

CURRENT AFFAIRS

July

- TOPIC WISE CURRENT AFFAIRS
- 150 QUESTION FOR PRACTICE
- DETAILED ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

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PREFACE

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

The Magazine is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short

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

Section 2: Practice Questions with Answers

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

Section 3: Detailed Analysis of important Event

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



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Topic Wise Current Affairs

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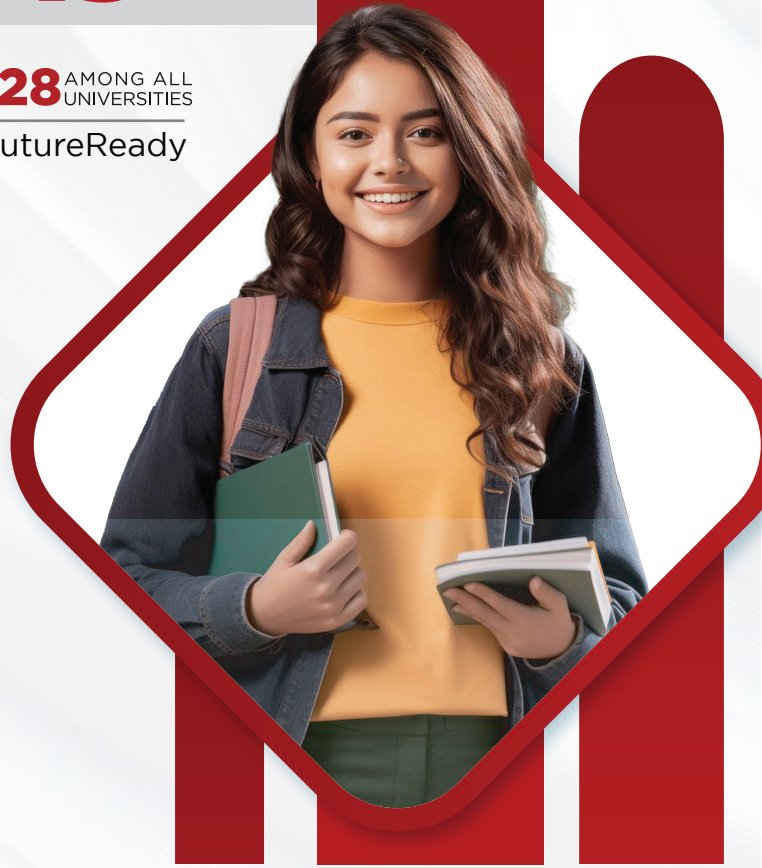
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SECTION 1

Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short

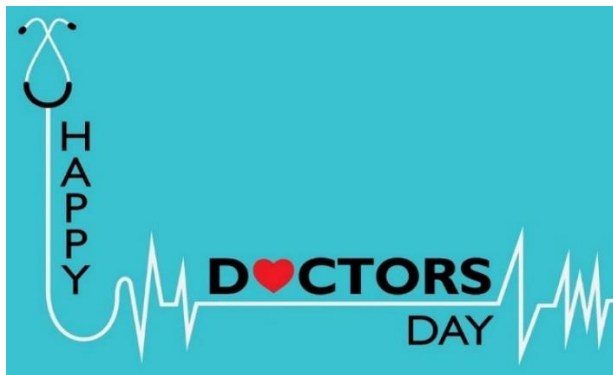


1: Important Days



Canada Day : 01 July :-

Canada Day is a national holiday in Canada commemorating the anniversary of the Canadian Confederation. It is celebrated on July 1st every year to commemorate the day in 1867 when three British colonies amalgamated to become the Dominion of Canada. On that day, the British North America Act, of 1867 (now known as the Constitution Act, 1867) was passed, uniting the three separate colonies- Upper Canada (now Ontario), Lower Canada (now Quebec), and Nova Scotia became a single dominion within the British Empire called Canada.



National Doctor's Day (India) : 01 July :-

National Doctors Day honors physicians and other front-line medical staff. National Doctors Day is observed in commemoration of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, a former West Bengal chief minister, Bharat Ratna award laureate, and one of India's most popular Congress politicians. He was born on July 1, 1882, and died on July 1, 1962, at the age of eighty. In India, National Doctors Day is celebrated

as a tribute to all doctors who dedicate their lives to serving humanity, while also honouring the memory of Dr. Roy. This year's theme for National Doctor's Day is "Healing Hands, Caring Hearts."



Chartered Accountants Day : 01 July :-

National Chartered Accountants Day, often known as CA Day, is commemorated on July 1 each year to commemorate the founding of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI). According to their website, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India is a statutory body formed by an Act of Parliament, namely the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 (Act No.XXXVIII of 1949), to regulate the profession of chartered accounting in the country. The Institute, functions under the administrative control of the ministry of corporate affairs.



World UFO Day : 02 July :-

Every year on July 2, World UFO Day is observed to raise awareness concerning unidentified flying objects and the possibility of extraterrestrial life. The day was first observed on June 24th, as founded in 2001 by Haktan Akdogan (a UFO researcher), to commemorate an American pilot called Kenneth Arnold's encounter of a

group of unidentified flying objects. However, because of scheduling issues with other UFO-related events, the date was later shifted to July 2 to coincide with the Washington, DC sightings. World UFO Day holds significance for people who are interested in UFOs and want to learn more about them.



World Sports Journalists Day : 02 July :-

Every year on July 2, the world commemorates Sports Journalist Day to recognize the work of sports journalists. The event's goal is to support those who promote various forms of sports and raise awareness of the culture among the public. The elite class established a special area for sports coverage in the media industry in the early 1800s. Later, middle and lower-class individuals were interested in the column, helping to establish sports journalism as a respected profession. The first World Sports Journalist Day was observed by the International Sports Press Association (AIPS) in 1994 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the organisation.



International Plastic Bag Free Day : 03 July :-

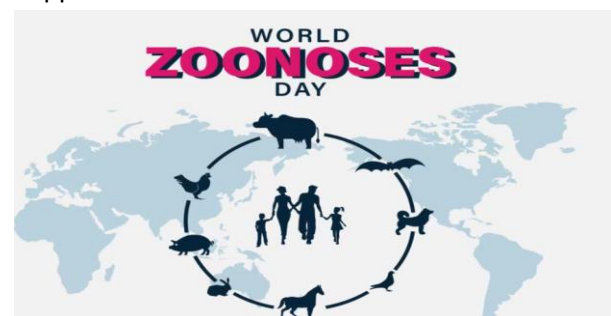
Every year on July 3, we commemorate International Plastic Bag Free Day. The day focuses on encouraging a zero-tolerance stance to plastic pollution, as well as the

significance of recycling and composting plastic trash. In the 1960s, the Swedish business Celloplast invented the one-piece polyethylene shopping bag, which swiftly supplanted cloth and plastic in Europe. Today, approximately 1,500 groups mark International Plastic Bag Free Day as part of the Break Free from Plastic Movement. The movement is committed to finding solutions to the plastic pollution crisis and making the planet safer for humans, the environment, and wildlife.



USA Independence Day : 04 July :-

Every year on July 4th, America celebrates Independence Day to commemorate the country's declaration of independence from Great Britain in 1776. US Independence Day is a notable federal national holiday commemorating the founding of the United States. The White House hosted its first Fourth of July celebrations in 1801. Since then, it has been an annual event. This year celebrates the 278th anniversary of the United States Independence Day. The day is celebrated with great enthusiasm by the people, and reverberates with the echoes of liberty, democracy, and the pursuit of happiness.



World Zoonoses Day : 06 July :-

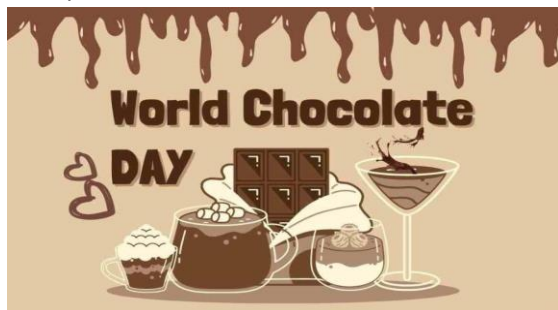
Every year on July 6, World Zoonoses Day commemorates the first vaccine against zoonotic illnesses. Zoonosis refers to any sickness or infection that

is transmitted from an animal to people. The infection's transmitted agents could include any bacterial, viral, or parasitic pathogen. Rabies, Ebola, Swine Flu, Zika, Plague, Dengue, and Covid-19 are just a few of the most frequent zoonotic diseases. The theme for World Zoonoses Day 2024 is 'Preventing the spread of zoonotic diseases' and revolves around managing threats for future infections.



International Day of Cooperatives 2024 : 06 July :-

International Day Of Cooperatives is annually celebrated on the first Saturday of July. International Day Of Cooperatives 2024 is set to be observed on July 06. The goal of this festival is to promote cooperatives worldwide and create an environment that encourages their growth and profitability. Co-operatives are people-centered enterprises that are owned, governed, and managed by and for their members in order to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and ambitions. The theme for the 102nd International Cooperative Day is- "Cooperatives Build a Better Future for All."



World Chocolate Day : 07 July :-

World Chocolate Day is commemorated annually on July 7th. The first International Chocolate Day was held in 2009, and World Chocolate Day has been around since then. The day was established to commemorate the alleged anniversary of the opening of the first chocolate

bar in Europe in 1550. Since then, World Chocolate Day has been celebrated with tremendous excitement around the world. World Chocolate Day is also a day to appreciate the different varieties of chocolate. It is a day of indulgence and celebration, as well as a time for reflection on the health benefits of chocolate.



World Kiswahili Language Day : 07 July :-

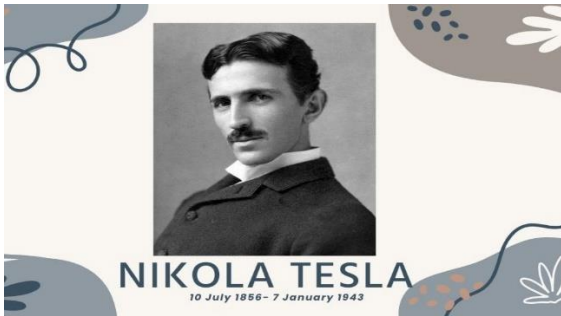
Kiswahili is spoken in east and central Africa. Mother-tongue speakers are mostly located around the coast, although Kiswahili is also used as a second or third language by individuals all over the world. According to UNESCO, which declared July 7 to be World Kiswahili Language Day in 2021, 200 million people speak it. By the 1800s, Kiswahili was being utilized throughout the caravan trade network that crisscrossed east-central Africa. In the centuries before this, the language had been used to formulate legal, philosophical and poetic contributions that influenced the entire Indian Ocean world. This year, World Kiswahili Language Day will be celebrated under the theme "Kiswahili: Education and Culture of Peace".



National Fish Farmers Day (India) : 10 July :-

National Fish Farmer's Day is observed on July 10th each year to acknowledge and appreciate the vital contributions of fish farmers, aquaculture industry professionals, and other stakeholders to maintaining a

healthy and thriving fisheries sector. The day is observed to honour and commemorate the contribution of Professor Dr. Hiralal Chaudhury and his colleague Dr. K. H. Alikunhi in the Indian fisheries sector, who guided the induced breeding and reproduction of Indian Major Carps using the Hypophysation technique on this day in 1957, resulting in a revolution in inland aquaculture.



Nikola Tesla Day : 10 July :-

Nikola Tesla Day is observed annually on July 10 to commemorate the life and accomplishments of Nikola Tesla, a Serbian-American inventor, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, and futurist primarily recognized for his contributions to the design of the modern alternating current (AC) electrical supply system. The first official Nikola Tesla Day was observed in 2006, when the Croatian Parliament designated July 10, Tesla's birthday, as a national holiday in honor of his achievements. The day is also celebrated in other countries, such as the United States, Canada, and Serbia.



World Population Day : 11 July :-

World Population Day is marked annually on July 11 to raise awareness of worldwide population issues, especially population management. According to the United Nations (UN), population growth has an impact on employment, economic development, poverty, income distribution, and social protection. This trend has

a negative influence on education, healthcare, sanitation, housing, water, food, and energy. To address sustainable needs, policymakers need accurate data. The United Nations declared World Population Day in 1989. The theme for this year is 'To Leave No One Behind, Count Everyone.'



World Paper Bag Day : 12 July :-

World Paper Bag Day is a yearly celebration held on July 12 to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of utilizing paper bags instead of plastic bags. This day also honors Francis Wolle's creation of the first paper bag machine, which he created in 1852. He later secured a patent for the machine, and paper bags became the buzz of town. Paper bags are an excellent concept that has helped to alleviate the difficulties caused by plastic pollution. According to The World Counts, an estimated 100 million tonnes of plastic are used every year.



Malala Day : 12 July :-

Malala Day is a yearly event celebrated on July 12th to honor Malala Yousafzai's persistence and advocacy. On July 12, 2013, the United Nations observed International Malala Day for the first time, a year after she was fatally shot by a Taliban gunman in Pakistan for criticizing the country's limitations on female education. Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who served as UN Special Envoy for Global Education at the time, addressed the

UN gathering. The day also coincides with Malala's birthday.



Bastille Day or French National Day : 14 July :-

French National Day, often known as Bastille Day, is observed on July 14 every year. It commemorates the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, a key event in the French Revolution. Bastille Day also commemorates the Fête de la Fédération, which occurred on July 14, 1790. The Fête de la Fédération was a celebration of togetherness held one year after the Bastille was stormed. More than 100,000 people attended the event, which included speeches, military parades, and fireworks. The name "Bastille Day" is actually misstated. The French don't actually call it Bastille Day in French. The name is Fête du 14 juillet, which simply means "July 14 Celebration" according to the Library of Congress.



World Youth Skills Day : 15 July :-

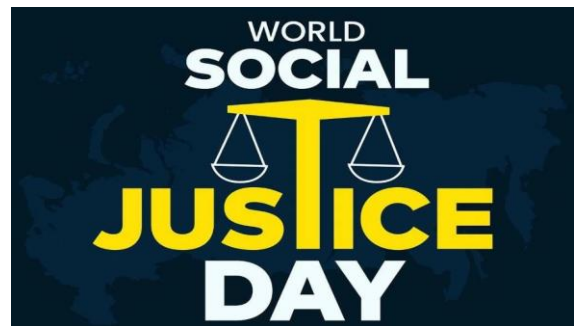
In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly designated July 15 as World Youth Skills Day (WYSD) to highlight the strategic importance of preparing young people for employment, decent labor, and entrepreneurship. The day offers a unique chance for conversation among young people, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, businesses, employers, legislators, and so on. The Skill

India Mission was also launched on this day, that is on July 15. The theme of the World Youth Skills Day 2024 is "Youth Skills for Peace and Development".



Social Media Giving Day : 15 July :-

Every year on July 15, we celebrate Social Media Giving Day. It was introduced by Givver.com, a non-profit organization that has been generating cash using Twitter since 2013. Chris Sommers owns Giver.com, which encourages users to donate through social networks. Chris Sommers also founded the well-known Pi Pizzeria restaurant business. The purpose of the day is to promote social media as a platform to help the charities and causes that aid in donating and increasing public consciousness on the significance of fundraising.



World Day for International Justice : 17 July :-

Every year on July 17, the World Day for International Justice, also known as the Day of International Criminal Justice, is commemorated to recognize the improvement of the international judicial system while simultaneously promoting victims' rights. According to The International Criminal Court - "July 17 is the Day of International Criminal Justice. It marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute on 17 July 1998, the founding treaty of the ICC, which seeks to protect people from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression."



Nelson Mandela
1918-2013

International Nelson Mandela Day : 18 July :-

Annually on July 18th, the globe commemorates the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela, a human rights icon and beacon of hope. Mandela Day is a truly worldwide celebration that crosses boundaries and cultures. In commemoration of Mandela's outstanding life and lasting legacy, the United Nations named July 18th as "Nelson Mandela International Day" in 2009. Renowned for his compassion, forgiveness, and belief in humanity's interconnectedness, Mandela's leadership left an enduring impact not only in South Africa but also globally. This year, the theme of Nelson Mandela International Day is "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity".



International Chess Day : 20 July :-

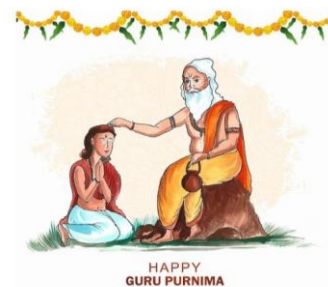
International Chess Day, observed annually on July 20, commemorates the establishment of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) on July 20, 1924, in Paris. The International Chess Federation (FIDE) was founded to organize and oversee international chess championships, as well as to promote the game around the world. Chess has a millennia-long history, beginning in ancient India about the sixth century. The game originated in India and spread to Persia, then to the Arab world and Europe throughout the medieval period. It evolved over time

into its modern form, with standardized rules and strategies.



International Moon Day : 20 July :-

International Moon Day was commemorated for the first time on July 20, 2022. On December 9, 2021, the United Nations General Assembly approved the proposal put forth by the Moon Village Association and numerous other factions within the organization. International Moon Day commemorates the anniversary of humanity's first landing on the lunar surface. Neil Armstrong was the first human to land on the Moon as part of the Apollo 11 mission. The Moon Village Association is a non-government organization that was created in 2017.



Guru Purnima : 21 July :-

The holy day of Guru Purnima, which honors spiritual mentors and educators, falls on July 21 this year. The celebration is significant for Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains who express gratitude to their gurus for giving their wisdom and expertise. Guru Purnima, also known as Buddha Purnima and Vyasa Purnima, is observed on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Ashadha. The occasion commemorates the birth of Ved Vyasa, the author of the Mahabharata, but its fundamental emphasis is the guru-disciple relationship. As India celebrates Guru Purnima, it is a timely reminder of the

invaluable role teachers play in shaping individuals and society.



National Mango Day (India) : 22 July :-

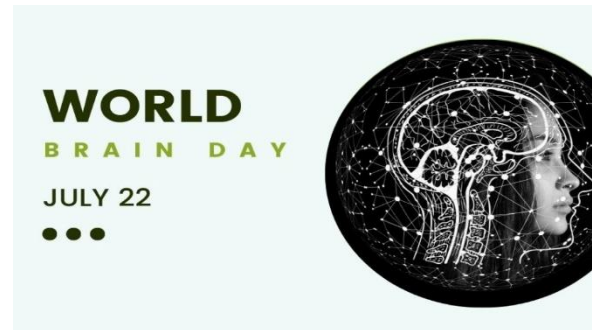
Every year on July 23, India and several other countries commemorate National Mango Day. The day honors the delicious flavor and health advantages of the nutritious tropical fruit. The National Mango Festival dates back to 1987, when the National Horticulture Board of India chose to celebrate this beloved fruit. Mango cultivation in India began roughly 5,000 years ago. Legend has it that even Lord Buddha had the privilege of resting under the shade of a mango orchard. The fruit's name "mango" is derived from the Malayan word "manna," altered by the Portuguese to "manga" during their spice trade in Kerala in the 1490s.



National Flag Day (India) : 22 July :-

The Indian National Flag continues to represent India's rich cultural past, its hard-fought struggle for independence, and its people's desire for a united and thriving nation. National Flag Day is held annually on July 22 to commemorate India's adoption of the tricolour created by Pingali Vekayya as its flag. The Indian National Flag features a distinctive tricolor pattern consisting of three horizontal stripes: saffron at the top, white in the middle, and green at the bottom. The saffron represents

courage and sacrifice, white symbolizes peace and truth, while green signifies fertility, growth, and auspiciousness.



World Brain Day : 22 July :-

Every year on July 22nd, the global community commemorates World Brain Day. The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) was established on July 22, 1957. The Public Awareness and Advocacy Committee proposed "World Brain Day" on July 22, which resulted in the development of the event. This recommendation was made during the World Congress of Neurology (WCN) Council of Participants meeting on September 22, 2013, and it was enthusiastically received. The Board of Trustees gave the idea its blessing at their meeting in February 2014, making it an annual celebration that would take place on the same day every year. World Brain Day 2024 focuses on the crucial theme of "Brain Health and Prevention".



National Broadcasting Day : 23 July :-

Every year, on July 23, India celebrates National Broadcasting Day. The day serves to remind us of the importance of radio in our lives. This day also marks the start of All India Radio's organised radio transmissions across the country. The India Broadcasting Company was founded on July 23, 1927, making it India's first radio

company. However, the company faced insolvency in less than three years. Following this, All India Radio (AIR) was established in April 1930 as the Indian Broadcasting Service. On June 8, it was rebranded as All India Radio. The famous Akashvani tune was composed by Indian Jewish refugee Walter Kauffman in 1930.



Income Tax Day (India) : 24 July :-

The Income Tax Department celebrates Income Tax Day, also known as Aaykar Diwas, on July 24 every year. The day is observed on July 24, as it was on this date in 1860 that Sir James Wilson implemented income tax for the first time in India. This step was taken to recompense the British government for losses suffered during the First War of Independence in 1857. The Central Board of Revenue Act of 1963 established a categorized Board for direct taxes known as the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). The first Income Tax Day in India was celebrated on July 24, 2010.



World Embryologist Day : 25 July :-

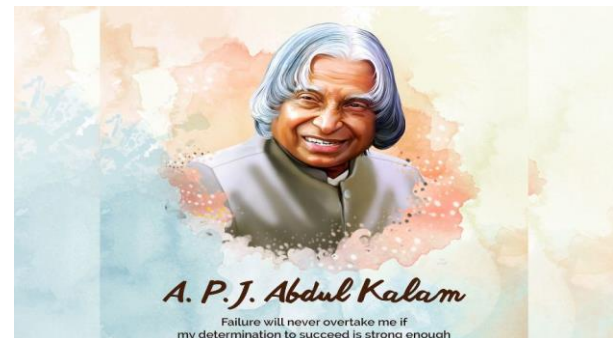
World Embryologist Day is observed annually on July 25. This day is especially significant because the first baby was delivered via the IVF procedure in 1978. Louise Joy Brown was the first baby born by in vitro fertilization (IVF). Embryologists are medical experts who research and investigate sperm, eggs, and embryos. They are responsible for determining which sperm and eggs are

viable for IVF treatment. On this day, awareness is given to people about the process and the chances of improving this particular field of medical science is explored on how to give birth to a healthy child through IVF.



Kargil Vijay Diwas : 26 July :-

Kargil Vijay Diwas is observed every year on July 26 to honour the bravery of Indian soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country during the Kargil War of 1999. This event marks the end of the Kargil War between India and Pakistan, which began in May 1999. Indian forces successfully recovered their key position in the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir, which had been penetrated by Pakistani soldiers and terrorists. In the battle that was held in J&K, 527 Indian soldiers lost their lives. India was declared the winner when the Pakistani army was compelled to withdraw.



APJ Abdul Kalam's Death Anniversary : 27 July :-

Former President of India APJ Abdul Kalam, also known as the 'Missile Man of India' and the 'People's President,' died on this day in 2015 at the age of 83 while giving a lecture at the Indian Institute of Management-Shillong. APJ Abdul Kalam's full name is Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen. He was the eleventh president of India. This year marks the tenth anniversary of his death. He played an important role in India's 1998 nuclear test, which was led

by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. From 2002 to 2007, he served as the 11th president of India.



CRPF Raising Day : 27 July :-

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) inaugural day is observed on July 27 each year to mark the founding of the central force on this date in 1939. The CRPF is an important aspect of India's internal security and one of the oldest Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). Founded in 1939 as the Crown Representative Police, the CRPF was India's internal combat force. On December 28, 1949, Parliament approved an Act renaming the force the CRPF. The CRPF aided the Indian Army during the 1962 battle with China in Arunachal Pradesh. The force played a key role in establishing peace in the northeastern part of the country. The force also assisted the army in the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars.



World Hepatitis Day : 28 July :-

Hepatitis is a liver inflammation caused primarily by viral infections, but it can also be caused by alcohol usage, certain drugs, and autoimmune illnesses. Every year on July 28, World Hepatitis Day is commemorated to promote awareness of hepatitis, which is a group of infectious disorders include hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E. This day was chosen to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Baruch Blumberg, the Nobel Laureate who detected the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and created a

diagnostic test and vaccination. The theme for World Hepatitis Day 2024 is "It's time for action."



World Nature Conservation Day : 28 July :-

Every year on July 28, World Nature Conservation Day is observed to promote awareness about the value of safeguarding our natural resources and the environment. The history of World Nature Conservation Day is currently unknown. However, the primary goal of commemorating this day is to inform people about the advantages of safeguarding and preserving of natural resources. Nature is crucial to life on Earth. It provides us with food, water, clean air, and shelter. It also regulates the climate and helps to prevent natural disasters. The theme for 2024 is, "Connecting People and Plants, Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation."



World Ranger Day : 31 July :-

World Ranger Day, observed on July 31, is a special time to pay tribute and express gratitude to the brave men and women who devote their lives to protecting animals and maintaining our valuable natural resources. These unsung warriors fight tirelessly to defend some of the world's most vulnerable environments and endangered animals. The day was established in 2007 in commemoration of eight rangers who were tragically killed while on duty in Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo. The 2024 World Ranger Day theme is '30 by 30'.

2: Agreements



DPIIT and NCAER sign MoU to overhaul India's logistics cost :-

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, collaborated with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to create a comprehensive framework for assessing logistics costs throughout the country. According to a press statement from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), inked in New Delhi, details a collaborative effort to delve deeply into the complexities of logistics charges and their impact on India's economic framework.



CSIR And MSSRF Sign MoU For Rural Livelihood Generation :-

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the M. S. A Research Foundation (MSSRF) have signed an MoU to collaborate on creating employment in rural, tribal, and farming communities. The MoU entails developing a framework and meaningful association for the transfer of affordable, proven, and selected

technologies with societal relevance available across CSIR laboratories/institutions, as well as mentoring SHGs/NGOs/FPOs and other voluntary organizations chosen by MSSRF for livelihood generation and empowerment of women and tribal populations.



India-Taiwan Mutual Recognition Agreement For Organic Products :-

The Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for organic products between India and Taiwan went into effect on July 8, 2024, over the 9th Working Group on Trade Meeting in New Delhi. The execution of the MRA between India and Taiwan is a watershed moment because it is the first bilateral agreement for organic products. The implementing Agencies for the MRA are Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India and Agriculture and Food Agency, Ministry of Agriculture (AFA), Taiwan.



Manipal Academy Of Higher Education Signs MoU with Teachspoon Edtech For Collective Growth :-

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) and Teachspoon Edtech Private Limited have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The alliance strives to achieve various goals in academic-industry interactions. The strategic alliance intends to develop capacities, with Central Development including Digital Learning Platform activities, engaging Workshops and Webinars, and collaborative Research Collaborations. To be noted that Teachspoon Edtech Private Limited (TEPL) is a start-up operating company incorporated in India on July 6, 2022. It is engaged in the education and learning industry.



NFDC And Netflix India Collaborate To Train Voice-Over Artists :-

The government and Netflix India collaborated to develop possibilities for voice-over artists, particularly women, to hone their abilities and seek better jobs in the ever-expanding media and entertainment industries. As part of the 'The Voicebox' program, the National Film Development Corp. and Netflix India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to train voice over artists in English, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, and Gujarati. As part of the programme, structured workshops, featuring guest lectures and mentoring sessions followed by an assessment will be conducted in seven major cities.



India Prepares To Sign Headquarters Agreement With Global Biofuels Alliance :-

The Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA), established in September 2023 by significant G20 countries such as India, the United States, and Brazil, is ready to take a critical step forward in institutional development. The Indian government is poised to sign a headquarters agreement with the alliance, a significant step forward in the organization's expansion and India's position in global sustainable energy activities. This elevated status will enable the GBA to function more efficiently at the international level, mirroring the recognition given to other global initiatives like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA).



Rajasthan Inks Tripartite MoU For Greenfield Airport In Coaching Hub Kota :-

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma presided over a meeting at the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) to finalize a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Airports Authority of India (AAI), the Urban Development Department, and the Civil Aviation Department. This Memorandum of Understanding is for the establishment of Kota Greenfield Airport on 440.086 hectare of land. The Chief Minister stated that the state

government would grant free land for the building of Kota Greenfield Airport. The AAI will be responsible for the entire construction, development, and operation of the airport.



Google Signs MoU With Anant Raj To Offer Data Centre Infra :-

The business told the exchanges that Anant Raj Cloud Pvt. Ltd., an entirely owned division of Anant Raj, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Google LLC, an American global technology corporation. According to this MoU, both firms will work together to deliver data center infrastructure, DC managed services, and a cloud platform to a variety of public and private enterprises. Both sides want to use the MoU to develop novel technology solutions for potential clients. Both parties will also collaborate closely to assist customers in developing purpose-built, AI-infused solutions for data infrastructure, productivity and security.



Indian Oil, Indian Navy sign MoU to promote hydrogen e-mobility :-

The Indian Navy has teamed with Indian Oil to test and potentially extend the usage of green hydrogen fuel cell buses, marking a significant step forward in environmentally friendly transportation alternatives. This endeavor is part of a larger examination to determine the performance of fuel cell electric buses in the tough conditions of the Delhi-NCR region. The project focuses on analyzing the impact of local fuel and

air quality on the performance of fuel cell systems and determining the vehicles' effectiveness, longevity, and operational reliability for potential use in public fleets.



C-DOT signs agreement with IIT, Roorkee and Mandi for “Development of ‘Cell-Free’ 6G Access Points” :-

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), a leading Telecom R&D centre of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Government of India, has entered into an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) and Indian Institute of Technology Mandi (IIT Mandi) to develop 'cell-free' 6G access points, marking a significant step toward indigenous technology development. This scheme aims to enable affordable broadband and mobile services, playing a significant role in bridging the digital divide across India, the Ministry of Communications said in statement.



Historic Cultural Property Agreement Between India And The USA :-

The Ministry of Culture announced that India and the United States have signed their first agreement to combat unlawful cultural property trafficking and return antique relics to their original location. Union Cultural Secretary Govind Mohan and US envoy Eric Garcetti signed the US-India Cultural Property Agreement in with the participation of Union Culture Minister Gajendra

Singh Shekhawat on the outskirts of the World Heritage Committee's 46th session at Bharat Mandapam. Interacting with the press later, Shekhawat said it is a general agreement that will allow 'smooth repatriation' of historic artefact from the US to India.



India-US Space Collaboration :-

The Space Exploration and Research Agency (SERA) of the United States has partnered with India for its human spaceflight program. This collaboration aims to enhance India's capabilities in space exploration and technology development. By joining forces with Blue Origin, SERA seeks to leverage India's expertise in space technology and foster innovation in human spaceflight missions. This partnership is expected to contribute significantly to global space research and exploration efforts

**TATA****TATA POWER SOLAR**

Tata Power Solar Partners with Bank of India :-

Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd has entered into a strategic partnership with the Bank of India (BOI) to provide financing solutions for rooftop solar installations and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. This collaboration supports India's ambitious renewable energy targets, including the National Solar Mission and the PM Surya Ghar Yojana. The partnership aims to make solar energy more accessible and affordable, encouraging the adoption of clean energy technologies across the country.

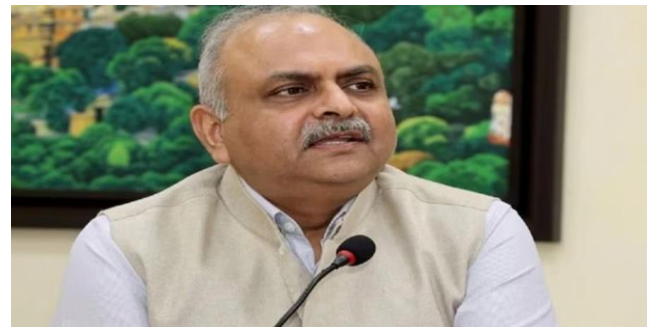
3: Appointments



CS Setty Gets FSIB Approval To Head SBI As Next Chairman :-

The Financial Services Institution Bureau (FSIB) has suggested Challa Sreenivasulu Setty, MD, State Bank of India, as the bank's next chairman. The board conducted interviews to find a replacement for incumbent Dinesh

Khara, whose extended term expires in August 2024. Setty (born September 1965) currently manages SBI's worldwide banking, global markets, and technology departments. He started his career with the bank in 1988 as a probationary officer. Setty holds a BSc degree in agriculture and is a certified associate of Indian Institute of Bankers.



Ravi Agrawal Appointed CBDT Chief, Succeeds Nitin Gupta :-

Ravi Agrawal, an IRS official from 1988, has been selected as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the Income Tax Department's administrative body. He succeeds Nitin Gupta, a 1986-batch Indian Revenue Service officer whose extended service as chairman expired on June 30. Gupta was appointed CBDT chief in June 2022. He was scheduled to retire in September last year but was given a nine-month extension till June. The new CBDT chief is currently working as member (administration) in the board.



Dhirendra Ojha Appointed Principal Spokesperson Of Government :-

Dhirendra K Ojha, a senior Indian Information Service (IIS) officer, has been designated the central government's principal spokesperson. Ojha, a 1990 batch officer, will also serve as the principal director general of the Press Information Bureau, according to an official order. Ojha succeeds Sheyphali B Sharan, who has been named Director General of the Publications Division. Sharan, also a 1990-batch IIS officer, was given the charge of principal director general, PIB on April 1 this year. Ojha served as the director general, Central Bureau of Communications (CBC).



Justice Sheel Nagu Appointed Chief Justice Of Punjab And Haryana High Court :-

The Centre has announced the selection of Justice Sheel Nagu as Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court. Justice Nagu was appointed Acting Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court on May 24, 2024, following the resignation of Chief Justice Ravi Malimath. Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva has been selected as the new Acting Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court. Justice Nagu's name was recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium — comprising Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna and BR Gavai.



Rajat Sharma Elected As NBDA President :-

The News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA) has overwhelmingly selected India TV chairman Rajat Sharma as president. He succeeds Avinash Pandey, the previous CEO of ABP Network. Sharma stated that the TV news sector is at a critical point, and the NBDA must work together to advance the interests of the genre, which is under enormous pressure. NBDA is the largest organisation of news broadcasters and digital media in India, consisting of almost all major news networks in the country.



Government Appoints Robert J Ravi As New CMD Of BSNL :-

The government has selected top Department of Telecommunications (DoT) officer Robert J Ravi as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). The government has chosen not to prolong the term of P K Purwar. Purwar, who took over as BSNL CMD in July 2019 for a five-year term, had requested for an extension. Ravi A Robert Jerard, currently serving as Deputy Director General (SRI) at DoT, is CMD of MTNL, and CMD of BBNL. This additional charge of appointment as BSNL CMD will be effective from July 15, 2024 until January 14, 2025.



Mamata Banerjee Reinstates Senior IPS Officer Rajeev Kumar As West Bengal DGP :-

The West Bengal government reappointed Rajeev Kumar, a veteran IPS officer, as the state's Director General of Police (DGP). Mr. Kumar will succeed Sanjoy Mukherjee, who was named the State's DGP on the orders of the Election Commission of India amid the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. Mr. Kumar will remain in his current position as Additional Chief Secretary in the Department of Information Technology and Electronics. Mr. Mukherjee has been appointed as the new Director General of the State's Fire and Emergency Services.



Roberta Metsola Re-Elected As European Parliament President :-

Roberta Metsola, a famous Maltese politician, has won a historic second term as President of the European Parliament, being the first woman to do so in the institution's history. Metsola, who is well-known for her leadership and campaigning, received 562 out of 623 votes from EU MPs. Metsola's re-election is a continuation of her efforts to raise the EU Parliament's profile and restore its integrity following scandals. She has been praised for uniting centrist parties and championing reforms in transparency and accountability.



HSBC Appoints Georges Elhedery As CEO :-

HSBC Holdings Plc announced that Chief Financial Officer Georges Elhedery will become Group CEO, demonstrating the global lender's preference for stability as it seeks to accelerate development. Elhedery, 50, will become HSBC's third CEO in less than eight years, succeeding Noel Quinn on September 2. The 160-year-old lender has usually chosen its CEO from within. Since 2020, Elhedery has been the co head of the Global banking and markets business, the division that houses HSBC's trading and investment banking advisory businesses.



Vinay Kwatra Appointed As India's New Ambassador To The U.S. :-

New Delhi stated that it will send Vinay Kwatra, who retired as Foreign Secretary, to Washington as India's new Ambassador, filling a post that has been vacant for more than six months, amid "differences" with the United States over India's ties with Russia and a number of other issues. The Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that Mr. Kwatra will "take up the assignment shortly." The bigger challenge for Mr. Kwatra going forward will be to evaluate the November US presidential election and interact with the incoming administration. He will also be expected to prepare for a possible visit by U.S. President Joseph Biden for the Quad Summit that India is due to host later this year.

were given, with Ajinkya receiving 221 and Sanjay, representing the Ashish Shelar Group, receiving only 114. The election for the secretary's post, vacated after Ajinkya took charge, will now be held in 45 days.



HS Dhalwal Appointed New DGP Of Andaman And Nicobar Islands :-

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has named Hargobinder Singh Dhalwal, a senior IPS officer, as the new Director General of Police in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Prior to his new post, Dhalwal, a 1997-batch IPS officer, was the special commissioner of police in New Delhi, in charge of traffic zone II. Throughout his career, Dhalwal has made major contributions, including solving prominent cases such as the Dhaula Kuan gangrape, the murder of journalist Saumya Vishwanathan, and the murder of Jigisha Ghosh.



Ajinkya Naik Elected As The Youngest MCA President :-

The incumbent secretary, Ajinkya Naik, defeated vice-president Sanjay Naik by a massive 107 votes to become president of the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA). Ajinkya, 37, became the MCA's youngest president to date. Election officer J.S. Saharia reported that 335 votes

4: Awards



Dr. Arpit Chopra Receives Prestigious Excellence Award For Pioneering Work In Homeopathy:-

NDTV conducted the MSMES conference in Bhopal, where Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav presented the Excellence Award to famous homeopathic practitioner Dr. Arpit Chopra. Dr. Arpit Chopra, the founder of Aarogya Homeopathic, has spent many years working relentlessly in the field of homeopathy to cure individuals with difficult disorders. Recognizing his contribution to society, Dr. Mohan Yadav conferred him with the Excellence Award. Anurag dwari, Head of NDTV Channel, was also present at the occasion.



HCLTech’s Roshni Nadar Malhotra Receives France’s Highest Civilian Honour :-

HCLTech chairwoman Roshni Nadar Malhotra has been awarded France's highest civilian accolade, the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur (Knight of the Legion of Honour), the firm announced. The award, given by France for distinguished service, recognized Nadar Malhotra's achievements to business and sustainability, as well as her efforts to develop commercial relations between France and India, according to HCLTech. The fourth largest player in India’s \$250 billion IT export industry, HCLTech services French companies across industries like aerospace, manufacturing, financial services and pharmaceuticals.



Vladimir Putin awards PM Modi Russia's highest civilian honour for 'outstanding service' :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Russia's highest civilian decoration, the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle. The Indian Prime Minister received Russia's highest civilian award in 2019 for “exceptional services in promoting special and privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India and friendly relations between the Russian and Indian people”. It is bestowed upon

prominent government officials, military leaders, and important personalities in science, culture, art, and many areas of the economy for their outstanding achievements to Russia.



Nagaland Crowned Best State In Horticulture: Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024 :-

Nagaland has been named the best state for horticulture at the renowned Agriculture Leadership Awards 2024. The award was granted to the state for its excellent work in implementing innovative horticultural development programs and policies that have favorably impacted the lives of a large number of farmers and rural residents in the state. Nagaland’s Minister for Women Resource Development & Horticulture, Salhoutuonuo Kruse received the award at the 15th Agriculture Leadership Conclave held in New Delhi.



International Honour For Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming :-

The Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) program, led by the Andhra Pradesh government, has been awarded the prestigious Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity in 2024. Dr. Angela Merkel, Chair of the Jury and former Federal Chancellor of Germany, delivered the announcement at a ceremony in Lisbon, Portugal. The ceremony was attended by

luminaries such as Portugal's President and other government officials, as well as international professionals. APCNF shares the €1 million prize with Dr. Rattan Lal, a renowned soil scientist from the USA, and SEKEM, an Egyptian network promoting biodynamic farming.



Odisha CM felicitates Sudarsan Pattnaik for winning gold at International Sand Sculpture Championship :-

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi honored sand artist Sudarshan Pattnaik at his Bhubaneswar residence for winning the Golden Sand Master Award and a gold medal in the International Sand Sculpture Championship in St. Petersburg, Russia, according to the Chief Minister's office. Sudarsan Pattnaik constructed a sand sculpture of Mahaprabhu Jagannath and his great devotee Balaram Das at the St. Petersburg International Championship. Pattnaik created a 12-foot depiction of a Sand Ratha (chariot) carrying Lord Jagannath and his devotee Balaram Das, a 14th-century poet.



INS Delhi Wins Best Ship Of Eastern Fleet 2024 :-

INS Delhi was named the Best Ship of the Eastern Fleet during the annual 'Fleet Awards Function-2024' held in Visakhapatnam. INS Kavaratti was named the Best Ship in Corvettes/OPVs/LSTs, while INS Shivalik, INS Sumedha, and INS Sumitra were named the most spirited ships in

the Sunrise Fleet for carrying out a wide range of hard operations throughout the previous year. Vice-Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command was the Chief Guest for the event which was hosted by Rear Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet.



Sri Kurumba Trust Wins Global CSR ESG Award 2024 :-

Sobha Group's CSR arm, Sri Kurumba Educational and Charitable Trust, has been named one of the "Best Child and Women Development Initiatives of the Year 2024." This prestigious award was granted at the Global CSR, Sustainability, and ESG Awards 2024, held at the Hyatt Regency in Gurgaon. Marketing and Brand Honchos organised the event, which brought together industry executives and social responsibility champions. Mr. Nagarajan S, Vice President of Projects at Sobha Limited, received this award on behalf of the organisation.



Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum Receives Prestigious Gandhi Mandela Award 2020:-

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, received the Gandhi Mandela Award for 2020. This prize was awarded on Nelson Mandela's 106th birthday. As per the Gandhi Mandela Foundation, the award honors those that promote peace, harmony, and values shared by Gandhi and Mandela, such as community service and

social development. The Dalai Lama was the recipient of this distinguished award in 2019. This year, the award has been bestowed upon Guatemalan human rights activist Rigoberta Menchú Tum, who has devoted her life to advocating for Indigenous rights.



AIFF awards 2024, Chhangte, Indumathi Win Top Male and Female Awards :-

India and Mumbai City FC winger Lallianzuala Chhangte and national women's team midfielder Indumathi Kathiresan received the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) male and female Player of the Year 2023-24 awards, respectively. The awards were presented during a reception hosted by the national football federation. The 27-year-old Chhangte recently extended his contract with Mumbai City FC till the end of the 2026/27 season. Indumathi, 30, represents Odisha FC in the Indian Women's League (IWL) besides marshalling the midfield for the national team.



RRR Star Ram Charan To Be Honoured At Indian Film Festival Of Melbourne 2024 :-

Ram Charan is the guest of honour at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM), where he will also be named Ambassador for Indian Art and Culture in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Indian cinema. The festival, hosted annually by the Victorian

State Government, will feature a retrospective of the actor's works to commemorate his career in the film business. It runs from August 15 to 25. Ram Charan's attendance in the 15th edition of the IFFM, according to festival director Mitu Bhowmick Lange, adds a dimension of significance to the event. Ram Charan's next films are Game Changer with Kiara Advani and RC16 with Janhvi Kapoor.



Abhinav Bindra Awarded Prestigious Olympic Order By IOC :-

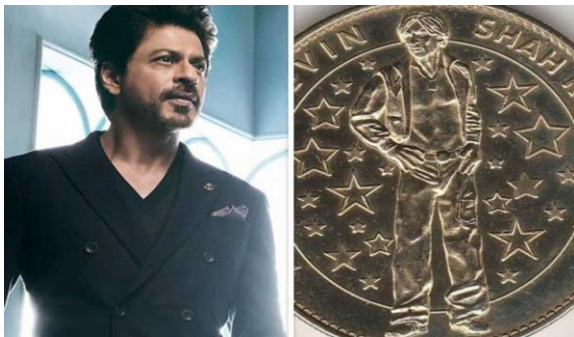
The International Olympic Committee (IOC) honored Olympic gold medalist shooter Abhinav Bindra with the Olympic Order. Bindra will receive the award, which was presented to him for his extraordinary contributions to the Olympic Movement, during the 142nd IOC Session in Paris on August 10, a day before the Paris Olympics conclude. The Olympic Order is the IOC's highest accolade, presented for outstanding achievements to the Olympic Movement. Nominations are proposed by the Olympic Orders Council and decided upon by the Executive Board.



Rahaab Allana Honored With French Arts And Letters Insignia :-

Rahaab Allana, a curator and novelist, received the insignia of Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres at the French Embassy in New Delhi. The French

government's award recognizes "persons who have distinguished themselves by their creativity in the disciplines of art, culture and literature or for their involvement in the impact of arts in France and throughout the world." Allana, curator and publisher at the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts, was honored for his career as a curator of contemporary South Asian photography, as well as his long-standing contributions to Indo-French artistic collaboration.



Shah Rukh Khan first Indian actor to have a special coin dedicated to him at Paris' Grevin Museum:-

Shah Rukh Khan has put a further jewel to his impressive crown. The superstar created history as the first Indian actor to receive a unique coin dedicated to him in Paris' Grevin Museum. The Musée Grévin is a wax museum on the Grands Boulevards in Paris' 9th arrondissement, on the right side of the Seine. The Grévin Museum also has a presence in Seoul. Musée Grévin Montreal opened in 2013 and close in 2021. Published by the prestigious entertainment-and-culture magazine of New York, Vulture, The article talks about his early days as an outsider to his transformation into Bollywood's consummate insider.



10th National Community Radio Awards Announced By Ashwini Vaishnav :-

Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting (I&B), declared the recipients of the 10th National Community Radio Awards. The announcement corresponded with the launch of India's 500th Community Radio Station, 'Apna Radio 90.0 FM,' run by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication in Aizawl. Yerlawani Sangli of Maharashtra won the Most Innovative Community Engagement Award for Kahani Sunandachi campaign. In the Sustainability Model Award category, Radio Benziger, run by the Bishop Benziger Hospital Society, Kollam, Kerala, won the first prize.



CWC Wins GEEF Global WaterTech Award 2024 :-

The Central Water Commission (CWC) received the GEEF Global WaterTech Award in the 'Water Department of the Year' category at the annual Global Water Tech Summit -2024 in New Delhi, which was organized by the Global Energy and Environment Foundation (GEEF). The Global Energy and Environment Foundation recognized the Central Water Commission's (CWC) critical role in hydro-meteorological gathering, forecasting of floods, reservoir storage tracking, water quality tracking, coastal area management, water resource project appraisal and monitoring, and inter-state water issues resolution.



Jitendra Singh Conferred The Prestigious “Lifetime Achievement Award” :-

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh received the renowned "Lifetime Achievement Award" during a ceremony commemorating the International Meet of major medical personalities, experts, and medicos from around the country and beyond. He received national and

international acclaim for his outstanding contributions to diabetology, diabetes care, and diabetes research. Among the Diabetes awareness books written by Dr Jitendra Singh, one of the books titled “Diabetes Made Easy” was included in the Best-seller section of the World Book Fair held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

5: Banking



RBI Ups Financial Accommodation For States/UTs By 28% To ₹60,118 Crore :-

The aggregate ways and means advances (WMA) limitation for State governments and Union Territories (UTs) has been increased to ₹60,118 crore from ₹47,010 crore. The higher revision in WMA, which takes into consideration state expenditure statistics from recent years, is based on recommendations given by the RBI-appointed Group of select State Finance Secretaries. The revised WMA limit is effective from July 1. The RBI provides WMA (or financial accommodation) to the States banking with it to help them to tide over temporary mismatches in the cash flow of their receipts and payments.



RBI, ASEAN To Create Platform For Fast Cross-Border Retail Payments:-

The Reserve Bank of India and ASEAN countries have agreed to establish a framework to enable fast cross-border retail payments. The platform is planned to go active in 2026. In a statement, the RBI stated that it has joined Project Nexus, a multilateral worldwide endeavor to enable immediate cross-border retail payments by linking local fast payment systems (FPSs). Nexus, conceptualised by the Innovation Hub of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), aims to connect FPSs of four ASEAN countries (Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand); and India, who would be the founding members and first mover countries of this platform.



SBI Launches MSME Sahaj: 15-Minute Online Loan Solution :-

PSU lender State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a web-based digital business loans solution for MSMEs' invoice financing, aiming at easing MSME loans with a quick turnaround time. The system, "MSME Sahaj - End to End Digital Invoice Financing," has been designed to provide solutions ranging from loan application to documentation and disbursement of the sanctioned loan within 15 minutes, with no manual interaction.

According to a release the closure of the loan on the due date is also automated and is carried out by the system itself.



ICICI Bank Launches Pre-Paid Sapphire Forex Card For International Students :-

ICICI Bank, a private sector lender, has created a pre-paid Sapphire Forex Card designed exclusively for students travelling abroad for higher study. The Visa-powered card offers students and their parents exclusive perks and convenience in managing education-related expenses overseas, such as admission fees, course-related fees, and other day-to-day expenses, such as transport, dining, and groceries, according to a bank statement. The card comes with an array of joining benefits up to Rs 15,000, along with exclusive privileges, it said.



Paytm Launches 'Health Saathi' Plan At ₹35 Per Month For Merchant Partners :-

Paytm, operated by One97 Communications (OCL) and headquartered in Noida, introduced 'Paytm Health Saathi', a health and income protection plan for its merchant partners. According to the fintech, the new plan would be offered through the 'Paytm for Business' app. The business explained that the package starts at Rs 35 per month on a monthly subscription. The company

has joined with MediBuddy to provide extra perks, including as discounts at renowned pharmacies and diagnostic procedures. Paytm is India's leading mobile payments and financial services distribution company.



REC Raises 31.96 Billion Japanese Yen Through 5-Year Green Loan:-

REC Limited, a power sector lender, has raised 31.96 billion Japanese yen through a 5-year green loan, which was arranged through Deutsche Bank's Gift City branch. The \$200 million loan would be used to support qualifying green projects in India, according to a statement from REC. "This successful transaction is in line with REC's commitment to enhance its green energy financing and sustainable projects capabilities as well as the global community's support for sustainable development projects in India," said Vivek Kumar Dewangan, CMD, REC.



Jio Financial Services Gets RBI Nod To Become Core Investment Company :-

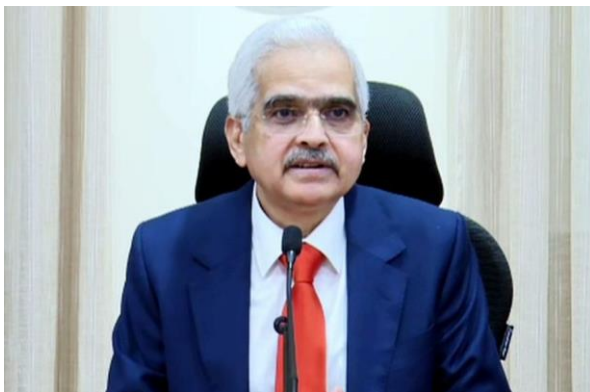
Jio Financial Services announced in a stock exchange filing that it has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India to transform from a non-bank financial company to a core investment company (CIC). Jio Financial, Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) financial services business, applied to become a CIC in November after the banking

regulator ordered the conversion following its separation from RIL and a change in its shareholding structure. With the transition, Jio Financial Services could streamline its diverse business verticals—spanning lending, asset management, insurance, and more—into distinct entities under the CIC umbrella.



SBI Launches Amrit Vrishti 444-Days Term Deposit With 7.25% Interest Rate :-

The State Bank of India (SBI) has introduced a scheme that pays 7.25 percent interest on deposits for 444 days. Amrit Vrishti additionally provides senior persons with an additional 0.50 percent interest rate. The special fixed deposit (FD) plan is open to investments until March 31, 2025. The plan will run from July 15, 2024 until March 31, 2025. The base interest rate on the Amrit Vrishti FD is 7.25 percent per year. Senior citizens will receive an additional 0.50 per cent interest, bringing the total rate up to 7.75 percent per annum.



RBI Governor flags concerns over decline in bank deposits :-

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das expressed concern about the expanding disparity between credit and deposit growth, as household savings shift away from traditional deposits, encouraging

banks to implement new tactics to attract deposits and efficiently manage liquidity risks. While Das acknowledged that banks have attempted to close the credit-deposit gap by raising their dependence on alternative sources such as short-term borrowings, Certificates of Deposit, and so on, this only “increases their sensitivity to interest rate movements and poses challenges to liquidity risk management.”



SIDBI To Build \$1B Fund For Green Financing With \$215 M :-

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), which has received funding of \$ 215.6 million from the Green Climate Fund, will establish a \$1 billion fund for 'financing mitigation and adaptation projects' (FMAP) of Medium and Small Enterprises (MSMEs). The board of the Green Climate Fund, an entity established by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has approved a \$200 million loan and a \$15.6 million grant for capacity building to SIDBI. The fund will provide a 'FMAP facility' for MSMEs, for projects such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy storage and e-mobility.



Amazon Pay, Adyen, And BillDesk Obtain RBI Cross-Border Payment License :-

The RBI has granted permission for fintech start-ups BillDesk, Amazon Pay India, and international payments giant Adyen to function as cross-border payment aggregators. The trio will now join a roster of companies that includes Cashfree Payments, which received its

licence earlier this month. The licence enables fintech and payment solutions companies to provide payment services to users for imports and exports. BillDesk received its cross-border licence for both exports and imports on July 29, while Amazon Pay India and Adyen received the licence for imports only on July 25.

6: Books and Author

Kerala Bhasha Institute to launch 'Yesudas Sagarasangeetham' book :-

The Kerala Bhasha Institute is preparing to issue Yesudas Sagarasangeetham, a comprehensive book by G B Harindranath commemorating the life and music of K J Yesudas, who has enthralled Malayalis for over six and a half decades. The ceremony will take place on July 3 at Vyloppilli Samskrithi Bhavan, Koothambalam. Yesudas Sagarasangeetham is an academic book that includes around 55 papers and color images. It also includes a QR code that enables readers to listen to the artist's music. The Kerala Bhasha Institute director, Sathyan M, will preside over the event. Sales department assistant director N Jayakrishnan will deliver the welcome address.



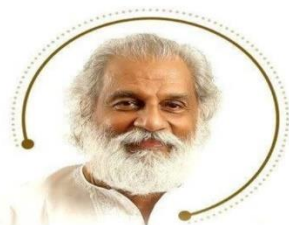
Book on Rath Yatra launched :-

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated 'Ahmedabad Rathyatra - A Journey of Miracles' in Gandhinagar, a book co-authored by retired IPS officer and former Ahmedabad police commissioner Sanjay Srivastava. Patel described the Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad as "nothing short of a miracle," and stated that future generations will be inspired by the city's cultural legacy through the book. Srivastava was Ahmedabad City Police



PM Modi launches three books on life of former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu :-

On the eve of former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu's 75th birthday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually published three volumes about his life and travels on 30 June. The prime minister expressed his pleasure at the publication of the biography "Venkaiah Naidu - Life in Service" by S Nagesh Kumar, former Resident Editor of The Hindu, Hyderabad edition. The two other books released by PM Modi include "Celebrating Bharat - The Mission and Message of M Venkaiah Naidu as 13th Vice-President of India", a Photo chronicle compiled by I.V. Subba Rao, former secretary to the Vice-President of India, and a pictorial biography in Telugu titled "Mahaneta - Life and Journey of M. Venkaiah Naidu" authored by Sanjay Kishore.



commissioner from 2020 till April 2023 when he retired. The book lists his wife Rekha Srivastava and advertiser-cum-filmmaker Kamlesh Acharya as co-authors.



Coffee-table book on Samayapuram Mariamman temple released :-

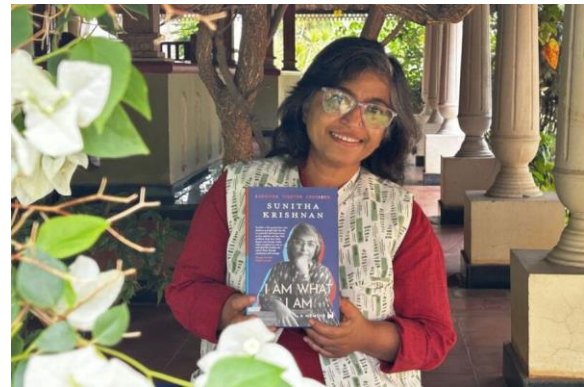
The Hindu Group of publications has released a coffee-table book titled 'Samayapuram - The Sacred Seat of Shakti'. Vrinda Ramanan, a licensed Bharathanatyam dancer and teacher, and J. Ramanan, a practicing architect, wrote the 190-page book, which describes every element of the Mother Goddess who reigns supreme in Samayapuram hamlet. Divided into different sections, the book with attractive images comes out with interesting stories about Goddess Mariamman — the Mother Goddess, the ancient legends, the festive celebrations of the temple, poojas and abhishekam to the deity, the sacred 'theerthams', extreme devotion exhibited by the devotees to Goddess Mariamman.



Tamil Nadu CM Stalin releases coffee table books on folk deities, forts of Tamil Nadu :-

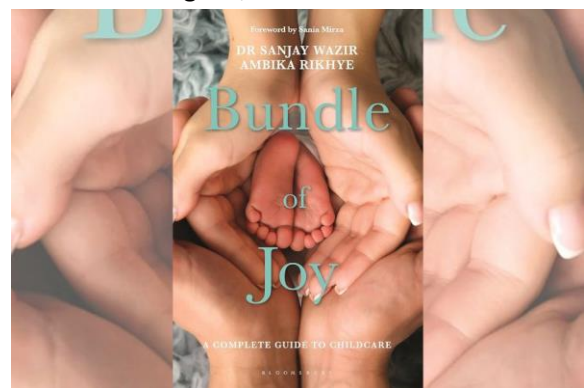
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin unveiled two coffee table books, 'Folk Deities of Tamil Nadu: Worship, Tradition, and Custom' and 'Forts of Tamil Nadu: A Walk-Through', published by The Hindu Group of Publications

in association with the Tamil Nadu government's Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR and CE) and Tourism Departments. The books were distributed in the Secretariat in Chennai on Tuesday, July 9, 2024. The book on folk deities, curated by B. Kolappan, The Hindu's Senior Deputy Editor, focuses on the innumerable folk deities of Tamil Nadu.



Social Activist Sunitha Krishnan Releases Autobiography :-

Sunitha Krishnan, the founder of Prajwala, a non-profit dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of sex trafficking and sex crime victims, has published a book. Sunitha describes her autobiography, 'I Am What I Am', as a story of optimism and possibilities. The 284-pager delves deeply into the life of the social activist and follows Prajwala's journey. Prajwala, which was founded in 1996, has carried out several rescue missions throughout the country, as well as some overseas ones. Based in Telangana, it now boasts a team of 200.



Paediatrician Sanjay Wazir And Author Ambika Rikhye Launch Their Book 'Bundle Of Joy' :-

Dr Sanjay Wazir, a paediatrician and neonatologist, and Ambika Rikhye, a content strategist for GurgaonMoms,

recently launched their book 'Bundle of Joy'. Bloomsbury India published the book, which serves as a handbook for every parent looking for answers to their day-to-day challenges. Neela Kaushik, the founder of GurgaonMoms, also discussed how the book is similar to a parenting bible in that it covers a variety of topics. The book also delves deeper into many unspoken issues that children go through like mental health issues, eating disorders, sleep issues, cyberbullying and so on.



IRS Swati Chopra's book of poems 'The Mosaic' released in Delhi :-

Bansuri Swaraj, a member of parliament, and Hardayal Singh, former Chief Commissioner of Income Tax at India International Center, released a book named 'The Mosaic', which is a collection of poems written by Indian Revenue Service (IRS) official Swati Chopra. During the ceremony, key guests Bansuri Swaraj and Hardayal Singh discussed the poet's remarkable collection of poetry and read a few poems from the book. Chopra, a 2011 batch IRS officer is presently posted in Panchkula as Additional Commissioner, CGST.



Migrant worker's son translates Malayalam story to Hindi, Kerala school publishes book :-

Aryan Thakur, born and nurtured in Kerala by his parents, Sanoj Kumar Thakur and Dimple Devi, who relocated to Kochi from Bihar's Rohtas region 12 years ago, speaks Malayalam well. Thakur, a Class 8 student at St Albert's High School in Kochi, recently translated a short story from Malayalam to Hindi. The 19-page book, Pyaj Karhi Aur Nau Ki Pahaada, was launched at a special occasion at Sree Rudra Vilasam UP School in Kochi, which Thakur attended until Class 7. He translated a short story by award-winning writer Priya A S titled Ullitheeyalum Onpathinte Pattikayum from his Malayalam text book.



Mallika Sarabhai releases book on Guruvayurappan College :-

Mallika Sarabhai, the Chancellor of Kerala Kalamandalam, has released "Samoothiri Guruvayurappan College Anubhava Charitram," a history of the 150-year-old institution at Pokkunnu, which was built by the Zamorins in Kozhikode. In her speech, Ms. Sarabhai stated that books and music may elicit both tears and smiles, especially in times of hatred, fear, and widespread uncertainty. The nearly 600-page book published by the trust features articles contributed by former Professors, students, and well-wishers of the Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College.



Former IAS officer's book 'A Bureaucrat Recalls' released :-

Ex-IAS officer Capt Narinder Singh has poured his heart out in his book 'A Bureaucrat Recalls', discussing everything from the heroism of the Sikh Regiment to the current problem of heroin addiction among Punjabi teenagers. Punjab Lokpal Justice VK Sharma launched the book at the Defence Services Officers Institute (DSOI)

in front of a crowd that included Army officers, serving and former officials, and literary majors. This is the third book by Capt Narinder Singh. He had previously written two books, 'Jeewan Khed' and 'Vibrant Colours of Punjab'. The book offers a detailed account of the life and the learnings of Capt. Narinder Singh.

7: Defence



IAF chief inaugurates newly established weapon systems school :-

Indian Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari has opened the newly created Weapon Systems School (WSS) at Air Force Station Begumpet in Hyderabad. The construction of this new training organization, aimed at recalibrating and reshaping the IAF as a future-oriented force, is a massive step forward for the armed services in general, according to an IAF statement. During the interaction, the Air Chief highlighted that with the creation of the WSS Branch, operators of ground-based and specialist weapon systems will come under one umbrella, enhancing the warfighting capabilities of the IAF significantly.

The Indian Army contingent is in Thailand for the 13th iteration of the India-Thailand Joint Military Exercise MAITREE. The drill is set to take place from July 1st to 15th, 2024, in Fort Vachiraprakan in Thailand's Tak province. The previous iteration of the same exercise took place in Umroi, Meghalaya, in September 2019. The Indian Army contingent of 76 personnel is led by a Battalion of the LADAKH SCOUTS, with support from other arms and services. The Royal Thailand Army contingent also comprises 76 personnel mainly from 1st Battalion, 14 Infantry Regiment of 4 Division.



India Unveils Indigenous Light Tank 'Zorawar' :-

The prototype of the country's indigenous light tank, Zorawar, is ready and will soon undergo intensive testing, according to Defense authorities. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) collaborated on its development, with Larsen & Toubro (L&T) serving as the principal integrator. The tank is currently powered by a Cummins engine, and the DRDO has launched a project to manufacture a new engine locally, according to officials. As part of developmental trials, over the next six months, the tank will be tested in



Maitree Exercise 2024 :-

various conditions including summer, winter and high altitude, a source said.



India Gears Up For Malabar Showdown With 'Quad' Allies Amid Rising China Tensions :-

India is preparing to conduct the famed Malabar naval drill in the Bay of Bengal this October, alongside the United States, Japan, and Australia. The move comes amid rising regional tensions, spurred by China's assertive operations in the South China Sea and its expanding influence across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The 28th edition of the Malabar exercise, with a major focus on advanced anti-submarine warfare, will be conducted on India's eastern seaboard in October to further enhance military interoperability among the four countries.



Azerbaijan Army Participates In "Birlestik-2024" Joint Military Exercises In Kazakhstan :-

On July 8, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Defense disclosed the start of joint military exercises called 'Birlestik-2024' (Association-2024) by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in the country's Mangystau area. Until July 17, the states' military contingents will simulate and practice a combined operation to localize an armed conflict in manoeuvres at the Oimasha training area and a Caspian Sea site two

kilometers from Cape Tokmak. Some four thousand military personnel and up to 700 pieces of military equipment will be involved in the exercise.



Uttar Pradesh Defence Corridor Boosts Industrial Growth :-

The Uttar Pradesh (UP) government has inked over 150 defense manufacturing agreements for ₹25,000 crore (about \$3 billion USD). This plan fits with India's record-breaking annual defense production, which reached ₹1.27 trillion (\$15.4 billion USD) in fiscal year 2023-24, up 16.7% from the previous year. The defence projects are strategically located within the UP Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC), spanning six nodes across Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, and Agra districts.



Lt Gen Shankar Narayan Takes Helm Of Army Hospital (R&R) :-

Lt Gen Shankar Narayan, NM, VSM, has been appointed as the Commandant of Army Hospital (R&R), New Delhi, the Armed Forces Medical Services' premier facility. The General Officer, an alumnus of the 1982 ('U') batch of the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, specialized in Pediatrics, completed post-doctoral sub-specialization in Neonatology at AIIMS, New Delhi, and trained in pediatric liver transplantation at King's College Hospital, London. Lt Gen Narayan has vast experience in patient care, clinical services, postgraduate teaching as well as

medical administration, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement.



Indian Air Force contingent in Australia to participate in Exercise Pitch Back 2024 :-

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has sent a large detachment to take part in Exercise Pitch Black 2024 at the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base in Darwin, Australia. The exercise, which runs from July 12 to August 2, 2024, is a biennial global event organized by the RAAF. This year's event is expected to be the largest in its 43-year history, with participation from 20 countries, over 140 aircraft, and around 4,435 military personnel. Exercise Pitch Black focuses on Large Force Employment (LFE) warfare, a concept that involves coordinating large numbers of aircraft in complex missions.



INS Tabar Was In HAMBURG, GERMANY For A Three Day Visit :-

Indian Navy's frontline frigate, INS Tabar was at Hamburg, Germany for a three day visit from 17 July. Activities during the visit includes professional interactions between the Indian Navy and German Navy, visit of ship's crews to the German Naval Academy and ship open to visitors. The crew of INS Tabar has also offered community service at Old Age Home. On departure from Hamburg, the two Navies also took part

in a Maritime Partnership Exercise at sea. These engagements seek to enhance bilateral relations, particularly in the maritime domain between both countries and also offer an opportunity to showcase Indian culture.



Mysuru's Capt. Supreetha becomes first woman officer to be deployed at Siachen Glacier :-

Captain Supreetha C.T., from Mysuru, is the first woman officer in the Corps of Army Air Defence to be operationally posted to Siachen Glacier. Captain Supreetha's father, Thirumallesh, a sub-inspector of police in Talkad near Mysuru, claimed his daughter received rigorous training before serving on the world's highest battlefield. She completed her high school and pre-university education at Marimallappa's in Mysuru before earning her LLB from JSS Law College in Mysuru. Capt. Supreetha joined the Indian Army as a Lieutenant in 2021 and had been posted in the Army Air Defence after undergoing training at Chennai.



DRDO Successfully Flight-Tests Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence System :-

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, establishing the indigenous capability to defend against ballistic missiles of the 5,000 km range. Phase 1 of the BMD system,

capable of intercepting ballistic missiles with a range of 2,000 kilometers, has already been deployed. The flight test successfully validated the entire network-centric warfare weapon system, which included long-range sensors, a low latency communication system, a Mission Control Centre, and advance interceptor missiles, according to DRDO.



Indian Army Departs For Multinational Exercise KHAAN QUEST 2024 :-

The Indian Army contingent left for the Multinational Military Exercise 'Khaan Quest' on July 25. The exercise is set to take place in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from July 27 to August 9, 2024, and will bring together armed units from around the world to work and improve their peacekeeping capabilities. The last version of Exercise 'Khaan Quest' took place in Mongolia from June 19 to July 2, 2023. The exercise began as a bilateral event between the United States and the Mongolian Armed Forces in 2003. From 2006 onwards, it evolved into a multinational peacekeeping exercise, with this year marking the 21st iteration.

8: Economy



Finance ministry mulls changes to MSME payout rule :-
The finance ministry is considering modifications to the income tax legislation that requires corporations to pay micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) within 45 days, according to sources. Nirmala Sitharaman, the finance minister, could disclose the adjustments during the 2024-25 budget presentation next month. According to sources, the government is considering many possibilities, including extending the payment term to 60 days, canceling the Income Tax Act change, and allowing firms to make payments by the due date to qualify for tax deductions, making the 45-day regulation obsolete.



Union Bank Of India Introduces "Union Premier" Branches For Rural And Semi-Urban Markets :-

Union Bank of India introduced "Union Premier" branches for high-value customers in the rural and semi-urban (RUSU) markets. According to the public sector bank, these branches would deliver personalized banking services to high-value consumers in RUSU areas by offering a diverse variety of products and services under one roof. A. Manimekhalai, Managing Director and CEO of Union Bank of India said, "We are dedicated to ensuring that all our RUSU clients receive the best services and enjoy a banking experience that is both world-class and efficient."



GST Collection In June 2024: Growth Slows To 7.7% :-

In June, India's GST collections reached a three-year low of approximately ₹1.74 lakh crore, up from ₹1,61,497 crore the previous year, according to informal data supplied by authorities. The Finance Ministry, which typically releases monthly GST revenue collections on the first of each subsequent month, including details on trends in State-wise collections and revenues collected from domestic transactions and imports, had yet to issue an official statement on June's indirect tax receipts at the time of publication.



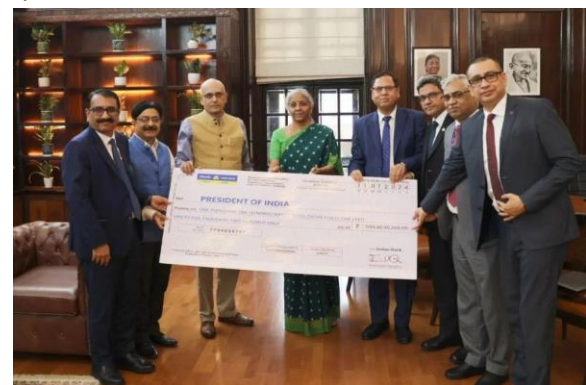
ICAI And MeitY Collaborate On AI Audit Tool For Corporate India :-

CA Institute President Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal announced that talks have begun with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to jointly build a 'AI Audit Tool' to track corporate India's performance and uncover corporate crime. Agarwal stated that the new tool will use artificial intelligence (AI) to coach and help enterprises in remaining 'going to concern'. After assuming charge as ICAI President, Agarwal had announced that CA Institute would during his Presidency focus on 'AI in ICAI'. The AI tool will used to track performance of company, fraud reporting or any qualification.



Indiabulls Housing Finance Rebrands As Sammaan Capital Limited :-

Indiabulls Housing Finance, a non-banking finance company, has changed its name to Sammaan Capital after receiving a Certificate of Incorporation from the Registrar of Companies (RoC) and a Certificate of Registration as an NBFC-ICC (Investment and Credit Company) from the Reserve Bank of India. The company will soon be submitting requisite applications with the stock exchanges for effecting change of name and trading in the shares of the company in its new name and a new symbol, the NBFC said in a regulatory filing.



PSU Banks Pay ₹6,481 Crore Dividend To Govt For FY 2023-24 :-

Four public sector banks, comprising Canara Bank and Indian Bank, handed over dividend checks totaling Rs 6,481 crore to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for fiscal year 2023-24. Similarly, Canara Bank MD and CEO K Satyanarayana Raju handed up a dividend check for Rs 1,838.15 crore. Indian Bank, situated in Chennai, issued a dividend of Rs 1,193.45 crore for fiscal year 2023-24.

Bank of India also paid a dividend of Rs 935.44 crore, which was delivered by its MD and CEO, Rajneesh Karnatak. In addition, Mumbai-based financial institution EXIM Bank presented a dividend cheque of Rs 252 crore for 2023-24.



Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund Launches BSE PSU Index Fund :-

The BSE PSU Index Fund, a passive equity plan that will mimic the BSE PSU Index, has been introduced by Kotak Mahindra AMC. Currently, 56 public sector undertaking (PSU) equities from various sectors are included in the index. Devender Singhal, Fund Manager at the AMC, said, "While individual PSU stocks may exhibit varying performance, this index-based approach allows investors to potentially benefit from the overall growth and reforms in the public sector. As India continues its economic trajectory, this fund offers investors a chance to be part of that journey through a comparatively cost-effective and systematically managed investment vehicle".



RBI Eases LRS Norms For Investment Via GIFT IFSC :-

The Reserve Bank of India has broadened the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) to include International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs). The apex bank permitted authorized individuals to facilitate transfers for the purpose of obtaining financial services or goods

within IFSCs in accordance with the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act of 2019. It has also permitted current or capital account transactions overseas (except foreign IFSCs) through a foreign currency account (FCA). For these purposes, resident individuals can open an FCA at GIFT IFSC.



Govt. Of India Upgrades IRCTC To 'Schedule A' CPSE :-

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), a Mini-Ratna PSU under the Ministry of Railways, has achieved a milestone in its 25th year of operation by joining the prestigious group of Scheduled 'A' Public Sector Undertakings of the Government of India. On this occasion, Sanjay Kumar Jain, Chairman & Managing Director of IRCTC, said, "IRCTC's promotion to a 'Schedule A' category PSU is indeed a significant achievement as it signifies IRCTC's robust performance. This recognition reflects positively on IRCTC's management, operations, and contribution to the hospitality, travel, and tourism sectors under the Ministry of Railways. It's a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved with IRCTC over its 25-year journey."



CBDT Awards Taxnet 2.0 Project To Bharti Airtel :-

Following government clearance, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) awarded the Taxnet 2.0 project to Bharti-Airtel Ltd, which would provide network connectivity, facilities management services, and video

conferencing services to the Income Tax Department (ITD). This is said to be a considerable improvement over the existing Taxnet 1.0 project. It will significantly improve the Department's digital infrastructure. The Taxnet 2.0 aims to revamp the Income Tax Department's network system, provide enhanced security, improved reliability, and a seamless user experience for all stakeholders.



Airbus And Tata To Debut India's First H125 Helicopter By 2026 :-

Sunny Guglani, head of Airbus Helicopters in India and South Asia, announced that the European multinational aerospace corporation, Airbus, will open its first production line in India for the single-engine H 125 helicopter. The business has chosen eight locations in India for the assembly line. In January, the business established a cooperation with Tata Group to construct a Final Assembly Line (FAL) for helicopters in the country. The FAL will produce Airbus' best-selling H125 helicopter from its civil range for India and export to some of the neighbouring countries, the company had said in January this year.



OVL Hikes Stake In Azerbaijani Oilfield With \$60 Million Investment :-

ONGC Videsh Ltd, the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)'s foreign investment arm, has paid

\$60 million for Equinor's stake in an Azerbaijan oilfield and pipeline, according to a statement. The deals, which are scheduled to be completed in the coming months, represent a total expenditure of up to \$60 million. OVL now owns a 2.31 percent stake in the ACG sector and a 2.36 percent stake in the BTC pipeline. The buyout of Equinor will help raise its stake. OVL holds a stake in 32 oil and gas projects in 15 countries, ranging from Vietnam to Venezuela.



AIM, WIPO Join Hands To Boost Innovation In Global South :-

A high-level team from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), led by Sherif Saadallah, Executive Director of the WIPO Academy, and Altaye Tedla, Head of the WIPO Academy, visited NITI Aayog to sign a joint letter of intent (JLoI) between the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and WIPO. The JLoI aims to develop programs in innovation, entrepreneurship, and intellectual property (IP) for nations in the Global South. Last year, Daren Tang, Director General, WIPO had visited the AIM ecosystem and advocated for Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) and Atal Incubation Centers (AIC) to be a good template for innovation and entrepreneurship through South-South cooperation.



Union Budget 2024-25: Rs 2.19 Lakh Crore for Home Ministry :-

The Union Budget 2024-25 granted Rs 2,19,643 crore to the Ministry of Home Affairs, with the vast majority of it -- Rs 1,43,275 crore -- going to central police forces such as the CRPF, BSF, and CISF, which are in charge of internal security, border guarding, and the security of critical installations. The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, which is at present under direct authority of the central government, has been allocated Rs 42,277 crore in the budget, while the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have received Rs 5,985 crore, Chandigarh Rs 5,862 crore, and Ladakh Rs 5,958 crore.



स्वास्थ्य एवं
परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय
**MINISTRY OF
HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE**

Union Budget 2024-25: Health ministry allocated ₹90,958 crore :-

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's 2024-2025 Budget allocates ₹90,958.63 crore to the Union Health Ministry. The increased budget to the health ministry is a 12.96% increase above the ₹80,517.62 crore 2023-24 revised projections. The health ministry has allotted ₹90,958.63 crore, with ₹87,656.90 crore going to the Department of Health and Family Welfare and ₹3,301.73 crore to the Department of Health Research. In the Budget, the government has also announced customs duty exemptions on three cancer treatment drugs -- Trastuzumab Deruxtecan, Osimertinib and Durvalumab.



Union Budget 2024-25: Rs 6.22 Lakh Crore Allocated To Ministry Of Defence :-

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman budgeted ₹6.22 lakh crore for the defense sector in 2024-25, practically matching the interim Budget tabled in February. The sum set aside for the defense sector accounts for around 12.90% of the entire budget, which is slightly more than last year. The budget of ₹6.22 lakh crore for the defense sector is 4.79% more than the Budget Estimates (BE) from last year. Of this, a share of 27.66% goes to capital; 14.82% for revenue expenditure on sustenance and operational preparedness; 30.66% for pay and allowances; 22.70% for defence pensions, and 4.17% for civil organisations under MoD.



Ministry Of Steel Launches 'Steel Import Monitoring System' 2.0 Portal :-

Shri H.D. Kumaraswamy, Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries, unveiled SIMS 2.0, an enhanced Steel Import Monitoring System. SIMS, which was launched in 2019, has played an important role in supplying detailed steel import statistics to the domestic industry. Based on industry comments, the Ministry has updated the portal to create a more effective SIMS 2.0, which represents a big step forward in monitoring steel imports and boosting domestic steel production. Availability of such detailed data not only provides input for policy making but also signals areas for production and growth to the domestic steel industry.



Lithium deposits found in Karnataka's Mandya and Yadgiri districts, Minister Jitendra Singh announces :-

Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences in the Rajya Sabha, announced the discovery of lithium resources in Karnataka's Mandya and Yadgiri districts. The minister noted in a written response that the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent entity of the Department of Atomic Energy, discovered lithium resources in Karnataka's Mandya and Yadgiri districts. Singh shared that a preliminary survey carried out recently by AMD in Himachal Pradesh has led to the identification of surface uranium occurrence in Masanbal, Hamirpur district.



Mankind Pharma Acquires Bharat Serums And Vaccines For Rs 13,600 Crore :-

Mankind Pharma said that it has signed a definitive deal to buy a 100% share in Bharat Serums and Vaccines (BSV) from private equity firm Advent International for Rs 13,630 crore. BSV recorded revenues of Rs 1,723 crore in FY24, representing a 20% year-on-year increase with adjusted EBITDA margins of 28%. The business has grown at a 21 per cent revenue compound annual growth rate over the last three years. More than 2,500 BSV employees will be joining Mankind.



RBI's Prompt Corrective Action for UCBs :-

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs). This framework replaces the Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) and aims for timely supervisory intervention to restore the financial health of UCBs. The PCA framework will focus on key areas such as capital adequacy, asset quality, and profitability. It offers flexibility based on specific risks and aligns with similar frameworks used for Scheduled Commercial Banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)



Revised Adarsh Kaushal Loan Scheme :-

The Indian government has introduced the Revised Adarsh Kaushal Loan Scheme, which offers collateral-free loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh for youth seeking advanced skill courses. This scheme aims to make high-fee training programs accessible to a broader audience. Eligible lenders now include Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Micro Finance Institutions, and Small Finance Banks. The scheme also provides a guarantee against default for up to 75% of the loan disbursed, fostering a future-ready workforce by enhancing skill development opportunities.

9: International



Japan Introduces Holographic Technology In New Banknotes :-

Japan will start releasing new banknotes on July 3rd. According to local media, this is the first time cutting-edge holography has been used to create portraits of historical personalities that appear to rotate in 3D. This new technology will enable visually challenged persons to feel and identify the cash they are holding. The last time Japan updated its banknotes was twenty years ago. Since the country issued its first banknotes in 1885, there have been 53 kinds of notes printed so far. The new banknotes will include ¥10,000, ¥5,000, and ¥1,000.



Former spy chief Dick Schoof sworn in as new Dutch Prime Minister :-

The Netherlands has a new Prime Minister for the first time in 14 years, as Dutch King Willem-Alexander swore in the new government more than seven months after elections dominated by a far-right, anti-Islam party. Dick Schoof, the former chief of the Dutch intelligence agency and counterterrorism office, signed the official royal decree at Huis Ten Bosch Palace, stating he "declared

and promised" to carry out his obligations as prime minister. The 67-year-old was formally installed alongside 15 other ministers who make up the country's right-leaning coalition.



Keir Starmer becomes UK's new Prime Minister :-

The Labour Party in the United Kingdom, led by Keir Starmer, won the general election by a landslide, obtaining 412 (+211) seats, while departing Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party lost 121 (-250) members in the 650-seat House of Commons. Nonetheless, the vote shares indicated a more modest triumph for Labour while confirming the Conservative defeat, with Labour receiving 35% and the Conservatives receiving 24%. Labour had consistently polled 20 points head of the Conservatives in opinion polls. Following Labour's victory, King Charles III, the country's monarch, appointed Mr. Starmer as the new Prime Minister of the U.K.



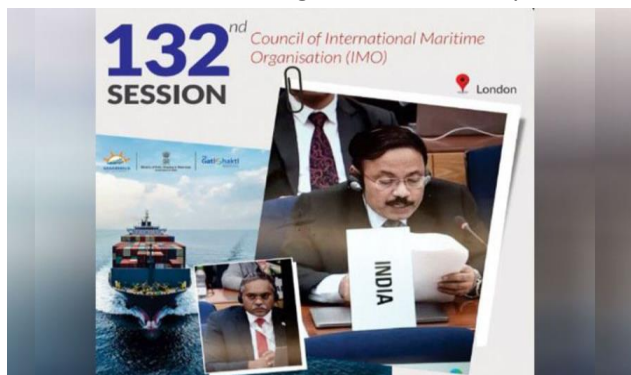
Masoud Pezeshkian Elected Iran President :-

Masoud Pezeshkian, a reformist contender, defeated hardliner Saeed Jalili in Iran's runoff presidential election by promising to reach out to the West and lessen enforcement of the country's mandatory headscarf legislation after years of sanctions and demonstrations pressuring the Islamic Republic. The election occurred amid rising regional tensions. Iran launched its first direct attack on Israel over the Gaza conflict in April, while armed groups backed by Tehran in the region, such as Lebanese Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels, are battling and have upped their attacks.



Colombo Security Conclave Welcomes Bangladesh As Fifth Member :-

The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), a regional security organization, has officially welcomed Bangladesh as its fifth member state. The declaration was made during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting, which was hosted digitally by Mauritius. The current members - India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and the Maldives - welcomed Bangladesh with open arms, while Seychelles served as an observer state. The Colombo Security Conclave was established in 2020, when India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives agreed to expand the scope of their trilateral meeting on maritime cooperation.



