monitors global defense information since 2006, has released the 'Global Firepower Index 2023', a list of 145 countries with the world's most powerful soldiers.
- These are evaluated on more than 60 factors. The GFP ranking is based on each country's potential combat capability to fight conventionally on land, sea and in the air. It scores each country with categories ranging from the amount of military units and financial status to logistical capabilities and geographic location. New countries have been included in 2023 – Belize, Benin and Senegal.

1	United States	PwrIndx: 0.0712
2	Russia	PwrIndx: 0.0714
3	China	PwrIndx: 0.0722
4	India	PwrIndx: 0.1026
5	United Kingdom	PwrIndx: 0.1435
6	South Korea	PwrIndx: 0.1505
7	Pakistan	PwrIndx: 0.1694
8	Japan	PwrIndx: 0.1711
9	France	PwrIndx: 0.1848
10	Italy	PwrIndx: 0.1973

### Uttar Pradesh tops the category of big states in 'Grievance Redressal Index'.

- 'Grievance Redressal Index' created by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) for the states under the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS).
- Among **large states with more than 17,500 complaints**, Uttar Pradesh topped the list with a score of 63.90%, followed by Jharkhand with 48.95% and Madhya Pradesh with 43.53%. Uttar Pradesh disposed off 1,23,633 complaints within 24 days.
- Among **states with less than 17,500 complaints**, Telangana government topped the list with a score of 74.44%, followed by Chhattisgarh government with 57.50% and Kerala government with a score of 52.16%.
- The government of **Sikkim topped the northeastern states** with a score of 66.70%, followed by the government of Assam with a score of 57.45% and the government of Arunachal Pradesh with a score of 52.30%.
- Among Union Territories**, Lakshadweep topped with a score of 70.41%, followed by Andaman and Nicobar Islands with a score of 64.55% and Ladakh with a score of 55.25%.



### Times Higher Education released the list of 'Best Young University-2023' in the world

- Times Higher Education-THE's '2023 Young University Rankings' reveals the best universities under the age of 50, assessing their engagement with teaching, research, international outlook and industry based on 13 performance indicators.
- Hong Kong has the maximum number of three institutions in the top 10. Turkey is the most represented country with 47 institutions, followed by India with 45 institutions.
- This year the number of regions shown in the table has increased from 74 last year to 78. Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Namibia are the latest additions.

THE Young University Rankings 2023	
Rank in 2023	University Name
1	Nanyang Technological University
2	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
3	Paris Sciences et Lettres – PSL Research University Paris
4	Hong Kong Polytechnic University
5	Erasmus University Rotterdam
6	City University of Hong Kong
7	University of Antwerp
8	Institut Polytechnique de Paris
9	University of Technology Sydney
10	Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology (UNIST)

**Top 5 universities:**

1. Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
2. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong
3. Paris Sciences et Lettres - Paris, France
4. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong.

**India (Top-100):**

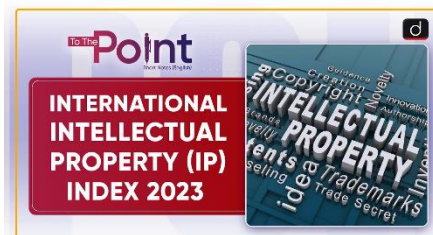
77th place - Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala.

79th place - JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Mysore Karnataka.

91st place - Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences, Bajhol, Himachal Pradesh.

**International Intellectual Property (IP) Index 2023**

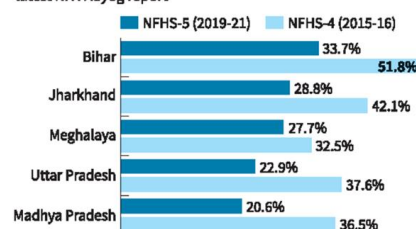
- India has been ranked 42nd among 55 major global economies in the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index 2023 released by the US Chambers of Commerce, which is topped by the US, followed by the United Kingdom and France.

**The NITI Aayog report says 13.5-cr. people lifted out of multidimensional poverty.**

- India has registered a significant decline of 9.89% points in the number of multidimensionally poor, from 24.85% in 2015--16 to 14.96% in 2019--2021, says the *“National multidimensional poverty index: a progress review, 2023”*, released by NITI Aayog.
- The report said rural areas witnessed the fastest decline in poverty from 32.59% to 19.28%, mainly due to a decrease in the number of multidimensionally poor in States such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.
- Delhi, Kerala, Goa, and Tamil Nadu have the least number of people facing multidimensional poverty, along with the Union Territories.**
- Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh top the chart where the percentage of population which is multidimensionally poor is high.**
- Multidimensional poverty in urban areas, during the same period, saw a decrease from 8.65% to 5.27%.
- Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in the number of poor with 3.43 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty.**
- The report was released by its Vice- Chairman, Suman Bery.
- The report has been prepared based on the latest National Family Health Survey of 2019--21 and is the second edition of the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

**Poverty score**

The chart shows the top-five States with the highest share of population with multidimensional poverty, according to the latest NITI Aayog report

**London is the 'Best City for Students' in the QS World Rankings 2024.**

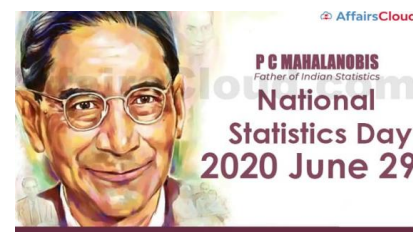
- London has retained its top spot as the world's 'Best Student City' for the 5th year in a row in the latest Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) 'Best Cities for Students' ranking 2024. While Tokyo is in 2nd place, Seoul in 3rd place, Melbourne in 4th place and Munich in 5th place.
- Munich slipped from second last year to fifth this year.
- Mumbai ranks 118th, which is the highest among Indian cities. At 132nd position, Delhi is second followed by Bengaluru at 147th and Chennai at 154th.

**QS World's Best Cities for Students**

2024	2023	City
1	1	London
2	7	Tokyo
3	2	Seoul
4	5	Melbourne
5	2	Munich
6	8	Paris
7	9	Sydney
=8	6	Berlin
=8	4	Zurich
10	11	Boston

**IMPORTANT DAY/WEEK/YEAR****National Statistics Day is celebrated on 29th June.**

- In recognition of the remarkable contributions made by (late) Professor Prashant Chandra Mahalanobis in the field of statistics and economic planning, the Government of India has been celebrating his birth anniversary, 29 June, as "Statistics Day" every year since 2007.
- Theme: "Aligning the State Indicator Framework with the National Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals."





- Prashant Chandra Mahalanobis was one of the members of the 1st Planning Commission of India and established the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in the year 1931. World Statistics Day, which is a day designated by the United Nations, is observed on 20 October.
- This year the main event of Statistics Day, 2023 was organized at SCOPE Convention Centre, SCOPE Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

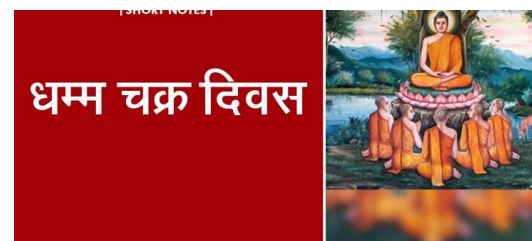
### International Parliamentary Day 2023 observed across the world on 30 June.

- Every year 30 June is observed as International Parliamentary Day to commemorate the foundation date of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The festival highlights the importance of Parliament in safeguarding the democratic rights of the citizens.
- Theme for 2023 is “**Parliament for the Planet**”, with a focus on climate action. The day was established in 2018 through a United Nations General Assembly resolution.
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU): began as a small group of parliamentarians in 1889 dedicated to promoting peace through parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue has since grown into a truly global organization with 179 members and 14 associate members. Its slogan is: Democracy for All. It's headquarter is in Geneva, Switzerland. It also has offices in New York, United States and Vienna, Austria.



