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Current Affairs

February 2023

Editor

Manohar E. Patil

(Founder-Director Reliable Academy)

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The Reliable Publication, Pune

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The Reliable Publication, Pune

Appointment

Praveen K. Srivastava named as acting Central Vigilance Commissioner

- ▶▶ Vigilance Commissioner Praveen Kumar Srivastava has been appointed as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC). His appointment comes after Suresh N. Patel completed his term as the chief of the anti-corruption watchdog Central Vigilance Commission on December 24. The commission is headed by a CVC and can have a maximum of two Vigilance Commissioners. Besides Mr. Srivastava, former Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Arvind Kumar is the other Vigilance Commissioner. The tenure of a CVC and vigilance commissioner is of four years or till the incumbent attains the age of 65 years.



Praveen K. Srivastava

About the Mr. Srivastava :

- ▶▶ Mr. Srivastava is a 1988-batch (retired) Indian Administrative Service officer of Assam-Meghalaya cadre. He superannuated as Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat on January 31 this year.
- ▶▶ During his tenure as Special Secretary and Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, he had handled matters relating to cadre management of Indian Police Service, personnel and general administration of central armed police forces and Union territories.
- ▶▶ Mr. Srivastava also assisted the government in negotiations relating to trade in services under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as Director/Deputy Secretary, Department of Commerce.
- ▶▶ He also served as Chief Vigilance Officer in RITES Ltd and as Joint Secretary and Mission Director, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).
- ▶▶ Mr. Patel, former managing director and chief executive officer of Andhra Bank, was on August 3, 2022 appointed as the CVC.
- ▶▶ He joined the Commission in April 2020 as the Vigilance Commissioner. Mr. Patel was made acting CVC on June 24, 2021 after Sanjay Kothari completed his term

Chetan Sharma reappointed as Chairman of BCCI's selection committee

- ▶▶ Chetan Sharma was reappointed as the chairman of the senior selection committee, exactly two months after his entire panel was disbanded by the BCCI for the Indian team's semifinal exit in the

T20 World Cup. Salil Ankola, Shiv Sunar Das, Subroto Banerjee and Sridharan Sharath are new members of the selection committee. The new committee has been picked by the Cricket Advisory Committee comprising Ashok Malhotra, Jatin Paranjape and Sulakshana Naik. The committee further recommended Chetan Sharma for the role of Chairman of the senior men's selection committee.



Chetan Sharma

About the new member :

- ▶▶ Salil Ankola, the former chief selector of the Mumbai cricket team, played 20 ODIs and 1 Test match between 1989 to 1997. His Test debut came along with Sachin Tendulkar against Pakistan in 1989.
- ▶▶ A domestic cricket veteran, Shiv Sundar Das played 23 Tests and scored 1326 runs. He also donned 4 ODI caps. Das finished his first-class career with mammoth 10908 runs in 180 matches. He has worked with the Indian women's cricket team as the batting coach.
- ▶▶ Subroto Banerjee made it to the Indian team in 1991 and made his Test debut against Australia in 1992. He played 1 Test and 6 ODIs. The former right-arm pacer scalped 135 wickets in 59 first-class matches and dismissed 54 batsmen in 49 List A matches.
- ▶▶ A domestic cricket giant, Sridharan Sharath remained uncapped in international cricket. He was a mainstay for Tamil Nadu. Sharath scored 8700 runs in 139 matches at a solid average of 51.17.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ BCCI President : Roger Binny
- ▶▶ BCCI Headquarters : Mumbai
- ▶▶ BCCI Founded : December 1928

India's Vinaya Prakash Singh new Asian Pacific Postal Union Secretary General

- ▶▶ According to the Ministry of Communications, Vinaya Prakash Singh, a former Member (Personnel), Postal Services Board, was elected as the union's Secretary General and will assume responsibility for the position for a four-year term following the successful elections held during the 13th APPU Congress, which was held in Bangkok during the months of August and September 2022. The Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU), which has its headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand, will be led by India starting this month.



Vinaya Prakash Sing

- ▶▶ An international group of 32 Asia-Pacific nations makes up the Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU).

- ▶▶ The only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialised organisation of the United Nations, in the area is the APPU.
- ▶▶ The APPU's mission is to strengthen postal ties among its members and to advance international collaboration in the provision of postal services.
- ▶▶ As the regional hub for a number of UPU initiatives, APPU also assumes responsibility for ensuring that all technical and operational UPU projects are completed in the area, providing the best possible integration of the region into the global postal network....

Praveen Sharma appointed as Director of National Health Authority

- ▶▶ Praveen Sharma has been selected for appointment as Director in the National Health Authority (Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission) under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. As per the order issued from the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), Sharma has been appointed to the post under the Central Staffing Scheme for a period of five years with effect from the date of taking over charge of the post or until further orders, whichever event takes place earlier. Sharma is an Indian Defence Service of Engineers (IDSE) officer of 2005 batch.



What Is National Health Authority ?

- ▶▶ National Health Authority (NHA) is the apex body responsible for implementing India's flagship public health insurance/assurance scheme called "Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana" & has been entrusted with the role of designing strategy, building technological infrastructure and implementation of "National Digital Health Mission" to create a National Digital Health Ecosystem.

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission -

- ▶▶ Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission will connect the digital health solutions of hospitals across the country with each other. The Mission will not only make the processes of hospitals simplified but also will increase ease of living. The Digital Ecosystem will also enable a host of other facilities like Digital Consultation, Consent of patients in letting medical practitioners access their records, etc. With the implementation of this scheme, old medical records cannot get lost as every record will be stored digitally....

Retired DG of BSF Pankaj Kumar Singh appointed Deputy NSA

- ▶▶ Retired director general of the Border Security Force (BSF), Pankaj Kumar Singh was appointed as the Deputy National Security Adviser in National Security Council Secretariat for a period

of two years. Singh, a 1988-batch IPS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, has been appointed on a re-employment contract. Singh had retired as the BSF chief on December 31, 2022. When Singh took charge of the BSF on August 31, 2021, he had created history of a son and a father holding the top post of a paramilitary force during their services. His father and retired IPS officer of the 1959-batch, Prakash Singh, had also headed the BSF from June, 1993 to January, 1994. Singh holds LLB and MPhil degrees, besides MBA from the IIM, Ahmedabad.



- ▶▶ Currently, retired IPS officer Dattatray Padsalgikar, former R&AW chief Rajinder Khanna and retired IFS officer Pankaj Saran also served as Deputy National Security Advisors.

Earlier Posting -

- ▶▶ Singh had earlier served with the Union government as Inspector General of the CRPF in Chhattisgarh and IG (Operations) at CRPF headquarters in Delhi.
- ▶▶ Before becoming BSF DG, he also served in the BSF as chief of the Eastern Frontier, he played an instrumental role in bringing down cattle smuggling through West Bengal and Assam borders.
- ▶▶ Between 2015 and 2021, cattle smuggling on the Indo-Bangla border dropped by 87%. When he became DG of the BSF, he had to negotiate the contentious amendment to BSF jurisdiction which was increased to 50km from the border as many states opposed it.
- ▶▶ He has served in the Rajasthan Police as well as in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), during which he cracked an infamous sex scandal that had rocked Jammu and Kashmir, besides being involved in solving several cases related to corruption.
- ▶▶ His idea to celebrate the Raising Day of the BSF in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, in 2021, appealed to the government so much that it has now directed all paramilitary forces and even the Army to celebrate their foundation and raising days out of Delhi.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ 5th and current National Security Advisor (NSA) :
Ajit Kumar Doval

UPSC recommends Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi As Drugs Controller General Of India

- ▶▶ The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has recommended the name of Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi as the new Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)**
- ▶▶ The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has recommended the name of Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi as the new Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) conducted interviews for the appointment of the Drugs Controller General

of India (DCGI). The UPSC conducted interviews for the appointment of the DCGI, with the top contenders being Dr. VG Somani, Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi, and Dr Jai Prakash.