India Leads Global Maritime Discourse At IMO Council Session In London :-

Shri T.K. Ramachandaran, Secretary of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, has played an important role in the development of international maritime policies at the 132nd session of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Council in London. The session, which began on July 8, 2024 and continues until July 12, 2024, tackles crucial concerns and suggestions for the future of global maritime operations. India, an elected member of the IMO Council due to its significant interest in international seaborne trade, has raised the critical issue of seafarer abandonment.



KP Sharma Oli Appointed As Nepal's New Prime Minister :-

K P Sharma Oli was selected Nepal's Prime Minister for the third time to lead the new coalition administration, which faces the arduous task of restoring political stability to the country. K P Sharma Oli, 72, succeeds Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, who lost a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives, resulting in the creation of a new administration under Article 76 (2) of the Constitution. President Ram Chandra Paudel appointed K P Sharma Oli as the new Prime Minister of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML)-Nepali Congress (NC) coalition.



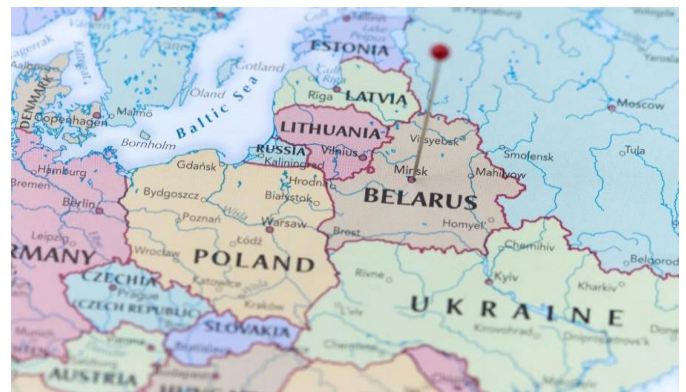
India Releases \$2.5 Million In Aid For Palestine Refugees :-

India has granted USD 2.5 million in financial support to the United Nations for the welfare of Palestinian refugees displaced by the Israel-Hamas conflict. This is the first installment of India's USD 5 million annual pledge to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 2024-25, according to a statement from the Indian mission in Palestine. India's financial assistance comes at a time when over 1.7 million Palestinians face internal displacement within the 'unrecognised' country as Israel's offensive against Hamas intensifies.



Elon Musk Says X, SpaceX Headquarters Will Relocate To Texas From California :-

In accordance to the Los Angeles Times, Tesla CEO Elon Musk has stated that he will relocate the headquarters of SpaceX and the social media platform X, previously known as Twitter, to Texas. Musk listed various complaints of California and doing business in San Francisco as justifications for the relocation. Musk cited a new state law, published by the Los Angeles Times, that prevents teachers from alerting families about student gender identification changes as a main reason for relocating SpaceX's headquarters from Hawthorne to the company's launch test site in Texas. The move represents a significant setback for Southern California, where SpaceX has played a pivotal role in fostering a growing space economy, as noted by the Los Angeles Times.



Belarus To Introduce 90-Day Visa-Free Regime For 35 European Countries :-

Belarus will establish visa-free travel for 35 European nations, according to a statement on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' official website. According to a report from Xinhua news agency, the policy goes into effect on July 19 and will last until December 31, 2024. Citizens of 35 countries, including the European Union and the United Kingdom, can stay in Belarus for up to 30 days without a visa. The visa-free policy can be used multiple times, and shall not exceed 90 days within a year. This policy does not apply to holders of special passports such as diplomatic and official passports.



Ivory Coast Joins UN Water Convention As 10th African Nation :-

Ivory Coast joined the United Nations Water Convention, becoming the tenth African country to do so. At least three more African countries, including Sierra Leone, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, will be in the final stages of ratifying the agreement by 2024. Ivory Coast joined the agreement to improve cross-border cooperative water management in response to growing water scarcity and the impact of climate change on the water sources it shares with its neighbours. Under the convention, the

parties (or nations) are required to cooperate for the sustainable management of transboundary waters.



PM Modi Announces \$1 Million Grant To UNESCO :-

India is holding the World Heritage Committee Meeting for the first time, which will run till July 31st. Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that India is committed to encouraging global collaboration and engaging local communities in cultural conservation activities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India will pay one million dollars to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. He said, this grant will be used for capacity building, technical assistance and conservation of the world heritage sites. Mr Modi said, the grant will especially be used for the countries of the Global South.



Nita Ambani Unanimously Re-Elected As IOCM: Paris Olympic, 2024 :-

Ahead of the opening festivities of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) declared that Nita Ambani, Founder of Reliance Foundation, was unanimously re-elected as India's IOC representative at the 142nd IOC session in Paris, receiving 100% of the vote. Nita Ambani was originally selected to the distinguished body in 2016, during the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. Since then, as India's first woman to join the IOC, Nita Ambani has already made great strides for the association, whilst also championing India's sporting ambitions and Olympic vision.



Sri Lanka Wins Women's Asia Cup :-

Sri Lanka has won its first Women's Asia Cup title by defeating India in the final match held at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium. This victory marks only the second time that India has lost in nine final appearances. Key players Chamari Athapaththu, who scored 61 runs, and Harshitha Samarawickrama, who scored an unbeaten 69 runs and was named Player of the Match, led the team to this historic win. Athapaththu was also recognized as the Player of the Tournament, highlighting her exceptional performance throughout the series



Iran Elects New President :-

Masoud Pezeshkian has been elected as the new President of Iran, emerging victorious in a run-off election against Saeed Jalili. Pezeshkian, a reformist leader, is anticipated to bring about significant changes in both domestic policies and international relations. His election marks a pivotal moment for Iran, as the country navigates through various economic and geopolitical challenges. The new leadership is expected to focus on reforming the economy and improving diplomatic ties with other nations.



Turkey Approves Stray Dog Euthanasia Law :-

On July 29, 2024, Turkey's parliament passed a law permitting the euthanasia of certain stray dogs, stirring a national debate. The legislation allows for the euthanasia of dogs deemed aggressive or unadoptable, aiming to reduce public safety risks. Critics, including animal rights organizations, argue that the law is inhumane and advocate for alternative methods such as sterilization and adoption programs. The government insists that the law will be applied selectively and humanely.



Japan's Sado Gold Mines Added to UNESCO World Heritage List :-

The historic Sado gold and silver mines in Japan have been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The

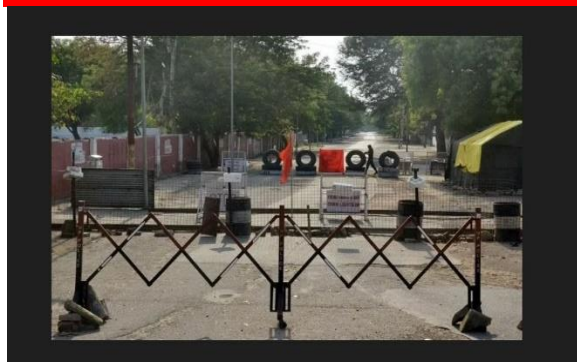
mines, operational from the 17th century until 1989, played a crucial role in Japan's economic history. This designation comes after a diplomatic understanding between Japan and South Korea, as the site also reflects the contentious history of forced labor during World War II. The recognition highlights the site's cultural and historical significance while acknowledging its complex past.



UN Report Highlights Persistent Global Hunger :-

A recent United Nations report revealed that 733 million people faced hunger in 2023, with significant challenges in Africa and Western Asia. The report indicates that while some regions like Latin America have seen improvements, others continue to struggle due to economic disparities and conflicts. In addition, 2.33 billion people experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, highlighting the urgent need for international cooperation and policy interventions to address global hunger and food access issues.

10: Miscellaneous



Defence Ministry Orders Abolition of 62 Cantonment Boards by end of 2024 :-

The defense ministry has ordered that all 62 cantonment boards be abolished by the end of 2024, changing them into military installations and incorporating civilian areas into state municipalities. This decision, which comes after extensive efforts by local advocacy organizations and politicians, intends to modernize military infrastructure and improve municipal government. The

defence ministry directive to separate civilian and military zones addresses long-standing issues of inadequate municipal services in civilian areas, which have often suffered due to financial constraints.



Air India To Set Up South Asia’s Largest Flight Training School In Amravati :-

Air India will establish South Asia's largest flying training organisation (FTO) at Amravati, Vidarbha. This FTO will increase India's pilot training capabilities. The Maharashtra Airport Development Company, a state-owned entity, recently enlarged the runway at Amravati Airport. Managing director Swati Pandey stated, “The infrastructure in Belora airport was recently upgraded and it now has the instrument-landing and the night-landing systems.” The flight school will be operating by the middle of 2026, with 180 commercial pilots graduating each year.



IGNOU Launches MA Programme In Bhagavad Gita Studies :-

In a breakthrough report, the IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) introduced a Master’s course in the study of the holy book, Bhagavad Gita. According to the announcement, the course will begin in the 2024-2025 session. The course is slated to begin in July and will

be available via open and remote learning. The course will last two to four years, and there are 500 seats available for admittance. It is a course carrying 80 credits and will be taught in Hindi. The name of the course is Masters in Bhagavad Gita Studies or MABGS.



Adani Enterprises Limited

Adani Group Announced As Principal Sponsor For Indian Team At 2024 Paris Olympics :-

Gautam Adani, head of the Adani Group, has made a huge announcement: the conglomerate will sponsor the Indian team traveling to Paris for the 2024 Olympics Games. With the Indian contingent nearing the end of its preparations for the 2024 Olympics, the Adani Group has promised its full support to the nation's champions through a campaign titled #DeshkaGeetAtOlympics. The campaign centres around the athletes, who have spent hours and years in training to win and hear the national anthem after the victory.



Second Regional Event Of ‘Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman’ To Be Held In Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh :-

The 2nd regional event of the year-long festivity, the 'Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman' campaign, is being organized under the auspices of Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA), a Central Sector Scheme carried out by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice,

Government of India. The event is set to take place on 16th July 2024 at the Allahabad Medical Association Convention Centre in Prayagraj, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution and India as a Republic.



Thomas Muller Retires From International Football :-

Germany's Thomas Muller the Bayern Munich forward has ended his 14-year international career following their exit from the European Championship. The 34-year-old appeared in his eighth and final tournament on July 5, in Germany's 2-1 quarter-final loss to Spain, coming on as a substitute in the 80th minute. Muller helped Germany win the 2014 World Cup and has 131 caps and 45 goals for the national team, ranking third all-time. He also won the Golden Boot and Young Player Award during the 2010 World Cup, when Germany finished third.



Lok Sabha Speaker sets up the Business Advisory Committee for the new session :-

Om Birla, the Lok Sabha Speaker, has formed the Business Advisory Committee (BAC), which sets the Parliamentary agenda. The Committee led by the Speaker has Sudip Bandyopadhyay (Trinamool Congress), P. P. Chaudhary (BJP), Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu (Telugu Desam Party), Nishikant Dubey (BJP), Gaurav Gogoi (Congress), Sanjay Jaiswal (BJP), Dilleshwar Kamait (JD-U), Bhartruhari Mahtab (BJP), Dayanidhi Maran (DMK), Baijayant Panda (BJP), Arvind Sawant (Shiv

Sena-UBT), Kodikunnil Suresh (Congress), Anurag Thakur (BJP) and Lalji Verma (SP) as members.



Kiren Rijju Inaugurates Lok Samvardhan Parv In New Delhi :-

Kiren Rijju, Union Minister for Minority Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, officially opened 'Lok Samvardhan Parv' in New Delhi. As part of its 100-day initiative, the Ministry of Minority Affairs is conducting 'Lok Samvardhan Parv' to highlight the Ministry's schemes, programmes, and achievements. It also highlights collaborative operations with partner organisations, as well as success stories from its many schemes. The Minister released a coffee table book on the schemes and achievements of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.



Manoj Soni, UPSC Chairman Confirms Resignation :-

Dr. Manoj Soni, Chairperson of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), has resigned five years before the end of his tenure in 2029, claiming "personal reasons". Soni, 59, a Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda alumni from Vadodara, confirmed his resignation as chairperson of the UPSC. His resignation comes at a time when the commission has filed a criminal complaint against probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar for falsifying her identity in order to fraudulently attempt the civil services test. Soni took over as a member of the

Commission on June 28, 2017 and took oath as chairperson on May 16, 2023.



BCCI To Provide Rs 8.5 Crore To IOA For Paris Olympics

-:

The Board of Control for Cricket in India, or BCCI, will donate Rs 8.5 crore to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for the Paris Olympics 2024. Jay Shah, the president of the BCCI, pledged financial aid for the Indian contingent that will travel to Paris for the summer Olympics. The BCCI has extended its support to the IOA, as the Indian contingent seeks Olympic triumph for the nation. A 117-member Indian delegation will go for Paris to compete in the Olympics 2024. A total of 47 female and 70 male athletes will be part of the Indian contingent at the Games.



Sania Mirza, Mary Kom And Rannvijay Singha Join Play Sports As Brand Ambassadors :-

Sania Mirza, a six-time Grand Slam winner and former World No. 1 in women's doubles, MC Mary Kom, a six-time World Champion and Olympic bronze medalist, and actor Rannvijay Singha will serve as brand ambassadors for 'Play Sports'. Play Sport's goal is to build a sustainable sports ecosystem in India by collaborating with schools, developing sports, maintaining sports infrastructure, conducting academies, and scouting talent at the grassroots level. Play Sports also involved in upgradation

of existing sports infrastructure at schools and where there is none to develop playgrounds of various sports. Play Sports also provides equipment support and develops sports curriculum for schools.



Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur Appointed IFFI Festival Director :-

Shekhar Kapur, an acclaimed filmmaker known for films including "Mr India," "Bandit Queen," and "Elizabeth," has been chosen festival director of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). According to a statement from the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Mr. Kapur will lead the 55th and 56th editions of the festival, which takes place yearly in Goa. Most recently, he directed the British comedy "What's Love Got to Do with It?". Mr. Kapur served as the head of the chairperson of the International competition Jury at the 54th IFFI.



Launch of China-Calcutta Service at Kolkata Dock :-

The Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Kolkata has launched the China-Calcutta Service (CCS), a direct weekly shipping route connecting China and Kolkata. The service, operated in partnership with Pacific International Lines, features three dedicated vessels with a transit time of 10 to 12 days. This new route enhances trade efficiency and connectivity for businesses in India and Nepal, facilitating smoother cargo movement and reducing logistical costs.

11: National



New Criminal Laws Scheduled to Take Effect on 1st July 2024 :-

The three new criminal laws—Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, 2023—will go into effect on July 1st. The Indian government has held monthly meetings with states and union territories, and they are completely prepared in terms of technology, capacity building, and awareness generating to apply the new criminal laws. A report says that these Bills were passed by the Parliament during the winter session last year. These laws aim to create a more accessible, supportive, and efficient justice system for everyone.



सत्यमेव जयते

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Government of India

MoSPI Launches ESankhyiki Portal For Enhanced Data Access :-

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has created the eSankhyiki site, an online platform that offers real-time data to planners, policymakers, researchers, and the general public. According to the ministry's press announcement, the platform has two modules: Data Catalogue and Macro Indicators. The Data Catalogue module catalogues the Ministry's primary data assets, making them more

accessible to users. The module allows users to search within datasets and download data of interest.



Centre reconstitutes 8 Cabinet panels :-

The Union government reconfigured eight Cabinet committees, including the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) and the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA), to accommodate members of the NDA. In the first reconstitution of a major panel following the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, HD Kumaraswamy of the Janata Dal (Secular) and Panchayati Raj, and animal husbandry minister Lalan Singh of the Janata Dal (United), were added as members. The previous reconstitution was done on December 8, 2023.



Ministry Of Culture Initiates Project PARI For The 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting :-

The Ministry of Culture has launched Project PARI (Public Art of India), which corresponds with the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee meeting. The 46th session of the World Heritage Committee Meeting will be held in New Delhi from July 21–31. Project PARI (Public

Art of India), an initiative of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, carried out by Lalit Kala Akademi and National Gallery of Modern Art, aims to produce public art that draws inspiration from millennia of artistic heritage (lok kala/lok sanskriti) while including modern themes and techniques.



DRDO Seven New Projects Awarded To Industries Under Technology Development Fund Scheme :-

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has granted seven new projects to enterprises under the Technology Development Fund plan to meet the needs of the Armed Forces, aerospace, and defense sectors. The approved projects include the creation of ice detecting sensors for aircraft, underwater launched unmanned aerial vehicles, and long-range remotely operated vehicles for detection and neutralization. The Ministry said, the Indigenous development of these technologies will strengthen the military-industrial ecosystem.



All-India Institute Of Ayurveda Successfully Hosts 'Saushrutam 2024' :-

The All-India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in New Delhi successfully completed its Second National Seminar SAUSHRUTAM Shalya Sangoshti, which commemorated Sushruta Jayanti-2024. The three-day festival, which

began on July 13, celebrated Sushruta, widely considered as the father of surgery. A highlight of the event was a live demonstration of 25 challenging surgical operations, which provided participants with a unique opportunity to witness and learn from famous surgeons. These surgeries, performed using both modern techniques like VAAFT, laparoscopy, and laser, as well as traditional Shayla methods, addressed conditions such as fistula-in-ano, hemorrhoids, and gallbladder stones.



India To Host 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference On Civil Aviation :-

The 2nd Asia Pacific ministerial conference on civil aviation will be place in the national capital on September 11 and 12, with delegates from over 40 countries likely to attend, including China and Pakistan. The Asia Pacific area contributes significantly to global air traffic, with India being the world's fastest-growing aviation market. The conference, jointly organised by the Indian government and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) APAC, will be held on September 11 and 12.



India Completes 4th ICCPR Human Rights Review :-

India has completed its fourth periodic review by the United Nations Human Rights Committee under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

(ICCPR) in Geneva. The Human Rights Committee, which consists of 18 independent experts, oversees the execution of the ICCPR, conducts periodic assessments of all countries' reports, and makes observations and suggestions. The Constitution, as well as the legislative and judicial frameworks, ensure the rights and freedoms outlined in the ICCPR, according to the external affairs ministry. India became a party to the ICCPR in 1979 and has undergone three such reviews so far, the last being in 1997.



RPF Rescued 84,119 Children Under Operation Nanhe Farishtey :-

For the last seven years, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) has been at the forefront of an operation called 'Nanhe Farishtey', which is committed to rescuing children in need of care and protection across several Indian railway zones. During the last seven years (2018-May 2024), the RPF has saved 84,119 children who were at risk at stations and trains, saving them from harm. The year 2018 marked a significant start for 'Operation Nanhe Farishtey.' In this year, the RPF rescued a total of 17,112 children, including both boys and girls.



Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia Released 'The Future is Now' As The Theme For India Mobile Congress 2024 :-

Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Minister for Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, laid out the theme for the India Mobile Congress 2024, 'The Future is Now'. The theme represents India's position at the forefront of technological evolution, and IMC 2024 will bring together global leaders - visionaries, pioneers, and innovators - to work together and actively shape the technologies that are transforming our world today, where the future is more than just a concept - it is a reality. Shri Scindia also launched the Indian Mobile Congress 2024 application and Website, a unique interactive App for registration.



Budget 2024 : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her seventh straight Budget :-

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made history by presenting her seventh consecutive budget for 2024-25 on July 23, breaking the mark set by former Prime Minister Morarji Desai. Throughout the budget, the Finance Minister also promised the construction of 3 crore new dwellings in rural and urban parts of the country through the PM Awas Yojna. Under the PM Jan Jatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan, the government intends to implement saturation coverage in tribal households and aspirational districts. Her Budget for the fiscal beginning April 2024 (FY2024-25) is the Modi government's 13th straight Budget since 2014 (including two interim Budgets presented ahead of general elections in 2019 and 2024).



Rashtrapati Bhavan's Durbar Hall, Ashok Hall renamed :-

President Droupadi Murmu has declared the renaming of two halls of Rashtrapati Bhavan, 'Durbar Hall' and 'Ashok Hall', as 'Ganatantra Mandap' and 'Ashok Mandap', respectively. The Rashtrapati Bhavan was completed in 1929, after King George V decreed that the capital of British India will be relocated from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911. The hall conducts Civil and Defence Investiture Ceremonies, during which the President bestows honors on the recipients. Swearing-in ceremonies, like those of the Chief Justices of India, are also conducted here. Durbar Hall witnessed a historic moment in the swearing-in ceremony of independent India's first government in 1947.



India Post Releases Commemorative Postage Stamp On 25 Years of Kargil Vijay Diwas :-

The Department of Posts has issued a commemorative postage stamp to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Kargil Vijay Diwas, which took place in Dras, Kargil, Ladakh, according to an official statement. The special edition commemorates the 25th anniversary of India's decisive victory in the Kargil War, paying tribute to our armed services' unparalleled bravery, determination, and sacrifice, according to the statement. On this day, 25 years ago, the Indian Armed Forces, through sheer courage and relentless spirit, evicted Pakistani intruders

from the icy heights of Dras, Kargil and Batalik Sectors of Ladakh during Operation Vijay.



World Bank Loan for Green Hydrogen in India :-

The World Bank has approved a \$1.5 billion loan to support India's initiatives in green hydrogen and low-carbon energy development. This significant funding aims to bolster the production of green hydrogen, the development of electrolysers, and the expansion of renewable energy sources. India's commitment to transitioning towards sustainable and low-carbon energy solutions is expected to receive a major boost from this financial assistance, facilitating advancements in clean energy technologies and infrastructure



Kaziranga National Park Conservation Efforts :-

Kaziranga National Park, located in Assam, continues to be a focal point for conservation efforts aimed at protecting its rich biodiversity. The park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is home to the endangered one-horned rhinoceros among other species. Recent conservation measures include intensified anti-poaching operations and habitat restoration projects to ensure the preservation of its unique wildlife. These efforts are crucial in maintaining the ecological balance and promoting sustainable tourism in the region.



India Opens First Sunken Museum at Humayun's Tomb

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Marking a significant addition to India's cultural landscape, the country's first sunken museum was inaugurated at the Humayun's Tomb complex in Delhi. The museum features underground galleries showcasing artifacts and stories related to India's Mughal heritage. Designed to blend seamlessly with the historical environment, the museum aims to enhance the visitor experience while preserving the site's architectural integrity. The project was developed in collaboration with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and aligns with the UNESCO World Heritage site's preservation efforts.



BHEL Secures Rs 10,000 Crore Thermal Project from DVC

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been awarded a contract worth Rs 10,000 crore by the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) for the development

of the 2x800 MW Koderma Thermal Power Station Phase-II in Jharkhand. The project includes the supply and installation of critical components such as boilers, turbines, and generators, along with comprehensive civil and commissioning works. This project underscores BHEL's role in India's power infrastructure development and contributes to meeting the country's growing energy demands.



4th Anniversary Of NEP 2020 Celebrated At Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam 2024 :-

The Ministry of Education held Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam 2024 in New Delhi's Manekshaw Centre Auditorium to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the National Education Policy 2020's implementation. Shri Pradhan also introduced four books and lecture notes designed to promote Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) among students and instructors. In his speech, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan stated that the four-year journey of NEP 2020 has been about implementing revolutionary change in the country's education system to develop a new generation of learners.

12: Obituaries



Legendary singer Usha Uthup's husband Jani Chacko Uthup passes away :-

Jani Chacko Uthup, the husband of Indian music icon Usha Uthup, died in Kolkata on July 8, according to his family. Jani, 78, complained of discomfort while watching television at their home. He was taken to a local hospital, but pronounced dead, according to reports. A major cardiac arrest caused the fatality, they noted. Jani, Usha's second husband, had a background in tea plantations. Earlier this year, Usha Uthup was honoured with the

third-highest civilian award, Padma Bhushan, for her contribution to the field of the music industry.



BJP Kedarnath MLA Shaila Rani Rawat passes away at 68 :-

Shaila Rani Rawat, a BJP MLA from Kedarnath, died in a private hospital in Dehradun late on July 9 night. She was 68. Shaila Rani Rawat has been on ventilator support at the hospital for the past few days. She was undergoing treatment for a backbone injury. Shaila Rani Rawat won the Kedarnath seat on a Congress ticket in 2012, her maiden election to the Uttarakhand Assembly. She lost her seat in 2017, but won it again in 2022 on a BJP ticket. She was among the many Congress MLAs, who had rebelled against former chief minister Harish Rawat in 2016 and joined the BJP.



Noted Kannada Actress And TV Anchor Aparna Vastarey Passes Away :-

Aparna Vastarey, an acclaimed Kannada television presenter and actress, died on July 11. Aparna, best known for her distinct voice heard in Bengaluru's Namma Metro announcements, has also achieved success as an actress in films and television series. Aparna began her acting career with the film Masanada Hoovu, directed by the acclaimed Kannada filmmaker Puttanna Kanagal. Her next was Inspector Vikram starring alongside

Shivarajkumar. She was last seen in Vijay Raghavendra's Grey Games that released in May 2024.



The Shining star Shelley Duvall has passed away at 75:-

Shelley Duvall, a veteran actress best known for her riveting appearances in Robert Altman's "3 Women" and Stanley Kubrick's "The Shining," died at the age of 75 from diabetes complications. Duvall's career was heavily influenced by filmmaker Robert Altman, who gave her first movie role in "Brewster McCloud." She then appeared in his films "McCabe & Mrs. Miller" and "Thieves Like Us" before making a substantial contribution to the ensemble cast of "Nashville" in 1975. Following her success in "Nashville," Altman cast her in "Buffalo Bill and the Indians" and later in "3 Women," where her distinctive screen presence earned her the Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Actress and a BAFTA nomination.



Veteran trainer S.K. Sunderji passes away :-

Sheraz K. Sunderji, a veteran trainer, died following a heroic battle with cancer. He was 64 years old and had lately resigned his trainer's licence. Sunderji started his extraordinary horse training career in 1985. Over over four decades, he saddled over a thousand winners. One of his most cherished objectives was to win the renowned Indian Derby, which he accomplished in 2018 with his horse Rochester. He saddled his first Pune Derby

through Desert Warrior (1989), followed by Desert Carnival (1995), Ocean And Beyond (2010) and most recently Trouvaille (2019).



Subhash Dandekar, founder of Camlin, is no more :-

Subhash Dandekar, the founder and creator of the popular stationery business Camlin, died at the age of 86. He was the chairman emeritus of Kokuyo Camlin after it was sold to Japanese conglomerate Kokuyo. Horse Brand was formed in 1931 by DP and GP Dandekar. Under Subhash Dandekar, the company was renamed Camlin and expanded from stationery to art products. Dandekar was widely recognized for his contributions to social consciousness, art, and enterprise. He received several awards, including Game Changers of Maharashtra award and Lifetime Achievement Award.



Filmmaker Sadananda Suvarna of Guddada Bhoota fame passes away :-

Sadananda Suvarna, 92, a veteran Kannada theatrical and film icon, died at a private hospital in Mangaluru. He suffered from age-related problems. He was most known for producing and directing the 13-part television series Guddada Bhoota for Doordarshan in 1991, as well as an eight-part documentary about Kannada writer Dr. K. Shivarama Karanth. His association with famous auteur Girish Kasaravalli produced several cinematic classics. Suvarna was born in Mulki, Dakshina Kannada district,

and has lived in Mumbai for almost five decades. Sadananda Suvarna directed only one film Kubi Mattu Iyala, based on a short story by K. P. Poornachandra Tejaswi.



Eminent cardiac surgeon Dr M S Valiathan passes away

Dr. Marthanda Varma Sankaran Valiathan, a famous cardiac surgeon and the founding director of the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), died in Manipal, Karnataka. He was ninety. Dr. M.S. Valiathan's outstanding career as a cardiac surgeon, as well as his substantial contributions to setting the groundwork for the nation's Indigenous medical technology development, have been documented in gold letters throughout history. He was instrumental in establishing SCTIMST as an institute of national importance in 1976. He headed the Department of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery for twenty years from the inception of SCTIMST till May 1994.



Vietnam's Communist Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong dies at 80 :-

Nguyen Phu Trong, the general secretary of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party and the country's most powerful leader, died after months of illness, according to official media. He was eighty. Trong has controlled Vietnamese politics since 2011, when he was named party chief. Throughout his term, he strove to strengthen the

Communist Party's position in Vietnam's single-party political system. In the decade before he took the top role in Vietnamese politics, the balance of power had shifted more toward the governmental wing led by then-Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung.



Padma Shri Awardee Kamala Pujari Passes Away At 74

At the age of 74, Padma Shri Awardee Kamala Pujari passed away. Pujari, a native of Patraput hamlet in the Jeypore block, was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri in 2019 for her major contributions to agriculture. She was well-known for saving hundreds of indigenous paddy types, and in 2002 she received the Equator Initiative Award in Johannesburg, South Africa. Kamala Pujari's dedication to agriculture and her efforts in preserving indigenous crop varieties have left a lasting legacy. Her passing marks the end of an era for the agricultural community in Odisha.



C.T. Kurien, Distinguished Economist, Passes Away :-

C.T. Kurien, a famous economist and former professor of Madras Christian College, has passed away. He died of diseases associated with age at 11 p.m. on July 23, 2024. He was 93. Professor Kurien received his Master's degree in Economics from Madras Christian College in 1953. He received a Ph.D. from Stanford University (1958-1963) on the topic Factor Market Structure and Technological Characteristics in an Underdeveloped Country: An Indian Case Study. Professor Kurien was a Visiting Fellow at Yale University in 1968-69. He was Professor at Madras Christian College between 1962-1978. He served as professor at Madras Institute of Development Studies from 1978-1991 and served as its Director from 1978-1988.

3: Ranks & Reports



India Becomes First Nation To Prepare Full List Of Fauna

India has made history by creating a full checklist of its entire fauna, which includes 1,04,561 species, making it the first country in the world to accomplish this accomplishment. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav launched the 'Fauna of India Checklist Portal' at the Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) 109th Foundation Day in Kolkata. The launch is an important milestone in biodiversity documentation, establishing India as a global leader in this field. The environment minister said that the checklist will serve as an invaluable reference for taxonomists, researchers, academicians, conservation managers, and policymakers.



Muthoot Finance

Muthoot Finance Selected For FATF Mutual Evaluation Report 2023-24 :-

Muthoot Finance stated that it was the only Indian NBFC chosen for the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) Mutual Evaluation report 2023-24. "This selection from FATF is a significant achievement for us and is testimony to Muthoot Finance's legacy as a trusted brand not just in India, but globally," Muthoot Finance MD George Alexander said in a release. FATF is a global agency established in 1989 to develop rules to combat money laundering, terrorism financing, and a variety of other important challenges to the financial system's stability.



RBI Report: India's Employment Growth At 6% In FY24 Vs 3.2% In FY23 :-

According to a Reserve Bank of India study, India provisionally created 46.7 million jobs in the fiscal year ending March 2024, bringing the overall number of people employed to 643.3 million. The country's employment growth rate was 6% in that fiscal year, up from 3.2% the previous year, according to the RBI's report on assessing industry-level productivity and employment. The release of the data follows a Citibank report which said growth of close to 7% will only create 8 million to 9 million jobs in India, short of the 11 million to 12 million needed.



Ireland Surpasses Mauritius In Preferred FPI Destinations :-

Mauritius, formerly a top destination for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) routing funds into India, has slid to fifth place, after Ireland, in terms of assets under custody (AUC) as of June 30. Ireland ranked fourth with an AUC of Rs 4.41 trillion, slightly higher than Mauritius, which had an AUC of Rs 4.39 trillion at the end of June 2024, according to data from the National Securities Depository (NSDL). The gap between the two jurisdictions becomes more pronounced when examining pure equity holdings.



NITI Aayog Releases SDG India Index 2023-24 :-

NITI Aayog issued the SDG India Index 2023-24, stating that India is making progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals amid worldwide challenges. The Index was inaugurated by NITI Aayog Vice Chairperson Suman Bery, in the presence of NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam and others. Mr Subrahmanyam stated that India's composite score climbed from 57 in 2018 to 66 in 2020-21, and then to 71 in 2023-24. SDG India Index measures and tracks national progress of all States and UTs on 113 indicators. It computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and UT.



Retail inflation surges to 5.08 per cent in June :-

India's retail inflation surged to a four-month high of 5.08 percent in June, up from 4.75 percent the previous month, while food inflation soared to 9.4 percent due to the impact of the heatwave on vegetables. Retail inflation rates for cereals, meat and fish, eggs, dairy, oils and fats, fruits, vegetables, pulses, sugar, spices, and prepared snacks and sweets increased on monthly basis, according to government data. Field staff personally visited 1,114 metropolitan markets and 1,181 villages across all states and union territories to collect the data. Inflation had dipped to a 12-month low of 4.75 percent in the previous month, despite food inflation hovering around 8.7 percent.



India's Population To Peak At 1.7 Billion By 2060s Before Declining: UN Report :-

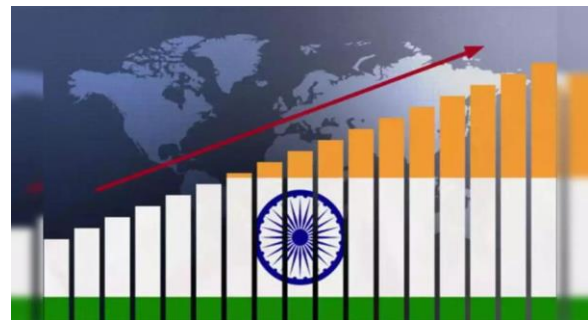
India's population is expected to peak at over 1.7 billion in the early 2060s before declining by 12%, but the country will remain the world's most populous throughout the century, according to the United Nations. According to the World Population Prospects 2024 report, the world's population is predicted to expand further during the next 50-60 years, peaking at roughly 10.3 billion people in the mid-2080s, up from 8.2 billion in 2024. After peaking, the global population is projected

to start declining gradually, falling to 10.2 billion people by the end of the century.



PM Modi Becomes Most Followed Global Leader On X With Over 100 Million Followers :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has passed a huge milestone, exceeding 100 million followers on his social media account X. This remarkable rise includes an increase of around 30 million followers in the last three years. Mr. Modi is currently the world's most popular leader in office on X. Prime Minister Modi is well ahead of other world leaders, including US President Joe Biden, who has 38.1 million followers. After crossing 100 million followers, Mr. Modi said in a social media post that he is happy to be on this vibrant medium and cherishes the discussion, debate, insights, people's blessings, constructive criticism and more.



Asian Development Bank Retains India's Growth Forecast At 7% For FY25 :-

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has maintained its prediction of 7% GDP growth for India in the current fiscal year. However, it has increased its growth estimate for developing Asia and the Pacific region by 1% to 5% in 2024 from the 4.9% it had previously stated in April. In its latest edition of Asian Development Outlook, Manila-headquartered ADB, said that the "stronger-than-expected fiscal position of the central government could

provide a further boost to growth” to the Indian economy.



Latest FIFA Rankings Released, India Remains 124th :-

India's football team is ranked 124th in the latest FIFA men's rankings. Meanwhile, Argentina, the incumbent world champions and Copa America winners, holds the top spot. Since June, India's national team has suffered a three-spot decrease from their prior place due to their failure to proceed to the third round of the 2026 World Cup Qualifiers after defeats to Qatar and Afghanistan. After briefly reaching a best-ever ranking of 99 last year, India's position has been on a downward trend. Regionally, India continues to hold the 22nd spot in Asia, trailing behind teams such as Lebanon, Palestine, and Vietnam.



Adani Ports Gets A Rating Upgrade From ICRA :-

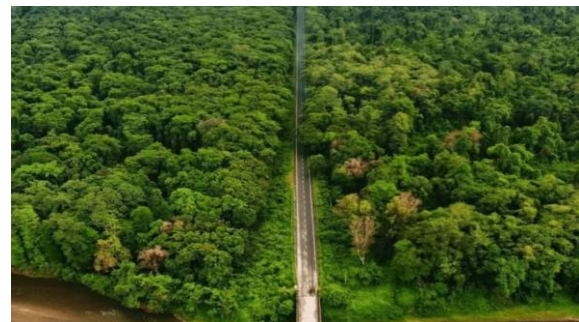
ICRA ratings agency has raised the Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) rating to AAA/Stable from AA+/Stable. The company's long-term fund-based and non-fund-based facilities, non-convertible debentures (NCDs), and commercial papers have all been upgraded to AAA/Stable. The upgrading follows a Bloomberg news story stating that the corporation wanted to increase its investment to Rs 100 billion (\$1.2 billion) to expand its southern India trans-shipment container port. Citing people with knowledge of the

matter, the report said the company is looking to lure some of the world's largest ships.



21.71% Of Country's Area Under Forest Cover :-

The Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an entity under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, conducts a biennial evaluation of forest cover. According to the current India State of Forest Report (ISFR) issued in 2021, the country's total forest cover is 7,13,789 square kilometers, accounting for 21.71% of its geographical area. The tree cover grew by 721 square kilometers between 2019 and 2021. There is no loss of tree cover during 2019 and 2021. Therefore, the question of increase in emission of carbon dioxide due to loss of tree cover does not arise.



China, Australia, And India Lead In Forest Area Gains: FAO Report :-

According to a new research by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), India gained 2,66,000 hectares of forest area per year between 2010 and 2020, placing it third among the top ten countries with the most notable forest area gains during this time frame. According to the research, China led the globe in forest area gain (19,37,000 hectares), followed by Australia (4,46,000 hectares) and India. Other countries in the top 10 include Chile, Vietnam, Turkey, the United States, France, Italy and Romania. The UN agency praised India for its efforts

in restoring degraded lands and expanding agroforestry through innovative approaches.



India's Installed Nuclear Power Capacity To Triple By 2031-32 :-

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for the Department of Atomic Energy, stated in a written reply to an unstarred question in the Rajya Sabha that India's nuclear power capacity will expand from 8,180 megawatts to 22,480 megawatts by 2031-32. Singh emphasized India's commitment to reaching net zero emissions by 2070. "Various studies have projected the need for a national nuclear capacity of approximately 1,00,000 MW by 2047, and the recommendations from these studies are being considered for future adoption," he said.



Moidams Of Assam Added To UNESCO World Heritage List :-

The Charaideo Moidams burial sites in Assam have been designated World Heritage Sites by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). These are the royal burial grounds of the Ahom dynasty, which reigned over much of Assam and the Northeast from 1228 to 1826 AD. Charaideo's tumuli, located around 30 kilometers from Sivasagar in eastern Assam, are still revered by many locals. Ahom kings and queens were buried inside these moidams. Unlike Hindus who cremate their dead, the predominant funerary method of the Ahoms, originating from the Tai people, was the burial.

14: Schemes & Committees



Ministry of statistics and programme implementation forms panel to find new GDP base year :-

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has formed a 26-member Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics (ACNAS) to suggest a new base year for GDP data, as

per an official notification. ACNAS, chaired by Biswanath Goldar, a former professor at the Institute of Economic Growth, will also investigate the relationship between GDP and key indices such as the wholesale price index (WPI) for inflation, the consumer price index (CPI) for consumer inflation, and the index of industrial production (IIP) for factory growth.



Housing ministry extends smart cities mission deadline till March 2025 :-

The Central government has responded positively to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's recent petition by extending the Smart Cities Mission until March 2025. According to a press statement from the CMO, during his recent visit to the national capital, Reddy met with Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar and requested that the deadline for the Smart City Mission be extended till June 2025. The official letter from the Centre clarified that the approved works will be continued and no new works will be sanctioned. The funds for ongoing works will be released on a first come, first served basis till September this year.



Madhya Pradesh: CM Mohan Yadav launches 'Lokpath Mobile App' for public :-

According to an official announcement, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has unveiled the 'Lokpath Mobile App', which would handle the public's road problems within seven days. The Chief Minister introduced the Mobile App at the media center in Bhopal's state legislature building. The mobile app will allow the general public to report problems along the routes while also ensuring the officers accountability. It has been developed by Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation Limited.



Judicial Commission Formed To Investigate Hathras Stampede :-

According to an official release, retired Allahabad High Court judge Brijesh Kumar Srivastav will lead a three-member judicial inquiry team formed by the Uttar Pradesh government to investigate the Hathras stampede tragedy. The panel, entrusted with completing the probe within two months, would examine at several aspects of the case, including "whether this incident is an accident or a conspiracy" and the district administration's and police's crowd control arrangements. It will also recommend preventive steps.



Uttar Pradesh Launches 'Mitra Van' Initiative Along Borders :-

The Yogi Adityanath government has announced the launch of 'Mitra Van' as part of the Vriksharopan Jan Abhiyan-2024 along Uttar Pradesh's border with Nepal. For this program, at least 35 forest divisions will find areas for the installation of 'Mitra Vans'. The Vriksharopan Jan Abhiyan-2024, which begins on July 20, is to conduct major tree planting drives in Uttar Pradesh's bordering districts. Thorough preparations are underway in all 35 districts bordering neighbouring states. Divisional forest officers (DFOs) have been instructed to expedite the establishment and enrichment of 'Mitra Van'.



Haryana Cabinet Approves IT Saksham Yuva Scheme To Provide 5,000 Jobs In First Phase :-

The Haryana government has launched the IT Saksham Yuva Scheme 2024 to promote youth empowerment and employment. In its first phase, the plan seeks to employ 5,000 young people. Former Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar introduced the 'Mission 60,000' initiative during his 2024-25 budget speech, and it aims to employ at least 60,000 young people from low-income families. Under this scheme, graduate and post-graduate applicants with IT backgrounds will undertake the Haryana IT Programme, a specially designed short-term course lasting a minimum of three months.



Government To Launch 'Agri Fund For Start-Ups & Rural Enterprises' :-

The government will soon initiate the 'Agri Fund for Start-Ups & Rural Enterprises' (AgriSURE) to assist start-ups and agripreneurs via investments in sector-specific, sector-agnostic, and debt Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), as well as direct equity support to start-ups that operate in agriculture and related sectors. This program seeks to promote innovation and sustainability in India's agriculture industry by establishing a Rs 750 crore Category-II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF). The fund will offer both equity and debt support, specifically targeting high-risk, high-impact activities in the agriculture value chain.