### Dhamma Chakra Pravartana Day is celebrated by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) on 3rd July.

- Under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, International Buddhist Confederation - I.B.C. On 3rd July 2023, National Museum, Janpath, New Delhi celebrated Ashadh Purnima as Dhammachakra Pravartan Diwas.
- It is also known as Esala Poya in Sri Lanka and Asanha Bucha in Thailand. In this program, 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa gave a special address on the importance of Ashad Purnima.
- It was in Sarnath that Buddha gave his first sermon and set the wheel of Dharma in motion. This IBC is the annual major event of Buddhism and the second major sacrificial day for Buddhists after Buddha Purnima or Vaishakh Purnima.
- This program was broadcast in Lumbini-Nepal by I.B.C. Special project of “India International Center for Buddhist Culture and Heritage”. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone of this center in Lumbini, Nepal on the occasion of Buddha Purnima in 2022.
- The IBC was launched in the year 2011 and was formally registered on 2 November 2012 as a 10- member provisional governing body.
- Dhamma Chakra Enlightenment Day: The day marks the Buddha's first teaching after attaining enlightenment to the first five ascetic disciples (the Pancha Varyas) on the poornima of Ashada at Shikshayatan Mrigaya, the 'deer park' in present-day Sarnath near Varanasi, India.



### World Population Day 2023 celebrated on 11th July.

- Celebrated with the aim to raise awareness of global population issues and their impact on society.
- Theme 2023: "Unleashing the Power of Gender Equality: Raising the Voices of Women and Girls to Unlock the Infinite Potential of Our World".
- According to the recent **World Population Status Report 2023 of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**, India has become the most populous country in the world with a population of 142.86 crores in the year 2023. At the same time, China has come in second place with a population of 142.57 crores.
- The concept of World Population Day was initiated by the United Nations in 1989 following a proposal by Dr. KC Zakaria, on the eve of the worldwide population crossing five billion on 11 July 1987. More than 90 countries celebrated World Population Day



for the first time on 11 July 1990. The United Nations Population Fund was established in 1969 and is headquartered in New York, United States.

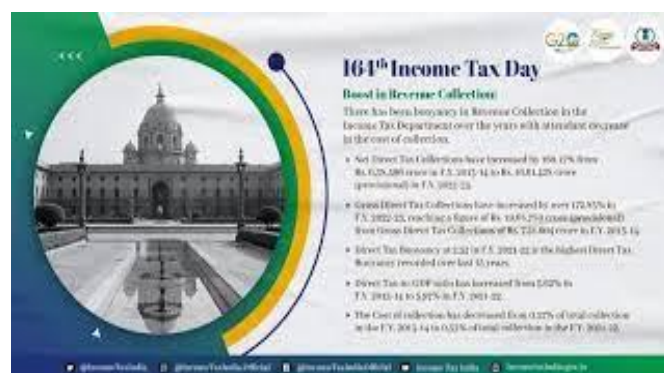
### National Broadcasting Day celebrated on 23 July 2023

- The purpose of this day is to remind us about the impact of radio on our lives. The day also symbolizes the onset of organized radio broadcasting in the country by All India Radio. Radio was the only broadcast medium before TV came into existence.
- On July 23, 1927, **India broadcasting company** came into existence and became **India's first radio company**. Soon after, **All India Radio (AIR)** came into existence in April 1930 as the Indian Broadcasting Service.
- The famous Akashvani Dhun was composed by Indian Jewish refugee Walter Cofman in 1930. The Central News Organization was divided into two divisions in the year 1938 - News Services Division (NSD) and Foreign Service Division (ESD). In 1941, Air came under the purview of the Information and Broadcasting Department in British India.
- All India Radio (AIR) has been officially known as 'Akashvani' since 1956. The name was taken from a poem by Rabindranath Tagore in 1938.



### 164th Income Tax Day celebrated on 24 July 2023.

- Income tax was introduced in India on 24 July 1860 by Sir James Wilson, the first finance minister of the British Indian government, although in the year 1922, a comprehensive income tax law (Income Tax Act 1922) was brought. The objective behind this initiative was to make up for the losses suffered by British rule during the First War of Independence in 1857.
- After independence, the Income Tax Act of 1961 replaced the earlier law and has since become the backbone of India's income tax system. In 2010, the Income Tax Department decided to celebrate 24 July as Income Tax Day to celebrate 150 years of Income Tax in India.



### International Mangrove Conservation Day 2023 observed on 26 July 2023.

- International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystem is observed annually on 26 July. This day brings awareness about sustainable practices in the management, protection and use of mangrove ecosystems. The General Conference of UNESCO officially adopted this International Day in 2015.
- As per the Forest Survey Report 2021, there has been an increase of 17 sq km in mangrove cover in India as compared to the 2019 assessment. It is now spread over 4,992 sq km. The three states that saw the highest increase in mangrove cover are Odisha (8 sq km), Maharashtra (4 sq km) and Karnataka (3 sq km). Also West Bengal has the highest number of mangroves, followed by Gujarat and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



### World nature conservation day 2023: 28 July.

- Theme: "Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet"
- Serious concerns have been raised about the impact of e-cigarette waste this year. E-cigarettes introduce toxic chemicals, heavy metals and nicotine salts into the ecosystem, posing a threat to wildlife and polluting waterways and soil.



### World Hepatitis Day 2023 observed on 28 July.

- The theme is "One Life One Liver".
- Doctor and geneticist **Dr. Baruch Samuel Blumberg**, also known as **Barry Blumberg**, discovered the **hepatitis B virus in 1967** and developed the first vaccine, and was awarded the Nobel Prize for it. His birthday, 28 July, has been chosen as World Hepatitis Day.

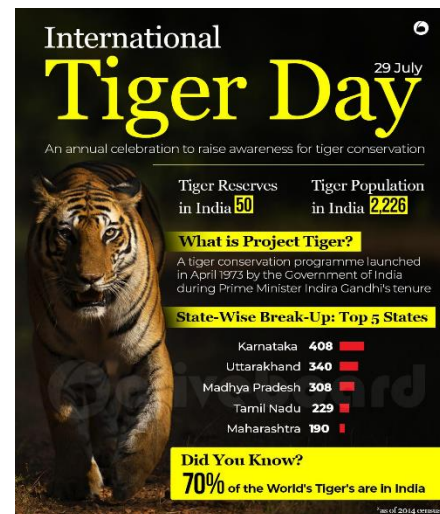


- Initially celebrated on 19 May, World Hepatitis Day was moved to 28 July in 2010.
- The World Hepatitis Alliance was established in the year 2007, and in 2008, the first community-organised World Hepatitis Day was celebrated.
- There are five commonly known strains of hepatitis virus: types A, B, C, D. They all affect the liver but there are some important differences in the origin, transmission and severity of the disease. Hepatitis is preventable with vaccination and manageable, but there is currently no cure.



### International Tiger Day is celebrated on 29 July.

- The main purpose of celebrating this day is to spread awareness for the conservation of tigers at the global level and to save their endangered species.
- World Tiger Day originated in the year 2010, in Petersburg, Russia when 13 tiger range countries came together for the Tx2 strategy's global goal of doubling the number of wild tigers by 2022.
- The tiger population in India is estimated to be 3925 with an annual growth rate of 6.1 percent. Madhya Pradesh has the largest population of tigers at 785, followed by Karnataka (563) and Uttarakhand (560), and Maharashtra (444).
- The abundance of tigers within the tiger reserve is highest in Corbett (260), followed by Bandipur (150), Nagarhole (141), Bandhavgarh (135), Dudhwa (135), Mudumalai (114), Kanha (105), Kaziranga (104).
- Earlier in April 2023, on the occasion of completion of 50 years of Project Tiger in Mysore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had declared a minimum population of 3167 tigers. Project Tiger which started 50 years ago in 1973 with 268 tigers.
- Management Effectiveness Evaluation Report:
- The 5th cycle of the Management Effectiveness Assessment Report of the Tiger Reserve was presented. The scores for all the 33 'criteria/indicators' were aggregated together for each of the 51 Tiger Reserves. Under which the overall average score of 78.01% (between 50% and 94%) has been obtained. The highest scoring tiger reserves - Periyar - Kerala, Satpura - Madhya Pradesh, Bandipur and Nagarhole - Karnataka have secured 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th position respectively in the Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE).



## FESTIVAL

### Traditional clay festival 'Chikal Kalo' is held in Goa.

- The clay festival known as 'Chikal Kalo' was celebrated in Marcel village, Goa.
- This festival happens every year on Ashadha Dwadashi. Chikal Kalo, which translates to "mud bath".
- During this festival, villagers and children used to play in the mud as a dedication to the childhood stories of Lord Krishna who used to play with his friends.