- ▶ On November 11, last year, Dr VG Somani's term as DCGI was extended for three months, coming into effect on November 16, 2022. This was done for the second time, as he had also gotten an extension in the month of August 2022. Dr Kiran Kumar Karlapu, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and Family Welfare, issued the circular regarding the extension of DCGI for a further period of three months. Dr VG Somani was appointed as the Drugs Controller General of India in the month of August 2019.
- ▶ DCGI heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) which is responsible to ensure quality drug supply across the country. It also has the authority to give approval to new drugs and regulate clinical trials...



Awards

Padma Awardees 2023

MULAYAM SINGH (POSTHUMOUS)
SM KRISHNA
N. K. JHUNJHUNWALA (POSTHUMOUS)
SUJATA MUKTY
GAVEENA TANDON
PM KEERAVANI
KULKAR MANGALAMP BILLA

- ▶▶ Padma Awards - one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities, viz - art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc. 'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.
- ▶▶ These Awards are conferred by the President of India at ceremonial functions which are held at Rashtrapati Bhawan usually around March/ April every year. For the year 2023, the President has approved conferment of 106 Padma Awards including 3 duo cases (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one) as per list below. The list comprises 6 Padma Vibhushan, 9 Padma Bhushan and 91 Padma Shri Awards. 19 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 2 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 7 Posthumous awardees.

Padma Vibhushan (6)

SN	Name	Field	State / Country
1	Shri Balkrishna Doshi(Posthumous)	Others - Architecture	Gujarat
2	Shri Zakir Hussain	Art	Maharashtra
3	Shri S M Krishna	Public Affairs	Karnataka
4	Shri Dilip Mahalanabis(Posthumous)	Medicine	West Bengal
5	Shri Srinivas Varadhan	Science & Engineering	USA

SN	Name	Field	State / Country
6	Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav(Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Uttar Pradesh
Padma Bhushan (9)			
7	Shri S L Bhyrappa	Literature & Education	Karnataka
8	Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla	Trade & Industry	Maharashtra
9	Shri Deepak Dhar	Science & Engineering	Maharashtra
10	Ms. Vani Jairam	Art	Tamil Nadu
11	Swami Chinna Jeeyar	Others - Spiritualism	Telangana
12	Ms. Suman Kalyanpur	Art	Maharashtra
13	Shri Kapil Kapoor	Literature & Education	Delhi
14	Ms. Sudha Murty	Social Work	Karnataka
15	Shri Kamlesh D Patel	Others - Spiritualism	Telangana
Padma Shri (91)			
16	Dr. Sukama Acharya	Others - Spiritualism	Haryana
17	Ms. Jodhaiyabai Baiga	Art	Madhya Pradesh
18	Shri Premjit Baria	Art	Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Damanand Diu
19	Ms. Usha Barle	Art	Chhattisgarh
20	Shri Munishwar Chanddawar	Medicine	Madhya Pradesh
21	Shri Hemant Chauhan	Art	Gujarat
22	Shri Bhanubhai Chitara	Art	Gujarat
23	Ms. Hemoprova Chutia	Art	Assam
24	Shri Narendra Chandra Debbarma (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Tripura
25	Ms. Subhadra Devi	Art	Bihar
26	Shri Khadar Valli Dudekula	Science & Engineering	Karnataka
27	Shri Hem Chandra Goswami	Art	Assam
28	Ms. Pritikana Goswami	Art	West Bengal
29	Shri Radha Charan Gupta	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
30	Shri Modadugu Vijay Gupta	Science & Engineering	Telangana
31	Shri Ahmed Hussain & Shri MohdHussain *(Duo)	Art	Rajasthan
32	Shri Dilshad Hussain	Art	Uttar Pradesh
33	Shri Bhiku Ramji Idate	Social Work	Maharashtra
34	Shri C I Issac	Literature & Education	Kerala
35	Shri Rattan Singh Jaggi	Literature & Education	Punjab

SN	Name	Field	State / Country
36	Shri Bikram Bahadur Jamatia	Social Work	Tripura
37	Shri Ramkuiwangbe Jene	Social Work	Assam
38	Shri Rakesh RadheshyamJhunjhunwala (Posthumous)	Trade & Industry	Maharashtra
39	Shri Ratan Chandra Kar	Medicine	Andaman & Nicobar Islands
40	Shri Mahipat Kavi	Art	Gujarat
41	Shri M M Keeravaani	Art	Andhra Pradesh
42	Shri Areez Khambatta(Posthumous)	Trade & Industry	Gujarat
43	Shri Parshuram Komaji Khunc	Art	Maharashtra
44	Shri Ganesh NagappaKrishnarajanagara	Science & Engineering	Andhra Pradesh
45	Shri Maguni Charan Kuanr	Art	Odisha
46	Shri Anand Kumar	Literature & Education	Bihar
47	Shri Arvind Kumar	Science & Engineering	Uttar Pradesh
48	Shri Domar Singh Kunvar	Art	Chhattisgarh
49	Shri Risingbor Kurkalang	Art	Meghalaya
50	Ms. Hirabai Lobi	Social Work	Gujarat
51	Shri Moolchand Lodha	Social Work	Rajasthan
52	Ms. Rani Machaiah	Art	Karnataka
53	Shri Ajay Kumar Mandavi	Art	Chhattisgarh
54	Shri Prabhakar Bhanudas Mande	Literature & Education	Maharashtra
55	Shri Gajanan Jagannath Mane	Social Work	Maharashtra
56	Shri Antaryami Mishra	Literature & Education	Odisha
57	Shri Nadoja Pindipapanahalli Munivenkatappa	Art	Karnataka
58	Prof. (Dr.) Mahendra Pal	Science & Engineering	Gujarat
59	Shri Uma Shankar Pandey	Social Work	Uttar Pradesh
60	Shri Ramesh Parmar & Ms. ShantiParmar *(Duo)	Art	Madhya Pradesh
61	Dr. Nalini Parthasarathi	Medicine	Puducherry
62	Shri Hanumantha Rao Pasupuleti	Medicine	Telangana
63	Shri Ramesh Patange	Literature & Education	Maharashtra
64	Ms. Krishna Patel	Art	Odisha
65	Shri K Kalyanasundaram Pillai	Art	Tamil Nadu
66	Shri V P Appukuttan Poduval	Social Work	Kerala
67	Shri Kapil Dev Prasad	Art	Bihar
68	Shri S R D Prasad	Sports	Kerala
69	Shri Shah Rasheed Ahmed Quadri	Art	Karnataka