Himachal Cabinet Approves Plan To Rationalise Provisions Of Zero Electricity Bill For Domestic Users :-

The Himachal Pradesh Cabinet agreed to rationalize the provisions for 0 electricity bills for domestic consumers by limiting subsidies to 'one family, one meter' and attaching power connections to ration cards. Previously, power expenses for up to 125 units per month were waived in Himachal Pradesh. The Cabinet has also approved a declaration of land acquisition and compensation for families affected by the Kangra airport expansion. Furthermore, it was decided to provide the state share of capital costs for the construction of Bulk Drug Park in the Haroli Assembly constituency of Una district and approved the calling of its tender.



Indian Council of Agricultural Research

ICAR launched 'One Scientist, One Product' Scheme :-

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has launched a target-oriented research plan "One Scientist, One Product" for the next five years, which would be periodically monitored from the top to ensure optimum productivity is achieved without duplication of efforts. As part of the government's 100-day plan, the research organization will shortly produce 100 seed variants for diverse crops. "As our Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has requested, Prime Minister Narendra Modi may release all the 100 new varieties soon," said a top official of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.



Haryana Announces 10% Job Quota, ₹60,000 Subsidy For Agniveers :-

In order to safeguard the future of Haryana youngsters recruited as Agniveers for a four-year period, the state government has established a 10% horizontal reservation for these soldiers in direct recruitment for positions such as constable, mine guard, forest guard, jail warden, and special police officer (SPO). The Haryana government has stated that Agniveers will receive a 5% horizontal reservation in direct recruitment for civil services in Group C and a 1% horizontal reservation in Group B. The state has also decided to grant Agniveers a three-year relaxation in the maximum age limit for govt jobs in Group-B and Group-C categories.



RBI Forms Panel To Review Fee Structure For White-Label ATMs :-

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formed a committee to assess the charge structure for white-label ATMs (WLAs). According to sources familiar with the situation, this group will assess present rules and procedures with the goal of recommending a fair and sustainable model that balances the interests of all parties. "An assessment will be done on fee structure, existing ATM infrastructure and international best practices," stated a bank executive, adding that the committee will present its findings to deputy governor T Rabi Sankar.



Telangana Launches TB-Free Model: Project Swasthya Nagaram :-

The project aims to achieve TB-free municipalities through a combined effort between the State Tuberculosis Cell, the Municipal Corporations of Peerzadiguda, Boduppal, and Pocharam in Medchal Malkajgiri district, the Central TB Division, WHO India, USAID, and others. The innovative approach will demonstrate ending TB in an urban setting where social determinants have huge impact on increasing the TB burden with an approach of surveillance, prevention, complete cascade of quality TB care with engagement of multi stakeholders.



Department Of Atomic Energy Inaugurates 'One DAE One Subscription' :-

The launch ceremony for 'One DAE One Subscription' (ODOS) was held at Mumbai's Tata Memorial Hospital. ODOS is a novel concept that brings the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and all of its units/subunits (about 60) under a single roof for read and publish access to national and international research papers as well as scientific publications. This effort allows us to share resources digitally and evolve collaboratively. DAE has signed consortium agreements with M/s. Wiley India Private Limited and with M/s. Springer Nature Group in furtherance of the same.

15: Science & Technology



SERA And Blue Origin Announce India As Partner Nation For Human Spaceflight Program :-

The US-based Space Exploration and Research Agency (SERA), in partnership with Jeff Bezos' space technology firm Blue Origin, has declared India as a partner nation in their human spaceflight program for people of countries with few or no astronauts. SERA will provide six seats for individuals from around the world on a future voyage of Blue Origin's reusable suborbital rocket, New Shepard. SERA said New Shepard will fly the selected astronauts on an 11-minute journey past the Kármán line (100km), the internationally recognised boundary of space.



New horned frog species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh :-

A new species of horned frog that lives in the jungle has been identified at Arunachal Pradesh's Tale Wildlife Sanctuary. The research findings were published in the most recent issue of India's Zoological Survey Records. A team of researchers from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Shillong made the finding in partnership with

colleagues from ZSI Pune and ZSI Itanagar. The frog species has been named after the state's Apatani tribe – *Xenophrys apatani*. This discovery marks a significant addition to India's herpeto-faunal diversity.



Russia Approves Schedule For Creation Of Russian Orbital Station By 2033 :-

Russia has authorized a timeline for establishing a Russian orbital station by 2033. Roscosmos, Russia's state space corporation, said in a statement that the schedule includes the design and construction of space modules, flight tests of a new-generation manned spaceship, the development of launch vehicles and space infrastructure on Earth, and a timeline for the work of scientific institutes supporting the project. The head of Roscosmos, Yuriy Borisov, has signed the construction schedule with the directors of 19 enterprises involved in creating the new station.



World To Witness 1st Indian In Space And Other Indian In Deep Sea By 2025 :-

Union Minister Jitendra Singh stated that by 2025, the world will see the first Indian in space and another Indian embarking on a deep-sea voyage. Singh spoke at an event about India's advances in space and marine exploration. He announced that four astronauts, including three group captains and one wing commander, have been chosen for India's first human space mission, Gaganyaan. "Similarly, India's Deep-Sea Mission will see three Indians venture into the depths of the ocean in 2025," Singh said.



Europe's Ariane 6 Rocket Launched After 4-Year Delay

Europe's newest rocket, the Ariane 6, just completed its maiden voyage, putting satellites into orbit and restoring the continent's independent access to space. European space authorities praised the successful launch, keen to move on after recent setbacks, including a four-year delay in the development of Ariane 6. The Ariane 6 rocket, selected by the ESA in 2014, is capable of placing satellites in geostationary orbit 36,000 kilometres above Earth, as well as deploying satellite constellations at lower altitudes.



'World's First' 3D-Printed Electric Abra Begins Trial Voyage In Dubai :-

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has begun testing the world's first electric abra made with 3D printing technology in conjunction with the private sector. The abra, which can accommodate 20 passengers, was conceived and manufactured to preserve the historic abra identity. The abra was created by Al Seer Marine Company in Abu Dhabi in conjunction with various international businesses, including Mitsubishi of Japan, which provided the materials used in its manufacture and printing, Siemens of Germany, which oversaw the printer's programming and calibration, and Torqeedo of Germany, which supplied the electric motors.



NASA's Historic Discovery: Six New Exoplanets :-

NASA has reported the finding of six new worlds, bringing the overall total of confirmed planets outside our solar system to 5,502. This new milestone represents a tremendous leap in our knowledge of the universe and the possibility of life beyond Earth and the Solar System. HD 36384 b, a super-Jupiter, orbits a massive M giant star almost 40 times the size of our Sun. TOI-198 b, a potentially rocky planet, is located at the inner border of its star's habitable zone. TOI-2095 b and TOI-2095 c are hot super-Earths orbiting the same M dwarf star, while TOI-4860 b is a rare "hot Jupiter" completing an orbit every 1.52 days around an M dwarf star.



OpenAI Launches SearchGPT, A New Era In AI-Powered Search:-

OpenAI has unveiled SearchGPT, an AI-powered search engine that provides real-time access to content from across the internet and is Google's new competitor. The Sam Altman-led business stated that SearchGPT will be accessible as a prototype in limited release, with OpenAI intending to eventually include it into ChatGPT. SearchGPT is powered by the GPT-4 family of models and will be available to just 10,000 test users at launch. OpenAI spokesperson Kayla Wood said that the company is working with third-party partners and using direct content feeds to build its search results.



WHO Launches mRNA Vaccine Project for H5N1 Bird Flu

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced a collaborative project with Sinergium Biotech of Argentina to expedite the development of mRNA vaccines for the H5N1 bird flu virus. This initiative aims to enhance vaccine availability in low-income countries, leveraging mRNA technology's flexibility and speed. The

project is a proactive measure to prevent potential pandemics and ensure global preparedness by providing timely and affordable vaccine solutions



SpaceX, NASA to launch Crew-9 mission next month :-

SpaceX and NASA announced plans to fly the space agency's Crew-9 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) no earlier than August 18. This statement comes after the Federal Aviation Administration approved SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket's return to space missions following a rare mid-flight malfunction earlier this month that briefly grounded the rocket. NASA astronauts Zena Cardman, Nick Hague, Stephanie Wilson, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Alexander Gorbunov will be on the expedition. They will be launched aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft, which will be propelled by a Falcon 9 rocket.

16: Sports



BCCI Announces Rs. 125 Crore Award For T20 World Champions India :-

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a massive Rs. 125 crore prize money for the senior men's Indian team following their T20 World Cup 2024 victory over South Africa in Barbados. According to the International Cricket Council, India won the competition with a seven-run victory in the final, earning \$2.45 million (Rs. 20.42 crore), while South Africa finished second with \$1.28 million (Rs. 10.67 crore).

Senior stars Rohit, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja also announced their retirements from the T20I format.



Lewis Hamilton Wins The British Grand Prix 2024 :-

Lewis Hamilton defeated Max Verstappen in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, his first victory since Saudi Arabia in 2021. Lando Norris of McLaren finished third. Hamilton's teammate George Russell, who won in Austria a week earlier, was pulled out due to a water leak after starting in pole position. Red Bull's Verstappen extended his lead over Norris in the drivers' standings after failing to win two consecutive races for the first time since Silverstone and Austria in 2022. Oscar Piastri of McLaren was fourth with Carlos Sainz of Ferrari sixth and Nico Hulkenberg of Haas seventh.



Indian Squash Players Triumph At Asian Squash Doubles Championship 2024 :-

Abhay Singh of India won two championships in the 2024 Asian Squash Doubles Championship, which was held at the Arena Emas in Johor, Malaysia. He won the mixed doubles title together with Joshna Chinappa, and the men's doubles title with Velavan Senthilkumar. Abhay Singh, who won gold in the Asian Games last year, joined up with Joshna Chinappa, a four-time World Doubles Championship medalist. They triumphed over Hong Kong

China's Tong Tsz Wing and Ming Hong Tang with a score of 2-1 (11-8, 10-11, 11-5) to claim the mixed doubles title.



Gagan Narang Appointed As India's Chef-De-Mission For Paris Olympics 2024 :-

Gagan Narang, a four-time Olympian and bronze medalist in the men's 10m Air Rifle at the 2012 Olympics, has been named Chef-de-Mission of the Indian presence for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, which begin on July 26. Dr. PT Usha, President of the Indian Olympic Association, stated that the 41-year-old Gagan Narang's promotion from Deputy Chef-de-Mission was an obvious choice following Mary Kom's departure. Mary Kom, a bronze medalist in the 2012 Olympics announced that she would be stepping down from the role 'owing to personal reasons', in April 2024.



Gautam Gambhir Appointed Head Coach Of India Men's Team :-

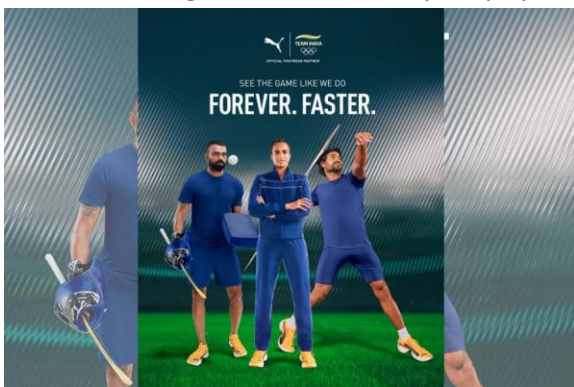
Gautam Gambhir, the former Indian opener, has been named Team India's head coach, according to BCCI secretary Jay Shah. He succeeds Rahul Dravid in this position and confronts the challenge of preserving the team's momentum following their recent T20 World Cup win. Gambhir's first job as head coach of the Indian cricket team will be the upcoming limited-overs series against Sri Lanka. Team India is set to play 3 ODIs and 3

T20Is starting July 27. As Gambhir takes charge, his primary objective will be to ensure that the Indian team continues to perform at the highest level.



PV Sindhu, Sharath Kamal Confirmed As India’s Flag Bearers For Paris Olympics :-

Ace Shuttler PV Sindhu will be India's female flag bearer at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics. PT Usha also stated that table tennis ace Sharath Kamal will join badminton superstar Sindhu as India's flag bearers at the Paris Games. In 2020, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) amended its protocol to allow one female and one male athlete to carry the flag together at the Olympic Games' opening ceremony. Boxing icon Mary Kom and former hockey captain Manpreet Singh were India's flag bearers at the Tokyo Olympics.



PUMA Partners With Indian Olympic Association For Paris Olympics 2024 :-

PUMA India has confirmed its relationship with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as the official footwear partner of the Indian delegation to the Paris Olympics 2024. PUMA has created a massive outdoor campaign called "See the Game Like We Do" to praise and celebrate Indian athletes' achievements. As part of this agreement, over 100 Indian athletes will get a variety of

equipment aimed at improving their training and comfort. These include podium and travel footwear, trolleys, backpacks, sippers, yoga mats, headbands, wristbands, socks, and towels.



James Anderson Retires From Test Cricket :-

James Anderson's retirement from Test cricket for England marks the end of an era. The veteran sprinter has ended his storied 21-year career. Anderson has the most wickets of any fast bowler in Test history, with 704 in 188 appearances. Anderson's former compatriot Stuart Broad, who has already retired, is the only other pacer with more than 600 Test wickets, namely 604. Anderson retired with a record 188 Test appearances, the second-most for a player after Sachin Tendulkar, who played 200 Tests. Among the current active players, Australia's Nathan Lyon is the next in line with 129 Test appearances.



Spain Clinches Euro 2024 Title With Dramatic Victory Over England :-

Spain won their fourth European Championship with a 2-1 victory over England in a thrilling final. Mikel Oyarzabal's 87th-minute goal, assisted by Marc Cucurella, sealed the victory and dashed England's hopes of forcing extra time following Cole Palmer's 73rd-minute equalizer. Nico Williams scored the opening goal

for Spain in the 47th minute, assisted by 17-year-old Lamine Yamal. The match in Berlin's Olympiastadion was attended by notable figures such as Prince William and Spain's King Felipe, underscoring its historical significance. Spain's emotional celebration highlighted their joyous triumph and united spirit with their fans.



India Champions Triumph In World Championship Of Legends 2024 :-

India Champions defeated Pakistan Champions by five wickets in the 2024 World Championship of Legends final played in Birmingham. India, led by Yuvraj Singh, successfully pursued a 157-run goal in 19.1 overs. Ambati Rayudu set the tone with a quickfire fifty, followed by important contributions from Yusuf Pathan, Gurkeerat Singh Mann, and the skipper himself. Pakistan, opting to bat first, posted a total of 156 for 6. Indian bowlers, spearheaded by Anureet Singh's three-wicket haul, effectively restricted Pakistan's run flow.



Argentina Clinches Second Consecutive Copa America Title :-

Argentina won the 2024 Copa America by defeating Colombia 1-0 at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, USA, thanks to Lautaro Martinez's goal in the 111th minute. Argentina has won its 16th title in South America's biggest international competition, surpassing Uruguay as

the most successful team in history. Argentina has won the Copa America for the second time in a row, in addition to the 2022 World Cup title they won between the two. This was also Angel Di Maria's last appearance for Argentina, with the winger announcing last year that he will end his prolific international career after the 2024 Copa America.



Nirma University Wins Robot Competition DD-Robocon India 2024 :-

The team from the Institute of Technology, Nirma University won the DD-Robocon India 2024 Robotic Competition. The two-day event was held in the Thyagaraj Stadium in New Delhi. Prasar Bharati and IIT Delhi jointly organised this event. The winner team will now represent India at the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union's Robocon 2024 in Quang Ninh, Vietnam. Pimpri-Chinchwad College of Engineering in Pune was named first runner-up, with MIT World Peace University in Pune coming in second. More than 750 students from over 45 colleges, institutions, and universities participated in the event.



Indian Tennis Legends Leander Paes And Vijay Amritraj Inducted Into International Tennis Hall Of Fame :-

Iconic Indian tennis players Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj, victors of many a historic triumph that spans generations, are the first two Asian tennis players to be admitted into the International Hall of Fame. Paes, 51, was honored in the 'Player Category' for his achievements, which include the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games men's singles bronze medal, eight men's doubles and ten mixed doubles grand slam titles, and several well-known Davis Cup victories. Vijay Amritraj along with Richard Evans was inducted into the Hall of fame in the 'Contributor Category'.



Kush Maini Scores Maiden F2 Victory At Hungarian GP

India's Kush Maini won his first Formula 2 Sprint Race at the Hungarian Grand Prix after first winner Richard Verschoor got disqualified for a technical violation. Following his podium performance, the 23-year-old Invicta racing driver added ten points to his season total. With the win at the Hungaroring, Maini beat Mercedes junior driver Kimi Antonelli in the Formula 2 Drivers Standings, moving up to eighth place with 66 points. The sole Indian driver on the 2024 F2 grid is currently enjoying his career-best season with five podiums, including a race win under his belt.



Manolo Marquez Appointed Head Coach Of Indian Men's Football Team :-

Manolo Marquez, a Spanish native who presently manages FC Goa in the Indian Super League, has been named the new head coach of India's men's football team. The selection was taken by the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) executive committee at their meeting. Marquez will succeed Igor Stimac, who was recently removed from his role. Stimac was sacked as head coach on June 17, after India failed to make it to the third round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. Since 2020, Marquez has been coaching in India, leading two ISL clubs.



IndusInd Bank Partners With Inspire Institute Of Sport :

IndusInd Bank and Inspire Institute of Sport are pleased to announce the debut of the 'Wrestle for Glory' program, a CSR initiative of the bank, which builds on the bank's long-standing collaboration with the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS), a high-performance Olympic training facility based in Vijayanagar, Bellary. The initiative seeks to strengthen 50 young female wrestling players from across the country by providing them with coaching at the prestigious IIS facility on fully financed scholarships. The 'Wrestle for Glory' program has been launched as a part of the 'IndusInd For Sports' initiative, a non-banking sports vertical of the Bank, established in 2016.



PR Sreejesh Announces Retirement After Paris Olympics 2024 :-

India veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh is scheduled to retire from international hockey after the Paris Olympics, which starting later this month. The 36-year-old, who debuted for India in 2006, confirmed his retirement on social media. Among his other achievements, the India international with 328 caps has won the Asian Games gold twice, the Asia Cup twice, and the Asian Champions title four times. Sreejesh was conferred with the Khel Ratna award, the highest sporting honour in the country. Indian hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh said that the side will dedicate the Paris 2024 campaign to Sreejesh.



Atiqa Mir becomes first female racer ever to win race at Rotax Challenge International Trophy :-

Atiqa Mir, a nine-year-old racing sensation, made history on the historic and prestigious Le Mans Kart International track by becoming the world's first female racer to win a race in the Rotax Challenge International Trophy. She accomplished this by winning the second race of the Micro Max Category Heats. In the final race, Atiqa was involved in several racing mishaps, slowing her down and eventually finishing 12th, 9.497 seconds behind leader Joshua Cooke of KR Sport, who finished

first. Alfie Mair finished second while Austin Oman of Sam Pollitt Racing secured third.



Oscar Piastri Wins F1 Title at Hungarian Grand Prix :-

Oscar Piastri, an Australian Formula One racer, won his maiden F1 title at the Hungarian Grand Prix. The Australian rookie spearheaded a powerful McLaren one-two finish alongside British-Belgian driver Lando Norris. Norris finally yielded on lap 68 of the 70-lap race, stopping to enable Piastri to overtake. The 23-year-old Australian took the opportunity and never looked back, finishing two seconds ahead of his buddy.



IOC Elects Salt Lake City-Utah as Host of 2034 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games :-

Salt Lake City, Utah, is going to host the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in 2034. The decision was made by IOC Members at the 142nd IOC Session in Paris. Salt Lake City conducted the Winter Olympics for the first time, in 2002. Out of 89 legitimate votes, Salt Lake City-Utah 2034 garnered 83 'yes' votes from IOC Members. The Salt Lake City-Utah 2034 delegation was led by the Governor of Utah, Spencer Cox, the Mayor of Salt Lake City, Erin Mendenhall, the President of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC), Gene Sykes, and

the President of the Salt Lake City-Utah Committee for the Games, Fraser Bullock.



2024 Paris Olympic Games Commenced :-

The Paris 2024 Olympics are officially kick started on July 26, with an elaborate opening ceremony along the Seine River in France. However, the Games 'unofficially' began on July 24 with football and rugby sevens competitions, followed by women's handball and archery individual ranking rounds on July 25th. India's medal possibilities at the Paris Olympics include Neeraj Chopra, Satwik-Chirag, and Mirabai Chanu. India is being represented by 117 competitors in the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. Only the second Indian athlete to win an individual gold medal at the Summer Olympic Games, Neeraj Chopra is India's strongest contender going into Paris 2024.



Manu Bhaker Wins Bronze at Paris 2024 Olympics :-

Indian shooter Manu Bhaker has won a bronze medal in the 10m Air Pistol event at the Paris 2024 Olympics. This achievement adds to India's medal tally and underscores the country's strength in shooting sports. Bhaker's consistent performance throughout the competition and her ability to excel under pressure have made her one of India's standout athletes in the Olympics. Her success serves as an inspiration for aspiring shooters and

highlights the importance of investing in sports infrastructure and training programs.



India To Host 2025 Men's Asia Cup In T20 Format :-

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has announced that India is going to host the Men's Asia Cup in 2025, which will be held in T20. Pakistan and Sri Lanka hosted the 2023 men's Asia Cup, which was played in a 50-over style. Bangladesh will host the Men's Asia Cup in 2027, which will be played in ODI format. Both tournaments will include six teams: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and a sixth team determined through qualifying event and comprise of 13 matches per edition.



Historic Bronze Win For Manu Bhaker And Sarabjot Singh At Paris Olympics :-

Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh assisted India capture its second medal at the ongoing Paris Olympics 2024 on July 30 by defeating South Koreans Wonho Lee and Ye Jin Oh in the bronze medal playoff match of the 10 m air pistol mixed team discipline. Bhaker and Sarabjot defeated the Korean duo 16-10. India's victory in the bronze medal playoff match enabled Bhaker to make history by being the first Indian female athlete to win two medals at the same Olympics. She had earlier won the bronze medal in the women's 10 m women's pistol event on July 28.

17: State



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw: Railways to invest ₹1 lakh crore in Odisha in next five years :-

On June 30, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that new railway projects totaling ₹1 lakh crore would be undertaken in Odisha over the next five years. Mr. Vaishnaw said this while speaking at an Odisha BJP felicitation function in Bhubaneswar to honour the party's 20 MPs and 78 MLAs elected in the recent Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Odisha. The Union Minister said the allocation to Odisha in the Railway Budget has been enhanced from ₹800 crore during the UPA government tenure to more than ₹10,000 crore during Modi government.



Hathras stampede: death toll rises to 121 :-

The dead toll from a stampede at a religious assembly in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras has increased to 121, a senior official said on July 3. The Office of the Relief Commissioner reports that 28 persons were hurt in the July 2nd event. According to the report, 19 of the total victims have yet to be identified. Devprakash Mathur, the event's organizer, has been charged under BNS

Sections 105, 110, 126, 223, and 238 by the Uttar Pradesh police. In view of the accident, the district administration has issued helplines 05722227041 and 05722227042 for the help of the general public, the official X handle of District Magistrate Hathras said in a post.



UP NIRMAL Bill-2024, Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Passes Draft :-

The Uttar Pradesh government has passed a draft of the Uttar Pradesh Nodal Investment Region for Manufacturing (Construction) Area Bill (NIRMAL)-2024 in an effort to transform the state's economy into a trillion-dollar one. This draft of the Bill to establish a Special Investment Region (SIR) was adopted at a cabinet meeting in Lok Bhavan chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, according to a senior official. The official also said according to draft Bill, at least four such SIRs will be created in UP, which will be in the four geographical areas of the state.



Hemant Soren takes oath as Jharkhand CM :-

Hemant Soren, head of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), officially swore in as Chief Minister of Jharkhand for a third term. Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office and secrecy in Ranchi's Raj Bhavan. Previously, Champai Soren resigned as Chief Minister, making room for his predecessor. Mr. Soren's father, party supremo Shibu Soren, mother Rupri Soren, and wife Kalpana Murmu Soren, as well as other alliance partners' leaders, were in attendance. It was a simple ceremony at the Raj Bhavan in which no one took the oath of Cabinet Minister.



Jharkhand's Mica Mines Declared Child Labour-Free By NCPCR :-

The Chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) declared Mica mines in Jharkhand 'Child Labour Free', marking a watershed moment for the state and country. During a programme organized by 'Child Labour Free Mica' in Koderma, NCPCR Chairperson Priyank Kanoongo underlined that all child laborers had been removed from mica mines and were now enrolled in schools. Kanoongo attributed the first ever such successful endeavour to cleanse supply chain of child labour in mica mining to the collaborative efforts made by the state, district, and local governing bodies, 'Child Labour Free Mica' programme, children and communities.



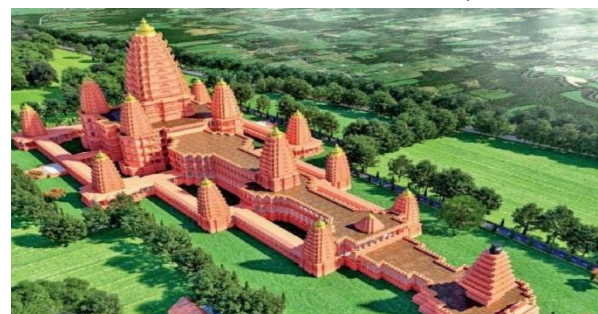
Supreme Court Appoints Former CJI To Head VC Selection Committee In West Bengal :-

With the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government and the West Bengal Governor at odds over the hiring of Vice-Chancellors for state-owned universities, the Supreme Court appointed former CJI U U Lalit as chairperson of the search-and-selection committees tasked with shortlisting names for appointments. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Viswanathan authorised the Chairman "to constitute separate or joint Search-cum-Selection Committees for one or more Universities, keeping in view the nature of subjects/disciplines in which education is being imparted in such pooled Universities".



Sarus Crane Population Thrives In Uttar Pradesh :-

The population of Sarus cranes in Uttar Pradesh is increasing, according to the most recent summer census, which was taken on June 20-21, 2024. It counted 19,918 Sarus cranes, up 396 from the previous year's tally, according to state forest department authorities. The Sarus is the official bird of the state. According to the survey, the Etawah Forest Division had the most Sarus cranes (3,289), an increase of 500, while the Mau Forest Division had six Sarus cranes for the first time in ten years. The summer census witnessed the participation of 10,000 citizens across U.P., for two days.



Second Phase Of Construction Begins On World's Largest Ramayan Temple In Bihar :-

The second phase of building on the "world's largest Ramayan temple" has recently begun in Bihar's East Champaran district. The Viraat Ramayan Mandir, once completed, will be three times the size of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. The temple, estimated to cost ₹500 crore, will feature the world's largest Shivaling. The temple's construction draws inspiration from Angkor Wat in Cambodia, the Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, and the Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in Madurai. The construction of the three-storey temple, spread over an area of 3.76 lakh sq.ft., began in June 2023 and is expected to be complete in 2025.



East India's First Disabled Varsity At Ranchi: Jharkhand

Champai Soren, former chief minister and minister of higher and technical education of Jharkhand, revealed plans to create eastern India's first university for the physically challenged on the outskirts of Ranchi, the state capital. Champai, who inspected the higher and technical education systems in Ranchi, stated that the proposal would be given to the cabinet for formal approval. The minister further said the proposed university will have special arrangements for education of divyangs (disabled) suiting their needs and would strictly adhere to norms of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.



Uttar Pradesh Mango Festival :-

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said in Lucknow that the state will sell 40 tonnes of mangos to Japan and Malaysia. And, for the first time in its 160-year history, Lucknow's famous Dussehri will be sold to the United States. He was launching the Uttar Pradesh Mango Festival 2024 at Awadh Shilp Gram. Mr. Adityanath presented a mango exhibition that featured 120 different varieties of exceptional mangoes. The three-day mango festival, from July 12–14, features a mango-eating competition and a training seminar that has drawn mango farmers from U.P., Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh.



CM Manik Saha Attends Kharchi Puja Celebrations In Agartala :-

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has underlined the necessity of educating the next generation about the historical significance of the Kharchi Puja and its fourteen deities. Saha made these remarks while launching the 7-day traditional Kharchi Puja and festival at the Chaturdash Devta temple in old Agartala, Khayerpur. Saha also declared a public holiday on July 20, the last day of the Kharchi festival, to encourage more people to join in the festivities. The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of such fairs and cultural traditions in

strengthening the bond of unity and brotherhood among the people of the nation.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates INS Towers In Mumbai :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched INS Towers, the New Indian Newspaper Society Secretariat, in Mumbai. He also launched and set the groundwork for other projects totaling more than Rs 29,400 crores in the city. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar honoured PM Modi at the NESCO Exhibition Centre in Goregaon. This was Narendra Modi's first visit to Mumbai since taking oath as Prime Minister for the third time on June 9, following the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) victory in the Lok Sabha elections. The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for tunnel work at the Goregaon Mulund Link Road (GMLR) Project, worth over Rs 6,300 crore.



Amit Shah inaugurates PM College of Excellence in MP's 55 districts :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah virtually inaugurated the Prime Minister's College of Excellence for all 55 districts in Madhya Pradesh, praising Narendra Modi's foresight in implementing the New Education Policy, with the goal of making India a developed country by

2047. These state-run colleges, established in accordance with the NEP, aim to make education more employment-oriented. Addressing the main programme held at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government Arts and Commerce College in Indore, which has been developed as a PM College of Excellence, Shah said students must download the NEP document as it will teach them to "think out of the box".



Uttarakhand Opens Its First-Ever Bird Gallery In Dehradun :-

The forest department's research wing recently inaugurated the state's first bird exhibit in Dehradun, near the Jolly Grant airport, to educate visitors about the region's rich avian species and the crucial role they play in the sensitive Himalayan ecosystems. The gallery is part of the Nature Education Centre, which is an important component of the forest department's research work. Visitors can witness over 250 photographs of the state's bird species, along with their recorded chirping from Uttarakhand's forests. The bird species are categorised into ten groups.



"Rajiv Gandhi Civils Abhayahastam" Launched By Telangana CM :-

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy established an innovative initiative to provide financial support to Civil Services aspirants from Telangana, under which aspirants who qualify for the Mains exams would receive ₹1 lakh for preparations. The "Rajiv Gandhi Civils Abhayahastam" plan will benefit around 400 Telangana aspirants who qualify for the Mains each year. Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL) will provide the assistance as a part of its 'Nirmaan' programme.



Aqua Line : Mumbai's first underground metro :-

The Aqua Line, Mumbai's much-anticipated first underground metro, began operations on July 24, marking a watershed moment in the city's urban transportation system. This new underground metro is projected to alter urban transportation, make it easier to get around Mumbai's streets, and alleviate traffic congestion. The first phase of Mumbai Metro 3, which began on July 24, will connect the Santacruz Electronics

Export Processing Zone (SEEPZ) and the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC). The entire project is scheduled to be completed by the end of December 2024, although the initial completion date was set for September 2024.



Bihar Assembly passes Bill to prevent paper leaks in competitive exams :-

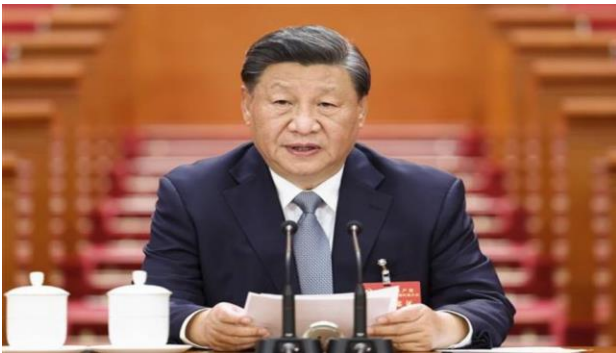
The Bihar Assembly has enacted a bill aimed at ending the plague of question paper leaks and other wrongdoing in the state's government recruitment exams. The Bihar Public Examinations (PE) (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, was introduced by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary and approved via voice vote despite the Opposition's walkout. The Bill proposes imprisonment for three to five years and a fine of ₹10 lakh. If a service provider whether a government entity or a private agency engages in malpractices, it will face a fine of ₹1 crore and four year termination of its services.

18: Summits & Conferences



EAM S. Jaishankar holds talks with Qatar's PM & Foreign Minister in Doha :-

During External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar's day-long official visit to Doha on June 30, India and Qatar discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations and maintain dialogue on matters of mutual concern. On June 30, the EAM met with Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, right after his arrival in the capital. This is EAM Jaishankar's third official visit during the third term of the Modi government. He had earlier visited Sri Lanka (June 20) and the UAE (June 23).



Chinese President Xi Jinping to attend SCO summit in Astana :-

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has confirmed that Chinese President Xi Jinping will attend the 24th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Kazakhstan's capital Astana this week. He will also pay a state visit to Tajikistan, the statement stated. According to the Ministry, President Xi will attend the SCO's 24th Council of Heads of State Meeting in Astana from July 2 to 6. According to officials, the summit will focus on the situation in Afghanistan, the Ukraine conflict, and increasing overall security cooperation among SCO member nations.

being organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) in the national capital highlights the government's "unwavering commitment to the responsible development, deployment, and adoption of artificial intelligence", the release said.



External affairs minister S Jaishankar to lead Indian delegation to SCO Summit :-

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will lead the Indian delegation to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, which is anticipated to chart a course for multilateral cooperation and address regional challenges such as the situation in Afghanistan. Kazakhstan will host the 24th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State, often known as the SCO Summit, in Astana on July 4. Officials have said the prime minister's preoccupation with the ongoing session of Parliament, which is set to end on July 3, was the key reason for his decision to skip the summit.



India to host Global India AI Summit 2024 in New Delhi on July 3-4 :-

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will host a worldwide AI conference on July 3-4 to examine issues concerning artificial intelligence, with India strongly committed to the ethical and inclusive evolution of this new technology. India hopes to establish itself as a global leader in AI innovation through the 'Global IndiaAI Summit 2024', guaranteeing that AI advantages are available to all and contribute to the country's socioeconomic progress. The two-day event



International toy fair to begin on July 6 with over 100 foreign buyers :-

The four-day international toy exhibition, which begins on July 6 in the national capital, is expected to attract more than 300 domestic enterprises and over 100 foreign buyers from the United States, Germany, and other nations, according to a release. According to Toy

Association of India senior vice-president Naresh Kumar Gautam, around 250 Indian businesses will showcase their items at the event, which will be held at Pragati Maidan here. Gautam said that the 15th Toy Biz International B2B Expo 2024 is the largest fair in South Asia.



International conference to be held in August to solve man-animal conflicts in Karnataka: Minister Eshwar Khandre :-

In response to an increase in man-animal conflict in Karnataka, forest, ecology, and environment minister Eshwar Khandre said that an international conference will be organized in August to address the problem. The minister blamed the surge in man-elephant conflict on a loss in forests and increased commercial activity in buffer zones. He stated that Karnataka has the greatest elephant population in India, with 6,395 elephants and 263 tigers. The prevalence of weeds has further exacerbated these conflicts, he noted.



Amit Shah To Address Conference To Mark 102nd International Day Of Cooperatives :-

Shri Amit Shah, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, will address the "Sahkar Se Samridhhi" conference in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on Saturday, July 6, 2024, to commemorate the 102nd International Day of Cooperatives. The Ministry of Cooperation is holding a 'Sahkar se Samridhhi' conference on this day to commemorate International Day of Cooperatives 2024. Incidentally, the International Cooperative Day 2024 will be observed on July 6, which is also the Ministry of Cooperation's third foundation day. The theme for the 102nd International Cooperative Day is- "Cooperatives Build a Better Future for All."



"Divya Kala Mela" Being Held At Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, in partnership with the National Divyangjan Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC), is organizing an outstanding event to celebrate the talents and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs and artisans across the country. The Divya Kala Mela & Divya Kala Shakti will be held from 5th to 11th of July 2024 at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) Campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



Obstetric and Gynecological Societies of India holds first-ever conference in Surat :-

The Federation of Obstetric and Gynecological Societies of India (FOGSI) held its inaugural three-day national conference in Surat on July 5–7 at a major hotel. Over 500 gynaecologists from various states took part in the event. Notably, the FOGSI is the world's largest organisation, having over 44,000 doctors as members. The conference was attended by the national level FOGSI India President Dr Jaideep Tank, Secretary Dr Madhuri Patel, South Asian Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecology President Dr Shyamal Desai among others.



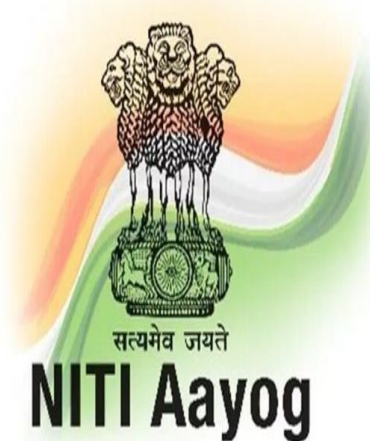
Biden To Host NATO Summit To Show Strong Support For Ukraine Amidst Conflict :-

President Joe Biden is scheduled to hold a crucial three-day NATO meeting aimed at demonstrating unity and solidarity among the US and its allies in support of Ukraine. The conference, scheduled for July 9-11, will highlight NATO states' commitment to bolstering Ukraine's security amid the ongoing conflict with Russia. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg is anticipated to announce significant boosts in military, political, and financial aid to Ukraine at the summit. In a historic move, Sweden will be formally welcomed as NATO's newest member during the summit proceedings, marking a strategic expansion of the alliance's membership.



World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit From 20th -24th November In Goa :-

Ashwani Vaishnav, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting, has announced that India would host the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) from November 20 to 24, in conjunction with the International Film Festival of India in Goa. The summit represents a watershed moment for the media and entertainment industries worldwide. The minister made this announcement at a curtain raiser event in New Delhi along with Chief Minister of Goa Pramod Sawant and Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr. L. Murugan.



PM Chaired 9th Governing Council Meeting Of NITI Aayog :-

According to an official statement, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 9th Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog on July 27, which aimed at making India a developed nation by 2047. The council, the apex body of NITI Aayog, consists of all state chief ministers, lieutenant governors of Union Territories, and numerous Union ministers. Modi serves as the chairman of the NITI Aayog. According to the statement, the meeting intends to promote participatory governance and collaboration among the Centre and state governments, thereby improving the quality of life for both rural and urban inhabitants by strengthening government intervention delivery systems.

SECTION 2

Practice Questions with Answers



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1) What event is observed on June 30 to raise public awareness about asteroid impact hazards?

- A) International Space Day
- B) International Asteroid Day
- C) World Astronomy Day
- D) Global Space Awareness Day

2) Who received the 12th Vishwa Hindi Samman for her contribution to Hindi literature?

- A) Dr. Seema Singh
- B) Dr. Usha Thakur
- C) Dr. Nisha Patel
- D) Dr. Rani Gupta

3) Which organization announced a revised Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC countries?

- A) World Bank
- B) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- C) Asian Development Bank
- D) International Monetary Fund

4) What is the goal of HDFC Life's 'Bridge the Gap' campaign?

- A) Promote health insurance
- B) Increase life insurance awareness
- C) Advocate for pension plans
- D) Launch new savings schemes

5) Who was elected as the President of the European Council from Portugal?

- A) Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa
- B) Pedro Passos Coelho
- C) António Costa
- D) Rui Rio

6) 'Mission Nischay' was launched by which of the following state police recently?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Haryana
- C) Punjab
- D) Uttarakhand

7) _____ has pledged its support to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) to achieve sustainable waste management and eliminate waste dumping by 2026-2027.

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

8) The second annual meeting of the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) between India and the US was held _____.

- A) Chennai
- B) Hyderabad
- C) Jaipur
- D) New Delhi

9) The Centre has extended the Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS) till June 30, 2025. Under which of the following initiative Digital Health Incentive Scheme was launched?

- A) Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission
- B) Mission Indradhanush
- C) Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana
- D) Universal health care

10) The theme of this year's 'World Sickle Cell Day' is _____.

- A) Celebrating Progress
- B) Hope Through Progress: Advancing Sickle Cell Care Globally
- C) Increase public awareness and understanding of sickle cell disease (SCD)
- D) Shine the Light on Sickle Cell

11) The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has extended the license of _____ airport recently.

- A) Manohar International Airport, Goa
- B) Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh
- C) Cochin International Airport Limited, Kochi, Kerala
- D) Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad, Telangana

12) What is the rank of India in the global Energy Transition Index 2024 by the World Economic Forum (WEF)?

- A) 24
- B) 51
- C) 63
- D) 159

13) Along with CERT-In which of the following company has signed an MoU for collaboration in cyber security to enhance India's cyber-resilience in Financial Sector?

- A) Visa
- B) National Payments Corporation of India
- C) Mastercard India
- D) American Express

14) Which of the following launched Nifty India Tourism Index?

- A) Axis Mutual Fund
- B) Groww Mutual Fund
- C) NSE Indices
- D) Tata Mutual Fund

15) Who among the following was appointed as chairman of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)?

- A) Dileep Sanghani
- B) Jitendra Singh
- C) Kishor Makwana
- D) Mohammad Rihan

16) The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has recently issued two new standards: IS 18590: 2024 and IS 18606: 2024 for _____ .

- A) Artificial Intelligence Management System
- B) Defence Products
- C) Electric Vehicles
- D) Petrochemicals Organisations

17) Indian Army has signed an MoU with _____ to advance collaboration in 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies for Indian Army'.

- A) SAMEER
- B) C-DAC
- C) DRDO
- D) INCOIS

18) The Ministry of Education has constituted seven-member high level committee to reform the working of the National Testing Agency (NTA) headed by _____.

- A) Vinod Kumar Paul
- B) Vijay Kumar Saraswat
- C) Rajiv Gauba
- D) K. Radhakrishnan

19) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar commissioned the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre built with a USD 6 million grant from India in which of the following country?

- A) Mauritius
- B) Philippines
- C) Sri Lanka
- D) Tanzania

20) Who among the following took oath as the Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha?

- A) Om Birla
- B) K Suresh
- C) JP Nadda
- D) Jagan Mohan Reddy

21) According to a report by the Hurun Research Institute how many unicorns are there in India?