### World famous Shravani fair started in Deoghar, Jharkhand

- Shravani Mela, one of the largest religious gatherings in the eastern region of the country, was inaugurated on 3 July 2023 in Deoghar district of Jharkhand. State Agriculture Minister Badal Patralekha inaugurated the fair at Kanwariya Path in Dumma, bordering Bihar.
- Usually, the fair is held for a month during the month of 'Shravan', as per the Saka calendar. This year this fair will be organized continuously for two months from 3rd July to 31st August. This is the first time after 19 years that there will be eight Mondays during Shravani Mela.
- During the month of Shravan, devotees from India and abroad come to Deoghar and offer prayers at Baba Baidyanath Dham temple. After taking a holy dip in the Ganges at Sultanganj in Bihar, the Kanwariyas begin their 105-km walk to Deoghar. The yatra ends with the pilgrims offering holy water to the 'Shiva Lingam' at the Baba Baidyanath Dham temple.





**'Ker Puja' festival celebrated in Tripura.**

- In the northeastern Indian state of Tripura, Ker Puja, two weeks after Kharchi Puja, is celebrated to worship the Vastu deity 'Ker', this time it is being celebrated from 11 to 13 July 2023.
- The celebration of Ker Puja began five centuries ago, on the day of the festival, the entrance to the city is locked and people from outside areas are prohibited from entering the area. 'Ker' is a designated area or boundary where no one is allowed to go. That is why the city of Agartala is closed for any visitors during Ker Puja.

**Bihar's one month long world famous 'Rajgir Malmas Fair' started.**

- **"Rajgir Malmas Fair" started at Rajgir** in Nalanda district of Bihar. There will be many holy baths during the 1 month long fair. The fair started with the traditional flag hoisting in the presence of saints and sages.
- CM Nitish Kumar inaugurated the month-long **Malmas Mela at Brahma Kund in Rajgir**. The CM also unveiled the **idol of Lord Shiva at Vaitarani Dham**.
- It is believed in Hinduism that 33 crore deities migrate to Rajgir in the month of Malmas. During this time lakhs of devotees from different parts of the country and state reach Rajgir to offer prayers and take a holy dip in the Brahmakund.

**'Machail Mata Yatra' festival started in Jammu and Kashmir.**

- Machail Mata Yatra started annually, with many devotees gathering devotionally at the Devi temple located in the Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir. The yatra commenced with the "Pratham Puja" dedicated to Goddess Durga at the temple.
- The Machail Yatra is the second largest pilgrimage in the Jammu region, with over 50,000 pilgrims visiting Chandi Dham Machail.
- On the holy day of the first Bhadon or Bhadun Sankranti, a huge fair is held outside the Chandi Mata Temple in Machail, as the temple gates are opened.

**SPORTS****Netherlands Both men's and women's teams won FIH Hockey Pro League title for season 2022-23.**

- Both the men's and women's teams have defeated Britain and Argentina respectively.
- Netherlands became the first team to win a second title in the men's competition, while the women's team also became the third-time winners and the team with the most editions.
- Indian men's hockey team finished fourth in the FIH Pro League 2022-23 with 30 points from 16 matches. India captain Harmanpreet Singh finished as the top scorer in the FIH Pro League 2022-23 with 18 goals.



Edition	Winner (Men)	Runner-up (Men)
2019	Australia	Belgium
2022-23	Netherlands	Great Britain

Edition	Winner (Women)	Runner-up (Women)
2019	Netherlands	Australia
2022-23	Netherlands	Argentina

**Ukraine's Elina Svitolina won Wimbledon duel with Belarus rival Victoria Azarenka on Sunday, describing it as the "second happiest moment" of her life after the birth of her daughter.**

- As has become a common feature, Svitolina did not shake hands with Azarenka in protest over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Belarus is a key military ally of Moscow.
- Ukraine's Elina Svitolina beats Belarus' Victoria Azarenka during their women's singles tennis match in 2023 Wimbledon Championships at the All England Tennis Club in Wimbledon, London.



**Corpuz wins U.S. Women's Open; Aditi finishes tied 33rd.**

- Allisen Corpuz became the 1st American in 20 years to make the U.S. Women's Open her 1st LPGA title, closing with a 3--under 69 at Pebble Beach and handling her historic moment as if she had been there before.
- Corpuz won by three shots over Charley Hull (66) and Jiyai Shin (68) to claim the \$2 million prize. Aditi Ashok, playing her record 25th Major, finished tied 33rd.



**Rudransh sets world record on way to pistol gold.**

- India para-shooters Rudransh Khandelwal and Nihal Singh won the gold and silver in the P4 Mixed 50m pistol SH1 category at the World Shooting Para Sport (WSPS) World Cup.
- The 16- year old Rudransh created a world record, shooting 231.1 in the final, while Nihal shot 222.2 to finish second.
- Rudransh broke the world record of Khel Ratna awardee Manish Narwal, who won gold at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games.
- In the R3 Mixed 10 m air rifle prone SH1 event, India's paralympic gold medallist at the Tokyo Olympics, Avani Lekhara finished sixth with a score of 168. Avani had earlier won gold in the R2 10M Air Rifle SH1 category.



**India's national men's football team reached 100th position in FIFA world rankings.**

- India's national men's football team has made a significant improvement in its position in the ongoing FIFA World Rankings. After this the Indian team has reached from 101st to 100th position. The team's rank was 94th in 1996, 99th in 1993 and 96th from 2017 to 2018.
- This achievement has made India the 18th ranked team in Asia and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). After going unbeaten against Lebanon in the Intercontinental Cup in June and against Kuwait in the SAFF Championship.
- This success of the Indian men's football team will have a huge impact on the upcoming 2026 World Cup qualifiers draw.
- **FIFA World Cup 2022 winners Argentina is on top** while runner up France is on the second spot. And Brazil, England and Belgium are the next three teams in the list. America has reached the top 10. America has now moved from 13th to 11th position.
- South Asian football teams are Nepal at 175th position, Bangladesh at 192nd position, Pakistan at 201st position and Sri Lanka at 207th position.
- **FIFA:** Federation Internationale de Football Association which was established in the year 1904. It was launched to oversee international competition between the national associations of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. FIFA now consists of 211 member states. Its headquarter is in Zurich.



**India won the Asian Kabaddi Championship-2023 by defeating Iran.**

- final of the Asian Kabaddi Competition 2023 held at the Okdang Cultural Center of Dong-Eui Institute of Technology in Busan, South Korea.
- This is India's 8th title out of 9 events of the Asian Kabaddi Championship.
- Apart from this, Chinese Taipei and Japan finished third and fourth.
- India's captain Pawan Sehrawat led the Super-10s from the front.





- The first edition was held in Kolkata in the year 1980 with the winner being the host nation. The Asian Kabaddi Championship returns after a long gap of six years since the last edition was held in Tehran in 2017. India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong participated in the competition.

#### Uma Kolkata became the champion of India's first women's kabaddi league.

- India's 1st women's kabaddi league was organized in Dubai by APS Sports Event Management, in which Uma Kolkata defeated Punjab Panthers in the finals.
- The winning Uma Kolkata team got Rs 1 Crore and Punjab Panthers got Rs 50 lakh and second place.
- All matches from 16 June to 27 June were held at the 'Shabab Al-Ahli' Sports Club in Dubai. The first match took place between Rajasthan Raiders vs Gujarat Angels. Actor Govinda was made its brand ambassador. Pradeep Kumar was its CEO.
- Eight teams participated in the Women's Kabaddi League, which were Delhi Dynamites, Gujarat Angels, Great Marathas, Haryana Hustlers, Punjab Panthers, Rajasthan Riders, Uma Kolkata and Bengaluru Hawks.



#### Asian Squash Mixed Doubles Championship.

- The pair of Dipika Pallikal and Harinder Sandhu has won the title of the Asian Squash Mixed Doubles Championship held in Guangzhou, China.
- They beat top seeded Malaysian pair Aira Azman and Shafiq Kamal in the quarter-finals, while in the semi-finals they beat Pakistan's Tyeb Aslam and Faiza Zafar.
- Apart from this, Pratibha Anahat and Abhay Singh won the bronze medal in the doubles pair.



#### Yuki Bhambri's first ATP doubles title.

- Yuki Bhambri won his first title on the ATP World Tour by winning the doubles trophy at the Mallorca Championships with South African partner Lloyd Harris.
- The Indo-South African pair defeated the Dutch-Austrian pair of Robin Hasse and Philipp Oswald in the final of the grass court event.