SN	Name	Field	State / Country
70	Shri C V Raju	Art	Andhra Pradesh
71	Shri Bakshi Ram	Science & Engineering	Haryana
72	Shri Cheruvayal K Raman	Others - Agriculture	Kerala
73	Ms. Sujatha Ramdorai	Science & Engineering	Canada
74	Shri Abbareddy Nageswara Rao	Science & Engineering	Andhra Pradesh
75	Shri Pareshbhai Rathwa	Art	Gujarat
76	Shri B Ramakrishna Reddy	Literature & Education	Telangana
77	Shri Mangala Kanti Roy	Art	West Bengal
78	Ms. K C Runremsangi	Art	Mizoram
79	Shri Vadivel Gopal & Shri MasiSadaiyan*(Duo)	Social Work	Tamil Nadu
80	Shri Manoranjan Sahu	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
81	Shri Patayat Sahu	Others - Agriculture	Odisha
82	Shri Ritwik Sanyal	Art	Uttar Pradesh
83	Shri Kota Satchidananda Sastry	Art	Andhra Pradesh
84	Shri Sankurathri Chandra Sekhar	Social Work	Andhra Pradesh
85	Shri K Shanathoiba Sharma	Sports	Manipur
86	Shri Nekram Sharma	Others - Agriculture	Himachal Pradesh
87	Shri Gurcharan Singh	Sports	Delhi
88	Shri Laxman Singh	Social Work	Rajasthan
89	Shri Mohan Singh	Literature & Education	Jammu & Kashmir
90	Shri Thounaojam Chaoba Singh	Public Affairs	Manipur
91	Shri Prakash Chandra Sood	Literature & Education	Andhra Pradesh
92	Ms. Neihunuo Sorhie	Art	Nagaland
93	Dr. Janum Singh Soy	Literature & Education	Jharkhand
94	Shri Kushok Thiksey Nawang Chamba Stanzin	Others-Spiritualism	Ladakh
95	Shri S Subbaraman	Others - Archaeology	Karnataka
96	Shri Moa Subong	Art	Nagaland
97	Shri Palam Kalyana Sundaram	Social Work	Tamil Nadu
98	Ms. Raveena Ravi Tandon	Art	Maharashtra
99	Shri Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
100	Shri Dhaniram Toto	Literature & Education	West Bengal
101	Shri Tula Ram Upreti	Others - Agriculture	Sikkim
102	Dr. Gopalsamy Veluchamy	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
103	Dr. Ishwar Chander Verma	Medicine	Delhi
104	Ms. Coomi Nariman Wadia	Art	Maharashtra
105	Shri Karma Wangchu (Posthumous)	Social Work	Arunachal Pradesh
106	Shri Ghulam Muhammad Zaz	Art	Jammu & Kashmir

Note: * In Duo case, the Award is counted as one.

Kerala University won 'Overall Championship' at youth festival

▶▶ University of Kerala bagged the 'Overall Championship' at Padma Tarang, the 36th Inter University South Zone Youth Festival at Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswa Vidyalayam (SPMVV) in Tirupati.

▶▶ University of Kerala bagged the 'Overall Championship' at Padma Tarang, the 36th Inter University South Zone Youth Festival at Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswa Vidyalayam (SPMVV) in Tirupati. Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, came the runners-up. With more than 700 registered participants from universities across South India converging on the campus.



Kerala University

Championships were awarded in each of the five categories :

- ▶▶ Music: MGU Kottayam
- ▶▶ Dance: Sri Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit
- ▶▶ Fine arts: Yogi Vemana University
- ▶▶ Theatre: University of Kerala
- ▶▶ Literary events: University of Kerala

About the Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswa Vidyalayam (SPMVV) :

- ▶▶ The SPMVV is hosting the event for the third time in collaboration with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU). In all, there will be 27 competitive events during the five-day festival. Of the eighteen universities that deputed student contingents to the event, Kerala ranked first with seven varsities.

United States R'Bonney Gabriel crowned 71st Miss Universe 2022

▶▶ The United States candidate R'Bonney Gabriel has crowned Miss Universe 2022 at a ceremony held in New Orleans, Mexico. The crown was presented to her by India's Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu who had won the 202

Miss Universe 2022 :

- ▶▶ The United States candidate R'Bonney Gabriel has crowned Miss Universe 2022 at a ceremony held in New Orleans, Mexico. The crown was presented



R'Bonney Gabriel

to her by India's Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu who had won the 2021 title. She was handed a bouquet of flowers, draped in the winner's sash and crowned with a tiara onstage at the 71st Miss Universe Competition. The second runner-up was Miss Dominican Republic, Andreina Martinez, Miss Curacao, Gabriela Dos Santos, and Miss Puerto Rico, Ashley Carino, rounded out the top five finalists.

Indian participant :

- ▶▶ Divita Rai of India reached the top 16, but she was unable to advance further. India's participation in the 71st Miss Universe was restricted to the top 16 since she was unable to make it into the top 5. Ms. Rai, a native of Mangaluru, who could not make it to the top-5 cut, hails from a family in Thiruvail. Daughter of Dilip Rai and Pranita Rai, Ms. Divita studied in Mumbai. She was adjudged Liva Miss Diva Universe 2022 and got qualified for the Miss Universe contest. Only two Indians before Ms. Sandhu had won the title of Miss Universe— actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.

About Miss Universe R'Bonney Gabriel :

- ▶▶ According to Miss Universe, Gabriel is a former high school volleyball player and graduate of the University of North Texas. A short bio posted on the organization's website said she is also CEO of her own sustainable clothing line. The 28-year-old Gabriel is a fashion designer from Houston, Texas....

CJI D.Y. Chandrachud to be Conferred with "Award for Global Leadership"

- ▶▶ Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession has announced Chief Justice of India Dr. DY Chandrachud as the 2022 recipient of its "Award for Global Leadership".
- ▶▶ The Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession (HLS CLP) has announced Chief Justice of India Dr. DY Chandrachud as the 2022 recipient of its "Award for Global Leadership" in recognition of his lifetime service to the legal profession in India and across the world. The award will be presented to him in a virtual event on 11th January 2023.
- ▶▶ Professor David Wilkins of Harvard Law School will have a conversation with Chief Justice Dr. DY Chandrachud at the event.
- ▶▶ The "Award for Global Leadership" is the Centre's highest Professional Honor.
- ▶▶ The Centre brings together leading academics, legal practitioners, and thought leaders to honor and recognize individuals whose achievements have been impactful to the legal profession.
- ▶▶ Professor Wilkins has praised India and Justice Chandrachud's contribution to issues such as the mental health and well-being of lawyers.
- ▶▶ The last recipients include Ambassador Samantha Power, Former US Permanent Representative



to the United Nations and current Director of the Agency for International Development; Brad Smith, Vice Chair of Microsoft, and Kenneth Frazier, former Chair and CEO of Merck.

- ▶▶ Chief Justice Chandrachud, took oath as the Chief Justice of India in November 2022. He holds an LL.M and an SJD from Harvard Law School.

About Dr. DY Chandrachud :

- ▶▶ Dhyanjaya Yashwant Chandrachud is an Indian judge who is currently serving as the 50th Chief Justice of India. He is the former ex-officio executive chairman of the National Legal Services Authority while being J1 of the Supreme court of India. He is also the former chief justice of Allahabad Highcourt and former judge of Bombay High Court....

Jalna and Nagpur Police won 'Best Police Unit' Award in Maharashtra

- ▶▶ Jalna district police and Nagpur city police in Maharashtra have been awarded the Best Police Unit Awards for 2021 in the state under different classes for maintaining law and order.

- ▶▶ Jalna district police and Nagpur city police in Maharashtra have been awarded the Best Police Unit Awards for 2021 in the state under different classes for maintaining law and order, use of modern technology, and evolving community policing and administration. The Jalna Police got the award in Class A and the Nagpur Police in Class B. The winners were announced by Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Kulwant Sarangal.



Jalna and Nagpur Police won 'Best Police Unit' Award in Maharashtra- Key Points

- ▶▶ Police units with less than 6,100 Indian Penal Code Cases are grouped in Class A.
- ▶▶ In Class B, there are more than 6,100 Indian Penal Code Cases.
- ▶▶ In Class A, Raigarh district police got the second-best police unit award.
- ▶▶ The Sindhudurg district police won for the best unit for conviction in session trial cases.
- ▶▶ Beed district police was awarded for the best unit in techno for policing.
- ▶▶ Gadchiroli Police was awarded for the best unit in community policing initiatives.
- ▶▶ The police units were evaluated based on their performance on 45 pre-selected parameters.
- ▶▶ Jalna Police force comes under the Aurangabad range.
- ▶▶ The Aurangabad rural police from the same range won the best police unit award for 2020 in Class A.
- ▶▶ The headquarters of the State Police announced Best Police Unit Awards 2021 to Nagpur Police Commissionerate.
- ▶▶ The award was instituted by the State Police to encourage good practice in policing.
- ▶▶ The 49 police units of Maharashtra have been divided into classes A, B, and C....