- A) 106
- B) 67
- C) 46
- D) 25

22) _____ has now moved from the endangered to vulnerable category on the IUCN Red List.

- A) Leopards
- B) Iberian Lynx
- C) Himalayan Wolf
- D) Great Indian Bustard

23) _____ launched India's inaugural ETF dedicated to electric vehicles (EVs) and the new-age automotive sector.

- A) Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management
- B) Bajaj Finserv Asset Management Limited
- C) Mirae Asset Investment Managers
- D) SBI Mutual Fund

24) Foreign direct investment (FDI) in India during 2023 declined by 43% to \$28 billion as per a report by _____.

- A) CRISIL
- B) Morgan Stanley
- C) National Institute of Public Finance and Policy
- D) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

25) _____ has received the national award for significant enrolment under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

- A) Punjab National Bank
- B) Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank
- C) HDFC Bank
- D) Axis Bank

26) In total, how many medals has India won at the 2024 BRICS Games?

- A) 29
- B) 27
- C) 25
- D) 20

27) What was the total number of medals that India took home from the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championship?

- A) 14
- B) 13
- C) 12
- D) 11

28) Through the Universality Quota in Swimming which among the following was qualified for Paris Olympics 2024?

- A) Dhinidhi Desinghu
- B) Sajjan Prakash
- C) Srihari Nataraja
- D) Both A and C

29) Recently the Bharat Centre of Olympic Research and Education was launched in which of the following state?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Haryana
- C) Odisha

D) Uttar Pradesh

30) The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) has set a target of planting _____ trees for the entire National Capital Region.

- A) 5.5 crore
- B) 5.0 crore
- C) 4.5 crore
- D) 4.0 crore

31) _____ picked up two bronze medals on the final day of Archery World Cup Stage III at Antalya, Turkey.

- A) Abhishek Verma
- B) Dhiraj Bommadevara
- C) Limba Ram
- D) Pravin Jadhav

32) Which of the following was the theme of this year's 'International Olympics Day'?

- A) Let's Move and Celebrate
- B) Moving Forward: United by Emotion
- C) Together for a better world
- D) Together, For a Peaceful World

33) _____ was elected unanimously as the Speaker of the 16th Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

- A) Koyye Moshenu Raju
- B) Jagan Mohan Reddy
- C) C Ayyannapatrudu
- D) Ashok Bendalam

34) The 64th 'ISO Council Meeting' was held in which of the following city?

- A) Paris, France
- B) New Delhi, India
- C) London, UK
- D) Beijing, China

35) _____ introduced 'SmartLock', a unique safety measure enabling customers to lock/unlock its iMobile Pay mobile banking app.

- A) Bank of Baroda
- B) DBS Bank India Limited
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Karnataka Bank



36) When International Day of the Seafarer was observed?

- A) 23 June
- B) 24 June
- C) 25 June
- D) 26 June

37) _____ announced that it has secured a corporate agent license from the IRDAI.

- A) Aditya Birla Finance Limited
- B) L&T Finance Limited
- C) Muthoot Microfin
- D) Star Housing Finance Limited

38) The current account surplus of India stood at \$5.7 billion, or 0.6 per cent of the GDP, in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24, said a report by _____.

- A) World Bank
- B) Reserve Bank of India
- C) National Statistical Office
- D) National Payments Corporation of India

39) Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief _____ was given a one-year extension till June 2025.

- A) Tapan Kumar Deka
- B) Sapna Tiwari
- C) Piyush Anand
- D) Bharat Lal

40) _____ was given one-year extension as secretary general of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

- A) Bharat Lal
- B) Matam Venkata Rao
- C) Rizwan Koita
- D) Subhransu Sekhar Acharya

41) The government has elevated _____ to the Navaratna category.

- A) Central Coalfields Limited
- B) Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited
- C) HDFC Bank
- D) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited

42) _____ was granted "Mini RATNA" status (Category-1) during its Golden Jubilee celebration.

- A) Central Electronics Limited
- B) Central Warehousing Corporation
- C) Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited
- D) National Fertilizers Limited

43) Which of the following ministry has launched a comprehensive plan to create tobacco-free educational institutions across the nation?

- A) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- B) Ministry of Food Processing Industries
- C) Ministry of Education
- D) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

44) Which of the following digital investment platform was unveiled by HDFC Bank recently?

- A) ABHFL-Finverse
- B) Digital Intelligence Platform
- C) OneX
- D) SmartWealth

45) Which of the following bank has signed an initial agreement with the Indian Army on defence salary package which will come with a host of facilities, including free insurance cover?

- A) Bank of India
- B) Canara Bank
- C) Federal Bank
- D) Punjab and Sind Bank

46) _____ is the world's most "liveable" city, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2024 Global Liveability Index.

- A) Bengaluru
- B) Copenhagen
- C) New York
- D) Vienna

47) Along with RBI which of the following multilateral organization is set to establish instant cross-border retail payments platform?

- A) ASEAN
- B) BRICS
- C) G20
- D) ADB



48) The Asian Development Bank (ADB) recently signed a \$60 million nonconvertible debentures financing agreement with _____ to give housing loans to low-income women.

- A) Aadhar Housing Finance Limited
- B) LIC Housing Finance Limited
- C) Piramal Capital & Housing Finance
- D) Star Housing Finance Limited

49) Researchers have recently found enough minerals in Minami-Torishima Island to build EVs for a decade. Minami-Torishima Island located in which of the following which country?

- A) South Korea
- B) Japan
- C) France
- D) China

50) _____ has received the final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator.

- A) CleverTap
- B) EBANX
- C) Fonepay Payment Service Ltd
- D) Hitachi Payment

51) Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Chouhan launched a web portal to speed up settlement of claims under the _____.

- A) Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
- B) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- C) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
- D) Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

52) _____ officially became 100th full member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

- A) Sweden
- B) Paraguay
- C) Nepal
- D) Iceland

53) The RBI has levied a monetary penalty of Rs 29.60 lakh on _____ for violating rules on credit card, debit card.

- A) Bank of Baroda
- B) HSBC Bank

- C) ICICI Bank Limited
- D) Kotak Mahindra Bank

54) When the National Statistics Day (India) was observed?

- A) 28 June
- B) 29 June
- C) 30 June
- D) 31 June

55) When the World Allergy Week was observed?

- A) 07 to 13 July 2024
- B) 01 to 06 July 2024
- C) 23 to 29 June 2024
- D) 16 to 22 June 2024

56) Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has launched a geoportal named _____ for rural land record.

- A) Bhuvan Panchayat
- B) Diksha
- C) eNAM
- D) NaViGate Bharat

57) The smallest Asian elephant subspecies, Bornean elephants was declared as _____ under the IUCN Red List.

- A) Endangered
- B) Globally Threatened
- C) Near Threatened
- D) Vulnerable

58) The World Bank on June 29, approved _____ in financing to accelerate India's development of low-carbon energy.

- A) USD 9.8 billion
- B) USD 3.5 billion
- C) USD 2.6 billion
- D) USD 1.5 billion

59) SEBI has increased the threshold for the basic service demat account to _____ from the current Rs 2 lakh.

- A) Rs 10 lakh
- B) Rs 6 lakh
- C) Rs 5 lakh
- D) Rs 3 lakh

60) The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has entered into an agreement

with _____ to support development of urban infrastructure.

- A) World Bank
- B) KfW Bank
- C) Japan International Cooperation Agency
- D) Asian Development Bank

61) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) announced a mandatory _____ day waiting period for mobile number portability (MNP) following a SIM swap or replacement.

- A) 07 Days
- B) 20 Days
- C) 15 Days
- D) 10 Days

62) _____ ministry has notified the setting up of a 26-member panel to oversee the revision of the base year for GDP data.

- A) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- B) Ministry of Finance
- C) Ministry of Home Affairs
- D) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

63) India saw the highest amount of remittance inflows in the world in 2023 at _____, said a report by the World Bank.

- A) USD 31 billion
- B) USD 120 billion
- C) USD 111 billion
- D) USD 100 billion

64) (CBDT).

- A) Vivek Kumar Gupta
- B) Ravi Agrawal
- C) Gurcharan Singh
- D) Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar

65) Japan has successfully launched its new flagship H3 rocket carrying an Earth observation satellite named _____.

- A) Yunhai-3 02
- B) DAICHI-4
- C) ALOS-4
- D) Bandwagon-1

66) India has become the first country in the world to prepare a checklist of its entire fauna, covering 104,561 species. The 'Fauna of India Checklist Portal' was launched on the occasion of the 109th Foundation Day of the _____.

- A) Forest Research Institute
- B) ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute
- C) National Safety Council
- D) Zoological Survey of India

67) Along with the ASEAN countries which of the following bank is set to create platform to facilitate cross-border retail payments?

- A) Export-Import Bank of India
- B) National Housing Bank
- C) Reserve Bank of India
- D) Small Industries Development Bank of India

68) _____ has unveiled "MSME Sahaj," a novel online business lending solution designed specifically for MSMEs.

- A) Bank of Baroda
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) State Bank of India
- D) YES Bank

69) Who among the following was elected as the next Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI)?

- A) Amitabh Singh Chaudhry
- B) Challa Sreenivasulu Setty
- C) Nidhu Saxena
- D) Sanjeev Nautiyal

70) Who among the following was elected as the chairperson of the World Customs Organisation?

- A) Meenesh kumar Champaklal Shah
- B) Edward Kieswetter
- C) Ashwani Kumar
- D) Alain Noudéhou

71) Along with which of the following state the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has inked an agreement to establish three state-of-the-art testing facilities?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Madhya Pradesh



- C) Tamil Nadu
- D) Uttar Pradesh

72) Union Coal Ministry launched _____ scheme which will provide a support of one lakh rupees to eligible UPSC aspirants.

- A) Bhavishya
- B) NIRMAL
- C) PM-SURAJ
- D) SWATI

73) What is the rank of India in the Artificial Intelligence Preparedness Index (AIPI) Dashboard released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

- A) 86
- B) 72
- C) 54
- D) 45

74) Recently, INS Shivalik participated in which of the following exercise at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii?

- A) DUSTLIK 2024
- B) Gagan Shakti-2024
- C) RIMPAC
- D) Tarkash

75) _____ announced the launch of its 'Student Sapphire Forex Card', a premium forex prepaid card crafted specifically for students who are going abroad for higher education.

- A) Bank of India
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Yes Bank

76) _____ and Rajasthan government has signed an agreement for the implementation of the Rs 72,000 crore Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal river linking project.

- A) Haryana
- B) Madhya Pradesh
- C) Punjab
- D) Uttar Pradesh

77) Which of the following India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise is being held in Umroi, Meghalaya?

- A) Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2024
- B) Exercise Poorvi Lehar (XPOL) 2024

- C) Exercise SHAKTI 2024
- D) Exercise Varuna 2024

78) Along with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises which of the following ministry partnered to boost SHG women enterprises in India?

- A) Ministry of Education
- B) Ministry of Finance
- C) Union Ministry of Rural Development
- D) Ministry of Women and Child Development

79) The Union housing and urban affairs ministry has announced an extension of the _____ deadline until March 2025

- A) Atma Nirbhar Bharat
- B) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
- C) Smart Cities Mission
- D) Swachh Bharat Mission

80) Which of the following country has launched new banknotes with 3D holograms to fight counterfeiting?

- A) Cambodia
- B) Japan
- C) Laos
- D) Singapore

81) _____ has launched a three-month campaign from July 4, to September 30, 2024 under the name 'Sampoornata Abhiyan'.

- A) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)
- B) Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- C) Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)
- D) NITI Aayog

82) The Indian Air Force has recently inaugurated the Weapon Systems School in which of the following city?

- A) Leh, Ladakh
- B) Begumpet, Telangana
- C) Amritsar, Punjab
- D) Ambala, Haryana

83) Which among the following city is India's costliest city as per Mercer's 2024 "Cost of Living City Ranking" report?

- A) Bengaluru
- B) Chennai
- C) Delhi
- D) Mumbai

84) Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi was on a four-day visit to _____ from July 1 with an aim to consolidate the bilateral defence engagement.

- A) Bhutan
- B) Indonesia
- C) Bangladesh
- D) Sri Lanka

85) Which of the following country was officially accepted as a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)?

- A) Belarus
- B) Comoros
- C) Panama
- D) Timor-Leste

86) Women Entrepreneurship Platform and TransUnion CIBIL have partnered to launch _____ program to empower women entrepreneurs.

- A) ADITI
- B) SEHER
- C) START
- D) UNNATI

87) The government has made it mandatory for stainless steel and aluminium kitchen utensils to conform to national quality standards set by the _____.

- A) International Organization for Standardization
- B) Geographical Indication Registry
- C) Bureau of Indian Standards
- D) Competition Commission of India

88) A commemorative coin of _____ was released by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to mark the 101st birth anniversary of freedom fighter late Jawaharlal Darda.

- A) Rs 500
- B) Rs 250
- C) Rs 100
- D) Rs 90

89) _____ has signed an MoU with Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) to provide electric bicycles to self-help group women.

- A) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B) Ministry of Rural Development

C) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
 D) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
90) To commemorate the first National Space Day, which will fall on August 23 the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be organizing _____.

- A) Bharatiya Antariksh Hackathon
- B) IdeationX
- C) Indian Space Situational Assessment Report
- D) Zero Emission Initiative

91) Along with the CyberPeace Foundation which of the following ministry launched the fifth phase of the Digital Shakti Campaign?

- A) Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
- B) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- C) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- D) National Commission for Women

92) _____ has been chosen by the government as the Haj Committee's nodal ministry.

- A) Ministry of Culture
- B) Ministry of External Affairs
- C) Ministry of Home Affairs
- D) Ministry of Minority Affairs

93) Project PARI coincides with the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting was launched by which of the following ministry?

- A) Ministry of Culture
- B) Ministry of Education
- C) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- D) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

94) As per the official data by the defence ministry, in FY 2023-24, the country's annual indigenous defence production stood at _____.

- A) Rs 2.25 lakh crore
- B) Rs 2.11 Lakh crore
- C) Rs 1.27 lakh crore
- D) Rs 1.25 lakh crore

95) Who among the following was elected as the next President of Iran?

- A) Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif
- B) Masoud Pezeshkian
- C) Allamaye Halina



D) Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi

96) As per the RBI's data country's employment rate grew by _____ in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024.

- A) 10%
- B) 8%
- C) 7%
- D) 6%

97) The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister of India has approved India to sign the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement under _____.

- A) Convention on Biological Diversity
- B) UN Environment Programme
- C) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- D) United Nations Forum on Forests

98) The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has inked an agreement with _____ to develop a framework for assessing logistics costs in India.

- A) Asian Development Bank
- B) International Monetary Fund
- C) National Council of Applied Economic Research
- D) World Bank

99) EXIM Bank of India signed a USD 2.50 million credit line with which of the following country for a solar plant at Cheddi Jagan International Airport?

- A) Guyana
- B) Mauritius
- C) Nepal
- D) Zimbabwe

100) India's first tourism index fund was launched by which of the following company?

- A) Tata Asset Management Private Limited
- B) SBI Mutual Fund
- C) Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited
- D) Groww Mutual Fund

101) The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) has signed an MoU with which of the following organisation towards empowering persons with disabilities?

- A) Enable Me Access Association

- B) International Disability Alliance
- C) International Labour Organisation
- D) PTC India Limited

102) An online platform MeDevIS (Medical Devices Information System) was launched by which of the following organisation?

- A) International Institute of Health Management Research
- B) National Medical Commission
- C) Quality Council of India
- D) World Health Organization

103) Which among the following countries has topped the list of world's most affordable countries for immigrants in 2024 released by InterNations?

- A) Vietnam
- B) India
- C) Singapore
- D) Norway

104) Which of the following bank launched 'Safety Ring' mechanism to enhance security for internet, mobile banking users?

- A) Axis Bank
- B) Bank of Baroda
- C) IndusInd Bank
- D) Punjab National Bank

105) Which of the following mutual fund launched India's first exchange-traded fund (ETF) focusing solely on the oil and gas industry?

- A) ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund
- B) Mirae Asset Mutual Fund
- C) SBI Mutual Fund
- D) Tata Mutual Fund

106) Secretary of State for Defence Sanjay Seth launched _____ scheme which seeks solution to the problems related to the shipyards.

- A) DHIS
- B) EMPS 2024
- C) GAINS 2024
- D) NFIES

107) India generated _____ jobs between FY14 & FY23, as per a SBI Report.

- A) 181 million

- B) 170 million
- C) 135 million
- D) 125 million

108) The annual World Drug Report which provides an annual overview of the major developments in drug markets for the various drug categories was launched by _____.

- A) UNESCO
- B) UNICEF
- C) UNODC
- D) WHO

109) Which of the following organisation launched the New World Soil Health Index at International conference on Soils held in Morocco?

- A) FAO
- B) IUCN
- C) UNEP
- D) UNESCO

110) Which of the following company became only Indian NBFC selected for FATF Mutual Evaluation Report 2023-24?

- A) Aadhar Housing Finance Limited
- B) Bajaj Finance Limited
- C) LIC Housing Finance
- D) Muthoot Finance limited

111) Along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) _____ has signed an MoU to harness the power of Artificial Intelligence for detecting and classifying large cardamom diseases in Sikkim?

- A) Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- B) Indian Space Research Organisation
- C) Ministry of Agriculture
- D) Spices Board of India

112) The 24th meeting of the Council of Head of States of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was held in which of the following city?

- A) Astana, Kazakhstan
- B) Beijing, China
- C) New Delhi, India
- D) Tehran, Iran

113) 46th session of the World Heritage Committee was organized by which of the following country?

- A) Russia
- B) India
- C) France
- D) Australia

114) Which of the following state has launched the 'Lokpath Mobile App' for the public to resolve road problems in seven days?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Madhya Pradesh
- C) Rajasthan
- D) Uttar Pradesh

115) The Global Conclave on Plastic Recycling and Sustainability (GCPRS) was held in which of the following city?

- A) Bengaluru
- B) Chennai
- C) Hyderabad
- D) New Delhi

116) Who among the following was the winner of Asian Billiards Championship 2024?

- A) Rupesh Shah
- B) Pankaj Advani
- C) Geet Sethi
- D) Dhruv Sitwala

117) Indian squash players secured two titles at the Asian Doubles Squash Championships 2024 held at _____.

- A) Johor, Malaysia
- B) Kolkata, India
- C) Medan, Indonesia
- D) New Delhi, India

118) Vizhinjam International Seaport has welcomed its first mothership container. In which of the following state the Vizhinjam International Seaport is located?

- A) West Bengal
- B) Tamil Nadu
- C) Maharashtra
- D) Kerala

119) Along with a global consulting firm AT Kearney which of the following company/organization has launched the 'Jeevan Samarth' initiative to transform its agency framework?



- A) LIC
- B) Ministry of Education
- C) Ministry of External Affairs
- D) Policy Commission

120) Which of the following party has won the UK parliamentary elections by landslide?

- A) Liberal Democrats
- B) Labour Party
- C) Green Party
- D) Conservative Party

121) Haryana Government appointed who among the following as the new chief electoral officer?

- A) Ajay Sinha
- B) Ashok Ganguly
- C) Pankaj Agarwal
- D) Rajeev Kumar

122) Who among the following was awarded the ICC Player of the month for June 2024?

- A) Arshdeep Singh
- B) Hardik Pandya
- C) Jasprit Bumrah
- D) Rohit Sharma

123) In which of the following state Tata Power Solar Systems Limited launched the 'Ghar Ghar Solar' initiative, aimed at providing every home with clean energy through rooftop solar solutions?

- A) Uttar Pradesh
- B) Rajasthan
- C) Madhya Pradesh
- D) Bihar

124) Prime Minister Narendra Modi received which of the following country's highest civilian honour recently?

- A) France
- B) Russia
- C) Spain
- D) Ukraine

125) Which of the following country officially joined the Colombo Security Conclave as the fifth full member country?

- A) Pakistan
- B) Iran

- C) Bhutan
- D) Bangladesh

126) Along with the ICAI which of the following ministry is collaborating to develop an AI Audit Tool to monitor corporate performance and detect fraud?

- A) Ministry of Communications
- B) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- C) Ministry of Finance
- D) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

127) _____ has secured a green loan of Japanese Yen 31.96 billion (equivalent to \$200 million) to finance eligible green projects in India.

- A) Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency
- B) National Solar Energy Federation of India
- C) Power Grid Corporation of India Limited
- D) REC Limited

128) Hyderabad-based renewable energy company _____ has received sanctions worth INR 6,200 crore from the NABFID to pay back foreign bond investors owning bonds maturing in January and July next year.

- A) Adani Group
- B) Greenko
- C) Larsen & Toubro Limited
- D) REC Limited

129) Paytm Payments Bank has announced who among the following as managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO)?

- A) Ajith Kumar KK
- B) Arun Kumar Bansal
- C) Hitesh Kumar Sethia
- D) Rakesh Singh

130) When the International Malala Day was observed?

- A) 11 July
- B) 12 July
- C) 13 July
- D) 14 July

131) _____ have been named the top-performing states in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023-24.

- A) Tamil Nadu & Rajasthan
- B) Madhya Pradesh & Odisha



- C) Kerala & Uttarakhand
- D) Bihar & Jharkhand

132) _____ has created the SIDH (Skilling India Digital Hub) Portal by which the beneficiaries will receive complete information about what schemes running for them.

- A) Ministry of Communication
- B) Ministry of Education
- C) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- D) Ministry of Labour and Employment

133) _____ has clarified that the interest equalisation will be capped at Rs 1.66 crore per IEC (import-export code) for the July 1-August 31 period.

- A) Ministry of Commerce
- B) Ministry of External Affairs
- C) Ministry of Finance
- D) Ministry of Heavy Industries

134) Which of the following multi-national exercise is being held in Australia from 12th July to 2nd August 2024?

- A) Exercise Pitch Black 2024
- B) Exercise Poorvi Lehar 2024
- C) Exercise SHAKTI 2024
- D) Exercise Tiger Triumph 2024

135) Who among the following was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of BSNL?

- A) Atul Kumar Chaudhary
- B) Hitesh Kumar Sethia
- C) Manoj Jain
- D) Robert Jerard Ravi

136) _____ announced the launch of the GearShift Challenge to foster innovative business models for the adoption of zero-emission trucks (ZETs) in India.

- A) Defence Research and Development Organisation
- B) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- C) Ministry of Science and Technology
- D) NITI Aayog

137) Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched _____ with an aim to integrate farmers and sellers, enhancing agricultural connectivity in the North Eastern Region

- A) Krishi Paratha
- B) Krishi Rakshak
- C) NERACE
- D) Van Mitra

138) Government of India has marked _____ anniversary of the Skill India Mission on 15th July 2024.

- A) 25
- B) 15
- C) 09
- D) 05

139) India is expected to reach its peak population of 1.701 billion in 2062 said a report released by _____.

- A) UN DESA
- B) UNDP
- C) UNESCO
- D) UNGA

140) Which of the following country has signed an MoU with India to implement four Community Development Projects?

- A) Marshall Islands
- B) Mauritius
- C) Sri Lanka
- D) Tuvalu

141) _____ has notified the fifth Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) consisting 346 defence items in a major boost to self-reliance in defence production.

- A) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- B) Ministry of Defence
- C) Ministry of Finance
- D) Ministry of Home Affairs

142) India saw the highest 163 per cent growth globally in generating electronic waste between 2010 and 2022, said a report published by _____.

- A) IUCN
- B) UNCTAD
- C) UNEP
- D) UNFCCC

143) The Union Ministry of Education and _____ have started ASMITA, a project to create 22,000 books in Indian languages in five years.

- A) Ministry of Agriculture

- B) Policy Commission
- C) UGC
- D) None of the above

144) Who among the following was awarded the COSPAR Harrie Massey Award 2024?

- A) Srinivas Hedge
- B) Shrinivas Ramchandra Kulkarni
- C) Prahlad Chandra Agrawal
- D) Pavuluri Subba Rao

145) The International Olympic Committee (IOC) along with which of the following country have struck a 12-year commercial deal to host the first Esports Olympics?

- A) Uzbekistan
- B) Singapore
- C) Saudi Arabia
- D) Hungary

146) What recent law was passed by Turkey's parliament on July 29, 2024?

- A) Mandatory adoption of stray dogs
- B) Euthanasia of certain stray dogs
- C) Ban on dog ownership
- D) Mandatory sterilization of all pets

147) Which organization partnered with Sinergium Biotech to develop mRNA vaccines for H5N1 bird flu?

- A) World Health Organization (WHO)
- B) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- C) Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- D) United Nations (UN)

148) Where was India's first sunken museum inaugurated?

- A) Red Fort
- B) Humayun's Tomb
- C) Taj Mahal
- D) Qutub Minar

149) Which site in Japan was recently added to the UNESCO World Heritage List?

- A) Hiroshima Peace Memorial
- B) Kyoto's Historic Monuments
- C) Sado gold and silver mines
- D) Mount Fuji

150) Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd partnered with which bank for financing solar and EV infrastructure?

- A) State Bank of India
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Bank of India

ANSWERS

1) Correct Answer: B

International Asteroid Day is observed on June 30 to commemorate the Tunguska event in 1908, where a large explosion caused by an asteroid or comet impact occurred over Siberia, Russia. The United Nations established this day to educate the public about the potential dangers of asteroid impacts and to promote global awareness and preparedness.

2) Correct Answer: B

Dr. Usha Thakur received the prestigious 12th Vishwa Hindi Samman for her significant contributions to the promotion and development of Hindi literature. Her work includes translating over 40 pieces of literature into Hindi and Nepali, strengthening cultural and linguistic ties between these languages. The award was presented

to her in Kathmandu as she could not attend the event in Fiji.

3) Correct Answer: B

The Reserve Bank of India, in agreement with the Government of India, introduced a revised Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC countries. This arrangement allows SAARC central banks to access financial support in the form of currency swaps, with a total corpus of ₹250 billion in rupee support and additional provisions for US Dollar and Euro swaps.

4) Correct Answer: B

HDFC Life's 'Bridge the Gap' campaign is designed to raise awareness about the importance and benefits of life insurance in India. The initiative includes on-ground activities and digital content, such as chat shows in

collaboration with ET NOW, to educate the public on various aspects of financial planning and life insurance.

5) Correct Answer: C

António Costa, the former Prime Minister of Portugal, was elected as the President of the European Council. Costa, known for his efforts to revitalize Lisbon and Portugal, is the first Portuguese leader to hold this prestigious position. He is also recognized for his Indian heritage and received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman in 2017.

6) Correct Answer: C

From June 15 to 21, Punjab Police, in partnership with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs), launched "Mission Nishchay," a one-week anti-drug campaign in Fazilka district. The effort sought to increase community participation in combating the drug problem, with a particular emphasis on young and women.

7) Correct Answer: A

The World Bank will lend support to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) to achieve sustainable waste management in the city. At a meeting the World Bank held discussions on solid waste management with officials of the State government and the GCC to stop waste dumping in Kodungaiyur by 2026-2027.

8) Correct Answer: D

The second annual meeting of the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) between India and the US was held in New Delhi. During the two-day meeting, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his US counterpart Jake Sullivan reviewed the entire spectrum of Indo-US strategic ties.

9) Correct Answer: A

The central government has given a year-long extension to the Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS) meant for digitising patients' health records and linking them with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Account (ABHA ID). The scheme, which was launched on January 1, 2023, will now remain in effect till June 30, 2025.

10) Correct Answer: B

World Sickle Cell Day is observed on June 19 every year. It is an annual event which aims to raise awareness about

sickle cell disease globally. In 2024, the theme for World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is "Hope Through Progress: Advancing Sickle Cell Care Globally."

11) Correct Answer: B

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) extended the license of Maharishi Valmiki International Airport at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. The total duration of the license of the Maharishi Valmiki International Airport is five years now.

12) Correct Answer: C

India has been ranked 63rd on a global Energy Transition Index released on June 19 by the World Economic Forum. European nations dominated the top ranks with Sweden topping the index, followed by Denmark, Finland, Switzerland and France in the top five. China was ranked 20th.

13) Correct Answer: C

Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has joined hands with Mastercard to promote cooperation and information sharing in the area of Cyber security related to the financial sector. The two have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under which they will leverage their shared expertise with regards to financial sector in the fields of cybersecurity incident response, capacity building, sharing cyber threat intelligence specific to financial sector and advanced malware analysis.

14) Correct Answer: C

NSE's index services subsidiary, NSE Indices has launched a new thematic index called Nifty India Tourism which will track the performance of stocks in Nifty 500 index representing the travel and tourism theme. The base date for the index is April 1, 2005 and the base value is 1,000.

15) Correct Answer: B

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh assumes the charge as Chairman of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) for the third consecutive term. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Jitendra Singh praised the institution for its dedication, Commitment and contribution in the field of Statistics, Public Policy and administration.

16) Correct Answer: C

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) introduced two new guidelines aimed at enhancing the safety of electric vehicles in the L, M, and N categories. These new sets of rules, called IS 18590: 2024 and IS 18606: 2024, focus on the main parts of electric cars, buses, and trucks, especially the powertrain.

17) Correct Answer: A

Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Indian Army and Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER), an autonomous Research and Development laboratory under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to advance collaboration in 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies for Indian Army'.

18) Correct Answer: D

The seven-member high level committee Headed by K. Radhakrishnan to reform the working of the National Testing Agency (NTA) constituted by the Ministry of Education convened for its first meeting on June 24 evening in New Delhi.

19) Correct Answer: C

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar along with Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe jointly unveiled the virtual plaque to mark the formal commissioning of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre built with a USD 6 million grant from India.

20) Correct Answer: A

Om Birla was elected Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha defeating Kodikunnil Suresh of the Congress in a voice vote. In keeping with parliamentary tradition, Mr. Rahul Gandhi walked across the aisle to congratulate Mr. Birla, shook hands with Mr. Modi and escorted the Speaker to his Chair along with the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju.

21) Correct Answer: B

The Hurun Research Institute has recently released the ASK Private Wealth Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2024 that stated India is currently home to 67 unicorns, 46 gazelles, and 106 cheetahs, as against 68 unicorns, 51 gazelles, and 96 cheetahs in the 2023 index.

22) Correct Answer: B

One of the world's rarest cats, the Iberian lynx, is no longer classed as endangered, according to a report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). IUCN bumped the Iberian lynx from "endangered" to "vulnerable" after a significant surge in numbers.

23) Correct Answer: C

Mirae Asset Investment Managers has unveiled the 'Mirae Asset Nifty EV and New Age Automotive ETF,' India's first Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) dedicated to the burgeoning Electric Vehicles (EV) and New Age Automotive segment.

24) Correct Answer: D

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India plummeted by 43 per cent in 2023 to \$28 billion amid a global decline of 2 per cent, a report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said. While India dropped to 15th spot in 2023 from 8th position in 2022 in terms of FDI inflows, it remained in the Top-5 for both kinds of FDI.

25) Correct Answer: B

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB), sponsored by Canara Bank, has received the national award for significant enrolment under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)

26) Correct Answer: A

Last day India ascended one spot from the ninth to the eighth rank in the medal tally. Overall, India's medal tally increased to 29, including three gold, six silver, and 20 bronze medals. Russian Federation with 262 gold, 141 silver, and 99 bronze medals continues to stay on top of the tally.

27) Correct Answer: D

India concluded their campaign at the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman, Jordan, on a resounding note. The young Indian contingent clinched a total of 11 medals, including four gold, two silver, and five bronze medals.

28) Correct Answer: D

Srihari Nataraj and Dhinidhi Desinghu were qualified the 2024 Paris Olympics via the Universality places

qualification system, which allows countries to recommend their two highest ranked swimmers for the showpiece if none makes the cut through the regulation process.

29) Correct Answer: A

Bharat Centre of Olympic Research and Education was inaugurated at the Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) in Gujarat's Gandhinagar district. The centre will serve as a repository of knowledge, housing invaluable data and insights in Olympics, training methodologies, sports science and athlete development.

30) Correct Answer: C

The Commission for Air Quality Management in the national capital region and adjoining areas (CAQM) has set a target of 4.5 crore plantations by different agencies in the entire NCR in 2024-25. There has been a decrease in annual plantation target of Delhi in the current financial year, but targets for Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan have all increased.

31) Correct Answer: B

Dhiraj Bommadevara picked up two bronze medals on the final day of Archery World Cup Stage III at Antalya, Turkey. The women's compound team of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Aditi Swami and Parneet Kaur bagged the gold, while Priyansh clinched the silver in compound individual event.

32) Correct Answer: A

Observed annually on 23 June, International Olympic Day commemorates the founding of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894. The theme of this year's Olympic Day is 'Let's Move and Celebrate' to inspire and encourage people to embrace the joy of movement this summer.

33) Correct Answer: C

TDP's Narsipatnam MLA C Ayyannapatrudu was elected unanimously as the Speaker of the 16th Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. Only three nominations were received for the Speaker's post, and they all were on behalf of Ayyannapatrudu, said PPK Ramacharyulu, secretary general, Legislative Assembly.

34) Correct Answer: B

India has organised a global event in sugar sector 'ISO Council Meeting' in New Delhi from 25th till 27th June, 2024. International Sugar Organisation (ISO) is a UN affiliated body having HQ at London. ISO has about 85 countries as members covering almost 90% of sugar production in the World.

35) Correct Answer: C

ICICI Bank has introduced in its banking app a new security feature called 'SmartLock', allowing customers to instantly lock or unlock various banking services without the need for customer care assistance via phone or email. This feature is accessible on iMobile Pay and enables customers to manage access to internet banking, UPI, credit and debit cards, and the entire iMobile Pay app.

36) Correct Answer: C

Every year, on June 25th, the international maritime community comes together to celebrate the International Day of the Seafarer. This special day is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the invaluable contributions of seafarers to the world economy and our everyday lives.

37) Correct Answer: C

Muthoot Microfin has secured a corporate agent license from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). This license strengthens Muthoot Microfin's commitment to financial inclusion by providing insurance coverage that addresses the risks faced by the most vulnerable segments of society.

38) Correct Answer: B

India recorded a current account surplus of \$5.7 billion or 0.6% of GDP in the March quarter, the Reserve Bank of India said on June 24. In the year-ago period, the current account deficit stood at \$1.3 billion or 0.2% of GDP, and the same was \$8.7 billion or 1% of GDP in the preceding quarter ending December 2023.

39) Correct Answer: A

Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Tapan Kumar Deka was given a one-year extension till June 2025, according to a Personnel Ministry order. Deka is a 1988-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre.

40) Correct Answer: A

Veteran bureaucrat Bharat Lal was given one-year extension as secretary general of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Lal, a 1988 batch (retired) Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officer of the Gujarat cadre, was in June last year appointed to the post.

41) Correct Answer: D

Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India has elevated Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), India's premier warship and submarine builders to Navratna category. The company posted a consolidated annual turnover of Rs. 9,467 crore and net profit of Rs. 1845 crore for the FY 2023-24.

42) Correct Answer: A

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh announced the grant of "Mini RATNA" status (Category-1) for Central Electronics Ltd (CEL) at its Golden Jubilee celebration at the Ghaziabad campus. Dr Singh congratulated CEL on completion of 50 years in the service of the nation and now celebrating its Golden Jubilee on 26th June this year.

43) Correct Answer: C

The Ministry of Education has unveiled a comprehensive plan to create tobacco-free educational institutions across the nation. On World No Tobacco Day, observed on May 31, 2024, the Department of School Education & Literacy launched the "ToFEI Implementation Manual." This manual, developed under the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), aims to guide schools in complying with Tobacco Free Educational Institution (ToFEI) guidelines.

44) Correct Answer: D

HDFC Bank has launched a new digital investment platform to take wealth services to every Indian and make investments simple and transparent. Incorporating cutting-edge technology, the HDFC Bank 'SmartWealth' comes loaded with first-ever features that allow investors to make the right investment decisions and plan their financial journey.

45) Correct Answer: D

State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank has signed an initial agreement with the Indian Army on defence salary package which will come with a host of facilities,

including free insurance cover. Besides many features, the MoU provides the serving personnel, veterans and trainees with personal accident insurance (Death/Disability) cover up to Rs 1 crore and an air accidental cover of Rs 1.2 crore.

46) Correct Answer: D

Economist intelligence unit (EIU) has rated Vienna, the capital city of Austria, as the most liveable city in the world in its annual Global Liveability Index. This is the third consecutive year Vienna has been ranked number one, according to EIU.

47) Correct Answer: A

The Reserve Bank of India and ASEAN countries have decided to create a platform to facilitate instant cross-border retail payments. In a statement, RBI said it has joined the Project Nexus, a multilateral international initiative to enable instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic fast payments systems (FPSs).

48) Correct Answer: A

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a USD 60 million nonconvertible debentures financing agreement, disbursing USD 30 million to Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) to provide housing loans to women and address the shortage of financing in the low-income and affordable housing segment in India.

49) Correct Answer: B

Japan has hit the jackpot by finding huge mineral deposits near an isolated island in the country's exclusive economic zone. According to researchers, the mineral resources found on the seabed near Minami-Torishima are enough to meet the country's cobalt consumption needs for 75 years, and it also has over a decade's supply of nickel.

50) Correct Answer: D

Hitachi Payment Services has announced that it has received the final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator, under the Payments and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

51) Correct Answer: A

Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the web portal developed jointly by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers'

Welfare (DA&FW) and NABARD to automate and speed up the process of settlement of interest subvention claims of banks submitted under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF).

52) Correct Answer: B

Paraguay has become the 100th country to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as a full member. The ISA, co-founded by India and France during the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, aims to promote solar energy deployment worldwide.

53) Correct Answer: B

The RBI said it has imposed a penalty of ₹29.6 lakh on The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) for non-compliance with certain directions related to cards. RBI said a Statutory Inspection for Supervisory Evaluation (ISE 2022) of the bank was conducted by it with reference to its financial position as on March 31, 2022.

54) Correct Answer: B

National Statistics Day is celebrated on June 29 every year to acknowledge and appreciate the exceptional contributions made by statisticians in India, particularly honoring the birth anniversary of eminent statistician (Late) Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis. For 2024, the theme is "Use of Data for Decision Making".

55) Correct Answer: C

Every year, World Allergy Week is observed to create awareness. From June 23 to June 29, the World Allergy Week is observed annually to spread awareness about such complications and help eradicate them. Allergies are on the rise in both developed and developing nations, so it's important to educate people about the measures they can take to reduce their risk.

56) Correct Answer: A

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has launched two geoportals namely 'Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver 4.0)' portal for rural land records and "National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver 5.0)" developed by Indian Space research Organization (ISRO), at Prithvi Bhavan, New Delhi.

57) Correct Answer: A

The Borneo elephant has been added to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's 'Red List of Threatened Species.' Entering the list for the first time with an immediate grading of 'Endangered', the rare subspecies is estimated to have as little as 1,000 individuals left.

58) Correct Answer: D

The World Bank has approved \$1.5 billion in financing to help India accelerate the development of low-carbon energy. The financing is extended for a second operation to promote the development of a vibrant market for green hydrogen, continue to scale up renewable energy, and stimulate finance for low-carbon energy investments

59) Correct Answer: A

Capital market regulator SEBI increased a threshold applicable to basic service demat accounts by five times to Rs 10 lakh from the existing Rs 2 lakh, in a move aimed at enhancing investor participation. SEBI said that the new guidelines will take effect from September 1.

60) Correct Answer: B

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has entered into an agreement with the German state-owned development bank KfW to raise over Rs 850 crore to support development of urban infrastructure.

61) Correct Answer: A

There will be a seven-day waiting period after the SIM swap or replacement for a mobile number to become eligible for porting, telecom regulator TRAI said. Earlier, there was a waiting period of 10 days in case a sim is swapped but the regulator has now reduced it to 7 days in the latest amendment.

62) Correct Answer: D

The Ministry Of Statistics And Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has constituted a 26-member Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics (ACNAS) chaired by Biswanath Goldar to recommend a new base year for GDP data, according to an official notification.

63) Correct Answer: B

The World Bank said remittances to India are forecasted to grow at 3.7 per cent to USD 124 billion in 2024. India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, which is almost twice of USD 66 billion received by Mexico during the same period, the World Bank said in a report released.

64) Correct Answer: B

Ravi Agrawal, a 1988-batch IRS officer, has been appointed as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the administrative body for the Income Tax Department. He takes over from Nitin Gupta, a 1986-batch Indian Revenue Service officer, whose extended tenure as the chairman ended on June 30.

65) Correct Answer: C

Japan deployed an upgraded Earth observation satellite for disaster response and security after it was launched on a new flagship H3 rocket. The Advanced Land Observation Satellite, or ALOS-4, is tasked primarily with Earth observation and data collection for disaster response and mapmaking.

66) Correct Answer: D

India has made history by preparing a comprehensive checklist of its entire fauna, covering 1,04,561 species, becoming the first country in the world to achieve this feat. The 'Fauna of India Checklist Portal' was launched on the occasion of the 109th Foundation Day of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Kolkata by Union environment minister Bhupender Yadav.

67) Correct Answer: C

The Reserve Bank of India and ASEAN countries have decided to create a platform to facilitate instant cross-border retail payments. In a statement, RBI said it has joined the Project Nexus, a multilateral international initiative to enable instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic fast payments systems (FPSs).

68) Correct Answer: C

Public sector lender State Bank of India (SBI) has announced MSME Sahaj, an online business loan solution for MSMEs to avail credit against their Goods and Services Tax (GST) registered sales invoices of up to Rs 1 lakh. SBI said the new solution will have a turnaround time of less than 15 minutes, from applying for the loan

to documentation and disbursement of the amount without any manual intervention.

69) Correct Answer: B

Challa Sreenivasulu Setty has been selected as the next chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) by the Financial Services Institution Bureau (FSIB), an arm of the central government. The two other contenders were Ashwini Tiwari and Vinay Tonse. Setty will succeed current chairman Dinesh Khara, whose term ends on August 28.

70) Correct Answer: B

South African Revenue Service (SARS) Commissioner Edward Kieswetter was recently reinstated as Chairperson of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a second straight term (2024-2025). He was appointed by the WCO Council, the organization's highest decision-making body, at its 143rd/144th session, which took place in Brussels, Belgium.