#### Triveni Continental Kings became the champion of the first Global Chess League

- Triveni Continental Kings have won the 1st edition by defeating Grand Mumba Masters during the final of the Global Chess League at Le Meridien Hotel, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Danish Grandmaster Jonas Bjerre led his team to victory by defeating Javokhir Sindarov at the Upgrade Mumba Masters.
- Global Chess League: inaugural edition took place in Dubai from June 21 to July 2, 2023. Six teams such as Magnus Carlsen, Vishy Anand and world champion Ding Liren have participated. Major teams - Ganges Grandmasters, SG Alpine Warriors, Chingari Gulf Titans, Upgrade Mumba Masters and Alaska Knights.



#### Shreyanka Patil becomes first Indian woman cricketer to be part of Caribbean Women's Premier League.

- Young spin bowler Shreyanka Patil has created history by becoming the first Indian cricketer to be signed for the Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL). Apart from this, Patil is also the first Indian player to be offered a contract in a foreign league before making his international debut.
- Patil has been selected for the Guyana Amazon Warriors in the WCPL, which will be held from 31 August to 10 September. The 2023 edition of the WCPL will be the second season of the competition - it begins in Barbados on August 31, and the final in Trinidad on September 10.



#### Haryana won the 6th Youth Women's National Boxing Championship.

- Defending champions Haryana retained the Women's Youth Boxing National Championship by winning 9 medals including 8 gold on 2nd July 2023 at Tanta Tope Stadium, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Haryana put up a great show on the final day and all their 8 finalists won gold medals. Haryana topped the table with 63 points, 8 gold and 1 bronze medal.



- Gold medal winners for Haryana - Bhavna Sharma (48kg), Anshu (50kg), Mohini (52kg), Tanu (54kg), Priya (57kg), Pranjal Yadav (70kg), Muskan (75kg) ) and Kirti (81+kg).
- The first Youth Women's National Boxing Championship was held in New Delhi from 16–22 January 2017, which was also won by Haryana.
- Best Boxer - Priya (57kg) of Haryana. Most promising boxer - Anjali Singh of Madhya Pradesh.



### India won the 'SAFF Bangabandhu Football Championship' for the ninth time after defeating Kuwait 5- 4 in the penalty shootout.

- India won the final via a penalty shootout after a 1–1 draw in regulation time at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru.
- Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh, saved a goal from the Kuwait captain's final kick. The Indian team made it to the final after defeating Lebanon in the semi-finals, while Kuwait beat Bangladesh 1-0 in the other last four encounters.
- India, ranked 100th in the latest FIFA rankings, won the 9th SAFF Championship out of 14 editions. The win marked their second consecutive victory after winning the Intercontinental Cup the previous month.



#### Tournament Winner:

- Golden Boot, Golden Ball - Sunil Chhetri
- Man of the Match (Final) - Gurpreet Singh Sandhu
- Golden Glove - Anisur Rahman Zico (Bangladesh)
- Fair Play Award - Nepal Football Team

#### SAFF Football Championship:

- SAFF Football Championship, also known as the South Asian Football Federation Championship, is a biennial international football tournament contested by the national teams of South Asian countries. India has been the winner so far 9 times - 1993, 1997, 1999, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2015, 2021, 2023.
- 1993: The SAFF Championship was inaugurated in Lahore, Pakistan. India became the champion by defeating the hosts Pakistan in the final. The 2021 championship was held in Maldives, Nepal was the runner up.

### Yashasvi Jaiswal creates Indian record for most runs on overseas Test debut against West Indies.

- India beat West Indies by an innings and 141 runs to win the 1st Test in Dominica in 3 days.
- India has won 5 consecutive Tests against the West Indies for the first time.
- Opener Yashasvi Jaiswal scored 171 in the 1st innings in the Dominica Test against the West Indies, the highest score by an Indian on Test debut overseas. The previous record was in the name of Sourav Ganguly (131 runs at Lord's).
- Jaiswal's 171 is the fifth highest score on debut globally. **Tip Foster's 287 for England at Sydney in 1903 leads the way.**
- Yashasvi faced 387 balls, which is the record for the most balls played on Test debut for India. Mohammad Azharuddin faced 322 balls to score 110 in his debut match against England in Kolkata in 1985.
- Jaiswal's 171 is the third highest score by an Indian on Test debut. Shikhar Dhawan tops the list with 187 against Australia and Rohit Sharma is second with 177 against West Indies in 2013. Yashasvi Jaiswal is the 17th Indian batsman to score a century on debut. 16th is Shreyas Iyer and 15th is Prithvi Shaw.
- India's senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin took 10 wickets in the first Test match against the West Indies. It was Ashwin's eighth 10-wicket haul in Test cricket, equaling former India captain Anil Kumble's record for most 10-wicket hauls in Tests.



### Satwik sets record for fastest badminton hit.

- India's R. Satwiksairaj set the Guinness World Record for the fastest hit by a male player in badminton, recording a mind boggling 565 mph with his smash.
- Satwiksairaj, thus, broke the record set in May, 2013 by Malaysian Tan Boon Heong, who had produced speed of 493 km/h with his smash.



- The Indian's smash was faster than the top speed of 372.6km/h achieved by a Formula One car.
- Malaysia's Tan Pearly set the Guinness World Record for the fastest female badminton hits with a remarkable speed of 438 kmph.

### Broad climbs Mt. 600, Woakes picks up four.

- England's Stuart Broad became just the 5th bowler to take 600 Test wickets, as Australia ended the opening day of the fourth Test at Old Trafford on 299 for eight.
- Veteran England seamer Stuart Broad joined the 600-wicket club on day 1 of the 4th Ashes Test at Old Trafford in Manchester. The right-arm bowler did so by getting Travis Head in the first over after the tea break. Broad also became the second English bowler to achieve the milestone **after James Anderson**.



### FIFA Women's Football World Cup-Started hosted by New Zealand and Australia

- The FIFA Women's World Cup is being held in New Zealand and Australia on 20 July - 20 August 2023. The first match of the competition was played between New Zealand and Norway at Eden Park, Auckland. This will be followed by Australia and Ireland in Sydney. Its final match will be played at the Sydney Olympic Stadium.
- The FIFA Women's World Cup will be the ninth edition.
- Apart from Ireland, Vietnam, Jamaica, Haiti, Morocco, Panama, Philippines and Portugal are participating in the women's world cup for the first time.
- FIFA Women's Football World Cup 2023:
- For the first time, a total of 32 teams - eight more than the previous version held in France - will compete for the iconic FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 Trophy. A total of 10 stadiums - six in Australia and four in New Zealand - will host 64 matches of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- The United States is the current FIFA Women's World Cup champion.
- The first FIFA Women's World Cup took place from 16 to 30 November 1991 in Guangdong, China. The inaugural tournament in 1991 was won by the United States.



### Indian Grandmaster Pragyananda won the Super GM Chess Tournament 2023 in

- 17-year-old young Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandha emerged as the champion in the V Géza Hetenyi Memorial Super GM Chess Tournament 2023 in Budapest, Hungary. He scored an impressive 6.5 points, a clear first place finish in the 10-man competition.
- In the final round, he drew with Polish grandmaster Radosław Wojtaszek, demonstrating his strong performance with the white pieces.
- Pragyananda drew her last three games against Pavel Elzhantov (Ukraine), Maxim Matlakov (Russia) and Wojtaszek. After this win, the live rating of the young Indian Grandmaster has increased to 2707.3.



### The pair of Satwik and Chirag won the title of 'Korea Open Badminton Tournament'.

- A pair of Asian champions Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty defeated Indonesia's Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Riyan Ardianto in the men's doubles final of the 500 Badminton tournament 'Korea Open Badminton Tournament'.
- Satwik-Chirag has won the **4th title** of the year in 2023. They won the **Swiss Open, Asian Championship** and **Indonesia Open** this year. Thus, 2022 **Commonwealth Games champions Satwik and Chirag** have extended their winning streak to 10 matches.
- A pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won gold at the Commonwealth Games, gold at the Thomas Cup, bronze at the World Championships and wins at the Super 300 (Syed Modi and Swiss Open), Super 500 (Thailand and India Open), Super 750 (French Open) and Indonesia Open Super 1000.