17th Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2023 announced

- ▶▶ 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award: 27 Indians living overseas have been chosen by the Indian government for the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA), for outstanding achievements both in India and abroad. The award is the highest honour conferred upon Indians living abroad, including Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) or organisations/institutions established and run by them.
- ▶▶ The jury that selected the recipients comprised Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar as its chairman and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar as its Vice-Chair, among other distinguished dignitaries from different fields. The awards will be conferred upon the recipients by President Droupadi Murmu during the 17th edition of the PBSA, which is scheduled to be held from 8-10 January in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.



Theme of 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award :

- ▶▶ As per the Ministry of External Affairs, the theme for Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2023 will be "Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal". This theme highlights the importance of the Indian diaspora in contributing to India's progress.

List of Overseas Indians Chosen for the Honour

No.	Person	Country	Field
1	Jagadish Chennupati	Australia	Science & Technology/ Education
2	Sanjeev Mehta	Bhutan	Education
3	Dilip Loundo	Brazil	Art & Culture/Education
4	Alexander Maliakel John	Brunei Darussalam	Medicine
5	Vaikuntam Iyer Lakshmanan	Canada	Community Welfare
6	Joginder Singh Nijjar	Croatia	Art & Culture/Education
7	Ramjee Prasad	Denmark	Information Technology
8	Kannan Ambalam	Ethiopia	Community Welfare
9	Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay	Germany	Welfare/Medicine
10	Mohamed Irfaan Ali	Guyana	Politics/Community Welfare
11	Reena Vinod Pushkarna	Israel	Business/Community Welfare
12	Maqsooda Sarfi Shiotani	Japan	Education
13	Rajagopal	Mexico	Education

No.	Person	Country	Field
14	Amit Kailash Chandra Lath	Poland	Business/Community Welfare
15	Parmanand Sukhumal Daswani	Republic of Congo	Community Welfare
16	Piyush Gupta	Singapore	Business
17	Mohanlal Hira	South Africa	Community Welfare
18	Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel	South Sudan	Business/Community Welfare
19	Sivakumar Nadesan	Sri Lanka	Community Welfare
20	Dewanchandrebhose Sharman	Suriname	Community Welfare
21	Archana Sharma	Switzerland	Science & Technology
22	Frank Arthur Seepersad	Trinidad & Tobago	Community Welfare/Education
23	Siddharth Balachandran	UAE	Business/Community Welfare
24	Chandrakant Babubhai Patel	UK	Media
25	Darshan Singh Dhaliwal	USA	Business/Community Welfare
26	Rajesh Subramaniam	USA	Business
27	Ashok Kumar Tiwary	Uzbekistan	Business

About the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman :

- ▶▶ The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (Overseas Indian Honour/Award) is the highest Indian award for Non-resident Indian and Overseas Citizen of India or an organisation or institution established and run by Non-Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, constituted by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India in conjunction with the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Non-Resident Indian Day), to honour exceptional and meritorious contribution in their chosen field/profession. The award is given by the President of India. Since 2016, the Government of India has doubled the number of awardees each year to 30 after a decision to grant the award once every two years.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBS) is conferred for outstanding contributions in any of the following areas :

- ▶▶ "Social and humanitarian causes in India or abroad"
- ▶▶ "Better understanding of India"
- ▶▶ "Support to India's causes and concerns in a tangible way"
- ▶▶ "Building closer links between India, the overseas Indian community and their country of residence;"
- ▶▶ "Welfare of the local Indian community"
- ▶▶ "Philanthropic and charitable work"
- ▶▶ "Eminence in one's field or outstanding work, which has enhanced India's prestige in the country of residence; or"
- ▶▶ "Eminence in skills which has enhanced India's prestige in that country (for non-professional workers)."

Odisha wins World Habitat Award 2023 for its JAGA Mission

- ▶▶ Odisha won the UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023 for Jaga Mission, a 5T initiative of the state. The awards recognise and highlight innovative, outstanding and revolutionary housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world. The Jaga mission is the land titling and slum upgrading program that aims at empowering the lives of slum dwellers.

About the Jaga Mission :

- ▶▶ Jaga mission is the world's largest land titling and slum upgrading program which aims at empowering the lives of slum dwellers. Under the inspiring leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the Government of Odisha has set itself the ambitious target of becoming the first slum-free state in India and is leading the Jaga Mission programme to upgrade all of the state's 2,919 slums. In the last 05 years of the initiative, 1,75,000 families have been granted land tenure security, 100% households in 2,724 slums have been provided with pipe water connections, 707 slums transformed fully into Liveable Habitats, 100% households in 666 slums have individual toilets, and 8 cities have become slum-free.
- ▶▶ Notably: Earlier in 2019, Odisha's Jaga mission had received World Habitat Awards for its success in providing land tenure security to the slum dwellers....



Vivek Agnihotri's 'The Kashmir Files' selected for Oscars 2023

- ▶▶ Vivek Agnihotri's film 'The Kashmir Files' has been shortlisted for Oscars 2023. That means now this film has qualified to get an Oscar. Actors Anupam Kher, Mithun Chakraborty, Darshan Kumar and Pallavi Joshi are also shortlisted for the best actor category. The story of Kashmir Files revolves around the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in the year 1990 following systematic killings of people from the community by Pakistan-backed terrorists. The film was released in theatres in March 2022.
- ▶▶ The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has announced its list of films that are eligible for a nomination at the Oscars 2023. After RRR, there are three major entries from the Hindi film industry on the list namely The Kashmir Files, Gangubai Kathiawadi, and Rocketry. The films that impressed moviegoers with their storylines are expected to compete in their respective categories with some of the finest movies is shortlisted for the 95th Academy Awards.



Other shortlisted movie's :

- ▶▶ Rishabh Shetty's 'Kantara', Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Gangubai Kathiawadi', Paan Nalin's 'The Chello Show' and SS Rajamouli's 'RRR' have also made it to the Oscar shortlist.
- ▶▶ Originally made in Kannada with a budget of less than Rs 16 crore, 'Kantara' went on to become one of the highest-grossing Kannada films with Rs 400 crore at the box office.
- ▶▶ Marathi films Me Vasantao, Tujhysa Sathi Khai Hi, Kannada film 'Vikrant Rona' and R Madhavan's 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect' have also been shortlisted for Oscars 2023.
- ▶▶ The film 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect' is a biopic of ISRO scientist Nambi Narayanan, who was accused of spying for ISRO and was later acquitted.
- ▶▶ Apart from these, Shaunak Sen and Kartiki Gonsalves' documentary 'All That Breathes' 'The Elephant Whispers' is also a part of the list.... Read more at: <https://currentaffairs.adda247.com/vivek-agnihotris-the-kashmir-files-selected-for-oscars-2023/>

Varanasi Cantt Railway Station achieves 5-star rating

- ▶▶ Indian Railways' Varanasi Cantt Railway Station has been awarded a 5- star 'Eat Right Station' certification for providing high-quality, nutritious food to passengers.
- ▶▶ This certification is granted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to railway stations adhering to standard food storage and hygiene practices. The 'Eat Right Station' certification is awarded by FSSAI to railway stations that set benchmarks in providing safe and wholesome food to passengers.



- ▶▶ The station is awarded a certificate upon a conclusion of an FSSAI-empanelled third-party audit agency with ratings from 1 to 5. The 5-star rating indicates full compliance by the station to ensure safe and hygienic food is available to passengers.