71) Correct Answer: C

Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed an MoU to establish three state-of-the-art testing facilities in Chennai under the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor - one each in Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), Electronic Warfare (EW) and Electro Optics (EO) domains.

72) Correct Answer: B

Powered by Coal India Limited the NIRMAN (Noble Initiative for Rewarding Mains Aspirants of National Civil Services Examination) portal aims to offer Rs 1 lakh to eligible candidates of the UPSC examination. The financial support of Rs 1 lakh will be provided to the UPSC examination qualified candidates, who have an annual family income of less than Rs 800,000.

73) Correct Answer: B

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released an Artificial Intelligence Preparedness Index (AIPI) Dashboard on their website, tracking 174 economies globally for AI readiness. India ranks 72 in a total of 174 countries, with Bangladesh (0.38) on 113, Sri Lanka (0.43) on 92, and China (0.63) on 31.

74) Correct Answer: C

Indian multi-role stealth frigate INS Shivalik was in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii to take part in the Rim of the Pacific

(RIMPAC) exercise, world's largest naval exercise from 27 Jun to 07 Jul 2024. INS Shivalik sailed into Pearl Harbour on 27 June on completion of JIMEX-24, a bilateral exercise between India and Japan.

75) Correct Answer: C

ICICI Bank announced the launch of the 'Student Sapphiro Forex Card', a premium prepaid forex card designed for Indian students pursuing higher education abroad. Powered by Visa, the card offers a range of benefits aimed at making overseas financial management simpler for students and their parents, the bank said in its press release.

76) Correct Answer: B

The Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan governments has signed an agreement for the implementation of the Rs 72,000 crore Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal river linking project. The link project will help utilise the available water resources of the Chambal basin optimally and economically.

77) Correct Answer: A

The 16th edition of India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT is being held at Foreign Training Node, Umroi (Meghalaya). The Exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 03rd to 16th July 2024. Indian contingent comprising of 45 personnel is being represented by a Battalion of SIKKIM SCOUTS along with personnel from other arms and services.

78) Correct Answer: C

The Union Ministry of Rural Development and Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME), in the spirit of a whole-of-government approach, signed a Statement of Intent (Sol) to collaborate on formalizing and strengthening Self Help Group (SHG) women-led rural enterprises through MoMSME's flagship schemes.

79) Correct Answer: C

The Union housing and urban affairs ministry said it has extended the deadline for the Smart Cities Mission till March 2025, allowing cities to complete ongoing projects, which account for around 10 per cent of the total projects. In a statement, the ministry said the mission has been getting multiple requests from some

states to grant some more time to complete the remaining projects.

80) Correct Answer: B

Japan issued its first new banknotes in two decades, yen packed with 3D hologram technology to fight counterfeiting. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida praised as historic the state-of-the-art anti-counterfeit traits of the new 10,000 yen, 5,000 yen and 1,000 yen bills.

81) Correct Answer: D

NITI Aayog launched a nationwide campaign namely 'Sampoornata Abhiyan' with a focus to attain saturation in 12 key social sector indicators in 500 aspirational blocks and 112 aspirational districts. 3-month campaign from 4th July – 30th September 2024 also included organising camps emphasizing the key indicators of the campaign as in Ratlam and Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh.

82) Correct Answer: B

Indian Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari has inaugurated the newly established Weapon Systems School (WSS) at Air Force Station Begumpet, Hyderabad. This follows the approval for the creation of a new Weapon System (WS) branch in 2022.

83) Correct Answer: D

In the Mercer's Cost of Living City rankings for 2024 report, Mumbai claimed the top spot in India, rising 11 places to 136th position, establishing itself as the priciest city in the country for expats. Delhi closely follows suit, climbing four places to secure 165th position.

84) Correct Answer: C

Indian Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi was on an official visit to Bangladesh for four days from July 1 to 4. The visit was aimed at consolidating bilateral defence relations between India and Bangladesh and exploring new avenues for Naval cooperation, a Navy press release said.

85) Correct Answer: A

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has admitted Belarus as the 10th member of the group. Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and the hosts of the Summit congratulated Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on this occasion.

86) Correct Answer: B

The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and TransUnion CIBIL have launched SEHER, a credit education program to enhance financial literacy and business skills among women entrepreneurs. This initiative aims to provide vital support, enabling women to access the financial tools needed for business growth and job creation.

87) Correct Answer: C

The government has made it mandatory for stainless steel and aluminium kitchen utensils to conform to national quality standards, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) said, in a move aimed at enhancing consumer safety and product quality.

88) Correct Answer: C

A commemorative coin of Rs 100 was released to mark the 101st birth anniversary of late Jawaharlal Darda, freedom fighter and Founder-Editor of the Lokmat Media Group, with Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde stating that late leader was "a real gem" from the state.

89) Correct Answer: B

The Union rural development ministry signed an MoU with a company to facilitate sustainable transport for members of women self-help groups by providing e-bicycles. The agreement was signed with the Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) for sustainable transport for rural entrepreneurs through electric bicycles (STREE) for the SHGs that come under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).

90) Correct Answer: A

For the first National Space Day, which will fall on August 23, to commemorate the safe landing of the Vikram Lander near the southern polar region of the moon, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be organising Bharatiya Antariksh Hackathon.

91) Correct Answer: D

CyberPeace Foundation along with the National Commission for Women, launched the fifth phase of the Digital Shakti Campaign, a pan-India project on digitally empowering and upskilling women and girls in cyberspace.

92) Correct Answer: D

In further strengthening the role of the Kiren Rijju-led Ministry of Minority Affairs, the government notified the latter as a nodal ministry instead of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), for the Haj Committee. Earlier, the work related to management of Haj pilgrimage, including administration of the Haj Committee Act, 2002, and rules made thereunder was handled by the MEA.

93) Correct Answer: A

Project PARI (Public Art of India), an initiative by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, being executed by Lalit Kala Akademi and National Gallery of Modern Art for the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting, seeks to bring forth public art that draws inspiration from millennia of artistic heritage (lok kala/lok sanskriti) while incorporating modern themes and techniques.

94) Correct Answer: C

India's annual defence production has hit a record high of approximately ₹1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, with the Make in India programme crossing new milestones, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said. The value of defence production in FY 2022-23 was ₹1,08,684 crore.

95) Correct Answer: B

Iran's Masoud Pezeshkian will be sworn in before parliament in early August as the Islamic republic's ninth president, state media reported. Iran's president is not head of state, and the ultimate authority rests with the supreme leader -- a post held by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for the last 35 years.

96) Correct Answer: D

The country's employment rate grew by 6 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024 from a growth of 3.2 per cent in 2022-23, according to the Reserve Bank of India's data. Employment in the country increased by 4.67 crore to 64.33 crore (provisional) in the fiscal year 2023-24, from 59.67 crore in 2022-23.

97) Correct Answer: C

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved India to sign the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement. The BBNJ Agreement, or the 'High Seas Treaty', is an international treaty under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

98) Correct Answer: C

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry and National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in New Delhi for the development of framework and assessment of logistics cost in India.

99) Correct Answer: A

Exim Bank has inked an agreement with the Guyana government to extend an India-supported line of credit (LoC) of USD 2.50 million for the installation of a solar photo voltaic power plant at Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana.

100) Correct Answer: A

Tata Asset Management Company on July 8 launched the nation's first tourism index fund, comprising a collection of companies forming part of the Nifty 500. The Tata Nifty India Tourism Index Fund will track the Nifty India Tourism Index. The NFO was closed on July 19, 2024.

101) Correct Answer: A

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) took a significant step towards empowering persons with disabilities by signing two important Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). The first MoU was signed between "DEPwD" and "Enable Me" Access Association (EMA), and the second MoU was signed between the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Center (ISLRTC) and YUNIKEE.

102) Correct Answer: D

World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced an online platform called MeDevIS (Medical Devices Information System), the first global open access clearing house for information on medical devices. It is designed to support governments, regulators and users in their decision-making on selection, procurement and use of medical devices for diagnostics, testing and treatment of diseases and health conditions.

103) Correct Answer: A

The Expat Insider 2024 survey, conducted by InterNations, drew participation from over 12,000 expatriates across 174 countries, offering a comprehensive view of expat life worldwide. The

rankings revealed Vietnam as the most affordable country for immigrants, securing the top position for the fourth consecutive year.

104) Correct Answer: D

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has introduced a new security feature 'Safety Ring' within its internet banking system and mobile banking system in response to the increasing number of cyber frauds. This mechanism provides an additional safety layer to minimise potential losses in case of unauthorised access by fraudsters.

105) Correct Answer: A

ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund has launched the ICICI Prudential Nifty Oil & Gas ETF, India's first exchange traded fund (ETF) in the oil and gas sector. The scheme will track the Nifty Oil & Gas TRI, an index that reflects the performance of listed sector companies.

106) Correct Answer: C

Secretary of State for Defence Sanjay Seth launched the "GRSE Accelerated Innovation Nurturing Scheme (GAINS 2024)" of Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) in Kolkata. This innovative scheme aims to address challenges in the shipbuilding industry and promote technological advancements by leveraging the expertise of start-ups and MSMEs in the country.

107) Correct Answer: D

Between FY14 and FY23, India generated 125 million jobs, which is 4.3 times more than the preceding decadal period of FY04-FY14, a State Bank of India (SBI) report showed. Besides, the report also noted that the total employment reported by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) registered with the MSME Ministry has crossed 200 million.

108) Correct Answer: C

The UN agency tackling crime and drug abuse (UNODC) released its annual World Drug Report in June 2024 warning that there are now nearly 300 million users globally, alongside an increase in trafficking. In 2022, cocaine production hit a record high with 2,757 tons produced – a 20 per cent increase from 2021.

109) Correct Answer: D

At an International Conference on Soils in Agadir, Morocco, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) introduced the New World Soil Health Index, which will create global standards for assessing soil health. The meeting, organized by UNESCO and the Kingdom of Morocco's National Agency for the Development of Oasis and Argan Zones (ANDZOA), drew specialists and delegates from over 30 nations.

110) Correct Answer: D

Muthoot Finance said it was the only Indian NBFC to be selected for The Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) Mutual Evaluation report 2023-24. "This selection from FATF is a significant achievement for us and is testimony to Muthoot Finance's legacy as a trusted brand not just in India, but globally," Muthoot Finance MD George Alexander said in a statement.

111) Correct Answer: D

The National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Spices Board of India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop Artificial intelligence (AI) tools for detecting and classifying large cardamom diseases in Sikkim. The project, spearheaded by NIC's Centre of Excellence in AI in Kolkata, aims to analyze images of cardamom leaves to identify diseases early.

112) Correct Answer: A

The 24th Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State (SCO Summit) was held on 04 July 2024 in Astana, under the presidency of Kazakhstan. External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar lead the Indian delegation to Astana for the Summit.

113) Correct Answer: B

The 46th session of the World Heritage Committee is being held in New Delhi, India from 21-31 July 2024. The meeting is a significant step towards fostering global cooperation and ensuring the protection of our World Heritage properties.

114) Correct Answer: B

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav launched the 'Lokpath Mobile App', through which road problems of the public will be resolved in seven days. The mobile app will provide a facility for the general public to report

problems on the routes and will also ensure the accountability of the officers.

115) Correct Answer: D

The four-day Global Conclave on Plastic Recycling and Sustainability (GCPRS) was held at the Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from 04 July. India's plastic recycling industry is rapidly growing, and is expected to reach \$6.9 billion by 2033.

116) Correct Answer: D

India's Dhruv Sitwala and Anupama Ramachandran clinched the men's Asian billiards and women's snooker titles in the Asian championships in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia recently. Dhruv set the tone for the match with an impressive start, scoring 103 points while Pankaj Advani struggled to get on the board, finishing with 0 points.

117) Correct Answer: A

India won two titles in the Asian doubles squash championships, which concluded in Johor (Malaysia), with Abhay Singh recording a 'double'. Abhay Singh and Velavan Senthilkumar were crowned the men's doubles champions before Abhay Singh combined with Joshna Chinappa for the mixed doubles crown.

118) Correct Answer: D

The Vizhinjam International Sea Port, India's largest transshipment port in Kerala, has welcomed its first container ship, a large cargo vessel named 'San Fernando' from China. The ship, with a capacity of 8,000 to 9,000 TEUs, is owned by the prominent shipping company Maersk and arrived from Xiamen Port in China.

119) Correct Answer: A

LIC announced the launch of 'Jeevan Samarth', an initiative aimed at transforming the agency ecosystem. To achieve this, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has partnered with AT Kearney, which will undertake this agency transformation project by reviewing its existing agency framework on an end-to-end basis.

120) Correct Answer: B

Labour Party has won the UK general election in a landslide. The new Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, pledged to steer the country towards "calmer waters" in his first address to the nation. The outgoing PM, Rishi Sunak,

pledged to resign as party leader. Several cabinet ministers lost their seats, as did former PM Liz Truss.

121) Correct Answer: C

Senior IAS officer Pankaj Agarwal was appointed the chief electoral officer of Haryana. "Pankaj Agarwal (2000 batch officer) has been posted as Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana and Commissioner and Secretary to Government, Elections Department," an official statement said.

122) Correct Answer: C

Hero of India's victorious T20 World Cup campaign, Jasprit Bumrah added another feather to his cap when he was named the 'ICC Men's Player of the Month for June'. It was double delight for India as women's team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana was also named the 'Women's Player of the Month' by the global body.

123) Correct Answer: A

Tata Power Solar Systems Limited launched a transformative rooftop solar initiative aimed at powering every home in Uttar Pradesh (UP) with clean energy. Starting from Varanasi, the ambitious initiative of 'Ghar Ghar Solar, Tata Power ke Sang' promises substantial financial savings and environmental benefits for residents through state-of-the-art Rooftop Solar Solutions (RTS).

124) Correct Answer: B

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was officially presented with Russia's highest civilian honor, the Order of St Andrew the Apostle the First-Called, by Russian President Vladimir Putin at a ceremony in St Catherine's Hall of the Moscow Kremlin.

125) Correct Answer: D

The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), a regional security grouping, officially welcomed Bangladesh as its fifth member state. The announcement came during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting, hosted virtually by Mauritius.

126) Correct Answer: B

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has initiated talks with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to jointly develop an 'AI Audit Tool' to track performance of corporate India and

detect corporate frauds, its President Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal has said.

127) Correct Answer: D

State-run REC Limited has secured a green loan amounting to JPY 31.96 billion (equivalent to \$200 million) from Deutsche Bank AG, GIFT City branch, marking a significant move towards financing sustainable development in India.

128) Correct Answer: B

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NABFID) has sanctioned Rs 6200 crore from which Greenko will use to pay back foreign bond investors for bonds maturing in January and July next year. Greenko has 7.5 gigawatts of installed solar and wind power capacity across 15 states in India.

129) Correct Answer: B

Paytm Payments Bank, a subsidiary of One97 Communications (OCL), has appointed Arun Kumar Bansal as its new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Bansal, previously with IDBI Bank, left his role as Executive Director and Head of Treasury at IDBI following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval of his new position.

130) Correct Answer: B

International Malala Day is observed every year on July 12 to celebrate the life and legacy of Pakistani education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai. A symbol of the fight for girls' education, Malala was first recognized globally on October 9, 2012, when she was shot in the head and neck by a Taliban gunman.

131) Correct Answer: C

Uttarakhand and Kerala have been named the top-performing states in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023-24, which measures the progress of states and union territories on social, economic, and environmental factors. Bihar was ranked as the worst performer. The NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023-24 shows that India's overall Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) score rose to 71 in 2023-24, up from 66 in 2020-21.

132) Correct Answer: C

Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary said the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has created the

SIDH (Skilling India Digital Hub) portal and the beneficiaries will receive complete information about all schemes running for them.

133) Correct Answer: A

The commerce ministry clarified that the interest equalisation will be capped at Rs 1.66 crore per IEC (import-export code) for the July 1-August 31 period. Last month, the government extended the interest equalisation scheme (IES) on pre- and post-shipment rupee export credit for two months to promote the country's outbound shipments.

134) Correct Answer: A

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is at the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Darwin, to participate in Exercise Pitch Black 2024. Scheduled from July 12 to August 2, this biennial multinational exercise will bring together 20 countries, featuring over 140 aircraft and 4,400 military personnel.

135) Correct Answer: D

The government has appointed Robert Jerard Ravi as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) effective July 15, denying extension to outgoing PK Purwar, who served as the CMD of BSNL and MTNL since July 2019.

136) Correct Answer: D

In a bid to zero-emission trucks (ZETs) adoption in the country, NITI Aayog in collaboration with IIM Bangalore, Smart Freight Centre India, CALSTART/Drive to Zero and WRI India announced the launch of the NITI GearShift Challenge as part of the e-FAST India initiative.

137) Correct Answer: C

Union Minister for the Development of the North East Region Jyotiraditya Scindia has launched the North East Region Agri Commodity E-Connect (NERACE) designed to benefit the farmers of the region and help position it as a hub of high-value horticultural products in the international market.

138) Correct Answer: C

The 9th anniversary of the Skill India Mission was marked on July 15, 2024. The National Skill Development Mission, popularly known as the Skill India Mission, was started on this day in 2015. Skill India is a national

government effort that aims to provide skill sets to young people in order to increase their employability.

139) Correct Answer: A

India's peak population is likely to be 1.701 billion, and the country is expected to reach that mark in 2062, according to the World Population Prospects report published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The report also showed that currently, India is the most populous country in the world. It is home to 1.451 billion people.

140) Correct Answer: A

External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar said India and the Marshall Islands have signed an MoU for the implementation of Four Community Development Projects in the Marshall Islands. Dr. Jaishankar said the islands in the Pacific are not small islands but large ocean countries.

141) Correct Answer: B

With the aim of boosting self-reliance in defence production and minimising imports by defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs), the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has notified a fifth positive indigenisation list (PIL) comprising 346 defence items.

142) Correct Answer: B

India saw the highest 163 per cent growth globally in generating electronic waste from screens, computers, and small IT and telecommunication equipment (SCSIT) between 2010 and 2022, according to a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report.

143) Correct Answer: C

The Union Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched a project to produce 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years. The Project titled ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian languages through Translation and Academic Writing) was launched by the secretary, Higher Education, Sanjay Murthy.

144) Correct Answer: C

Indian astrophysicist Prahlaad Chandra Agrawal, who has been involved with major Indian space programmes including the AstroSat space telescope and the

Chandrayaan 1 lunar mission, has been awarded the COSPAR Harrie Massey Award 2024. Mr. Agrawal received the award at the opening ceremony of the 45th COSPAR Scientific Assembly in Busan, South Korea, on July 15, 2024.

145) Correct Answer: C

Saudi Arabia and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have announced a 12-year agreement to host the new esports Olympics in the oil-rich kingdom starting next year. The partnership promises "Olympic Esports Games held regularly", the International Olympic Committee said in a statement.

146) Correct Answer: B

The Turkish parliament passed a law allowing the euthanasia of stray dogs deemed aggressive or unadoptable, intending to address public safety concerns. The legislation has sparked debate, with critics arguing that it is inhumane and advocating for alternatives like sterilization and adoption programs. The government, however, assures that the law will be applied selectively and humanely.

147) Correct Answer: A

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced a collaboration with Sinergium Biotech to expedite the development of mRNA vaccines for the H5N1 bird flu virus. This initiative aims to enhance vaccine availability,

particularly in low-income countries, to prevent potential pandemics and improve global preparedness.

148) Correct Answer: B

The first sunken museum in India was inaugurated at the Humayun's Tomb complex in Delhi. It features underground galleries that showcase artifacts and stories related to India's Mughal heritage. The museum is designed to blend with the historical environment, enhancing the visitor experience while preserving the architectural integrity of the UNESCO World Heritage site.

149) Correct Answer: C

The Sado gold and silver mines in Japan were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. These mines, which operated from the 17th century until 1989, are significant for their role in Japan's economic history. The recognition also acknowledges the complex history associated with the site, including issues of forced labor during World War II.

150) Correct Answer: D

Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd entered a strategic partnership with the Bank of India (BOI) to provide financing solutions for rooftop solar installations and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. This partnership aims to support India's renewable energy targets and make clean energy technologies more accessible and affordable.

SECTION 3

Detailed Analysis of Important Events



Economics

RBI proposes rationalising regulations on Export-Import Transactions



Why in the News?

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has suggested streamlining the laws controlling import and export activities. The intention is to facilitate business dealings and enable banks to offer their foreign exchange clients more effective services.

RBI Proposal and Directions

- The RBI issued 'Regulation of Foreign Trade under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999 – Draft Regulations and Directions.'
- Key propositions include:
 - Timeline for Repatriation: Within nine months of the date of goods shipment and the date of service invoicing, the entire export value of the items and services must be realized and returned to India.
 - Caution Listing: The authorized dealer may place an exporter on a caution list if they are unable to realize the full value within the allotted time.
 - Alert List of Exporters: Exporters on the caution list are only permitted to export after receiving a fully paid advance or an

irreversible letter of credit that satisfies the authorized dealer.

- Limitations on Advance Remittances: Unless the RBI has given its express approval, no advance remittance for the import of gold or silver is allowed.

Expected Benefits

- Ease of Doing Business: The goal of the proposed regulations is to make doing business easier, particularly for small importers and exporters.
- Empowerment of Banks: The rules are designed to enable authorized dealer banks to serve their foreign exchange clients more quickly and effectively.

About Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999

- The FEMA, 1999, regulates foreign exchange and trade in India.
- FEMA replaced the older Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), 1973.

How does FEMA regulate EXIM Transaction?

	Regulation under FEMA
Resident Indian Criteria	Defined in Section 2(v) of FEMA; A person residing in India for more than 182 days during the course of the preceding financial year.
Current Account Transactions	Permitted freely for EXIM activities, including trade payments and remittances.
Capital Account Transactions	Regulated by RBI, includes FDI in export-oriented units and overseas investments by Indian entities.
Documentation and Declarations	Exporters and importers must furnish declarations to RBI to ensure compliance and monitor foreign exchange.
Export Declarations	Declare the value of goods/services exported, expected earnings, and timeframe for realization.

Import Declarations	Provide details of goods/services imported, and foreign exchange spent, and ensure payments through authorized channels.
Authorized Dealers	Only RBI-approved dealers (banks/financial institutions) can handle foreign exchange transactions for EXIM.
Import Payment Regulations	Payments must be made through authorized channels within prescribed time limits, complying with DGFT terms.
Foreign Currency Accounts	Entities can maintain foreign currency accounts for efficient handling of foreign exchange for EXIM activities.

ICEA calls for reduction in Import Duties to Boost Mobile Phone Sector



Why in the News?

- In the upcoming Union budget, the Indian Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA), which represents domestic electronics makers, demanded a decrease in import levies.
 - The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) program and other supportive policies have made it clear that domestic demand will no longer drive the growth of the mobile phone industry, as the ICEA pointed out.

About India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA)

- The Indian mobile and electronics industry's interests are represented by the ICEA, the top trade association.
- It was founded in the year 2017.

- Through advocacy, the creation of policies, and strategic initiatives, it is essential in influencing policy and fostering the expansion of the sector.
- **Membership:**
 - Leading mobile handset makers, electronics manufacturers, and industry players make up ICEA.
 - This covers businesses in the electronics industry that are based in India as well as those worldwide.
- **Collaborations:**

ICEA works closely with government bodies, regulatory authorities, and other industry associations to align its initiatives with national economic goals.

ICEA's Key Demands

- **Reduction of Import Duties:** ICEA is advocating for lower import taxes on components used in the production of electronics, especially those used in the mobile phone industry.
 - India's manufacturing costs are rising by 7.5–7.5% on the bill of materials due to the current high tariffs.
- **Alignment with Global Standards:** Part of the need is to match tariffs with nations that have lower tariffs on fewer components, such as China and Vietnam.
- **Enhancement of Customs Procedures:** In order to avoid delays in the export of essential components, the ICEA is advocating for streamlined customs procedures.

Significance of ICEA's Demands

- Lower import taxes improve India's ability to compete, increase exports, encourage investment and job creation, close the trade deficit, and promote long-term growth in the country's electronics and mobile phone manufacturing industries.

Key Initiatives and Programs by ICEA

- **Electronics industrial Clusters:** To establish a strong supply chain and industrial foundation in India, ICEA encourages the growth of electronics manufacturing clusters.

- The association places a strong emphasis on the necessity of skill development in the electronics industry to guarantee a workforce with the necessary skills to sustain the industry's growth.
- R&D and Innovation: To preserve industry competitiveness and technological improvement, ICEA promotes R&D and innovation within the sector.

Women get only 7% MSME credit: RBI ED



Why in the News?

- Neeraj Nigam, executive director of the Reserve Bank, emphasized that women's low labor force participation is a major obstacle to financial inclusion and overall economic growth.
- He brought up the fact that women-owned businesses only receive 7% of all loans made to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Barriers to Financial Inclusion

- Economic Participation: Nigam underlined that more female involvement in the economy is necessary for both financial inclusion and economic expansion.
- Involvement Disparity: According to official figures, women's involvement in the labor force was 32.8% in FY22, while men's participation was over 77%.
- Credit Disparity: Women-owned companies make up over 25% of MSMEs, but women only get 7% of the total credit that is extended to this industry, which is a huge discrepancy.

Efforts and Challenges in Financial Inclusion

- Highlights and Inadequacies: The RBI ED acknowledged the achievements of the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) program and social security transfers in expressing contentment with the availability of financial services.
- Resolving Demand-Side Problems: Demand-side problems still need to be addressed even though supply-side ones have already been.
- Obstacles of Structure: Women's financial inclusion is hampered by structural problems such as low capital levels, labor force participation, cultural norms that prevent women from inheriting property, and restricted access to education and training.

Stereotyping and Behavioral Issues

- Higher Risk Perception: According to Nigam, lenders frequently stereotype women borrowers, viewing them as greater risks. This might result in higher interest rates, a stronger demand for collateral, or outright loan denials.
- Behavioral Challenges: He also discussed the behavioral problems that women borrowers face, including their increased risk aversion, lack of confidence while negotiating loan terms, and decreased likelihood of applying for additional loans out of fear of being turned down.

Policy Moves: Priority Sector Lending and Financial Literacy Initiatives

- Priority Sector Lending (PSL): Demand-side limitations still exist, but PSL mandates have turned into a sustainable business model for banks and microlenders.
- RBI Projects: The RBI has started financial inclusion initiatives to address these issues. These initiatives include the establishment of 2,400 financial literacy centers at the block level in collaboration with charitable organizations and the mandate that lead banks maintain a literacy center in every district.

Government Schemes:

	Stand Up India Scheme	Mudra Yojana Scheme	Annapurna Scheme
Launched	April 2016	April 2015 (under PMMY)	-
Objective	To promote entrepreneurship among women and SC/ST	To provide financial support to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises	To support women entrepreneurs in the food catering business
Eligibility	Women entrepreneurs and SC/ST entrepreneurs above 18 years of age	All non-farm enterprises, including women-owned businesses	Women entrepreneurs planning to start or expand their food catering business
Loan Amount	INR 10 lakh to INR 1 crore	Up to INR 10 lakh, categorized into three types: 1. Shishu: Up to INR 50,000 2. Kishor: INR 50,001 to INR 5 lakh 3. Tarun: INR 5,00,001 to INR 10 lakh	Up to INR 50,000
Purpose	For setting up a greenfield enterprise in	For business activities in manufacturing,	For starting or expanding

	manufacturing, services, or trading sectors	processing, trading, or service sectors	the food catering business
Repayment Period	Up to 7 years with a maximum moratorium period of 18 months	-	36 months, including a grace period of 1 month

Conclusion

- **Economic Growth Obstacles:** The low rate of female labor force participation and restricted loan availability continue to be major obstacles to financial inclusion and economic expansion.
- **Changes in Structure Are Needed:** To truly empower women economically, structural and societal obstacles must be addressed, misconceptions must be dispelled, and financial literacy must be raised.
- **Importance of continuous Efforts:** While the RBI's programs on financial inclusion and literacy are important, more must be done to guarantee that women may fully engage in and profit from economic activities, which will promote overall economic development. This will require continuous efforts and cooperative action.

Surge in Silver Imports from UAE through Gift City



Why in the News?

- Through the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX), Gift City, a small group of private companies from Dubai currently handle the majority of silver imports into India.

- India may experience long-term income losses as a result of this tendency, which is intended to lower import duties paid by the traders.

India’s Silver Imports

- In the first four months of 2024, India imported a record 4,172 metric tons of silver, significantly more than the 3,625 tons imported in the entire year 2023.
- India imported a record 2,295 metric tons of silver in February 2024 alone, up from 637 tons in January. This amounts to a 260% rise.
- The solar panel industry's growing demand and the development in speculative investment, wherein investors are trading silver over gold, are the main drivers of the import surge.
- Because of reduced import duties under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have supplied about half of India's silver imports thus far in 2024.
- Silver is usually subject to an import tariff of 15% in India.
- But according to the 2022 CEPA that India and the UAE signed, private dealers are now able to import silver through the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) for a total of 3% value-added tax and 9% tariff.
- Concerned with the 647-fold increase in silver imports from the United Arab Emirates, the government intends to speak with Abu Dhabi about the matter.
- Compared to imports from other ports, the Gift City exchange is being closely watched for possible rules violations even though it has been processing imports from Dubai since December 2023.

About India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX)

- The term "bullion" describes actual, very pure gold and silver that is frequently stored in bars, ingots, or coins.
- The Finance Minister revealed the IIBX during the 2020 budget speech.

- It is situated in GIFT City, Gandhinagar, inside the International Financial Services Center (IFSC).
- It was established in Gujarat on July 29, 2022, and is the first bullion exchange in India.
- This is the third such exchange worldwide.

Regulations and Setup:

- December 2020 saw the notification of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Bullion Exchange) Regulations, 2020, which are especially related to the trading of precious metals like gold and silver.
- These rules apply to how the bullion exchange, depository, Clearing Corporation, and vaults connected to IIBX operate.

Operational Framework

- In the 1990s, India had already liberalized the import of gold through designated banks and organizations.
- Jewelers in India that meet the requirements can import gold directly through IIBX.

Comparison with Previous Practices

- In the past, RBI-approved banks and agencies would import bullion into India using a consignment arrangement, which came with additional handling costs and premiums.
- By permitting direct imports through the exchange, IIBX seeks to simplify the supply chain and possibly lower prices for both merchants and consumers.

Integrated Tribal Development Programme by NABARD



**नाबाई
NABARD**

Why in the News?

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is set to launch an integrated tribal development programme in Kulathupuzha grama panchayat, Kollam.

About Integrated Tribal Development Programme

- Over the course of the next five years, the project, which aims to alter the livelihoods of tribal families, will be implemented by Thanal, an environmental organization.
- The five-year project aims to improve 413 households' access to sustainable agriculture and their standard of living while living in eight hamlets.
- The program's main goal is to promote a variety of agricultural products, including plantains, pepper, arecanuts, coconuts, ginger, Thai ginger, and turmeric.
- It includes projects related to fish farming, poultry, beekeeping, goat husbandry, and the production of fodder.
- To further strengthen the community's economic clout, a Tribal Farmer Producer Company (FPO) will be established.

Components of the Programme

- Initiatives aiming at improving water resources for agricultural use are referred to as water resource development.
- Training in Leadership: Courses designed to enable local leaders in the tribes.
- Awareness Creation: Initiatives to increase public knowledge about community development and sustainable practices.
- Initiatives for cleanliness and Hygiene: Attempts to raise the bar for tribal families' levels of cleanliness and hygiene.
- Training in Marketing and Branding: Courses designed to improve participants' brand awareness and marketing abilities.
- Workshops on Skill Development: These sessions aimed to improve the tribal community's non-agricultural and agricultural skills.

About NABARD:

- It was founded on July 12, 1982, in accordance with the Sivaraman Committee's recommendation to support India's agricultural growth and sustainable rural development.
- The goal is to make it easier for loans to flow in order to support and grow the cottage and village industries, small-scale agriculture, handicrafts, and other rural crafts.
- With its main office in Mumbai, it functions as a statutory organization under the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934.
- It is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the GoI:
 - Representatives from the RBI;
 - Central and state governments;
 - Experts from various fields related to Rural Development and Finance.

Functions of NABARD:

- Support for Refinancing: For agricultural and rural development initiatives, like as crop loans and rural infrastructure projects, NABARD offers banks and financial institutions refinancing options.
- Financial Inclusion: It advances financial inclusion by boosting SHGs, FPOs, and MFIs, providing support for rural communities' access to credit, and extending banking services to these areas.
- Priority Sector Lending: In accordance with the Reserve Bank of India's priority sector lending rules, NABARD is essential in directing credit toward priority sectors like rural infrastructure, small-scale industries, and agriculture.
- Direct Lending: It provides institutions with direct loans for certain rural development initiatives, like the construction of rural infrastructure, agri-processing facilities, and agricultural production.
- Implementation of Schemes: To finance watershed development initiatives and rural infrastructure projects, the organization manages government funds and schemes such

as the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and the Watershed Development Fund (WDF).

- Credit Planning: To create credit policies and strategies for the agricultural and rural sectors, NABARD works with the RBI, state and federal governments, and other stakeholders.
- Research and Training: NABARD supports technology transfer initiatives, builds capacity among rural stakeholders, and conducts research and development in agriculture.

National Gopal Ratna Award, 2024



Why in the News?

- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying has announced the recipient of the National Gopal Ratna Award (NGRA) 2024.
- ON November 26, National Milk Day, the awards ceremony takes place every year.

What is the National Gopal Ratna Award (NGRA)?

- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying started the NGRA project as part of the Rashtriya Gokul Mission.
- The purpose of the prize is to encourage the preservation and advancement of native bovine breeds, which are essential to the long-term viability of India's dairy industry.
- Categories: NGRA is awarded in several categories:
 - Best Dairy farmer rearing indigenous cattle/buffalo breeds.
 - Best Dairy Cooperative Society (DCS)/ Milk Producer Company (MPC)/ Dairy Farmer Producer Organization (FPO).

- Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT).

Other aspects of the Award

- Special Recognition: To support dairy development initiatives in the North Eastern Region (NER) states, a unique award category has been added in recent years.
- Recognition and Nominations: The National Award portal is the online platform for submitting nominations for the NGRA.

Award Details:

- NGRA 2024 will confer awards in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ranks, and one Special Award for the NER States in each category.
- Cash prizes for Best Dairy Farmer and Best DCS/FPO/MPC categories:
 - Rs. 5,00,000/- (1st rank)
 - Rs. 3,00,000/- (2nd rank)
 - Rs. 2,00,000/- (3rd rank)
 - Rs. 2,00,000/- (Special Award for NER).
- Best AIT category: Certificate of merit and a memento, without any cash prize.

Rashtriya Gokul Mission

	Details
About	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds since December 2014. • Continued under the umbrella scheme Rashtriya Pashudhan Vikas Yojana from 2021 to 2026 with a budget of Rs.2400 crore.
Nodal Ministry	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance productivity of bovines and increase milk production sustainably using advanced technologies. • Propagate the use of high genetic merit bulls for breeding purposes. • Enhance artificial insemination coverage by strengthening the

	<p>breeding network and providing services at farmers’ doorsteps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote indigenous cattle & buffalo rearing and conservation in a scientific and holistic manner.
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Uniform IGST Rate of 5% on Aircraft and Aircraft Engine Parts



Why in the News?

The government has implemented a uniform Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) rate of 5% on all aircraft and aircraft engine parts.

Background:

- Aviation and aviation parts were subject to a variety of federal, state, and local taxes prior to the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017.
- A number of taxes, including excise duty, VAT, and additional customs duties, were applied to aircraft parts under the pre-GST regime. This resulted in a cascading effect and increased costs for the aviation sector.

IGST Harmonization for MRO Boost:

- The purpose of this action is to increase Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) operations in India.
- A number of problems were previously brought about by the different GST rates of 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28% on airplane components.

MRO Industry in India

- By 2030, the MRO market in India is expected to grow to \$4 billion.
- Presently, India accounts for a mere 1% of the US\$45 billion global MRO business.
- The maintenance sector of the industry is split into four categories: airframe, components, line (monthly checks), and engine (50–55% of work value).
- 13–15% of commercial airlines' earnings are allocated to maintenance, mostly through outsourcing of major repairs.

What is Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)?

- The IGST is a component of the GST system in India.
- It is levied by the central government on:
 - Inter-state /UT supply of goods and services;
 - Imports of goods and services;
 - Supply of goods and services to/by SEZ units;
 - Deemed exports (certain transactions where goods supplied do not leave the country but are treated as exports under GST law).
- IGST is calculated by adding the applicable Central GST (CGST) and State GST (SGST) rates.
- One thing to remember in IGST is that the importing state gets the accrued benefit of taxes.

Rationale for the Uniform 5% IGST Rate

- Simplifying Tax Structure:** Tax compliance is made easier and categorization complications are removed with a standard 5% IGST rate on engine and aircraft parts.
- Cost-effectiveness:** A reduced IGST rate makes aircraft acquisition and maintenance more affordable by lowering the aviation industry's overall tax burden.
- Global Alignment:** This raises India's competitiveness and allure for investments in international aviation by bringing its tax policy into line with international norms.

- Promotion of Aviation Services: Promotes MRO and aircraft leasing operations, assisting India's goal of becoming a center for aviation services.

India to host 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation



Why in the News?

- On September 11 and 12, India will host the second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation.
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) APAC and the Indian government will organize the conference together.

About the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

	Details
Establishment and Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded on December 7, 1944, by the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation • Became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1947 • HQ: Montreal, Canada
Objectives and Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop international standards and regulations for aviation safety, security, efficiency, and environmental protection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote safe and orderly growth of international air transport
Structure and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assembly: Meets every three years, includes all member states • Council: Governing body with 36 elected member states • Secretariat: Led by the Secretary General, manages daily operations
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 193 member states as of 2024 • Open to all states subscribing to Chicago Convention principles • India: Founding member, joined in 1944
Functions and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish international standards and recommended practices (SARPs) • Conduct audits and monitor SARPs compliance • Provide technical assistance and capacity-building • Facilitate aviation data and statistics collection
Key Areas of Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety: Enhance global aviation safety • Security: Strengthen aviation security measures • Efficiency: Promote efficient air navigation services • Environmental Protection: Address aviation's environmental impact
Significant Programs and Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP): Monitors safety oversight capabilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP): Evaluates aviation security measures • Next Generation Aviation Professionals (NGAP): Addresses anticipated aviation professionals shortage • No Country Left Behind (NCLB): Assists states in implementing ICAO standards and policies
Publications and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexes to the Chicago Convention: SARPs across civil aviation domains • ICAO Journal: Quarterly publication • Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP): Strategic documents for aviation safety and navigation improvements.
Regional Offices	Seven offices in Bangkok, Cairo, Dakar, Lima, Mexico City, Nairobi, and Paris
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1: Personnel Licensing • Annex 6: Operation of Aircraft • Annex 8: Airworthiness of Aircraft • Annex 17: Security • Annex 19: Safety Management
Global Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonizes international aviation policies and procedures • Contributes to safe, secure, and sustainable growth of global air transport

About Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation

- The conference's objectives are to fortify regional cooperation and create a future-oriented, safety- and innovation-focused vision for the area.

- Beijing hosted the first conference in February of 2018.
- 39 nations from the Asia Pacific region that are members of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the UN agency responsible for aviation safety, are anticipated to attend.
- Making aviation travel durable, sustainable, and adaptable to the shifting needs of a globally interconnected community is the main goal of the conference.
- This region is the largest in the globe in terms of flight departures, making up 33.41% of all regions.
- It is anticipated that by 2050, there will be 11.5 billion passengers worldwide, up from 4.5 billion this year.

Union Govt. eases Procurement Rules for Scientific Research Goods



Why in the News?

- In order to provide scientific Ministries more latitude when it comes to importing and purchasing research equipment, the Finance Ministry has issued new regulations under the General Finance Rules (GFR).
- These adjustments allay experts' worries that stringent regulations have impeded research.

Changes introduced in GFR

- The amount that can be purchased without a tender has been increased from ₹25,000 to ₹1,00,000.

- A three-person committee is responsible for scouring the market for the best value and quality when it comes to goods priced between ₹25,000 and ₹250,000.
- The ₹1,00,000 limit has been increased to ₹10,00,000.

What are General Finance Rules (GFR)?

- The Indian government has published a series of regulations known as the General Finance Rules (GFR) to control financial issues in public administration.
- They offer a structure for handling finances, guaranteeing responsibility, openness, and effectiveness in the utilization of public resources.
- 1947 saw the first issuance of the GFR following independence.
- The most recent revisions to the regulations were made in 2017. Prior revisions occurred in 1963, 2005, and 2017.
- All central government ministries, departments, and government-funded enterprises are subject to the GFR.

Key Provisions:

- General System of Financial Management: Accounting, auditing, and budgeting guidelines.
- Guidelines for the acquisition of goods and services that place a strong emphasis on openness and competition.
- Inventory Management: Procedures for overseeing government assets and inventory.
- Grants-in-Aid: The processes by which funds are given to organizations and people.

Major Highlights:

- E-procurement is emphasized in order to improve efficiency and transparency.
- Government contracts must include performance security as a condition to guarantee compliance and lower risk.
- bolstering audit procedures and internal controls to guarantee adherence to laws and regulations.

India’s economy projected to grow at 6.5% to 7% in FY ending March 2025.



Why in the News?

- India’s economy is projected to grow at 6.5% to 7% in the fiscal year ending March 2025.
- The Economic Survey for 2023-24 highlights the need to address inequality and unemployment as policy priorities.

Policy Recommendations by Chief Economic Adviser (CEA)

- Regulatory Burdens: CEA V. Anantha Nageswaran advocates for Central and State governments to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses.
- Corporate Responsibility: He urges the corporate sector to create productive jobs, emphasizing their responsibility in generating employment.

Various Challenges discussed

(1) Challenges in the IT Sector:

- Slowdown in Hiring: The CEA notes a significant slowdown in IT sector hiring over the last two years.
- AI and Labor: He encourages the industry to use AI to augment labor rather than replace workers.