**Para-archer Sheetal Devi of Jammu and Kashmir became the world's 1st armless woman archer to win a silver medal in the World Championship.**

- Venue: **Archery World Championships in Plzen, Czech Republic.**
- In the semifinals, the 16-year-old compound archer defeated another Indian Sarita. But in the championship match, she was defeated by **Kure Oznur of Turkey.**



**The Indian team won a bronze medal for the 1st time in the 'Asian Surfing Championship' held in Maldives.**

- The **Asian Surfing Championship** was held at **Thulusdhoo Island in Maldives**, in which 18 countries participated. India's surf team, participating for the 1st time, secured the 3rd position and the bronze medal. Apart from this, two youngsters from Tamil Nadu entered the top 10 in the Asian rankings.
- Japan won the gold medal and Maldives won the silver medal.
- The Chennai-based TT Group sponsored the Indian surf team.
- D Srikanth from Kovalam fishing village near Chennai was the center of attraction at the event. Currently ranked fifth in Asia.



**Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma creates history by entering top-10 for the first time in British Open.**

- at the 151st British Open at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Merseyside, England.
- He finished tied-eighth with Cameron Young of America. Brian Herman, a lefthander from the United States, was the winner.
- Prior to this, Anirban Lahiri had a top-5 finish in 2015, the best by an Indian in a men's major tournament, and Jeev Milkha Singh had a T-9 finish at the 2008 PGA Championship in Michigan, USA.



**Leon Marchand breaks Michael Phelps' 15-year-old swimming record.**

- In a thrilling development at the World Swimming Championships in Japan, 21-year-old Leon Marchand of France pulled off a remarkable feat by breaking legendary American swimmer Michael Phelps' final individual world record in the 400m individual medley.
- Under the guidance of Bob Bowman, the legendary coach who played a key role in the illustrious career of Michael Phelps, Leon Marchand achieved a stunning time of **4 minutes 2.50 seconds in the 400 m individual medley** and set a new world record.
- This outstanding performance surpassed Phelps' previous record of 4:03.84, which had been unbeaten since the 2008 Beijing Olympics.
- Michael Phelps: Legendary American swimmer Michael Phelps won a total of 28 medals in five Olympic Games, including 23 gold medals, three silver and two bronze medals.



**Sumit Nagal, winner of Tampere Open-2023, became the first Indian tennis player to win two ATP Challenger titles on European soil.**

- Sumit Nagal won the second ATP Challenger event singles title by defeating Delibor Srinko of Czech Republic in the final of €73,000 Challenger tennis tournament 'Tampere Open' in Tampere, Finland.
- It was the second Challenger title of the season after the title in Rome, and the fourth Challenger title of his career.



**Handball Federation of India recognized.**

- The Sports Ministry said that it has decided to recognize the Handball Association of India (HAI) as the official body governing the game in the country.
- The ministry took this decision after Digvijay Chautala was elected as the president of the HAI and Jagan Mohan Rao as the general secretary.
- It was formed on 15 June 1972 by Jagat Singh Lohan. His contribution during the Munich Olympics has played an important role in laying its foundation.





### Maharashtra's 17-year-old chess prodigy Aditya Samant becomes India's 83rd Chess Grandmaster.

- To become a Grandmaster, a player has to achieve three GM criteria. Also, a live rating of 2,500 Elo points has to be crossed.
- Aditya became the GM as he started his ninth round game against compatriot Aryan Chopra in the Beelchess MTO 2023 tournament. Samant, a player from Maharashtra, had already crossed the 2500 Elo mark in the live ratings and achieved two GM benchmarks.



### 16-year-old South Korea's Casey Phair becomes the youngest player to play in the FIFA Women's Football World Cup.

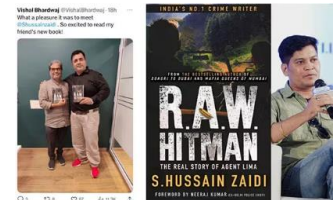
- Casey Phair's first match was on 25 July 2023 against Colombia.
- The previous record was held by the late Ifeanyi Chiijin, who was 16 years and 34 days old while playing for Nigeria in the 1999 Women's World Cup.
- This year's FIFA Women's World Cup is being co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand from 20 July – 20 August 2023. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 is going to be the biggest women's football tournament ever.



## BOOKS & AUTHORS

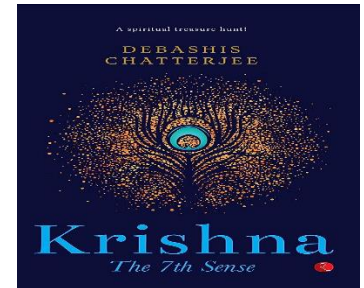
### Writer S. Hussain Zaidi's book 'R.A.W Hitman' will be launched.

- Published by American publication 'Simon & Schuster' "R.A.W Hitman", the story of a real RAW agent, authored by S Hussain Zaidi, will be published globally on July 4, 2023. R.A.W Hitman is his second publication in India after his first book Sachin@50.
- The book, R.A.W Hitman, is based on the life of Indian R&W agent Laxman Singh Bisht (Lucky Bisht) aka Agent Lima.



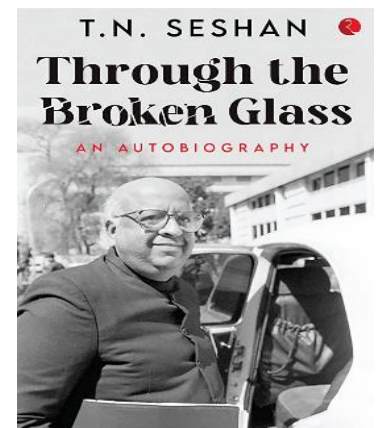
### Kerala Governor released Debashish Chatterjee's book 'Krishna - The 7th Sense'

- Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan released the Malayalam translation of 'Krishna - The 7th Sense' written by **IIM -Kozhikode director Debashish Chatterjee**. Krishna - The 7th Sense 'is the 1st novel of globally acclaimed management Guru, who has already written 18 books in the non-fiction category.
- This book discovers a new dimension of Krishna as an incarnation of seven colors of love. According to him, both true love and devotion are unconditionally and equal. This love can be understood only through pure devotion, which is the quality of the seventh sense.
- It has been translated from English under the title 'Krishnan Oru Ezamindrium' by Mr. V Madhusudan. The Honorable Governor also unveiled the latest version of Professor Chatterjee's other book 'Kama Sutra - Leadership and Wisdom in Ancient Times', which is the major book of the IIMK -PANGI series for new managers.
- 'Prism: The ancestral abode of rainbow' book:
- National Award winning filmmaker-writer Vinod Makara's new book 'Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow' was released on the occasion of Chandrayaan-3 on 14 July 2023 at the Satish Dhawan Space Center (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. This book is a compilation of 50 interesting articles of various streams of science including space science, astronomy, biology, anthropology and mathematics.



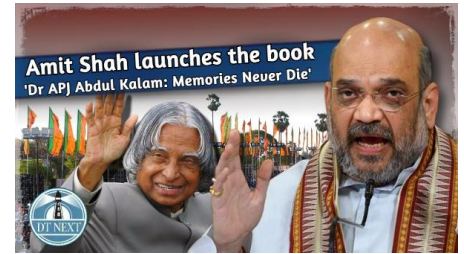
### "Through the Broken Glass: An Autobiography" written by TN Seshan

- The 'Through the Broken Glass: An Autobiography' written by former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India **TN Seshan/ Tiruneli Narayan Iyer Seshan** has been published by Rupa Prakashan Bharat 4 years after his death in 2019. This autobiography also includes his tenure as CEC from 1990 to 1995.
- TN Seshan is also a writer of "An Undocumented Wonder: The Making of the Great Indian Election".
- Tirunellai Narayan Iyer Seshan belonged to the self-righteous South Indian Brahmin, especially the Tamil Brahmin community. In 1990, he served as a bureaucrat for more than three decades before the CEC was built.



### Union Minister Amit Shah released a book titled 'Dr APJ Abdul Kalam: Memories Never Die' in Tamil Nadu.

- a tribute to the biography and legacy of former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, at Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu.
- This book is written by YS Rajan and Dr. APJ M Nazema Marakaiyar from their own experiences and translated by Srinivasan.
- Shah visited Kalam's memorial at Peekarambu, a village near Rameshwaram.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### India pips China as the best emerging market for investing.