About Eat Right Station :

- ▶▶ The certification is part of the 'Eat Right India' movement- a large-scale effort by FSSAI to transform the country's food system to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable food for all Indians. Eat Right India adopts a judicious mix of regulatory, capacity building, collaborative, and empowerment approaches to ensure that our food is suitable both for the people and the planet.
- ▶▶ The other railway stations with Star certification include Anand Vihar Terminal Railway Station (Delhi); Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Mumbai); Mumbai Central Railway Station, (Mumbai); Vadodara Railway Station, Chandigarh Railway Station and Bhopal Railway Station.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ FSSAI Founded:- 5 September, 2008
- ▶▶ HQ'S:- New Delhi
- ▶▶ Chairperson:- Shri Rajesh Bhushan, IAS

Nepalese Dr. Sanduk Ruit wins Bahrain's ISA Award for Service to Humanity

▶▶ Himalayan Cataract Project Co-Founder Dr Sanduk Ruit has won the ISA Award for Service to Humanity, a top civilian award of Bahrain. The award carries a cash prize of USD 1 million, a certificate of merit and a gold medal. He is pioneer in delivering high-quality microsurgical procedures in remote eye camps. He made modern eye care affordable and accessible to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.



Dr. Sanduk Ruit

▶▶ The biennial award will be presented at a ceremony to be held next month at the Isa Cultural Center in Manama under the patronage of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. The Board of Trustees considered the findings of the field research team's visit and decided that Dr. Ruit work deserves this award for service to humanity because of the originality of his efforts and his success. The "Isa Award for Service to Humanity" was established in 2009 by His Majesty Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain.

About the Dr Sanduk Ruit :

▶▶ Dr Ruit has trained more than 650 doctors, teaching them to cure preventable blindness. He has been instrumental in making modern eye care affordable and accessible to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. He is fondly called "God of Sight" for saving the sight of 1,20,000 eyes.

Awards and honours he received :

- ▶▶ The Government of Australia conferred on him "The Order of Australia" in 2007.
- ▶▶ In 2016, he was awarded the "Asian Game Changer Award" by the Asia Society of New York.
- ▶▶ He is the recipient of the Padma Shri Award by the GoI.
- ▶▶ The National Order of Merit of Bhutan as well as the Ramon Magsaysay Award. Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' congratulated senior ophthalmologist Ruit for receiving prestigious Bahrain's ISA award.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ King of Bahrain: Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.
- ▶▶ Bahrain Capital: Manama.
- ▶▶ Bahrain Currency: Bahraini dinar...

Goa Manohar International Airport wins best sustainable greenfield airport award

- ▶▶ The New Goa Manohar International Airport (MIA), built by the GMR Goa International Airport Ltd (GGIAL), a subsidiary of GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited, won the prestigious "Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport" award under Aviation Sustainability and Environment at ASSOCHAM 14th International Conference-cum-Awards for Civil Aviation 2023 at New Delhi. The award was presented for "excellent initiatives" taken by GGIAL in implementing sustainability as one of core concepts. During the conference, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia presented the award to the senior officials from GGIAL in the presence of industry dignitaries and participants.
- ▶▶ The forum recognises the companies engaged in civil aviation initiatives that adopt best practices and technological advancement in their daily operations, a GMR Goa International Airport release said. The criteria of awards are contribution, innovativeness, applicability, relevance and impact potential in their respective areas. The jury evaluated the participants on various parameters and innovative thought process.
- ▶▶ Sustainability as one of core concepts, New Goa Manohar International Airport is designed to be a zero-carbon footprint airport and will join the elite club of green airports across the world. The New Goa Manohar International Airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 11 last year and the commercial operations started from January 5, 2023



Writer K. Venu received Federal Bank Literary Award 2023

- ▶▶ Noted writer K Venu was conferred with Federal Bank Literary Award 2022 for his autobiography 'Oranweshananthinte Katha.' Venu received the award from Balagopal Chandrasekhar, Chairman and Independent Director of Federal Bank, at a special event held as part of the Kerala Literature Festival. 'Oranweshananthinte Katha' was chosen by the judging panel comprising writer and literary critic KC Narayanan, Sunil P Ilayidom and PK Rajashekharan. Judging panel member P K Rajashekharan commented that the essence of the book brought back the memory of the most intense political timeline in the modern history of Kerala.



- ▶▶ This is the first-ever literary award constituted by the Federal Bank. By constituting the award, Federal Bank aims to celebrate the diversity of contemporary literature and recognise writers for their cultural contributions.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ Federal Bank Headquarters: Aluva;
- ▶▶ Federal Bank CEO: Shyam Srinivasan (23 Sept 2010–);
- ▶▶ Federal Bank Founder: K.P Hormis;
- ▶▶ Federal Bank Founded: 23 April 1931, Nedumpuram

ICC annual awards 2022 announced

- ▶▶ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced its first individual award winners in the ICC Awards 2022, naming the stars honoured in the Associate, Emerging and T20I categories following a global vote conducted among the specialist panel of media representatives, the ICC Voting Academy and global fans who voted for their favourite stars. Winners in the 13 individual categories were based on overall performances and achievements throughout the calendar year, with winners announced across ICC digital channels.



ICC awards winners for 2022

- ▶▶ Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy : **Babar Azam (Pakistan)**
- ▶▶ Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy : **Nat Sciver (England)**
- ▶▶ Men's Test Cricketer of the Year : **Ben Stokes (England)**
- ▶▶ Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year : **Babar Azam**
- ▶▶ Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year : **Nat Sciver**
- ▶▶ Men's T20 International Cricketer of the Year : **Suryakumar Yadav (India)**
- ▶▶ Women's T20 International Cricketer of the Year : **Tahlia McGrath (Australia)**
- ▶▶ Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year : **Marco Jansen (South Africa)**
- ▶▶ Women's Emerging Cricketer of the Year : **Renuka Singh (India)**
- ▶▶ Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year : **Gerhard Erasmus (Namibia)**
- ▶▶ Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year : **Esha Oza (India)**
- ▶▶ David Shepherd Trophy : **Richard Illingworth (England)**
- ▶▶ Spirit of Cricket Award : **Aasif Sheikh (Nepal)**

ICC AWARDS 2022



BABAR
AZAM
MEN'S
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



NAT
SCIVER
WOMEN'S
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



ESHA
OZA
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATE
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



GERHARD
ERASMUS
MEN'S ASSOCIATE
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



SURYAKUMAR
YADAV
MEN'S T20I
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



TAHLIA
MCGRATH
WOMEN'S T20I
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



MARCO
JANSEN
MEN'S EMERGING
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



RENUKA
SINGH
WOMEN'S EMERGING
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



RICHARD
ILLINGWORTH
W/PIRE OF THE YEAR



BABAR
AZAM
MEN'S ODI
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



NAT
SCIVER
WOMEN'S ODI
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR



BEN
STOKES
MEN'S TEST
CRICKETER OF THE YEAR

ICC Voting Academy :

- ▶▶ Anand Vasu, Anjum Chopra, Daniel Beswick, Daren Ganga, Emal Pasarly, Estelle Vasudevan, Faizan Lakhani, Firdose Moonda, Frankie Mackay, Ian Bishop, Ian Callender, Isobel Joyce, Javed Hamim Kakar, Lisa Sthalekar, Lydia Greenway, Mehluli Sibanda, Melinda Farrell, Mohammad Isam, Mohammad Sekander Ali, Mpumelelo Mbangwa, Nasser Hussain, Natalie Germanos, Niall O'Brien, Paul Radley, Peter Della Penna, Peter Lalor, Rex Clementine, Russel Arnold, Sambit Bal, Shahid Hashmi, Simon Doull, Simon Wilde, Suzanne McFadden, Tristan Holme.

R.V. Prasad honoured the most distinguished scientist of the year award 2022

- ▶▶ R. Vishnu Prasad was awarded "The most distinguished scientist of the year 2022" at Vigyan bhawan, Delhi. Prasad, a scientist with 69 patents has been honored with the Indian Achievers Award as the most distinguished scientist of the year. The award, which recognizes individuals for their outstanding contributions in various fields, including culture, science, sports, and innovation. He contributed to smart cities, solid waste management, large-scale water treatment, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, was selected by a jury headed by Justice Gyan Sudha Mishra.
- ▶▶ The Indian Achievers Award is the india's most prestigious award and a prestigious recognition that is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to society in a variety of fields. Vishnu, who has been working tirelessly on sustainability, smart cities and is on a mission towards clean India on solid waste management and treatment of large water bodies, was selected by a jury headed by Hon'ble Justice Gyan Sudha Misra....