(2) Skilling Initiatives

- Addressing Inequality: The Economic Survey suggests steps to tackle inequality, improve health, and bridge the education-employment gap.
- Skilling Reboot: A reboot of India’s skilling initiatives is proposed to provide the industry with people having the right attitude and skills.

(3) Corporate Sector and Economic Growth

- Demand and Employment: The Survey emphasizes the benefits for corporates from higher demand generated by employment and income growth.
- Warning against Short-Termism: It warns against “short-termism” which can weaken economic linkages.

(4) State Capacity and Consensus Building:

- Enhancing State Capacity: Enhancing state capacity is critical for the strategy to work.
- Need for Consensus: The CEA stresses the need for consensus between governments, businesses, and the social sectors for effective transformation.

(5) Land Acquisition and Investment Concerns:

- Land Use Norms: While the Survey does not mention land acquisition reform, it highlights the need to deregulate land use norms and consolidate farmland holdings.
- Investment Cautions: The Survey cautions about private capital formation being cautious due to fears of cheaper imports, indirectly referencing China.

(6) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Challenges:

- Attracting FDI: Attracting FDI will be challenging due to higher interest rates and developed countries encouraging domestic investments through subsidies.

- Addressing Uncertainties: Despite progress, uncertainties related to transfer pricing, taxes, and import duties need to be addressed.

Structural Reforms

- Existing Reforms: Structural reforms such as GST and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code are delivering expected results.
- Next-Gen Reforms: The Survey calls for “next-gen reforms” that are bottom-up in nature to achieve sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth.

Strategic Directions for Growth

- Six-Pronged Strategy: The Survey outlines a six-pronged strategy for growth, emphasizing private sector investments and a fair share of income for workers.
- Focus Areas: Other focus areas include financing the green transition, removing barriers for MSMEs, and implementing intelligent farmer-friendly policies.

Conclusion

- Sustained Growth Potential: The economy can grow at over 7% on a sustained basis in the medium term by building on past reforms.
- Tripartite Compact: Achieving this growth requires a tripartite compact between the Centre, States, and the private sector.

Environment & Diversity

Afforestation in Delhi Ridge



Why in the News?

The Central and Southern sections of Delhi Ridge will be physically inspected by the Delhi High Court to

determine the degree of tree-cutting and afforestation in the region.

Deforestation in Delhi Ridge:

Delhi Ridge deforestation: 183 hectares of the environmentally fragile Delhi Ridge area have been "diverted" for "non-forestry purposes," and over 308 hectares of the territory have been encroached upon. (Information from the Central Empowered Committee's (2023) Supreme Court report.)

About Delhi Ridge

- Delhi Ridge, a continuation of the old Aravalli Range to the north, is situated in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.
- Mostly made out of quartzite rocks, it stretches along the Yamuna River for about 35 kilometers, from Tughlaqabad in the southeast to Wazirabad in the north.

Ecological Significance:

- Serving as Delhi's "green lungs," it offers vital ecological functions including carbon sequestration and wildlife habitat.
- It shields Delhi from the sweltering winds of the desert that blow in from Rajasthan to the west.
- Because to its abundance of vegetation and fauna, Delhi is one of the world's birdiest capital cities.
- Through biodiversity parks and animal sanctuaries like the Northern Ridge Biodiversity Park and Asola Bhatti animal Sanctuary, efforts are being made to preserve biodiversity.

Geographical Features

- Compared to the Himalayas, which are thought to be about 50 million years old, the ridge is an ancient geological feature, estimated to be around 1.5 billion years old.
- It divides the Indo-Gangetic Plain's Indus Plain to the west from the Gangetic Plain to the east, serving as a watershed.

Administrative Divisions:

- Southern Ridge, Central, South-Central, and Northern are the four primary zones.
- Every zone is unique, with differing levels of urban expansion and conservation initiatives.

Niranjan Panel set up to study Pollution Level in Cauvery



Why in the News?

The Karnataka government has formed an expert committee, headed by Niranjan, Chief Environment Officer of Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, to study the pollution level in the Cauvery.

About Niranjan Panel

- In order to determine whether the influx of sewage water, solid waste, industrial waste, and other sorts of pollutants has contaminated the Cauvery River water, the panel will analyze the information and produce a report within ten days.
- Pollutants have destroyed the natural purity of the Cauvery water, endangering the health of both people and aquatic life.

About Cauvery River

- The Cauvery River rises in Talakaveri in the Brahmagiri range in Karnataka's Kodagu district. It is also spelled "Kaveri" and is referred to as "Ponni" in Tamil.
- It is almost eight hundred kilometers long and passes through the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka before arriving at the Bay of Bengal.
- The catchment area of the river encompasses areas in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and the Pondicherry Union Territory.
- Hemavati, Kabini, Suvarnavathi, Bhavani, Harangi, and Kabini are important tributaries that join the Cauvery.
- Because it depends on rainfall from both the advancing and retreating monsoons, it is eternal.
- Cauvery WLS, Pushpagiri WLS, Muthathi WLS, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Bhimeshwari WLS, Nagarhole NP, and Bandipur NP are among the protected places in its basin.

Challenges associated with the Cauvery River:

- High bacterial loads and nutrient contamination are caused by the direct discharge of untreated sewage and household garbage from towns and cities along the Cauvery.
- Various industries near the Cauvery river release their effluents straight into the river, such as dyeing, textiles, and pharmaceuticals.
- Rain and irrigation cause pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers used in fields along the river to wash into the Cauvery.
- Natural flow patterns and habitat structures are altered by uncontrolled dredging and sand

mining operations, which can disturb riverbeds and banks.

- African catfish and tilapia are two examples of non-native species that were introduced to the Cauvery, initially for aquaculture, and have since proliferated there.

Cauvery Water Dispute:

- Tensions had existed between Madras, under British authority, and Mysore since 1892.
- The 1924 Agreement attempted to settle disputes, but it also created conditions for new ones. Dam development after independence prompted TN petition.
- It was decided to create the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT).
- The Cauvery River Authority (CRA) issued temporary directives in 1998.
- The 2013 CWDT award divided up the water quantity among the states.
- Karnataka shares water with Tamil Nadu on a monthly and annual basis.
- Karnataka has to offer Tamil Nadu 177.25 TMC in a normal year.
- Because of the fluctuations in rainfall, monsoons provide challenges.
- Parliament has authority over interstate river conflicts under Article 262. The legislative authority over water resources is defined in the Seventh Schedule.
- 2018: The Supreme Court affirmed river water equality and referred to calumny as a "national asset."
- The Court created the Cauvery Management Board (CMB) to oversee its implementation.
- For data gathering and water regulation, CWMA and CWRC were founded.

Reviving Gharials in Kaziranga



Why in the News?

In Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, a lone female gharial has emerged as a significant presence, marking a potential revival for the species in the Brahmaputra River.

About Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve:

- Kaziranga, a state in Assam, is well known for its biodiversity and conservation initiatives.
- Originally created as a reserve forest in 1905, it was designated as a national park in 1974.
- In 1985, the Great One-Horned Rhinoceros and its exceptional natural setting led to its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Of all the protected places in the world, Kaziranga has the highest tiger density.
- It is home to two-thirds of the Great One-Horned Rhinoceros population in the world, which is an important success story for conservation.
- The park is made up of grasslands, ponds, and woodlands that cover an area of around 430 square kilometers (166 square miles).

One-Horned Rhinoceros:

- IUCN Red List: Single-Horned Rhinos Status: Vulnerable; WPA, 1972: Schedule I; CITES: Appendix I.
- mostly found in West Bengal's Assam state.

In Pobitora WLS, Rajiv Gandhi Orang NP, Kaziranga NP, and Manas NP, Assam is home to roughly 2,640 rhinos.

About Gharial

- The Indian subcontinent is home to the fish-eating Gharial crocodile.
- They are an essential sign of pure river water.
- It can also be found in Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary, Odisha's Mahanadi rainforest biome.
- The IUCN Red List of Species lists gharials as "Critically Endangered."
- Additionally, the species is included in Schedule I of the 1972 Wild Life (Protection) Act.
- The largest protected habitat for the species is the National Chambal Sanctuary, which is located in Madhya Pradesh along the Chambal River.

Recent findings of Gharial in Kaziranga

- It was thought that by the 1950s, gharials—which could be identified by their long, narrow snouts—had vanished from the Brahmaputra.

- With the growth of the female gharial to almost adult size since her original sighting in 2021, there is hope for their restoration into the ecosystem.

Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994



Why in the News?

The Supreme Court and the Delhi government are at loggerheads due to alleged felling of trees in the Asola-Bhati Wildlife Sanctuary under the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994.

Forest Cover in Delhi: ISFR Report Findings

- The Forest Survey of India (FSI) has released the "India State of Forest Report 2021" (ISFR), which shows that out of the seven major megacities, Delhi has the most forest cover (195 sq. km), followed by Mumbai (110.77 sq. km) and Bengaluru (89.02 sq. km).
- Delhi's tree cover covers 147 sq. km. (9.91%), while its forest cover makes up 13.15% of its total area.
- Growth Over Time: The city's total green cover (forest and tree cover) expanded from 151 sq. km (10.2%) in 2001 to 342 sq. km (23.6%) in 2021 despite significant urban expansion.

What is the case against the DDA?

- The Vice Chairman of the DDA is facing a contempt petition before the Supreme Court for cutting down over 1,100 trees in the ridge area—which is part of the environmentally sensitive zone surrounding Asola-Bhati Wildlife Sanctuary—in defiance of the SC's directives.
- In order to obtain authorization to fell trees in order to build the Gaushala Road, the DDA applied to the SC on March 4. With the

assistance of subject matter experts, the court ordered the DDA to reevaluate the proposal.

- The Vice Chairman of the DDA testified that tree cutting had started in February and had gone on for ten days. Even before the application made it to the SC, all of the planned trees had been felled by February 26. When the application was heard by the court on March 4, this crucial information was not revealed.
- The Bench chastised DDA for failing to produce documentation of the Delhi LG's (DDA Chairman) February 3 visit to the location, which is purportedly what prompted the order for tree cutting. The authority granted by the Tree Officer was usurped by the Delhi government, which was also censured for this.
- The top court has put a stop to the DDA's operation and ordered an FSI team to determine how many trees have been taken down and how much environmental harm has occurred.

Law governing Tree Protection in Delhi:

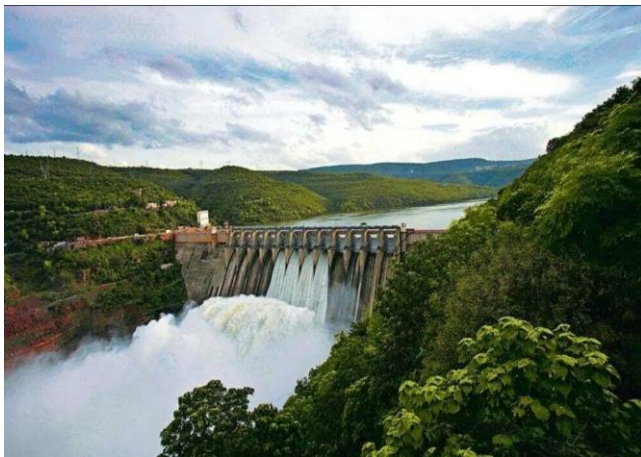
- The Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994, shields trees in the nation's capital against activities that can jeopardize their ability to grow or regenerate.
- "A woody plant that has branches supported by a trunk or a body of at least 5cm diameter and is at least 1 meter high from the ground" is what the Act defines as a tree.
- According to Section 2(h) of the Act, "to fell a tree" means any of the following: uprooting, burning, girdling, cutting, lopping, pollarding, using arboricides, and any other harmful technique.
- Even on privately held territory, Section 8 prohibits the removal of trees or forest products from any land without the "Tree Officer's" prior consent. After inspection, the "Tree Officer" has sixty days to respond.
- Infractions against this Act carry a maximum one-year jail sentence, a fine of up to ₹1,000, or both.
- According to the Act, a "Tree Authority" will be in charge of overseeing nurseries, performing tree censuses, and analyzing development plans from the public and private sectors.

- Eighty percent of identified trees that are scheduled for removal must be transplanted, according to Delhi's 2020 Tree Transplantation Policy. But according to an affidavit the government provided to the Delhi High Court in 2022, only 33.33 percent of the transplanted trees had made it.

Upper Siang Hydropower Project in Arunachal Pradesh

Why in the News?

Activists are protesting against the Upper Siang Hydropower Project in Arunachal.



About Upper Siang Multipurpose Storage Project

- An 11,000 MW hydroelectric project on the Siang River in Arunachal Pradesh is called the Upper Siang project.
- The Siang River rises in Tibet near Mount Kailash (Tsangpo), flows for more than a thousand kilometres east, passes through Arunachal Pradesh, and eventually merges with the Brahmaputra in Assam.
- After being initially proposed as two distinct projects, they were combined into a single, bigger project in 2017 that will be constructed by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and include a dam that is 300 meters high.

Strategic Importance:

- A 60,000 MW "super dam" in Tibet's Medog county is one of China's hydroelectric projects on the Tsangpo, and the Upper Siang project is considered a calculated strategic response to these developments.

- This super project, which aims to transport water to northern China, has a capacity that is over three times greater than that of the Three Gorges project in China.

Environmental and Social Concerns

- In their memorandum, anti-dam groups voice their worries about the project's effects on society and the environment.
- The memorandum emphasizes how Arunachal Pradesh, which already has a large number of dams, poses a danger to fragile ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and biodiversity.
- The campaigners are especially concerned about community displacement because the project may flood more than 300 Adi tribe settlements, including the Yingkiong district headquarters.
- The project's presentation as an undertaking in the national interest has also alarmed activists, as does a clause in the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act that exempts strategic projects located within 100 kilometers of India's borders from the need for clearance.

Weed control using 'Cyrtobagus salvinia' Insect



Why in the News?

With the discharge of an alien beetle to eliminate the invasive weed *Salvinia molesta*, the Sarani reservoir in the Betul area has been effectively cleansed. Within 18 months, all of the weed was eradicated, drastically changing the 2,800-acre reservoir.

Case Study: *Salvinia Molesta* eradication from Sarani Reservoir

- The Sarani reservoir on the Tawa River in Madhya Pradesh has been supplanted by the aquatic fern *Salvinia molesta*.

- Known as "Chinese Jhalaar" in the area, the invasive species was discovered in 2018 and had completely taken over the reservoir by 2019.
- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Directorate of Weed Research (ICAR-DWR) has never conducted an experiment as large-scale or as successful as this one. First Difficulties
- Water bodies were covered in alien species, which reduced oxygen levels and decimated fish populations.
- At first, the business thought about pulling the weed by hand, which was projected to cost Rs 15 crore.
- Because of the possibility of the weed's recurrence, manual removal was judged useless.

Biological Control using ‘Cyrtobagus salvinia’

- ICAR-DWR proposed using the exotic insect **Cyrtobagus salvinia**.
- *Cyrtobagus salvinia*, a **bio-agent from Brazil**, specifically targets *Salvinia molesta*.
- ICAR-DWR, after thorough research and government approvals, **released the insect** into the reservoir in April 2022.
- This insect **feeds exclusively** on *Salvinia molesta* and **dies naturally** once the weed is eradicated, posing no environmental threat.
- Within **15 to 18 months**, the insect population **eradicated the weed**.

About ICAR-DWR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Directorate of Weed Research)

- Establishment: Based in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India, and founded in 1989.
- The mission is to conduct research and development in weed management with the goal of developing ecologically friendly and sustainable approaches.
- Research Topics: Herbicide resistance, non-chemical weed management, weed usage, and weed ecology and biology.
- Facilities: Complete with a herbarium, experimental farms, state-of-the-art labs, and an extensive library.

Economic and Social Benefits

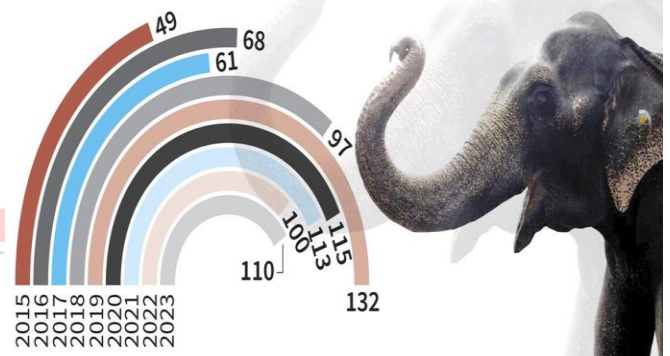
- Fishermen in the nearby communities are relieved and have been able to resume their

livelihoods because *Salvinia molesta* has been eradicated.

- Because of the infestation, fish numbers have decreased, forcing many fishermen to migrate and find other employment.
- Now that the reservoir is free, fishermen are hopeful that reintroduced fish populations would allow them to recoup their losses.

845 Elephant Deaths recorded in Kerala in eight years

Elephant mortality



Why in the News?

- Kerala’s forests have recorded 845 elephant deaths between 2015 and 2023.
- Studies indicate an increasing trend in the death rate over time.

Habitat and Population Challenges

- Elephants face increasing vulnerability due to shrinking habitats and rising fragmentation exacerbated by climate change.
- Factors contributing to their susceptibility include:
 1. Declining population sizes
 2. Sensitivity to high temperatures
 3. Competition from invasive plant species disrupting food sources
 4. Heightened susceptibility to diseases

Elephant Mortality: Key Trends

- Younger elephants, particularly those under 10 years of age, face the highest risk of mortality.
- The mortality rate for calves is approximately 40%.

- The increase in deaths among calves is primarily due to Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesviruses – Haemorrhagic Disease (EEHV-HD).

Influence of Herd Size on Survival:

- A recent study in Sri Lanka highlights potential mitigating factors against the herpesvirus.
- Calves in larger herds exhibit better survival rates due to shared immunity.
- Exposure to various virus strains within larger herds helps calves develop antibodies, improving their chances of survival.



Why in the News?

- In India, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has begun a nationwide assessment of around 800 recyclers of plastic garbage.
- This action is a result of the finding that, under the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program, four companies in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Karnataka issued around 600,000 bogus certifications.

About Elephants in India

	Details
Population Estimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India hosts the largest population of wild Asian Elephants (<i>Elephas maximus</i>), with around 29,964 individuals, • Approximately 60% of the global population (2017 census).
Leading States	Karnataka holds the highest number of elephants, followed by Assam and Kerala.
Conservation Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN Red List: Endangered. • CMS: Appendix I. • Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Listed under Schedule I, • CITES: Appendix I.
Conservation Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Elephant launched in 1992, covering 23 states across India. • India is home to more than 60% of all wild Asian elephants. • Contributed to the increase in wild elephant population from around 25,000 in 1992 to about 30,000 in 2021. • Establishment of Elephant Reserves. Total 33 in numbers covering approximately 80,777 Sq.km.

About Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB): Overview

- Founded in September 1974, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is a governmental body.
- The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974 served as the legal basis for its creation.
- Additionally, under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981, CPCB is assigned certain authorities and responsibilities.
- It carries out the directives of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as the technical branch of the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change.

Principal Functions:

- **Water Pollution Control:**
 - Prevent, manage, and mitigate water pollution to improve the quality of streams and wells in various states.
 - In charge of the National Water Quality Monitoring Program, which gathers, compiles, and distributes statistical and technical data about water pollution.
- **Air Pollution Control:**
 - Enhance the nation's air quality and avoid, manage, or lessen air pollution.

CPCB plans to check violations in Plastic Waste Trading Regime

- As part of air quality management, monitor the quality of the air.
- Initiate the National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP) to ascertain the present state and patterns of air quality, control industrial pollution, and furnish baseline data on air quality for industrial siting and town development.

Key Initiatives and Programs:

- National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP): Designed to keep an eye on the state and trends of air quality as well as to manage and regulate industrial emissions in order to maintain acceptable levels of air quality.
- Real-time statistics and trends on air quality are provided by the National Air Quality Index (NAQI).
- A series of actions to be conducted in accordance with the severity of air pollution levels is known as a Graded Response Action Plan, or GRAP.
- Clean Air Campaign: Programs designed to raise public awareness and implement practical solutions to reduce air pollution.

Role in Data Management:

- CPCB gathers, compiles, and distributes statistical and technical information about air and water pollution.
- gives the information required for planning, urban planning, and regulatory requirements, such as industrial siting.

What is Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programme?

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) means the **responsibility of a producer** for the environmentally sound **management of the product** until the end of its life.
- India had **first introduced EPR in 2011** under the:

1. Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011

2. E-Waste Management and Handling Rules, 2011.
 - The EPR scheme requires businesses using plastic packaging to **recycle a certain percentage** of the plastic **used in the previous two years**.

Implementation of EPR:

- Registration: Producers are required to file an EPR plan and register with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
- Mechanisms for Collection: In order to manage garbage, producers establish collection points, return programs, or alliances with licensed recyclers.
- Documentation: Producers must keep thorough records of all waste that is gathered and processed, and they must report on a regular basis to the CPCB.
- Compliance Audits: To make sure manufacturers are adhering to EPR regulations, the CPCB performs audits.

Function of EPR Certificates:

- EPR certificates are produced by registered recyclers of plastic waste.
- There is a certificate produced for each tonne of recycled plastic.
- A CPCB report from May stated that certificates were produced by about 3.7 million tonnes of recycled plastic.
- About 18,000 businesses that use plastic packaging registered with the CPCB in 2022–2023 with the goal of recycling roughly 3.3 million tons.

Compliance and Targets:

- For 2022–2023 and 2023–2024, businesses must recycle 70% of the packaging that was used in the preceding two fiscal years. There may be sanctions if these goals are not met.
- EPR certifications are posted onto a specific website that the CPCB manages, enabling online trading between recyclers and buyers.

Governance

Four-year UG programmes formally launched in Kerala



Why in the News?

At the curriculum launch for the state's Four-Year Undergraduate Programs (FYUP), Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan emphasized that it is in keeping with developments in the Global Education System, which place equal emphasis on knowledge transfer, skill transfer, and vocational training.

About Four-Year Undergraduate Program (FYUP):

Parameters	Details
Key features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are allowed to select their major and minor subjects; for instance, science majors may elect to take arts classes. There is a provision for students to finish their degree in 2.5 years provided they obtain the necessary credits. offers sixteen FYUP honors programs at the University of Kerala that include research in the fields of science, the arts, commerce, and business.
FYUP curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to offering several chances for research and employment, it is intended to provide students with the information, intellectual capacity, diverse perspectives, adaptable skills, social commitment, and

	<p>research aptitude necessary to become responsible citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprises research projects, skill development, internships, and online courses.
Eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CGPA of 7.5 or higher is required for students to move on to the fourth year and earn an honors degree with research. Currently, entrance exam is scheduled for the following year; admission is based on 12th grade marks.

Administrative and Technological Upgrades required:

- Regulatory Revisions:** To improve efficiency and simplify academic procedures, plans are underway to revise University Acts and Regulations in their entirety.
- The Kerala Resources for Education Administration and Planning (K-REAP) initiative introduces a governance software designed to centralize institutional operations.

Issues with FYUP Program

- Challenges in Implementation:** The FYUP's implementation was hampered by administrative and logistical issues, which affected how widely Kerala's higher education institutions adopted it.
- Curriculum Adaptation:** According to critics, the FYUP's revised curriculum is not sufficiently in line with business demands and does not effectively equip students for problems they would face in the real world.
- Student Adaptation:** Concerns over the sudden change in the academic framework and its effect on student performance and learning outcomes have been voiced by a few educators and students.
- Evaluation Techniques:** The efficacy of the FYUP's evaluation techniques is still being debated, with some stakeholders doubting the program's capacity to reliably measure students' knowledge and abilities.
- Policy Revisions:** In order to respond to changing stakeholder feedback and educational needs,

the FYUP's policies and regulations must be continuously revised and adjusted.

New Education Policy (NEP), 2020:

- The Government of India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 seeks to revolutionize the nation's educational system.
- Restructuring the length and structure of undergraduate programs is one of the NEP's major modifications.
- The existing three-year bachelor's degree format will be replaced by a four-year undergraduate program under the NEP 2020.
- With a qualification, students can leave the program at different points in time. For example:
 - **After 1 Year:** Certificate
 - **After 2 Years:** Diploma
 - **After 3 Years:** Bachelor's Degree
 - **After 4 Years:** Bachelor's Degree with Research

Food Colorants and Chemical Additives Under Crackdown in Karnataka



Why in the News?

Karnataka's Food Safety Department ordered action after 40 kebab samples showed unsafe artificial colours, extending the crackdown to Panipuri, Cotton candy, and Gobi Manchurian.

Artificial Colours in the Controversy

- Some artificial colours under scrutiny include:
 1. Sunset Yellow (Yellow 6, E110): Approved in the US but requires a warning label in the EU.
 2. Carmoisine (Red No. 10, E122): A deep red dye often used in food.

3. Rhodamine B: A banned textile dye sometimes illegally used in food.
 - Different countries have varying regulations for these dyes. For example, tartrazine (E102 in the EU, Yellow 5 in the US) is permitted but only in limited quantities.

Legal Action against FBOs

- To take legal action, the department collects a survey sample from an FBO and, if found unsafe, collects four more legal samples for further testing at the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI).
- If CFTRI deems the samples unfit for consumption, the FBO is booked under the *Food Safety Act* and tried at a court of *Judicial Magistrate of First Class (JMFC)*. Penalties can include a fine of up to *Rs 10 lakh and imprisonment for 7 years*.

Role of FSSAI in Food Safety and Colorants Regulation

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) plays a crucial role in regulating and ensuring food safety across the country under the *Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006*.

Ingredients legally banned in India by the FSSAI and various states initiatives:

Parameters	Details
Ingredients Banned in India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhodamine B: A textile dye sometimes illegally used as a food colorant. • Potassium Bromate: A flour treatment agent linked to cancer. • Oxytocin: A hormone used unethically in the dairy industry to increase milk production. • Calcium Carbide: Used for ripening fruits, which is hazardous to health. • Formalin: Used in fish preservation, which is carcinogenic. • Brominated Vegetable Oil (BVO): Used in soft drinks, which is linked to various health issues.
State Initiatives for Food Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karnataka: Crackdown on use of <i>unsafe food colorants</i> in kebabs, pani puri, cotton candy, and gobi manchurian.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maharashtra: Rigorous checks on <i>milk adulteration</i> and stringent actions against offenders. • Kerala: Implementation of 'Safe Food' campaign focusing on reducing pesticide use in vegetables. • Tamil Nadu: Regular inspections of <i>street food vendors</i> and training programs on food safety. • Delhi: Special drives to monitor and control the use of <i>banned substances in sweets</i> during festive seasons. • State Food Safety Index (SFSI) by FSSAI sheds light on the performance of Indian states in ensuring food safety.
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Bhil Tribe have again demanded a separate 'Bhil Pradesh'



Why in the News?

A large number of people from the Bhil tribe recently gathered at a rally in Rajasthan's Mangarh Dham to raise the demand for an independent 'Bhil state'.

About the Bhil Tribe

- The Bhil tribe is made up of several native Indian communities living in western India, which includes areas of Bengal, Tripura, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.
- Bhils are included in the reservation policy of the Indian government as Scheduled Tribes in a number of states.

- The Bhils are regarded as the most extensively distributed tribal group in India and are one of the largest tribes.

History:

- Historically, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, Bhils ruled over a sizable portion of Gujarat.
- They participated actively in a number of uprisings, including those against British colonial control and the Mughal Empire.
- Because they resisted colonial authority, they were classified as a criminal tribe by the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.
- Every Bhil village has historically been governed by a headman, or gameti, who is in charge of handling local conflicts and making decisions.

Language:

- In addition to speaking regional languages like Marathi, Gujarati, and Bengali, they speak a variety of Indo-Aryan languages together known as Bhil languages.
- There are up to 36 recognized dialects of Bhili. In some places, it blends into local languages like Rajasthani and Marathi.
- In the census, about 10 million persons identified as Bhili speakers.

Culture:

- The rich cultural heritage of the Bhils is exemplified by their Pithora paintings, Ghoomar dances, and distinctive musical instruments.
- The in-filling of multicolored dots is a defining characteristic of Bhil paintings.
- Bhils combine Hinduism and animism in their practices. Every hamlet worships a different local deity; they revere Bhati dev, Bhilat dev, Baba dev, and other gods.
- Bhils commemorate both ancient celebrations like Akhatij, Navmi, and Bhagoria, as well as popular Indian holidays like Rakhi, Navratri, Dasher, Diwali, and Holi.
- The Bhils engage in a type of agriculture known locally as "Podu" or "Bewar," which entails shifting cultivation.

Background of the Bhil Pradesh Demand

- It has previously been discussed to create a tribal state that would include portions of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

- The Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP), which was established in 2017, advocated for the creation of a distinct tribal state in western India.
- In order to create Bhil Pradesh, the Bhil people has been demanding that 49 districts be divided into the four states.
- Since Independence, there have been several calls for Bhil Pradesh.

- The areas with a tribal majority were once a unified unit, but after independence they were split up.
- As per the 2011 census, over 14% of Rajasthan's population is of tribal descent.
- Many Union administrations have introduced legislation and programmes for tribal people, but their execution has lagged.

Historical Context

- The call for a separate state for indigenous people was originally made in 1913 by Bhil social reformer and spiritual leader Govind Guru.
- The demand came forth as a result of the Mangarh massacre, in which British forces slaughtered hundreds of Bhil tribal people.
- Known as the "Adivasi Jallianwala," the massacre occurred six years prior to the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy.

Example of Implementation Issues

- The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled communities) Act, 1996, included provisions that intended to strengthen gram sabhas and decentralize government in tribal communities.
- Although the law was passed by the Rajasthani government in 1999, its regulations weren't created until 2011.
- A lot of individuals still don't know about the law, even local authorities.

Reasons for the Demand

History

Significance of 'Abhaya Mudra'



Why in the News?

The Leader of Opposition invoked the Abhaya Mudra in his inaugural address as Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha.

What is Abhay Mudra?

- Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism are among the numerous South Asian religions that use the abhaya mudra, or open palm (stop) symbol.
- Abhaya, which meaning fearlessness in Sanskrit, is also referred to as the "fearlessness gesture." The gesture stands for harmony and safety.
- The abhaya mudra is said in yoga circles to encourage bravery and lessen worry and dread.

- The abhaya mudra is widely used in various religions, but it is most commonly found in Buddhism, particularly in Thailand and Laos, where it is connected to pictures of the walking Buddha.

Origins of the Gesture

- As a statement of good intentions and peace, the open palm extended outwards appears to be a natural gesture that dates back to prehistoric times, according to Stanford University.
- In antiquity, the gesture also served as a declaration of power, akin to the Roman Emperors' magna manus, which combined legislation and peacemaking.
- The motif gradually found its way into the major faiths of South Asia, most likely from a universal gesture connected with human communication.

Evolution of Mudras in Buddhism

- After the Buddha, for over 500 years, he was not shown in bodily form.
- Early depictions, influenced by Gandhara and Gupta art, initially emerged in the first millennium.

- Numerous mudras entered Buddhist iconography as these Buddhist lineages developed.
- Mudras represented material offerings, performed acts of worship, or connections with pictured deities in tantric Buddhist traditions.

Significance of ‘Abhaya Mudra’ in Buddhism:

- Buddhism associates the abhaya mudra with a story about the Buddha's cousin Devadatta, who attempted to kill the Buddha by letting a charging elephant cross his path.
- By making the abhaya mudra, which signifies the calming of the senses and the absence of fear, the Buddha was able to quiet the elephant.
- In Buddhist cultures, the gesture is widely used to represent serenity and fearlessness.

Geospatial analysis shows Architectural Riches near Mahabodhi Temple



Why in the News?

Geospatial assessment employing satellite imagery and terrestrial surveys indicated the presence of considerable architectural treasures near the Mahabodhi temple complex in Bodh Gaya, Bihar.

Archaeological Discoveries Detailed:

- The study found that the Niranjana River's course changed significantly from east to west, changing the geographical setting of the Mahabodhi temple and the nearby archeological sites.

- This is consistent with Hiuen Tsang's accounts.

Historical Accounts of Bodh Gaya:

- Hiuen Tsang, a Chinese Buddhist, scholar, traveler, and translator—also referred to as Xuanzang—was a monk.
- In order to gather Buddhist scriptures during King Harsha Vardhan's reign, he traveled from China to India.
- His voyage to India between 629 and 645 CE is what made him most famous, as were his attempts to introduce over 657 Indian texts into China.
- His words had a big influence on how Buddhism spread throughout China.
- Alexander Cunningham was able to locate well-known locations like Nalanda and Vaishali in the 1860s and 1870s with the aid of Xuanzang's travelogue of India.

About the Mahabodhi Temple Complex:

	Details
Location	Bodh Gaya, Bihar;
Significance	Marks the location where Buddha attained enlightenment
UNESCO Status	World Heritage Site since 2002
Historical Importance	One of the four holy sites related to Buddha's life (Enlightenment). Other holy sites: Lumbini (Birth) in Nepal, Sarnath (First Sermon) in Uttar Pradesh, Kushinagar (Death) in Uttar Pradesh
Original Construction	Built by Mauryan Emperor Ashoka around 260 BCE
Reconstruction	Reconstructed in brick during the late Gupta period (5th or 6th centuries)
Archaeological Finds	Indicates a site of veneration since the Mauryan period. Vajrasana (Diamond Throne): Located within the temple, dated to the third century BCE

Main Temple Structure	Dates from the 6th century CE, incorporate parts from 2nd or 3rd century CE
Architectural Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two large shikhara towers, the largest over 55 meters high • Influenced Jain, Hindu, and Buddhist architecture globally
Materials	Made mostly of brick covered with stucco
Bodhi Tree	A direct descendant of the original tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment
Traditional Accounts	Describes 7 weeks Buddha spent meditating after enlightenment at various spots within the complex
Decline and Revival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declined after the Huna invasions and early Islamic invasions. • Revived under the Pala Empire (8th-12th century). • Declined again after 12th century CE invasions by Turk armies.

Ratna Bhandar of Puri Jagannath Temple, opened after 46 years

Why in the News?

After 46 years, the *sacred treasury of Shree Jagannath Temple*, Puri, known as Ratna Bhandar, was reopened amid years of legal battles, controversies, and debates.

About the Ratna Bhandar

- The wealth and gems that worshippers give to Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Goddess Subhadra are kept in storage at the Ratna Bhandar.
- On the north side of the temple, it is next to the prayer hall.
- The "Bhitar Bhandar" (Inner Treasury) and the "Bahar Bhandar" (Outer Treasury) are its two divisions. The most recent inventory, conducted

in 1978, noted that both chambers contained sizable amounts of gold and silver goods.

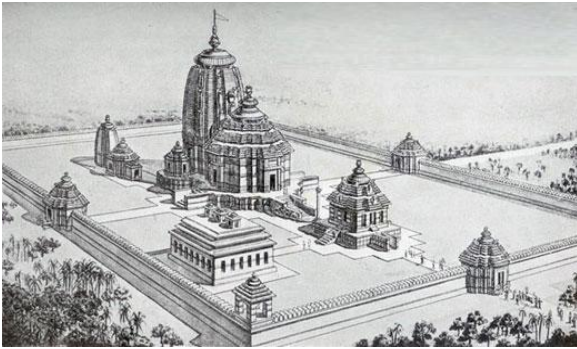
- According to legend, 2.5 lakh madhas of gold were provided by Odisha's King Anangabhim Dev (1211–1238) to create jewelry for the Almighty.
- In order to take a more active part in the administration of the temple, the Odisha government passed the Jagannath Temple Act, 1952, which required them to keep a record of the offerings in the Puri collectorate's Record Room.

Recent Developments:

- The Temple Committee, which is led by the self-styled "King of Puri" and is composed of IAS officers and other state-appointed officials, is in charge of overseeing the safety of the Ratna Bhandar.
- Due to court decisions, the Puri royal family, the temple committee, and the collectorate originally controlled the keys to the Ratna Bhandar. Over time, these parties' ownership and access arrangements underwent substantial modifications.
- The inner chamber's locks had to be broken in order for the recent reopening because the tight protocols required breaking them.

About Jagannath Puri Temple

- In Puri, Odisha, there is a significant Vaishnavite shrine called Jagannath shrine, which is devoted to Jagannath, a manifestation of Sri Krishna.
- The current temple was constructed starting in the tenth century on the location of an ancient temple. The Eastern Ganga dynasty's first ruler, Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva, started the reconstruction of the temple.
- The three main deities are hauled by enormous, ornately decorated temple cars during the yearly Ratha Yatra, or chariot festival, held at the Puri temple.



Its Architecture:

- It is among the most amazing monuments in India because of the richness of its sculpture and the flowing Oriya style of temple building.
- The massive temple complex is encircled by a high defensive wall and spans an area of over 400,000 square feet.
- The name of this 20-foot-tall wall is Meghanada Pacheri.
- The main temple is surrounded by a second wall called Kurma Bedha.

The temple has four distinct sectional structures, namely:

1. Deula, Vimana or Garba griha (Sanctum sanctorum) where the triad deities are lodged on the ratnavedi (Throne of Pearls). In Rekha Deula style;
2. Mukhashala (Frontal porch);
3. Nata mandir/Natamandapa, which is also known as the Jagamohan (Audience Hall/Dancing Hall), and
4. Bhoga Mandapa (Offerings Hall)

National Flag Day, 2024



Why in the News?

On 22nd July in 1947, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the National Flag.

About the National Flag Day

- The Constituent Assembly met in New Delhi at 10 o'clock, chaired by Dr. Rajendra Prasad.
- The Assembly had been meeting since December 9, 1946, discussing various subjects.
- The Chair announced the first agenda item: "a Motion by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about the Flag."

Jawaharlal Nehru's Resolution on National Flag

- India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, moved the Resolution:
 - The horizontal tricolor of deep saffron (kesari), white, and dark green in equal proportions will be the National Flag of India.
 - A navy blue wheel representing the Charkha will be placed in the middle of the white band.
 - The Wheel's design is derived from the Chakra seen at Ashoka's Lion Capital, Sarnath.
 - The wheel's diameter is almost equal to the white band's width.
 - The flag's width to length proportion must be 2:3.
 - The Assembly approved the motion with a unanimous vote.

Nehru's Speech regarding National Flag:

- He talked about the freedom fighters' struggles and the history that the flag represented.
- Nehru hailed the occasion as a victory even though he recognized the enormous challenges the nation faced.
- He underscored the importance of tackling problems such as malnourishment, inadequate attire, and prospects for advancement for every Indian community.
- He emphasized the end of British authority and the triumph against imperialist dominance.

Adoption by Popular Acclaim:

- Nehru stated that throughout the last few decades, the Flag was embraced with sacrifice and widespread admiration.
- Nehru made it clear that the Flag was not intended to be interpreted in a sectarian manner.
- The idea behind the design was to capture the essence and customs of ancient India.

Changes in the Flag:

- The colors of the flag remained the same: dark green, white, and deep saffron.
- For pragmatic considerations, the Wheel from Ashoka's column took the place of the Charkha, guaranteeing that the sign remained the same on both sides.
- The Wheel represented the principles and culture of ancient India, and Ashoka was an important figure in world history.

Reactions and Support

- Nehru's Resolution was not met with any substantial opposition.
- In addition to supporting the Resolution, a number of members, including Sarojini Naidu, Frank R. Anthony, Saiyid Mohammad Saadulla, Chaudhri Khaliqzaman, S. Radhakrishnan, and V. I. Muniswami Pillai, paid respects to the flag.
- In order to respect the House's decision, Dr. P. S. Deshmukh did not press his amendment and instead supported keeping the original tricolor with the Charkha.

Birth Anniversary of Chandrashekar Azad and Lokmanya Tilak

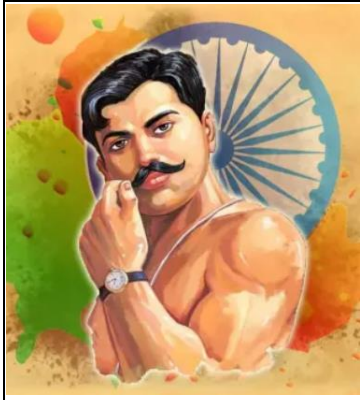
Why in the News?

Prime Minister paid his tributes to legendary freedom fighters Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Chandra Shekhar Azad on their birth anniversaries.

About Chandrashekar Azad and Lokmanya Tilak


[1] Chandrashekar Azad:

	Details:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born Chandra Shekhar Tiwari on 23 July 1906; • Indian revolutionary leader of HSRA; • Died 27 February 1931.
Early Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Bardarka, Uttar Pradesh; • <i>Joined Non-Cooperation Movement</i> at 15; • Famously declared his name as <i>"Azad"</i> when arrested.
Revolutionary Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Joined Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)</i>, participated in <i>Kakori Train Robbery</i>, avenged Lala Lajpat Rai's death; • Reorganized HRA into Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA); • Influenced by <i>socialist literature</i>.
Support from Congress	Financially supported by Motilal Nehru.

Activities in Jhansi	Used Jhansi as a base, practiced shooting, lived as Pandit Harishankar Bramhachari, taught children, connected with local revolutionaries.
Collaboration with Bhagat Singh	Reorganized HRA into HSRA, planned to assassinate James A. Scott, mistakenly killed John P. Saunders.
Death	Surrounded by police in Alfred Park, Allahabad; Ensured companion's escape; shot himself to avoid capture on 27 February 1931.

[2] Lokmanya Tilak:

	Details:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Born Bal Gangadhar Tilak on 23rd July 1856 in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra; Died on 1st August 1920.
Education	Founded Deccan Education Society (1884) and Fergusson College (1885) in Pune.
Ideology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devout Hindu using scriptures to inspire resistance; Advocated for self-rule (Swarajya); famous slogan: "Swaraj is my

	<p>birthright and I shall have it!";</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasized cultural and religious revival. Popularized Ganesh Chaturthi and Shiv Jayanti festivals.
Political Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early advocate for complete independence; Part of the Lal-Bal-Pal trio; joined Indian National Congress (INC) in 1890.
Surat Split (1907)	Split INC into Extremists (led by Tilak) and Moderates (led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale) due to leadership disputes and differing approaches.
Contribution to Freedom Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted swadeshi movements and boycott of foreign goods; co-led Indian Home Rule Movement (1916); Founded All India Home Rule League; Involved in Lucknow Pact (1916) for Hindu-Muslim unity.
Imprisonment	Imprisoned from 1908 to 1914 in Mandalay Prison for defending revolutionaries Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki.
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edited weekly Kesari (Marathi) and Mahratta (English); Authored books "Gita Rahasya" and "Arctic Home of the Vedas."