- India has overtaken China as the most attractive emerging market for investing for sovereign wealth funds in 2023 due to its solid demographics, political stability and proactive regulation, according to a report published.
- **The Invesco Global Sovereign Asset Management report** has captured the views of 142 chief investment officers, heads of asset classes, and senior portfolio strategists from 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks. Collectively, these institutions manage about \$21 trillion in assets. As per the report, India is a better story now in terms of business and political stability. Fast Growing demographics, good regulation initiatives, and a 'very' friendly environment for sovereign investors are positives for the country.
- Invesco noted that India is benefitting from increased foreign corporate investment. In addition, India and South Korea continue to be the best destinations for increasing exposure.



### Jaishankar files nomination for Rajya Sabha from Gujarat.

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar filed his nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha for the second time from Gujarat. The BJP has repeated him from the State.
- Other two members are Jugal Thakor and Dinesh Anavadiya. At the Gujarat Assembly Secretariat where he filled his nomination papers, he was accompanied by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and State party chief C.R. Paatil.



### Uzra Zeya meets Kwatra, discusses Indo Pacific cooperation, civil rights.

- U.S. Under Secretary of State Uzra Zeya met Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra to discuss cooperation in the Indo Pacific region, as well as regional issues and "civilian security" or protecting civil rights.
- Ms. Zeya, who met with the Dalai Lama, is due to meet civil society organizations and human rights, free speech and minority rights activists during her visit to Delhi.
- Ms. Zeya is visiting India and Bangladesh on a weeklong trip that follows two weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington. The visiting U.S. delegation included U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu and USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator Anjali Kaur. They will leave for Dhaka on 11.7.2023.



### Meta launches 'Mixed Reality Fund' for Indian startups.

- Meta has announced the launch of a new 'Mixed Reality Program' (MR) in India, which offers \$250,000 in awards to support domestic startups and developers in building applications and experiences.
- The objective of the program is to foster innovation and establish a national technology ecosystem.
- Selected participants will also have the opportunity to upload their products to the Quest App Lab and gain exposure within Meta's developer ecosystem.



### World Bank President Ajay Banga is the only Indian in Carnegie Corporation of New York's 2023 list of Great Immigrants.

- 'Great Immigrants of 2023' prepared by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- Banga has been awarded the Foreign Policy Association Medal, the Padma Shri Award by the President of India, and the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.





- Including Banga, a total of 35 people have got a place in this list. Who came from 33 countries of the world and settled in America. Oscar Award winning actor Kwon, actor Pedro Pascal, Nobel Prize winner Hoffman and Guido Imbens etc. have found a place in this list.

#### GAIL gets the status of "AEO T3" authorized economic operator.

- GAIL India Limited has been awarded the coveted Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) T3 status by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Ministry of Finance.
- This recognition signifies the highest level of facilitation for exporters and importers, establishing GAIL as a reliable and secure partner in international trade.
- The AEO program, administered by the World Customs Organization (WCO), aims to strengthen global supply chain security, streamline customs procedures and promote ease of doing business.
- GAIL (India) Limited: incorporated in August 1984 as a Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG).



#### Chief Justice of India, Dr. D.Y. Chandrachud lays the foundation stone for the new campus of the Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh High Court at Raika on the outskirts of Jammu.

- The Chief Justice of India also launched e-initiatives for the Judiciary of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Which includes a document management system for the High Court and a national service for tracking electronic processes in the district courts of both the Union Territories.
- *The CJI inaugurated the Training cum-Examination Center in the Supreme Court Complex. J&K LG lays foundation stone for first Foreign Direct Investment project.*



#### HDFC Bank becomes the fourth most valuable bank in the world.

- After the merger with Housing Development Finance Corp was completed on July 1, 2023, HDFC became the **4th largest bank in the world in terms of Equity Market Capitalization with a valuation of around \$172 billion.**
- The tie-up makes HDFC Bank the 4th largest lender behind **JP Morgan Chase & Co, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and Bank of America Corp**, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.
- HDFC has also surpassed its Indian counterparts, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank, in terms of market capitalization at \$62 billion and \$79 billion respectively.
- It was one of the first banks to receive approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a private sector bank in August 1994. Its headquarter is in Mumbai.

TOP GLOBAL BANKS		TOP INDIAN BANKS	
	Mcap (\$ b)		Mcap (\$ b)
JPMorgan Chase	417	HDFC Bank #	172
ICBC	228	ICICI Bank	80
Bank of America	227	State Bank of India	62
HDFC Bank#	172	Kotak Mahindra Bank	45
Agriculture Bank of China	169	Axis Bank	37
		All Other Listed Banks	114
			9,35,270

TOP INDIAN COMPANIES	
	Mcap (\$ b)
Reliance Industries	210
HDFC Bank #	172
TCS	147
ICICI Bank	80
Hindustan Unilever	77

# Merged entity/ Source: Bloomberg

#### Gustav Klimt painting, auctioned for \$108 million, becomes most expensive artwork in European auction history.

- Renowned Austrian artist Gustav Klimt, considered one of the greatest decorative painters of the 20th century, has made history with the sale of his last painting at an auction in London.
- Gustav Klimt's final work, titled "Dame mit Fächer" or "Lady with a Fan", fetched an astonishing £85.3 million (\$108 million) at Sotheby's.
- The sale made it the most expensive artwork ever sold at a European auction. Prior to this, Alberto Giacometti's 1961 bronze sculpture L'homme qui marche I, worth £65 million (\$104.6) in 2010, was the most expensive work ever sold at an auction in Europe.



#### The Ministry of Rural Development launches 'eSaras' mobile app to sell products of women SHGs.

- Mobile application 'eSaras App' under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihoods Mission, which will link e-commerce initiatives to products made by women self-help groups.





- The Ministry also inaugurated the eSaras Fulfillment Center at the Ministry's office in Janakpuri, New Delhi.
- This initiative further promotes the spirit of "Vocal for Local" with easy marketing of products made by "SHG Didis". It will also handle the logistics required to bring online orders to the customer's doorstep.

**Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches 'Akshar River Cruise' in Gujarat on Akshar River at Sabarmati Riverfront Ahmedabad. Which is expected to boost tourism in Ahmedabad.**

- Developed by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) and Sabarmati Riverfront Development Corporation Limited, this cruise is the first passenger catamaran built in the country with twin engines under Make in India at a cost of Rs 15 crore, which can safely travel 165 passengers at a time.



**China launches indigenous computer operating system 'OpenKylin'.**

- China recently launched its 1st open-source desktop operating system (OS), named OpenKylin 1.0, to reduce its dependence on American technology and create China's independent software system.
- OpenKylin 1.0 is a Linux operating system that was created by a community of approximately 4,000 developers. The system, which is based on the open-source Linux platform, is used in various industries such as finance, energy and even its space program.



**Mongolian government grants a 2 license to SpaceX to operate as an internet service provider.**

- This development will provide wider access to high speed internet for internet users across the country.
- Starlink's rapidly growing network of more than 3,500 satellites in low Earth orbit enables reliable connectivity even in remote areas.



**Tomato crops suffered maximum damage due to mosaic virus in Maharashtra and Karnataka.**

- Maharashtra farmers' tomato crops were adversely affected by 'Cucumber mosaic virus' (CMV), while growers in Karnataka and other south Indian states attributed their losses to 'Tomato mosaic virus' (ToMV).
- ToMV is mainly spread through infected seeds, plants, farm equipment and often through the hands of nursery workers who fail to clean themselves properly before entering the fields. It is a member of the Virgaviridae family and shares a close relationship with tobacco mosaic virus (ToMV). It affects a variety of plants including tomatoes, tobacco, peppers and some ornamental plants.
- High temperature conditions and subsequent intermittent rains, which allow aphids to thrive, are responsible for the spread of CMV.



**Jaishankar files nomination for Rajya Sabha from Gujarat.**

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar filed his nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha for the second time from Gujarat. The BJP has repeated him from the State.
- Other two members are Jugal Thakor and Dinesh Anavadiya. At the Gujarat Assembly Secretariat where he filled his nomination papers, he was accompanied by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and State party chief C.R. Paatil.



**Collegium refuses requests of 3 judges.**

- The Supreme Court Collegium found no merit in the reservations expressed by three High Court judges against their proposed transfers to other States.
- The Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud stood firm by its recommendations to transfer these judges. Refusing to budge in all three cases of Justice Gaurang Kanth who requested transfer to Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan or any neighbouring States, Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh who asked for a transfer to Delhi, Punjab, or any nearby States and Justice Manoj Bajaj who wanted to stay back instead of being transferred to Allahabad, the Collegium said it had given "thoughtful consideration" and did not find any merit in the requests.