R. V. Prasad

Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 announced

- ▶▶ For the year 2023, Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Lunglei Fire Station (LFS), Mizoram, both in the Institutional category, have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 for their excellent work in Disaster Management.

About the award :

- ▶▶ The Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has instituted an annual award known as Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar to recognize and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organizations in India in the field of disaster management.
- ▶▶ The award is announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate in case of an institution and Rs. 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual.
- ▶▶ Under the guidance of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, the country has significantly improved the disaster management practices, preparedness, mitigation and response mechanisms resulting in significant reduction in casualties during natural calamities.



Subhash Chandra Bose

- ▶▶ For the award of year-2023, nominations were solicited from 1st July, 2022 onwards. The award scheme for the year 2023 was given wide publicity through print, electronic and social media. In response to the award scheme, 274 valid nominations were received from institutions and individuals.

Following is a summary of the outstanding work of the winners of 2023 Award in the field of Disaster Management :

Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA)

- ▶▶ Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), was established in 1999 in the aftermath of the Super Cyclone. OSDMA embarked on multiple initiatives including raising of the Odisha Disaster Response Action Force (ODRAF), Multi-hazard Early Warning Service (MHEWS) framework, and a cutting-edge technology-enabled web/smartphone-based platform called "SATARK" (System for Assessing, Tracking, and Alerting Disaster Risk Information based on Dynamic Risk Knowledge). OSDMA provided effective response during various cyclones, Hudhud (2014), Fani (2019), Amphan (2020) and Odisha floods (2020). OSDMA conducted disaster preparedness initiatives in building community resilience in 381 tsunami prone villages/wards and 879 multi-purpose cyclone/ flood shelters located within 1.5 km from coastline.

Lunglei Fire Station, Mizoram :

- ▶▶ Lunglei Fire Station, Mizoram, responded efficiently and effectively to a massive forest fire which was reported on 24 April 2021 in the uninhabited forest areas that surrounded Lunglei town and spread to more than 10 village council areas. Lunglei Fire Station personnel assisted by local civilians worked continuously for more than 32 hours during which they motivated and provided on the spot training to residents. Due to the valiant, brazen and prompt efforts of Fire & Emergency staff in the putting out the flames, there was no loss to life and property and the spread of fire to other parts of the State was prevented....

Critics Choice Awards 2023 - RRR bags two more awards

- ▶▶ The 28th Critics Choice Awards were held, and once again, SS Rajamouli's RRR has made India proud, as the film scored two awards, RRR won Best Song award for Naatu Naatu, as well as Best Foreign Language film. RRR was also nominated for Best Director, Best Picture and Best Visual Effects.
- ▶▶ The American Canadian Critics Choice Association CCA show Who shows for the finest In cinematic achievement. The Critics Choice Movie award Formerly known as the Broadcast Film Critics Association award was held. Critics Choice Awards Winner 2023 shows were hosted by Chelsea Handler.



Indian Movie :

- ▶▶ The 28th Critics Choice Awards were held, and once again, SS Rajamouli's RRR has made India proud, as the film scored two awards. RRR won Best Song award for Naatu Naatu, as well as Best Foreign Language film. RRR was also nominated for Best Director, Best Picture and Best Visual Effects.



Critics Choice Movie Awards

The Critics Choice Movie awards were given according to the nominees selected. You can see the Critics Choice Movie awards list in the given. The list is given according to the movie, series etc.

- Best Animated Series : **"Harley Quinn"**
- Best Foreign Language Series : **"Pachinko"**
- Best Comedy Special : **"Norm Macdonald: Nothing Special"**
- Best Talk Show : **"Last Week Tonight With John Oliver"**
- SeeHer Award : **Janelle Monáe**
- Lifetime Achievement Award : **Jeff Bridges**
- Best Picture : **"Everything Everywhere All at Once"**
- Best Director : **Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, "Everything Everywhere All at Once"**
- Best Actor : **Brendan Fraser, "The Whale"**
- Best Actress : **Cate Blanchett, "Tár"**

Republic Day 2023 : Uttarakhand tableau wins first prize

- ▶▶ Uttarakhand tableau which showcased the state's wildlife and religious sites at the 74th Republic Day parade has won the top prize. Uttarakhand's tableau showcased the state's wildlife and religious sites during the ceremonial parade at Kartavya Path on January 26. In the foreground of the tableau, reindeer, deer and various birds were shown roaming in the world-famous Corbett National Park. The central part of the tableau depicted the state animal of Uttarakhand, musk deer, national bird peacock and ghoral. Jageshwar Dham, a group of 125 small and big ancient temples in Manaskhand's Almora district, and popular deodar trees were shown



in the rear part of the tableau.

- ▶▶ Uttarakhand won the first prize for its tableau, followed by Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in the second and third positions respectively. The tableau of Maharashtra on Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav presented "Sade Tin Shaktipithe" and "Nari Shakti", while that of Uttar Pradesh showcased Ayodhya Deepotsav.

Republic Day 2023 : Other winners in different categories :

- ▶▶ Gujarat's tableau emerged as the numero uno in the popular choice segment.
- ▶▶ Army's Punjab Regiment has been adjudged the best marching contingent among the three services, while the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) marching contingent won the top prize among the CAPFs and other auxiliary forces.
- ▶▶ Among the ministries and departments, the tableau of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Eklavya Model Residential Schools) won the best prize.
- ▶▶ The Central Public Works Department's tableau on biodiversity conservation and 'Vande Bharatam' dance group earned a special prize.
- ▶▶ The IAF's marching contingent emerged as the winner among the three services in the popular choice category.
- ▶▶ Among the tableaux from states and union territories, Gujarat won the first prize in the category, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra in that order. Kutchi embroidery and decoration, known for its mirror work, traditional 'bhungas' and renewable energy production were the focus elements in the Gujarat tableau. The village of Modhera, famous for its Sun Temple, and being India's first round-the-clock solar-powered village was also showcased in the tableau.
- ▶▶ Among the central ministries and departments, the tableau by the CAPF, the Ministry of Home Affairs, emerged as the best in the popular choice segment.

How these tableau selected ?

- ▶▶ Three panels of judges were appointed for assessing the performance of the marching contingents from the three services, those from Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and other auxiliary forces, and tableaux from various states and union territories, and various ministries and departments. Citizens voted in an online poll on MyGov for their favourite tableaux and marching contingents in the popular choice category. The poll for the popular choice was conducted between January 25 and 28...

President of India Awarded RPF/RPSF Personnel with Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards

- ▶▶ The President of India Droupadi Murmu has awarded the RPF/RPSF personnel with Jeevan Raksha Padak awards to Jaipal Singh, Head Constable/ Northern Railway.
- ▶▶ The President of India Droupadi Murmu has awarded the RPF/RPSF personnel with Jeevan Raksha Padak awards to Jaipal Singh, Head Constable/ Northern Railway, Surendra Kumar, Constable/Northern Railway, and Bhuda Ram Saini, Constable/7th BN/RPSF.

President of India Awarded RPF/RPSF Personnel with Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards- Key Points

- ▶▶ During that time about 1000 (one thousand) persons were working at the site. An atmosphere of fear was created after seeing the fire taking a dreadful form.
- ▶▶ To save their lives, the workers started running here and there in a fit of desperation. Head Constable Jaipal Singh, Constable Surendra Kumar, and Constable Buddha Saini were posted on duty.
- ▶▶ Without caring for their own life, they extinguished the fire taking the dreadful form of a BTPN wagon full of highly inflammable material (Naphtha) with the help of a fire extinguisher.
- ▶▶ Fire would have spread to a total of 18 BTPN wagons filled with a highly inflammable substance (Naphtha), causing a major accident, threatening the lives of thousands of people, and causing damage to railway property worth billions of rupees.
- ▶▶ Mr. Jaipal Singh, Mr. Surendra Kumar, and Mr. Budhram Saini have saved about 1000 human lives and railway property worth billions by risking their lives, which is commendable work.