International Relations

EAM Jaishankar attends SCO Summit



Why in the News?

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Kazakhstan’s capital Astana on behalf of Prime Minister Modi.

About Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

	Details
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in 2001 by China and Russia, the SCO is a Eurasian political, economic, and security organization. It spans about 80% of Eurasia and encompasses 40% of the world’s population, with a GDP of around 20% of global GDP as of 2021.
Origins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successor to the Shanghai Five, formed in 1996 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. It evolved into the SCO in 2001 with the inclusion of Uzbekistan.
Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India and Pakistan joined in June 2017, followed by Iran in July 2023, and Belarus in July 2024. Several other countries participate as observers and dialogue partners.

Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governed by the Heads of State Council (HSC), the supreme decision-making body that meets annually. Includes the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) as a key component for security coordination.
Key Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of State Council: Supreme decision-making body. Heads of Government Council: Discusses multilateral cooperation and approves budgets. Council of Foreign Ministers: Regular meetings on international affairs. Council of National Coordinators: Coordinates multilateral efforts.
Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headquartered in Beijing, China, the Secretariat executes organizational decisions, drafts documents, and promotes SCO activities. Secretary-General serves a 3-year term.
RATS Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, RATS fosters cooperation against terrorism, separatism, and extremism. The director serves a three-year term overseeing these efforts.
Official Languages	Chinese and Russian are the SCO’s official languages.
Key Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions (1996) Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions (1997)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration on a “multipolar world” (1997)
Major Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual summits and meetings across member states; • Initiatives in transportation, energy, and telecommunications; • Regular gatherings of security, defence, economic, and cultural officials.
International Relations	Established partnerships with various global bodies including the UN, ASEAN, CIS, CSTO, ECO, and CICA, reflecting its broad engagement in regional and international affairs.



Why in the News?

Argentina faces one of the world’s highest inflation rates and a decade-long economic stagnation. The International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) earlier decision to release \$4.7 billion from a \$57 billion bailout package to Argentina, despite missed targets, raised eyebrows.

IMF’s Controversial Decision:

- \$4.7 billion, including advanced and past-due payments, was distributed by the IMF to support President Milei's newly formed administration.
- This action, which demonstrated geopolitical clout and strategic backing, went against IMF recommendations mandating obedience to economic circumstances.

Argentina’s Economic Struggles

- Argentina has been beset by long-term budget deficits and persistent inflation, with historical inflation averaging 190% between 1944 and 2023.
- Nine sovereign debt defaults by the government exacerbated the already unstable economy.
- Due to excessive expenditure and reliance on the inflation tax, budgetary deficits have continued since 2009 and reached 4.4% of GDP in 2023.
- In contrast to earlier, unsuccessful measures like the Austral Plan, Milei's administration aims to reduce significant deficits through fiscal reform.
- Alfonsín introduced the Austral Plan, a program of austerity that included devaluations of currencies, wage and price controls, and the introduction of a new currency, the austral.

IMF and its Bailout

Strategic Significance of SCO for India

- Open-door for bilateral relations: India's membership makes it easier to discuss common security issues with Central Asian countries and powerful regional players like China and Russia.
- China-Russia Dynamics: China and Russia use the SCO as a platform to challenge Western dominance in international forums and assert their influence.
- Initiative for a Belt and Road (BRI) Dispute: India's opposition to BRI projects approved by the SCO is a reflection of its worries over sovereignty, especially with reference to the CPEC's passage through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

About Kazakhstan

- At 2.7 million square kilometers, Kazakhstan is the largest landlocked nation in the world and the eighth largest by land area.
- It shares borders with China to the east, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan to the south, Russia to the west and north, and the Caspian Sea to the southwest.

State of Economic Emergency in Argentina

- The With 190 members, the IMF is a global institution that offers its members loans, technical support, and policy recommendations.
- Founded in 1944 with the goals of advancing global monetary cooperation, stable exchange rates, balanced economic expansion, and the eradication of poverty.
- Headquarters: D.C.
- A loan package given to nations experiencing financial difficulties is known as an IMF program or bailout.
- Borrowing nations must adhere to certain terms and conditions of bailout programs in order to receive funding.

Sighting of Peru’s uncontacted Mashko Piro people



Why in the News?

An NGO has released rare photographs of the Mashco Piro tribespeople, one of the world’s 100-odd uncontacted tribes.

Who are the Mashko Piro people?

- The Mashco Piro tribe is a hunter-gatherer group that may have about 750 members.
- They reside in the Madre de Dios Region's Amazon rainforests, close to Peru's borders with Bolivia and Brazil.
- The Mashco Piro and other uncontacted tribes are mostly found in Southeast Asian and Amazonian jungles.
- The language spoken by the Mashco-Piro is a dialect of Piro.
- The tribe is extremely solitary and only seldom interacts with the other indigenous group, the Yine people.

Threats from the logging activities

- 53,000 hectares in the Madre de Dios forests have been given to logging corporations for the purpose of harvesting mahogany and cedar.
- Through the Yine people, the Mashco Piro have voiced their dissatisfaction of the logging firms, claiming to be under pressure and distressed as a result of business assaults.

Historical Context:

Types of IMF Bailout Packages:

	Description	Duration	Conditionality
Stand-by Arrangements	Short-term lending programs for countries with temporary balance of payments problems.	1-2 years	Specific macroeconomic policies for stabilization
Extended Fund Facility	Medium-term lending programs to address balance of payments difficulties from structural weaknesses.	Longer-term	Extensive conditionality and significant reforms
Rapid Financing Instrument	Loan program providing quick financing for countries with urgent balance of payments needs.	Flexible	Fewer conditions and shorter application process

- Invasion of the Mashco Piro area during Peru's 1880s rubber boom led to widespread murders, enslavement, and relocation.
- After moving farther upstream on the Manu River, the survivors have been living alone ever since.

Protective measures from the Government

- To preserve the land of the Mashco Piro, the Peruvian government created the Madre de Dios Territorial Reserve in 2002.

- Nonetheless, a sizable portion of their ancestral lands have been sold as forestry concessions and are located outside the reserve.
- In an effort to stop the spread of illnesses against which the Mashco Piro tribe lacks immunity, the Peruvian government has outlawed any communication with them.
- Nothing remains for the Mashco Piro when logging firms invade their lands.

Polity

National Commission for Minorities (NCM)



Why in the News?

The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has advised State Governments/UTs to conduct “Sarv Dharma Meetings”.

Advisory on “Sarv Dharma Meetings”

- NCM advised State Governments/UTs to conduct “Sarv Dharma Meetings”:
1. At Sub-divisional level of States monthly.
 2. At District level half-yearly.
- In order to avoid causing division within the community, it aims to reduce hate crimes and attacks against minority communities.
 - NCM highlighted the freedom of citizens to freely practice and profess their religion while emphasizing that hate crimes are a direct result of mental weakness and rage.

Responsibilities and Recommendations

- People are asked to denounce and reject hate acts.
- pushed for the government to take harsh measures against anti-social individuals.

- suggested civic society-based deterrents for anti-social and anti-national forces that aim to stop societal violence.

About National Commission for Minorities (NCM)

- It was established as a statutory entity in 1992 to replace the Minorities Commission, an earlier organization, on the basis of the National Commission for Minorities Act.
- There are seven members of the Commission, all of whom must be nominated by the Central Government from among individuals of distinction, aptitude, and honesty.
- There are five members, the chairperson, and the vice-chairperson.
- After taking office, each Member is in office for a term of three years.

Functions of NCM:

1. Evaluate minority development progress.
2. Monitor constitutional and legal safeguards.
3. Recommend effective safeguard implementation.
4. Address complaints regarding deprivation of rights.
5. Conduct studies on discrimination and recommend measures.
6. Research socio-economic and educational development.
7. Suggest measures to Central or State Governments.

8. Make periodical or special reports to the Central Government.
9. Address any matter referred by the Central Government.

Powers of NCM:

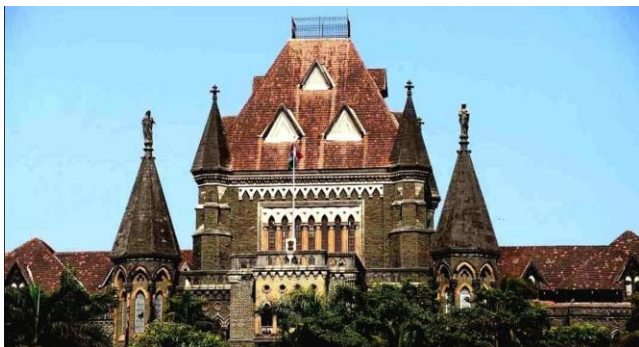
1. Summon and enforce attendance of any person from India.
2. Require discovery and production of documents.
3. Receive evidence on affidavit.
4. Requisition public records from courts or offices.
5. Issue commissions for examining witnesses and documents.

Who are Minorities?

- In compliance with Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM), Act, 1992, the Central has informed minority groups nationwide after consulting with a range of stakeholders.
- Under Section 2(c) of the NCM Act, six communities—Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Parsis, and Jains—have been notified as minority communities.
- January 2014 saw notification of Jains as a minority community.
- Notification of any State-specific community inside a State as a minority community falls under the jurisdiction of that State.

Total Minority Population in India as per 2011 Census: 19.3% of the total population (Muslims: 14.2%; Christians: 2.3%; Sikhs: 1.7%; Buddhists: 0.7%; Jains: 0.4%; Parsis: 0.006%)

Bombay HC quashes Exemption from RTE Quota for Private Schools



Why in the News?

The Maharashtra government's new regulation, which permitted private schools to avoid allocating 25% of their seats to pupils from underprivileged and weaker sections and groups, within a one-kilometer radius of government-run or government-aided schools, has been overturned by the Bombay High Court.

Right to Education (RTE) Act: Overview

- Under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution, free and compulsory education is guaranteed by the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.
- It stipulates that every child must have the equal and satisfactory opportunity to receive a full-time primary education in a formal school that complies with a set of fundamental norms and criteria.
- **Key Provisions:**
 - All children between the ages of six and fourteen are entitled to free and compulsory education under the RTE Act.
 - To guarantee accessibility, schools have to be accessible within a certain radius of the child's home.
 - The Act guarantees the availability of sufficient educators and sets criteria for their qualifications and caliber.
- **Teacher Qualification:** The teacher needs to be certified by the relevant government body after passing the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET). The minimal credentials needed to be appointed as a teacher for grades I through VIII have been set by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).
- **Minority institutions are exempt from the RTE Act.**

Section 12(1) (C) of the RTE Act:

- Private unaided and specified category schools are required by Section 12(1)(C) to set aside at least 25% of their seats for students from economically disadvantaged groups and economically weaker sections.

- With the help of this provision, social inclusion will be encouraged and access to high-quality education will be guaranteed for kids from all circumstances.
- Based on the state's per-child spending, the government reimburses schools for the costs they incur in admitting these students.
- This Section helps children from economically challenged families and communities by giving them access to private education.
- This section seeks to challenge apartheid in education and promote equity and equal opportunities for every child.

Details of the Exemption Rule in Maharashtra

- According to the notification, private unaided schools that are less than a kilometer away from a government or government-aided school are exempt from having to set aside 25% of their student body for pupils from socioeconomic backgrounds.
- First priority for admission to neighboring government or government-aided schools would go to students living in these districts.
- Future private schools founded within a kilometer of public or government-aided schools were also exempt from this rule.
- Private schools would be identified for RTE admissions if there were no such schools nearby.

Similar Exemptions in Other States

- Along with Kerala and Karnataka, Maharashtra implemented this policy exempting private schools from RTE admission requirements.
- Karnataka enacted the regulation in December 2018, drawing inspiration from Kerala's 2011 regulations.
- In Kerala, RTE quota pupils are only eligible for fee reductions if there are no government or assisted schools within a kilometer for first-graders.

Reasons for Introducing Exemptions

- The Law Minister of Karnataka declared in 2018 that the main goal of RTE is to educate kids in all academic courses.
- It was brought to the attention of private schools and teachers' associations that state governments frequently neglected to reimburse tuition for children admitted under the RTE quota.
- State governments are required by RTE Act Section 12(2) to compensate schools for costs spent per student or the fee amount, whichever is lower.
- Due to unpaid reimbursements of Rs 1,800 crore, the Maharashtra English School Trustees Association (MESTA) threatened to boycott RTE admissions in Maharashtra in December.

Science, Technology, Art & Culture

Universe had Spiral Galaxies 4 billion years sooner than expected: Study



Why in the News?

A new study has revealed more spiral galaxies in the universe's youth than astronomers had previously expected.

Universe's Age and Galaxy Types

- The The cosmos is home to a variety of galaxies, including spiral and elliptical ones, and is estimated to be 13.8 billion years old.
- Spiral galaxies are thought to have formed some 6 billion years ago, but the latest study challenges this theory.
- Because older galaxies have different shapes and less light, studying them is more difficult than

studying younger ones, which have a tendency to spiral.

Formation of Galaxies

- As the universe cooled from a dense plasma state, hot gas formed clumps that became galaxies.
- These early galaxies had irregular shapes and lacked disks.
- **Spiral Formation Theory:**
 - According to the conventional view, spiral arms formed from hot, thick disks that cooled over billions of years.
 - According to the latest findings, spiral creation and cooling take place at around the same cosmic moment.

How is this verified?

- While they track star formation in real time, astronomers use "astronomical archaeology" to investigate the evolution of galaxies.
- Astronomers can better reconstruct the histories of galaxies by comprehending the proportion of spiral galaxies.
- Older galaxies have feeble light, thus in order to detect them, powerful telescopes are needed. Infrared and optical wavelengths are used for this purpose.
- Since its launch in 2021, the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has allowed astronomers to delve deeper into the history of the cosmos.
- **Study Methodology:**
 - A team from the University of Missouri examined 873 galaxies using the JWST and found at least 216 spiral galaxies, some of which were formed 1.5 billion years after the cosmos was first observed.
 - The results are devoid of human bias because all six authors independently rated the photos as spiral or non-spiral.

Findings and Implications

- Between 3 and 7 billion years after the Big Bang, the fraction of spiral galaxies rose from roughly

8% to 48%, which is higher than previously noted.

- The study casts doubt on current hypotheses and contends that additional complexity is required in theories regarding galaxy formation.

What makes mosquitoes suck blood?



Why in the News?

A study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) 1 has suggested that a pair of hormones work together to activate or suppress mosquitoes' blood cravings.

Mosquito Species and Behavior

- Worldwide, there are about 3500 different species of mosquitoes, with the exception of Antarctica.
- In order to help their eggs develop, female mosquitoes feed on blood.
- Female mosquitoes stop craving blood after feeding and wait to lay eggs.

Research by Michael Strand and Team

- Strand found that when mosquitoes were looking for a host, their levels of the gut hormone F (NPF) increased, and after they fed, they decreased.
- They examined the enteroendocrine cells in mosquitoes that produce gut hormones.
- **Hormonal Mechanisms:**
 - Before blood meals, NPF levels rose, and six hours after feeding, they fell.
 - It was discovered that RYamide, another gut hormone, affected mosquitoes' need for blood. Following a blood meal,

RYamide levels rose and NPF levels fell in the opposite order.

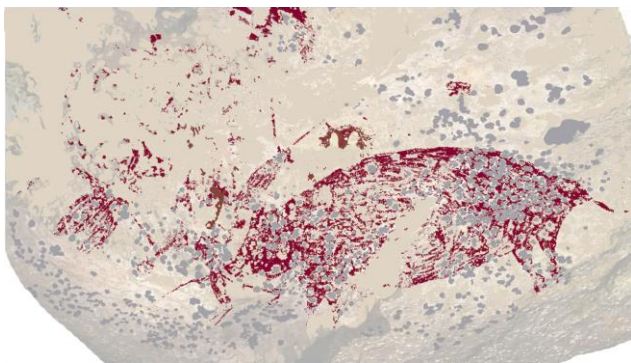
- The scientists came to the conclusion that RYamide and NPF cooperate to control mosquitoes' attraction to people and other hosts.

Implications of the Study

- Managing the Deadliest species: Because they carry diseases including dengue, malaria, zika, chikungunya, yellow fever, West Nile virus, and lymphatic filariasis, which together claim more lives than any other species, mosquitoes are the deadliest animal on the globe.
- New pesticide targets for stopping mosquito reproduction and illness transmission may result from this study.

Note: Every year, mosquitoes cause more than one million deaths in humans globally. They spread the Zika virus, yellow fever, dengue, malaria, and other dangerous illnesses.

Leang Karampuang Cave is the World's Oldest Cave Art



Why in the News?

- At least 51,200 years ago, a cave artwork was found in the limestone cave of Leang Karampuang on Sulawesi Island, Indonesia.
- The picture shows a wild pig, painted in crimson color, engaging with three individuals that are half animal, half human.

Study Details:

- The study "Narrative cave art in Indonesia by 51,200 years ago," which was published in the

journal Nature, employed a novel dating method to estimate the age of the artwork.

- Twenty-three researchers from Southern Cross University, Griffith University, and the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency participated in the study.

Use of Uranium-based Dating:

- Uranium series (U-series) examination on calcite layers above cave art is a new dating method.
- The laser-based approach highlights important age revisions for Sulawesi cave art by measuring uranium-thorium ratios to date paintings precisely.

About Leang Karampuang Cave

- The Maros-Pangkep karst region of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, is home to Leang Karampuang Cave.
- The cave is well-known for its prehistoric rock art and archeological discoveries, which shed light on the early stages of local human civilization.
- It has some of the oldest hand stencils and paintings of animals that have been discovered; these are thought to have been made by early people.

Key features of the Cave Paintings:

- On the cave wall, a painted tableau showed people conversing with a pig.
- A single shade of dark red pigment is used to create three tiny humanoid figures and a standing pig in the artwork.
- This picture dates to around 40,800 years ago, making it older than the cave paintings found in El Castillo, Spain.

Significance of the Painting

- Researchers claim that the dynamic motion depicted by the painting's subjects suggests a narrative or story being told.
- The discovery indicates a rich history of narrative through visual art in early human cultures, pushing back the genesis of figurative painting among Homo sapiens.

- Even though Neanderthals started painting in caves earlier—roughly 75,000 years ago—these were mainly non-figurative.
- The Sulawesi cave paintings, which predate comparable European art by millennia, indicate a sophisticated level of cultural and artistic development among early humans.

Contemporary Period in the Indian Subcontinent:

- By this point, Homo sapiens had dispersed throughout the Indian subcontinent.
- There is evidence that humans have lived in India for at least 70,000 years, and famous archaeological sites like Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh include evidence of prehistoric rock painting and human activity.

In an electric vehicle, what is Regenerative Braking?



Why in the News?

The Regenerative Braking device market is set to witness immense growth during the period 2024-2031 due to rise in prominence of e-vehicles.

What is Regenerative Braking?

Regenerative braking is a technology used in electric and hybrid vehicles to capture and reuse energy that would otherwise be lost during braking.

How Does It Work?

- 1. Normal Braking:** In a traditional vehicle, when you brake, the car’s kinetic energy (the energy it has while moving) is turned into heat and wasted.
- 2. Regenerative Braking:**

- In cars with regenerative braking, when you press the brake pedal, the electric motor runs in reverse.
 - This reverse action slows down the car, just like traditional brakes.
 - Instead of converting kinetic energy into heat, the motor converts it back into electrical energy.
 - This electrical energy is then stored in the vehicle’s battery for later use.
- 3. Energy Conversion:** This reversed motor converts the kinetic energy of the moving car into electrical energy.
 - 4. Energy Storage:** The electrical energy produced is sent back to the car’s battery and stored for future use, such as powering the vehicle or running electrical systems.

Significance:

- **Energy Efficiency:** Saves energy by reusing it, reducing the need for frequent battery recharges.
- **Extended Range:** Helps electric and hybrid vehicles travel further on a single charge.
- **Less Wear and Tear:** Reduces wear on traditional brake components, leading to lower maintenance costs.

Example: Imagine riding a bicycle down a hill. Normally, if you press the brakes, you slow down and the energy goes away as heat. But if you could somehow capture that energy and use it to help you pedal back up the hill, that would be similar to what regenerative braking does in a car.

How does a Motor become a Generator?

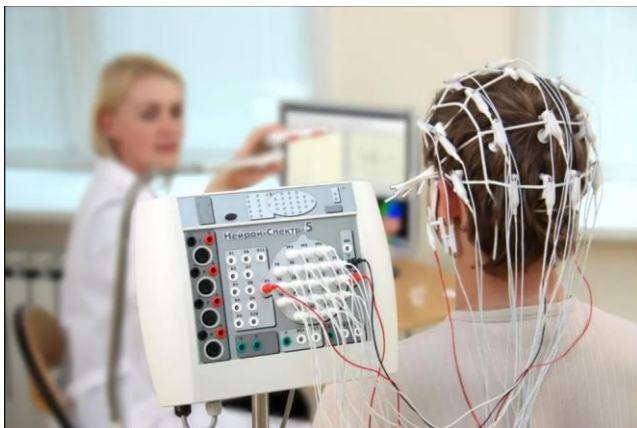
- A motor is made up of a stator, which is stationary, and a rotor, which rotates.
- Whereas the rotor has coils that transport current, the stator is made up of magnets or electromagnets.
- The rotor rotates as a result of the Lorentz Force acting on the charged particles in the magnetic field.
- Mechanical energy in a generator causes a current to flow through the stator. By alternating

between both configurations, the traction motor allows EVs to perform regenerative braking.

Downsides of Regenerative Braking

- Conventional braking systems must be used in addition to regenerative braking because it frequently isn't enough to stop a car completely.
- It's possible that regenerative brakes won't stop cars from sliding backward.
- While regenerative brakes help in stop-start traffic, their effectiveness diminishes as the vehicle's speed lowers.

100 years of Electroencephalography (EEG)



Why in the News?

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the first human electroencephalography (EEG) by German physiologist Hans Berger.

Historical Development of EEG

- Richard Caton first observed electrical signals in animal brains in 1875, which marked the beginning of the development of EEG.
- Adolf Beck and Vladimir Pravdich-Neminsky, who captured the first dog EEG, later added to his body of work.
- In 1924, Hans Berger became the first person to capture these signals from a human brain.

What is EEG?

- The acronym EEG denotes electroencephalography. The terms "encephalo" and "graphy" denote the brain and electricity and recording, respectively.

- It monitors the electrical activity produced as the brain's cells, known as neurons, move minute charged particles.
- This aids in the diagnosis of abnormal brain function.
- EEG is used by medical professionals to diagnose epilepsy, monitor a patient's level of anesthesia, examine sleep patterns, and even determine whether a patient has died.

Understanding Volume Conduction

- The electrical signals from the brain travel through many layers, including as skin and bone, to reach the electrodes on the scalp, and this process is explained by volume conduction.
- Before doctors can effectively read the signals that electrodes pick up, these layers and other disturbances must be removed from the signals.

How does an EEG Test Works?

- In addition to interacting with their environment, neurons can also move ions around.
- Electrical activity is generated in waves by this movement.
- An EEG is created by measuring the strength of these waves using electrodes on the head.
- Accurate placement of electrodes and application of gel to the head are necessary for EEG setup, and factors such as thick hair may interfere with these processes.

What EEG Can and Can't Show?

- Strengths: EEG is useful for quick observations since it is very good at capturing quick changes in the electrical activity of the brain.
- Limitations: It mostly picks up signals from the brain's surface and is more sensitive to specific kinds of cell components than others.
- It can be challenging to determine the precise brain region where an activity began.

Cost and Accessibility

- EEG is simple and affordable compared to other methods like MRI.

- It's portable, doesn't use large equipment, and is safe.

ICAR launches 'One scientist, One product' Scheme



Why in the News?

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is set to launch its 'One Scientist-One Product' program. This initiative aims to enhance research in agriculture and animal husbandry.

About the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

- Under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, ICAR is an independent organization.
- Its main office is in New Delhi.
- The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research was the old name of ICAR.
- It was founded in 1929 and registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 using the Royal Commission on Agriculture's report as a guide.

Functions of ICAR:

- Its main responsibilities include leading the agriculture and related industries and coordinating agricultural research and education in India.
- It is the supreme authority for organizing, directing, and coordinating agricultural research and education across the nation, encompassing horticulture, fisheries, and animal sciences.

What is the "One Scientist One Product" Scheme?

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has introduced a strategic research plan called "One Scientist One Product."
- By giving each scientist in the organization a specific research goal to work toward over the next five years, it seeks to increase agricultural productivity.

Key Objectives of the Scheme:

- Target-Oriented Research: To build a product, each scientist is assigned a defined goal. For instance, a conceptual model, research article, technique, or kind of seed.
- Preventing Redundancy: The program makes sure that no work is done twice by carefully planning out and giving each scientist a distinct research goal.
- Frequent Monitoring: The researchers themselves will check on the progress twice a year in addition to the official monitoring that will take place every three months.

Implementation Details:

- Under this scheme, 5,521 ICAR scientists have registered.
- Scientists are required to identify and report on the product they hope to develop at the start of the year.
- Even if individual contributions are emphasized, there will be times when a team of scientists will work together to build a product.

Long-Term Goals:

- Product Development: As part of the government's 100-day plan, the project is a component of a larger strategy to produce 100 new seed varieties for different crops.
- Climate-Resilient Crops: Increasing the portion of kharif acreage planted to climate-resilient rice seeds to 25% from the present 15% is a major goal.

Announcement of New Crop Varieties

- Event Information: At a ceremony in Delhi, ICAR will declare the launch of 323 new crop types.

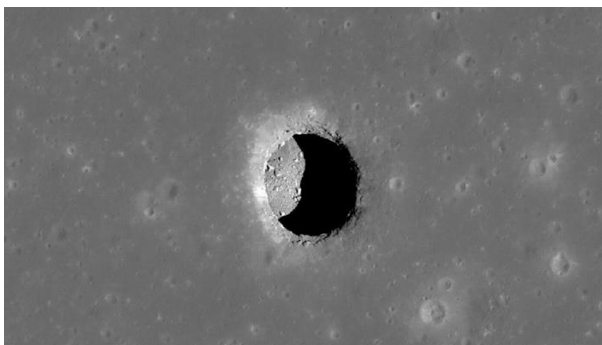
Cereals, oilseeds, fodder crops, and sugarcane are among the newly released crops.

- Variety: There are 27 bio-fortified varieties and 289 climate-resilient types among them.
- Future Projects: As part of a nationwide 100-day action plan, ICAR wants to create 100 new agriculture technology and seed varieties in 100 days.

Progress in Bio-fortification and Climate Resilience

- The adoption of bio-fortified crop types has advanced significantly, according to ICAR, with 16 million hectares of land being planted with these varieties.
- The company highlights the effectiveness of its climate-resilient solutions, pointing out increased output even in years with unusual weather patterns.

Cave on the Moon: What this discovery means for space exploration?



Why in the News?

- Researchers have verified the existence of a cave close to the location of the first lunar landing, which occurred fifty-five years ago.
- This finding may one day give explorers a possible place to live on the moon.

About the Cave on Mare Tranquillitatis

- The journal Nature Astronomy released a paper titled "Radar evidence of an accessible cave conduit on the Moon below the Mare Tranquillitatis pit."
- The analysis confirmed that the Sea of Tranquillity, a sizable, pitch-black basaltic plain on the moon's surface, is home to a moon cave.

- The cave is 400 kilometers away from the 1969 landing site of astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin.
- Its dimensions are about 80 meters long by 45 meters wide, or the size of 14 tennis courts.

Research Method

- Scientists examined images acquired by NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) mission in 2010.
- They came to the conclusion that the pit served as the entrance to a cave produced when a lava tube—a tunnel formed when molten lava flows beneath a field of cooled lava—collapsed.

Characteristics of Lunar Caves

- Craters are bowl-shaped and result from asteroid or comet strikes.
- Pits, in contrast, appear as massive steep-walled depressions.
- At least 200 such pits have been discovered, with 16 believed to have formed from collapsed lava tubes due to volcanic activity over a billion years ago.

Benefits for Human Exploration

- 150 times more solar radiation reaches the Moon than the Earth does.
- The daytime high on the lunar surface is approximately 127 degrees Celsius, while the nighttime low is approximately -173 degrees Celsius.
- On the other hand, the average temperature in caves is consistently around 17 degrees Celsius.
- They could provide radiation and micrometeorite shielding for human explorers, making them suitable for use as emergency shelters or lunar bases in the future.

Challenges and Further Research

- The depth of such caves could present challenges for accessibility.
- There are risks of potential avalanches and cave-ins.

Need for Further Research

- To comprehend and map the structural stability of the caverns, more investigation is required.
- Robots, cameras, or ground-penetrating radar could be used for this.

- Caves would require seismic activity monitoring systems and astronaut safety zones in the event of a cave collapse before they could be used as habitable environments

Security Issues

DRDO unveils Indigenous Light Tank Zorawar



Why in the News?

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and private company Larsen & Toubro (L&T) unveiled the prototype of the Zorawar light tank.

Note:

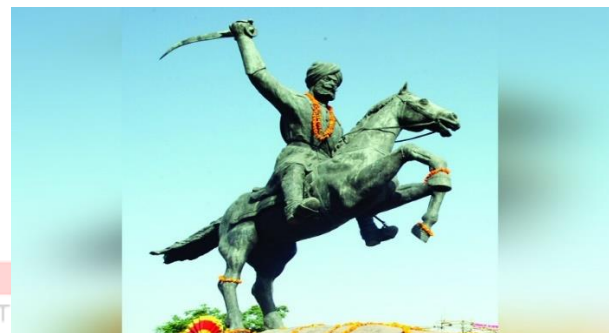
- India primarily has T-90S Bhishma and T-72 Ajeya produced under license from Russia.
- The Future Ready Combat Vehicle (FRCV) program aims to develop and induct next-generation Indigenous main battle tanks to replace the ageing T-72 fleet starting from 2030 onwards

What is Zorawar Tank?

- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and the DRDO collaborated on the development of the Zorawar Tank.
- It is a native light tank made especially for use in high-altitude areas such as Sikkim and Ladakh.
- It was created as part of "Project Zorawar," which bears the name of Jammu General Zorawar Singh.
- Its prototype underwent internal testing at L&T's Gujarat facility before being announced in July 2023.

- With plans for induction by August 2025, it has been slated for comprehensive trials in a variety of settings, including summer, winter, and high altitude settings.

Who was General Zorawar Singh (1784–12 December 1841)?



- General Zorawar Singh Chandel served as a military advisor to Gulab Singh, the Dogra Rajput king of Jammu.
- In his capacity as Kishtwar's governor (wazir-e-wazarat), he expanded the kingdom's borders by subduing Baltistan and Ladakh.
- During the Dogra-Tibetan conflict, he also valiantly attempted to conquer Western Tibet (Ngari Khorsum), but he was killed in the battle of To-yo.
- As General and Wazir, Zorowar Singh has left a record of conquest in the Himalayas, having held the titles of "Napoleon of India" and "Conqueror of Ladakh," among other victories over Tibet, Baltistan, and Skardu.

Operational Capabilities:

- Designed to function well with the least amount of logistical support possible at high altitudes (over 15,000 feet) and in adverse weather.
- designed to be used in difficult terrain where the capabilities of heavier tanks, such as the T-72 and T-90, are limited.

- Features to lessen electromagnetic, thermal, auditory, and visual signatures are included, along with nightfighting and thermal seeing capabilities.

Technical Specifications:

- **Weight:** Approximately 25 tons, allowing for air transportation.
- **Armament:** Equipped with a 105mm turret from John Cockerill.
- **Firepower:** Capable of firing advanced smart munitions and anti-tank guided missiles.
- **Mobility:** Agile and manoeuvrable on steep slopes and riverine regions, designed to be amphibious.

Engine and Power:

- Originally supposed to be powered by a German engine, but because to delays, it is now running on an Indian-assembled Cummins engine.
- To improve performance, DRDO is also designing a 1400 HP engine and a new power pack.

Significance of the Tank:

- **Operational Adaptability:** Unlike larger tanks, the Zorawar Tank is more maneuverable and flexible in high-altitude, isolated terrains along the LAC with China and maybe the LC with Pakistan.
- **Tactical Advantage:** In border defense scenarios, it disrupts enemy logistics and supports infantry troops with its rapid deployment and effective engagement skills.
- **Technological Edge:** The tank's cutting-edge features, which include artificial intelligence, real-time awareness, and improved protection, increase combat efficiency and survivability in contemporary warfare.
- **Strategic Deterrent:** The Zorawar Tank bolsters India's defense capabilities and demonstrates its dedication to self-reliance in defense production while acting as an effective deterrent against prospective aggression.

Appointment of the new Additional National Security Advisor (ANSA)



Why in the News?

- A new Additional National Security Advisor (ANSA) was appointed on July 1, 2024, marking the first time this position has been filled. The ANSA will assist the National Security Advisor (NSA) in managing the country's national security affairs.

Recent Controversies about the NSA's Role

- The Agniveer effort and recent R&AW issues have refocused attention on the NSA's participation.
- There are still unanswered questions concerning the NSA's ideal background and the relative importance of internal vs external security experience.

National Security Advisor (NSA):

- The senior member of India's National Security Council is the NSA.
- The Government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee created the office on November 19, 1998.
- In addition, he or she serves as the prime minister of India's principal advisor on foreign policy and national security strategy.
- As of right now, Ajit Doval holds the same position as a Union Cabinet Minister as the NSA.
- All intelligence reports (RAW, IB, NTRO, MI, DIA, NIA) are received by the NSA, which then organizes them for presentation to the prime minister.
- The Indian Prime Minister has the final say over who the NSA works for.

About the National Security Council of India:

- NSC is an **executive government agency** tasked with **advising the Prime Minister’s Office** on matters of national security and strategic interest.
- The **3 tier structure** of the NSC comprises:
 1. Strategic Policy Group (SPG),
 2. National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) and
 3. National Security Council Secretariat.
- All aspects of national security are deliberated upon by the **National Security Council (NSC)**, the apex body.
- **Members:** Ministers of Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Finance and Deputy Chairman of the NITI Aayog.
- The **NSA** is its **Secretary**.

Changes in the National Security Architecture

	Previous Structure	New Structure
Additional National Security Advisor (ANSA)	The position was consistently vacant	New ANSA appointed for the first time
NSA’s Role	NSA had a more operational role	NSA’s role is now more advisory, focusing on strategic policy and advisory outfits
Reporting Structure	CDS, service chiefs, and Union secretaries reported to NSA and their respective ministers	CDS, service chiefs, and Union secretaries continue to report to NSA and their ministers; however, ANSA now acts as a gatekeeper
Size of NSA’s Organization	Smaller organization with no ANSA	Larger organization with an ANSA and three deputy NSAs
Daily Security Briefings	Directly by NSA	Unclear if briefings will be by NSA, ANSA, or both

Communication Chain	Direct communication between mid-level unit heads and NSA	ANSA acts as an intermediary between mid-level unit heads and NSA, adding a bureaucratic layer
Ministerial Reporting	NSA interacted with Union ministers and Prime Minister	Ministerial bosses also interact directly with respective secretaries, causing potential turf issues
Speculations and Future Roles	Speculations about the continuity and succession of the current NSA	Ongoing speculations about the future role and potential succession by the newly appointed ANSA
Internal Security Management	NSA handled internal security along with other duties	ANSA now specifically responsible for internal security management and threat analysis
Overall Security Strategy	NSA managed both strategic advisory and operational aspects	Separation of strategic advisory role (NSA) and operational internal security role (ANSA)

Issues with the re-structuring:

- **Bureaucratic Layering:** The ANSA's implementation creates a new bureaucratic layer that could impede decision-making.
- **Turf Issues:** Possible disagreements about meeting calls between the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and the NSA.
- **Clarity is lacking in roles:** Uncertainty about which agency will provide daily security briefings—the NSA or the ANSA—could cause communication problems.
- **The dynamics of ministerial reporting:** ministers face difficulties in overseeing secretaries who

report to both their respective ministers and the NSA.

- Operational Efficiency: In addressing immediate security risks, the NSA's transition to a more consultative role may have an impact on operational efficiency.

Future of the NSA

- Ajit Doval, the current National Security Advisor, is a subject of conjecture regarding his future and whether his promotion signals his impending retirement.
- There are rumors that an outsider would be appointed or ANSA Rajinder Khanna will take over as Doval's successor.

How the Peace Deal in Colombia has affected its Cocaine Industry?



Why in the News?

Colombia, the global center of the cocaine industry, is undergoing significant changes due to domestic and global forces.

Recent Changes: Disruption in Cocaine Trade

- Drug traffickers who purchase coca paste ceased turning up two years ago.
- The villagers' abrupt stoppage left them without money, which caused food shortages and an exodus in search of employment.
- Cano Cabra's population dropped from 200 to 40 persons.
- In many Colombian areas where coca is the sole source of income, this trend has recurring.

About the FARC Peace Deal

- It alludes to the settlement that put an end to decades of hostilities between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government. It represents a critical turning point in Colombia's pursuit of enduring peace and security.
- Founded in 1964, the FARC is a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group that fought the Colombian government with guns for more than 50 years.
- The battle was one of the longest-lasting in Latin America, with approximately 220,000 people killed and millions of people displaced.
- On November 24, 2016, a peace agreement was signed, and the Colombian Congress then approved it.

How does the peace deal impact Columbia?

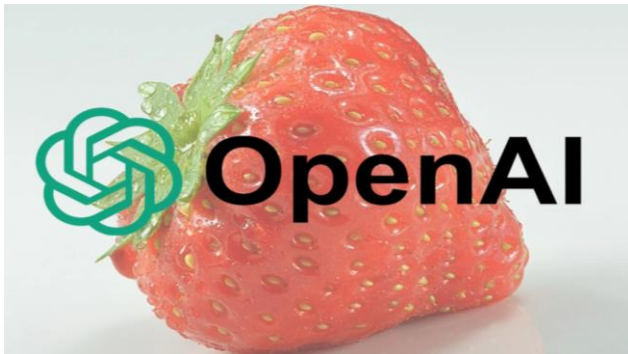
- The FARC depended on farmers to supply coca leaves in order to finance its fight with cocaine.
- Smaller criminal organizations took over the cocaine industry once the FARC fled, implementing a new economic strategy.
- For simpler drug transit, these gangs restrict their operations to border districts and purchase vast quantities of coca from a small number of growers.
- The towns' economies have collapsed due to the change in the drug trade.

Implications on India:

- Global drug trafficking routes could change if the cocaine industry in Colombia experiences changes.
- The routes taken to transport cocaine into India may alter as a result of the country's inclusion in the global drug trade network.
- A rise in cocaine production worldwide may result in increased drug availability in India.
- This might lead to a rise in drug trafficking activities within the nation, which would be seen in more seizures in big cities like Pune.
- Increased cocaine availability may contribute to a rise in drug misuse cases in India.

Trivia

What is OpenAI's secret Project 'Strawberry'?



Why in the News?

- OpenAI, a US-based company, became well-known with its AI chatbot ChatGPT, which can analyze photos and respond to queries.
- According to reports, OpenAI is now working on a new AI model with enhanced reasoning capabilities, which could alter the AI field.

What is Project Strawberry?

- OpenAI's covert Project Q* (Q-Star) first came to light over six months ago with its novel approach to AI training.
- Working under the code name "Strawberry," OpenAI is currently developing a new reasoning technology that is thought to be the renamed version of Project Q*.
- With Strawberry, AI models will be able to plan ahead, browse the internet on their own, and carry out in-depth research.

What are Large Language Models (LLMs)?

- Artificial intelligence (AI) systems with advanced capabilities, known as LLMs, are created to comprehend, produce, and handle human language.
- They are trained on a massive quantity of text data and are constructed utilizing deep learning techniques, specifically neural networks.

Difference from Existing AI Models

- Current large language models (LLMs) are capable of summarizing texts and writing prose, but they are not very good at multi-step logic tasks and common sense problems.
- Present-day LLMs lack the necessary external frameworks to successfully plan forward.
- It is anticipated that strawberry models would improve AI reasoning, enabling sophisticated problem-solving and planning.
- These models have the potential to revolutionize AI's capabilities by enabling it to execute tasks that call for a sequence of actions over a prolonged period of time.

Potential Applications of Strawberry Models

- Scientific advances could result from advanced AI models' ability to do experiments, evaluate data, and make new hypothesis suggestions.
- AI could help with medication discovery, genetics research, and analysis of tailored therapy in the medical field.
- AI has the ability to participate in theoretical research, help with engineering computations, and answer complicated mathematical issues.
- Writing, making art and music, making movies, and inventing video games are all areas where AI may be useful.

Ethical Considerations

- Impact on Jobs: As AI becomes more sophisticated, worries about employment displacement and the moral ramifications of AI replicating human labor may grow.
- Power Usage and Morality: Advanced AI models demand enormous quantities of power, which raises ethical and environmental concerns.

Admissions are Open for the 2024-2025 Academic Year

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ELIGIBILITY: 50% in 10+2/Intermediate in any stream from a recognized board.

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- B.A. (Hons) English Litt
- B.A. (Hons) Political Science and International Relations

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History | Economics | Political Science | Geography | Sociology
English Litt. | Telugu Litt. | Public Administration | International Relations

For SC/ST/OBC/PWD: 45%. | *100% placement assistance for registered and eligible students



B.A.(Hons) with IAS Orientation

Eligibility:

50% in 10+2 / Intermediate in
any stream from a recognized board.

For SC/ST/OBC/PWD: 45%. | *100% placement assistance

B.A. with IAS orientation offers a specialized curriculum blended with the UPSC – Civil Services Exam syllabus. As part of this program, the learners are exposed to all components of UPSC core subjects such as history, geography, politics, economy, general studies, current affairs, and C-SAT.

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