**Central government launched the “Sagar Sampark” system for accurate navigation in the marine sector.**

- India's port, ship transport and waterways Ministry inaugurated a system called ‘Sagar Sampark’, it is an important step towards digital change in the maritime industry.
- It is an indigenous differential global navigation satellite system (DGNSS). DGNSS is a site -based enhancement system that cures errors in the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), giving more accurate status to know.
- This greatly improves the accuracy of GPS and Glonas, reducing the errors caused by atmospheric estimates, satellite clock and other factors.
- Sailors can now improve their position within 5 meters using the latest DGNSS system, which reduces the chances of error with better navigation competence.



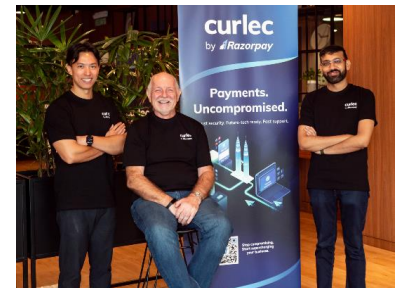
**The country's first Esport and Break Dance Academy will be established in the state of Madhya Pradesh.**

- Break dancing and e-sports in Madhya Pradesh have been decided to promote two such sports that are included in the upcoming Olympics and Asian Games.
- On 12 July 2023, Sports and Youth Welfare Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mrs. Yashodhara Raje Scindia, announced the establishment of the country's first ESPOR Academy in Madhya Pradesh. Earlier, it was announced to establish the country's first break dance academy.
- E-Sports have also been included in the category of medals winning medals as competitive games in international competitions. In this, the Indian team won the bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games held in Birmingham in 2022. The Asian Games starting in September include ESPORS.



**Razorpay India Launches its 1st International Payment Gateway In Malaysia**

- India's fintech giant Razorpay has launched its first international payment gateway in Malaysia with Curlec, now known as 'Curlec by Razorpay'.
- In February 2022, Razorpay announced its 1st international expansion in South-East Asia with the acquisition of a majority stake in Curlec.
- Curlec has been working over the past 5 years to revolutionize the way businesses in Malaysia accept digital payments. The new Curlec payment gateway will serve over 5,000 businesses with a target of RM10 bn in annual gross transaction value (GTV) by 2025.
- Malaysia's real-time payment system, also known as DuitNow, is another major catalyst for the acceptance of cashless payments by merchants.
- Razorpay was started in 2014 by Harshil Mathur and Shashank Kumar, two alumni of IIT Roorkee. Razorpay, Byju's, Swiggy and Dream11 were among six Indian companies to feature in the World's Top 100 Unicorns list released recently by Hurun. India has retained the third position in the index with 68 unicorns this year.



**SC asks Manipur govt. to approach HC against Internet restoration**

- The Supreme Court asked the Manipur government to approach the State High Court to reconsider its decision to restore limited Internet service.
- Appearing before a Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for Manipur, highlighted the risk of misuse of social media which may create further violence in the State.
- “Any rumour may ignite the situation,” Mr. Mehta submitted.
- The Bench asked the State to approach the High Court and present the problems which may accompany the restoration of the Internet. “You can present before the High Court the difficulties that may arise with the restoration of the Internet... We are not going to get into the merits. Let the High Court look into it,” Chief Justice Chandrachud addressed the Solicitor-General.
- The 12-member expert committee had informed the court that Internet service could be provided through broadband connections by ensuring “static IP, banning of Wi fi/Hotspots from any of the routers or system, blocking of social media websites and VPNs at the local level, removal of VPN software from the system and prohibiting installation of new software by any user and enforcing physical monitoring by the concerned authority/ officials.





**U.S. hands over 105 antiquities to India following agreement.**

- The United States handed over 105 trafficked antiquities to India. The repatriation ceremony was held at the Indian Consulate in New York and the antiquities would soon be transported to India.
- The restitution of the artefacts is a follow-up of an agreement to the effect during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the U.S. last month.
- India and the U.S. have also agreed to work for a Cultural Property Agreement that would help prevent illegal trafficking of cultural artefacts in future during the visit, a statement from the Indian Consulate said.
- Ambassador of India to the United States Taranjit Singh Sandhu.
- From across India The 105 artefacts represent a wide geographical spread in terms of their origin in India – with 47 from eastern India, 27 from southern India, 22 from central India, 6 from northern India and 3 from western India.
- Spanning a period from 2nd--3rd century CE to 18th--19th century CE, the artefacts are made of terracotta, stone, metal and wood.
- Around 50 of them have religious significance. During Mr. Modi's 2016 visit to the U.S., 16 artefacts were handed over by the U.S. side while in 2021, the U.S. government handed over 157.

**Foxconn arm proposes new plant in Karnataka.**

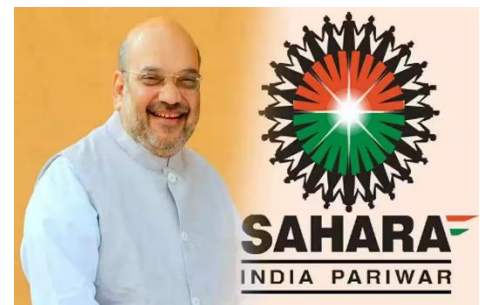
- Foxconn Industrial Internet (Fii), a subsidiary of **iPhone maker Foxconn**, has made a proposal to set up a plant at **Tumkur in Karnataka** with an investment outlay of **₹8,800 crore**.
- It will manufacture screens and outer coverings, apart from mechanical components for phones.
- The proposed plant can generate **14,000 jobs** and would require 100 acres of land. A company delegation met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in this regard.

**Pakistan gets another \$600 mn loan from China, says PM Shehbaz.**

- Cash Strapped Pakistan has received a rollover of an additional \$600 million loan from its all-weather ally China to help shore up the country's foreign exchange reserves on the back of an IMF deal, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said.
- This is in addition to the over \$5 billion in loans rolled out by Beijing in the last three months.
- Pakistan secured a last-gasp \$3 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund on June 30, which later disbursed an initial upfront installment of about \$1.2 billion.

**Govt. opens portal to refund small investors of Sahara**

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah launched a portal to refund the money of around 4 crore small time investors of four cooperative societies linked to the Sahara group of companies.
- 2 Sahara Group entities are being investigated by several agencies including the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for alleged money laundering and foreign exchange rules violations.
- Mr. Shah said that 1.7 crore investors will benefit in the first phase and claims up to ₹10,000 will be settled first. The money will be returned to the Aadhaar Linked bank accounts of the investors within 45 days.
- The four cooperative societies Sahara Credit Cooperative Society Limited, Saharayn Universal Multipurpose Society Limited, Hamara India Credit Cooperative Society limited and Stars Multipurpose Cooperative Society located in Lucknow, Bhopal, Kolkata and Hyderabad, respectively, were registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002 between March 2010 and January 2014.
- On March 29, the Supreme Court ordered the refund from Sahara -SEBI refund account to about 10 crore investors of the four cooperative societies.
- The court had requested that ₹5,000 crore from the Sahara- SEBI Refund Account may be used to pay depositors.





**SC Collegium recommends four advocates as HC judges**

- The Supreme Court Collegium recommended the names of 4 advocates for appointment as judges of different High Courts.
- The Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, proposed the name of advocate Manjusha Ajay Deshpande for appointment as a judge of the Bombay High Court, advocate Kurubarahalli Venkatarama Reddy Aravind as a judge of the Karnataka High Court and advocate N. Senthilkumar and G. Arul Murugan for appointment as judges of the Madras High Court.