Awards	Name	Designation
1. Jeevan Raksha Padak	Jaipal Singh	Head Constable/ Northern Railway
2. Jeevan Raksha Padak	Surendra Kumar	Constable/Northern Railway
3. Jeevan Raksha Padak	Bhuda Ram Saini	Constable/7th BN/RPSF

If You Believe In Yourself, You Do Not Have To Fear Any Challenge. I Wish You All The Success For Your Exam!



Economic



The Finance Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting the Union Budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 in Parliament on 1st February 2023

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has used a 'Made in India' tablet computer to deliver a paperless Budget address." She will be presenting her fifth budget, the previous being, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The Union Budget is a yearly statement of finance of the Indian Republic. It is presented every year in the month of February generally as Annual Finance Statement. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2023-24 in Parliament on 1st Feb 2023. She emphasized that the Indian economy is on the right track, and despite a time of challenges, heading towards a bright future. Nirmala Sitharaman is the sixth minister in independent India to present five consecutive budgets and she also presented the paperless budget three consecutive times in a row. Ministers who also have presented five straight annual financial statements in past include Arun Jaitley, P Chidambaram, Yashwant Sinha, Manmohan Singh and Morarji Desai.

About Budget



- ✔ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the budget on February 1, 2023.
- ✔ While this will be Nirmala Sitharaman's fifth budget speech, it will be the last full budget of the second term of the Modi government.
- ✔ This will be the 93rd budget of independent India.
- ✔ According to Article 112 of the Constitution, the budget of the Central Government is presented and according to Article 202 of the State Government, the budget is presented.
- ✔ The word budget is derived from the French word Bougettee, which means 'leather bag'.
- ✔ The word "budget" first appeared in England in 1733 was used.
- ✔ This was changed from 2019 and Finance Minister Nirmal Sitharaman brought the budget documents from a traditional ledger with a red cloth cover.
- ✔ Budget 2020-21 is known as paperless budget.
- ✔ Being paperless, tabs were used in the budget.
- ✔ James Wilson, the first finance member, presented the first budget on April 7, 1860.
- ✔ Liaquat Ali Khan, a member of the pre-independence interim government, presented the budget 1947-48.
- ✔ India's first Finance Minister after his death Shri. R. K. Ranammukham Chetty presented the first budget on November 26, 1947.
- ✔ As per the recommendation of the Acworth Committee of 1921, the railway budget has been separated from the general budget since 1924.
- ✔ In 92 years of Indian history, a consolidated budget was presented in 2016, including the railway budget in the budget.
- ✔ Fiscal year from 1st April to 31st March was started from 1867.
- ✔ Established in 1984, L. K. The Jha Committee was asked to study the questin of fiscal year.
- ✔ The committee recommended that the fiscal year be assumed from 1st January.

Union Budget 2023-24 Summary



Union Budget 2023-24 Objective

- As it is being the first budget in the 'Amrut Kal' or Amrit Kaal, the Union Budget 2023 hopes to Build on the Foundation of a Prosperous, Inclusive India in which fruits of development reach all sections, said the finance minister.
- In the 75th year of Independence, the world recognised the Indian economy as a bright star, she says. India has shown growth in spite of a slowdown globally owing to Covid-19. India's GDP growth is estimated at 7% in FY-23.

Union Budget 2023 India's Rising Global Profile

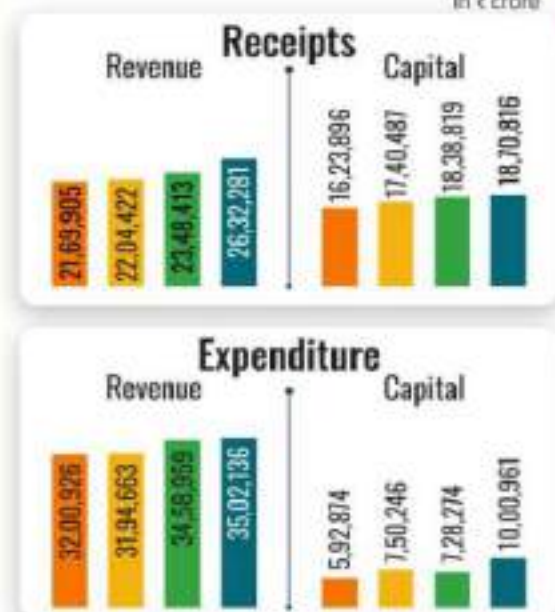
- India's rising global profile is because of several accomplishments, such as Aadhaar, Cowin and UPI, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman says in her budget speech.
- Finance Minister claims that throughout the pandemic, the Narendra Modi administration made sure that nobody went to bed hungry.
- The centre will be responsible for paying the full Rs 2 lakh crore cost of the PM Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana.
- In relation to numerous sustainable development objectives, the administration has achieved tremendous progress.



Budget at a Glance

● 2021-22 (Actuals) ● 2022-23 (RE) ● 2022-23 (RE) ● 2023-24 (RE)

In ₹ crore



- The fact that the membership of EPFO has doubled indicates how much more formalised the economy has become.

Union Budget 2023 Seven Priorities

- There are seven priorities of Union Budget 2023-24, of which the Finance Minister talked about in her budget speech are,
 - 1) Inclusive Development
 - 2) Reaching The Last Mile
 - 3) Infra and Investment
 - 4) Unleashing Potential
 - 5) Green Growth
 - 6) Youth Power
 - 7) Financial Sector
- The union government also aims to empower women by way of self-help groups (SHGs) focused on raw material supply, branding, and marketing of products, as stated by the finance minister.

Union Budget 2023 Key Proposals

- During the Budget 2023 speech, the honourable finance minister proposed some key initiatives:
- Set up a PM Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups Mission for improving the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable tribal groups.
- Set up a national digital library for children and adolescents to make up for their loss of learning during the pandemic of Covid-19.
- The Government will launch the Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme for improving the availability of disease-free quality planting material for high-value horticultural crops at an outlay of Rs 2,200 crore.
- The government had planned to set up an agriculture accelerator fund to encourage startups in rural areas.
- The government will be setting up 30 Skill India international centres in multiple states.



Key Numbers

In ₹ crore	2021-22 (Actuals)	2022-23 (Budget Estimates)	2022-23 (Revised Estimates)	2023-24 (Budget Estimates)
Revenue Receipts	21,69,905	22,04,422	23,48,413	26,32,281
Capital Receipts	16,23,896	17,40,487	18,38,819	1,870,816
Total Receipts	37,93,801	39,44,909	41,87,232	45,03,097
Total Expenditure	37,93,801	39,44,909	41,87,232	45,03,097
Revenue Deficit	10,31,021	9,90,241	11,10,546	8,69,855
Effective Revenue Deficit	7,88,375	6,72,598	7,84,958	4,99,867
Fiscal Deficit	15,84,521	16,61,196	17,55,319	17,86,816
Primary Deficit	7,79,022	7,20,545	8,14,668	7,06,845



Union Budget 2023- 24



PRATHAN
MINISTRY OF
FINANCE

Global Hub for Millets: 'Shree Anna'

India is at the forefront of popularising Millets such as jowar, ragi, bajra, kuttu, etc which have a number of health benefits and have been an integral part of our food for centuries.

To make **India global hub** for '**Shree Anna**', Indian Institute of Millet Research, Hyderabad will be supported as Centre of Excellence for sharing best practices, research and technologies at the international level.



- The government will be setting up a National Financial Information Registry to serve as a central repository of financial and ancillary information.
- PM PRANAM Yojna is to be launched for incentivising the States and Union Territories to promote alternative fertilisers and balanced use of chemical fertilisers.
- The government will be launching Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0. The objective is to skill the youth for international opportunities, 30 Skill India International Centres will be set up across different States.