**A fascinating fusion of rock art in A.P.'s Rudragiri**

- Rudragiri hillock, located in the village of Orvakallu, Atchampet mandal, in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, boasts a celebrated historical past and remarkable archaeological monuments.
- This site unveils a fascinating combination of prehistoric rock paintings from the Mesolithic period and exquisite artwork from the Kakatiya dynasty.
- D. Kanna Babu, former Superintending Archaeologist of the Temple Survey Project (Southern Region) at the Archaeological Survey of India, shared his discoveries, shedding light on the significance of this hidden gem.
- Rudragiri, nestled amidst the Eastern Ghats, features five naturally formed rock shelters at its foothills, facing westward. These shelters served as living quarters for people during the Mesolithic age around 5000 B.C., and they bear witness to the luminous rock paintings of that era.
- Interestingly, two natural caves at the southern end of the hillock also exhibit exceptional murals from the renowned Kakatiya kingdom.
- “These caves showcase the artistic brilliance of the Kakatiya period.
- The 1st cave, starting from the southern end of the hillock, presents a narrative mural portraying the intense battle between the Vanara brothers — Vali and Sugriva.
- In the middle cave, a grand sketch of Hanuman, accompanied by sacred symbols of the conch (Sankha) and the fire altar (Yagna Vedi), captures visitors’ attention.
- Hanuman is depicted carrying the Sanjeevani hill in his hand, symbolizing his mission to save Lakshmana’s life.
- The third cave houses the prehistoric rock paintings from the Mesolithic era. Interestingly, the Kakatiya artist chose the same rock shelter to superimpose the elegant figure of Hanuman, who is portrayed in a unique ‘Anjali’ posture, folding his hands in a divine offering.

**The world's largest office building established in Gujarat**

- The world's largest office building in India, leaving behind The United States Ministry of Defense Pentagon. For 80 years, the Pentagon was the world's largest office building.
- The title has now been taken by the building 'Surat Diamond Bores' built in Gujarat, which will have a diamond trade center. Surat is known as the world's gemstone capital, where 90 percent of the world's diamonds are carved.
- The building is built at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore and has been designed by the famous architectural firm, Morphogenesis, New Delhi. The construction of the building has been completed in four years.
- This 15-storey building is spread over 35 acres of land and has nine rectangular structures.

**Meta and Microsoft will launch artificial intelligence based new language model 'Llama 2'**

- Mark Zuckerberg's Meta has announced that it is partnered with Microsoft to introduce the next generation open-source language model 'Llama 2'. This model will soon be available for free for researchers and other commercial use making it a possible contestant of ChatGPT (OpenAI) and Bard. Llama 2 is pre-educated on 40 percent more data than its predecessor. However, it lacks the ability to code.
- Llama 2 comes in three different sizes: 7B, 13B and 70B. It is a large language model (LLM) that can be used to make chatbots like ChatGPT.



**India's Anshuman 18-year-old set the record for crossing the North Channel at the youngest age.**

- His feat, accomplished in just 125 days.
- Successfully swam from Donaghadee in Northern Ireland to PortPatrick in Scotland covering a distance of 35 km in 11 hours 28 minutes and 52 seconds. He broke the record of the previous world record holder, 19-year-old Prabhat Koli from Navi Mumbai.
- The North Channel, located between the northeast coast of Northern Ireland and the southwest coast of Scotland, serves as a strait that begins north of the Isle of Man, marking the end of the Irish Sea.
- Mihir Sen has the distinction of being the first Indian to swim across the English Channel from Dover to Calais in a remarkable time of 14 hours and 45 minutes, the fourth best time ever for this challenging endeavour.
- On 29 September 1959, Aarti Saha was the first woman swimmer from India and Asia to cross the English Channel. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1960. Aarti Saha was the first Indian woman sportsperson to get 'Padma Shri'.

**HDFC Bank becomes the second most valuable company in the country.**

- HDFC, the country's largest bank, has now become the second largest company in terms of market capitalisation.
- HDFC and HDFC Bank merged on 1 July.
- Total market capitalization of the company has become Rs 12,72,718.60 crore, which is more than Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) market capitalization of Rs 12,66,891.
- Reliance Industries is the country's most valuable company with a market valuation of Rs 17,72,455.70 crore, followed by HDFC Bank at number two, TCS at number three, ICICI Bank at number four (Rs 6,96,538.85 crore) and Hindustan Unilever (6,34,941.79 crores).

**India's first private hill station 'Lavasa' sold for Rs 1.8 thousand crores**

- National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has approved the sale of India's first private hill station Lavasa, Mumbai, Maharashtra to Darwin Platform Infrastructure for Rs 1.8 thousand crore.
- The main objective of Darwin Platform Infrastructure's resolution plan is to settle claims of home buyers and deliver completed homes within 5 years of obtaining environmental clearance on an actual basis with a claim amount of Rs 6,642 crore.
- Lavasa Hill Station is located in the picturesque Mulshi Valley in the Western Ghats close to Pune, Maharashtra. It was built in 2000 by the Hindustan Construction Company as India's first private hill town.

**Russia's Sberbank to set up an IT unit in Bengaluru.**

- Sberbank's branch in India has been permitted by RBI to set up an IT unit in Bengaluru. The newly established IT office will serve as Sberbank's in-house data processing center.
- The Indian branch of Sberbank has been operating in New Delhi since 2010, offering a wide range of financial services, the new Bengaluru office will focus exclusively on developing information technology.
- Anatoly Popov, deputy chairman of the Sberbank's executive board.
- Sberbank means the Savings Bank of the Russian Federation. On November 12, 1841, Russian Emperor Nikolai I ordered the formation of savings bank branches. Nikolai Cristofari, a loan fund officer from Saint Petersburg, became the first customer of the country's first savings bank branch on 1 March 1842.

**'Indian Flying Academy' and 'Fly Ola Aviation Academy' inaugurated at 5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Conference in Khajuraho.**

- The 5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Conference took place at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. It is jointly organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Pawan Hans Limited and Confederation of Indian Commerce and Industry.



- The theme of the conference is Last Mile Access: Regional Connectivity with Helicopters and Small Aircraft.
- The conference was inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Civil Aviation and Steel Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.
- Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated 3 pilot training schools 'Indian Flying Academy', 'Fly Ola Aviation Academy' and a helicopter FTO in Khajuraho, MP. The total number of FTOs will be six in Madhya Pradesh, three in Khajuraho, one in Indore, one in Sagar and one in Guna.
- Helicopter and Small Aircraft Conference: objective of this meeting includes expansion of UDAN scheme in remote and hilly areas.
- 1st Helicopter Summit- 2019 was held in Uttarakhand and the 4th in 2022 at Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre, Srinagar.



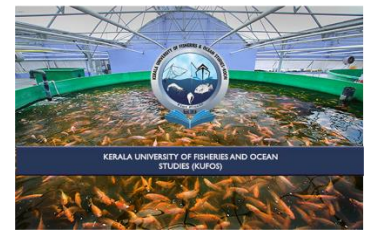
#### **PM Modi inaugurates redeveloped ITPO Complex 'Bharat Mandapam' at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.**

- The Prime Minister has inaugurated the redeveloped ITPO Complex 'International Exhibition cum Convention Center' (IECC) complex 'Bharat Mandapam' at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. Which will host the G20 summit in September this year.
- The PM said that India will soon get the world's largest museum, named 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat', which will be shifted from its present location to North Block as per the new Central Vista plan.



#### **India's first fisheries Atal Incubation Center to be set up in Kerala.**

- Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) has received a grant of ₹10 crore from NITI Aayog to set up India's first Atal Incubation Center (AIC) in fisheries at the university.
- The AIC initiative is part of the Atal Innovation Mission, which seeks to encourage a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across various sectors in the country.



#### **UNESCO's education report calls for a global ban on smartphones in all schools.**

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has released the Global Education Monitoring Report 2023 titled- "Technology in Education: A Tool on Whose Terms" has supported a ban on smartphones in schools where technology integration is Learning does not improve.
- UNESCO stressed the need for a more "human-centered approach" to education.



#### **Newly built National Martyrs' Memorial and National Railway Safety Museum inaugurated in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.**

- Shri Sanjay Chandra, Director General, Railway Protection Force (RPF) unveiled the recently constructed National Martyr's Memorial and National Museum for Railway Safety at Jagjivan RPF Academy, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- This martyr's memorial is spread over an area of 4800 square meters and on this memorial, since 1957, the names of 1014 martyred RPF jawans have been inscribed.
- The guiding motto of this museum is "Gyanvardhanayachasanrakshana ya" which serves as a constant inspiration for RPF to promote knowledge and protect heritage.







# THE KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF CLASSROOM & ONLINE PROGRAM AVAILABLE AT SUCCESS MANTRA

We assure you of our best-quality services & deliverables at all times.

Offline & Online  
Class Modes  
Available



Classes Under The  
Leadership of NLU  
Delhi & DU LLB  
Alumni



Teaching Hours  
Best Across  
Industry



Voice As Well As  
Chat Interaction  
Facility During  
Online Classes,  
Making Classes  
Just Next to Offline  
One



Every Class is  
Supported by Daily  
Practice Sheets  
and Assignments



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