Union Budget 2023 Key Targets

- There are some major Key Targets mentioned in the Union Budget 2023-24 such as:
 - 1) The gross borrowing target for Financial Year-24 is ₹15.43 lakh crore.
 - 2) The target for Fiscal deficit for the Financial Year-24 is 5.9%.
 - 3) Fiscal deficit for Financial Year-23 estimated at 6.4% of GDP.
 - 4) The fiscal deficit glide path for Financial Year-26 is 4.5%.
 - 5) Duties will be increased on silver doors, and bars at par with gold.
 - 6) Big push to 'Make in India'. LI battery, mobile, tv, and chimney manufacturing get custom rebates.

Union Budget 2023- 24



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Assistance to Artisans & Craftspeople

PM Vishwakarma KAushal Samman (PM VIKAS) scheme to be launched to enable Vishwakarma (traditional artisans & craftspeople) to improve quality, scale and reach of their products

The scheme will include not only financial support but also **access to advanced skill training, knowledge of modern digital techniques**

The scheme will greatly benefit **SCs, STs, OBCs, women & people belonging to the weaker sections**

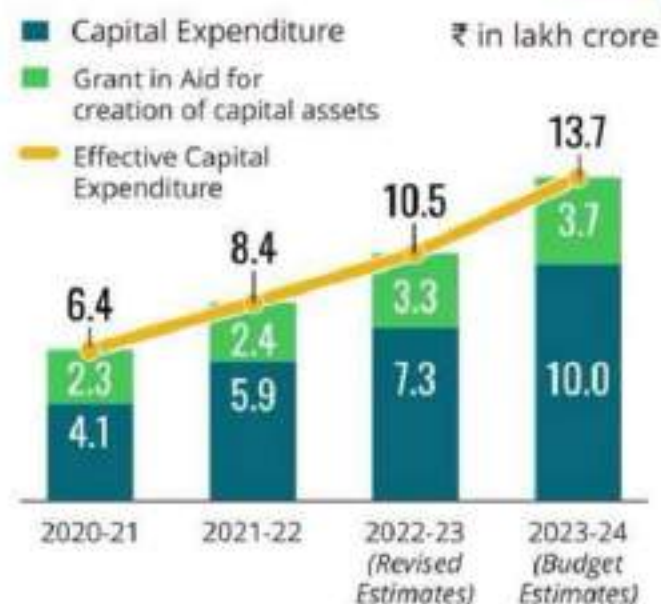


Union Budget 2023 Tax Slabs

- Income of Rs 3 lakh: Non-Taxable
- Income between Rs 3 lakh- Rs 6 lakh: 5% tax
- Income between Rs 6 lakh-Rs 9 lakhs: 10% tax
- Income between Rs 9 lakh-Rs 12 lakh: 15% tax
- Income between Rs 12 lakh- Rs 15 lakh: 20% tax
- Income of Rs 15 lakh or above: 30% tax
- To reduce the surcharge rate for those earning more than Rs 50 lakh from 37% to 25% in the new tax regime.
- The union government has increased the income rebate limit to Rs 7 lakh from Rs 5 lakh under the new tax regime. The new tax regime will now be a default tax regime, but citizens can still avail of benefits under the old tax regime on an opt-out basis, said the finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech.



Trends in CapEx



Union Budget 2023 Key Highlights

- Senior Citizen Savings Scheme: FM announces an increase in the maximum investment limit from Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 30 lakhs.
- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana budget is being increased by 66% to more than 79,000 cr.
- To serve 3.5 lakh indigenous students in 740 Eklavya Model residential schools, the Center will hire 38,800 teachers and other staff.
- The Green Hydrogen Mission will make it easier for the economy to change so that it imports fewer fossil fuels.
- ITR processing time decreased from 93 days to 16 days on average.
- The updated credit guarantee for the MSME plan will go into effect on April 1, 2023, with a corpus injection of 9,000 crores. To cut the cost of credit by 1%.
- According to Budget 2023, DigiLocker will now serve as a one-stop KYC maintenance solution for people, allowing you to make changes to one document that will be reflected in all of your documents linked to DigiLocker.

Union Budget 2023 Constitutional Provision



- Our Constitution of India makes no mention of the word "budget." According to Article 112 of the constitution, the annual financial statement is referred to as the union budget. It is a statement of the government's estimated receipts and outlays for a given fiscal year. includes the following in the budget:



- 1) It provides the estimations of revenue and capital receipts,
- 2) Provides the Ways and means to raise revenue,
- 3) Estimation of expenditure,
- 4) Details of the actual receipts and expenditure of the closing financial year and the reasons for any deficit or surplus in that year, and
- 5) The economic and financial policy of the upcoming year, i.e., taxation proposals, prospects of revenue, spending programme and introduction of new schemes/projects.



Union Budget 2023 Objective and Significance

- Allocating resources in such a way that benefits society as a whole and is in the best interests of the general welfare.
- It uplifts and motivates the underprivileged sections in society by lowering poverty rates and generating employment.
- Establishes policies for ensuring that all the people have access to necessities including food, shelter, healthcare, and education.
- It ensures that money is distributed fairly through taxes and other financial aid.
- To control inflation, deflation, and economic swings will guarantee the nation's economic stability and growth.
- In 2017, the year-old tradition of presenting the Railway and General budgets separately (started in 1924) was broken when the railway budget was merged with the Union Budget and presented together, it was merged on the recommendations of the Vibek Debroy Committee.

Union Budget 2023-24





Boosting production of High Value Horticulture Crops

With an outlay of ₹ 2,200 Crore, Aatmanirbhar Horticulture Clean Plant Program to be launched to boost availability of disease-free, quality planting material for high value horticultural crops



Highlights of Union Budget 2023-24



General

1. EPFO Numbers doubled to 27 crores
2. Agriculture accelerator fund to boost startup in Agri sector. Special scheme to boost fisheries
3. 38,800 teachers will be employed in 3.5 lakh Eklavya tribal school.
4. Capital outlay of Rs. 2.40 lakh crore for Railways.
5. 50 New Airports and Heliports to be made.
6. Rs. 10,000 crore for urban infra fund every year
7. Rs. 75,000 crore for 100 transport infra projects
8. 3 Centers of Excellence for "Artificial Intelligence" will be set up.
9. KYC procedure to be simplified. PAN to be come common business identifier.
10. Scope of Digi locker to be increased.
11. More than 39,000 compliances reduced. Jan Vishwas Bill to amend 42 laws
12. Rs. 35,000 crore for Energy transmission
13. 10,000 bio input research centers to be set up.
14. 30 Skill India International centers to be set up.
15. NFIR (National Financial Information Registry) to be launched for financial strategy.

16. Reducing cost of MSME Credit by 1%. Infusion of Rs. 9,000 crore in corpus for MSME credit.
17. 'Mahila Samman Bachat Scheme' for Women for Rs. 2,00,000 @ 7.5%
18. SCSS enhanced from 15 lakh to 30 Lakh.

Direct and Indirect tax

1. Promote domestic manufacturing and exports.
2. Tax exemption on Capital Goods and Lithium batteries.
3. Mobiles, camera lenses to become cheaper.
4. Gold, Silver & Diamonds, cigarettes, imported rubber to get expensive.
5. Enhanced limit for 3 crore and 75 lakhs for presumptive taxation.
6. Higher TDS limit of RS. 3 cr for Cooperatives
7. New IT Return Form for easier filing .
8. 100 Joint Commissioners to be appointed for disposal of small appeals.
9. TDS reduced on EPF withdrawal
10. Section 54 and 54F to be amended.
11. Rebate limit increased to 7 lakh in new tax regime.
12. Number of slabs reduced from 7 to 5 in new tax regime.
13. Only 5% tax on Individual's Annual income of 9,00,000 only to pay Rs. 45,000 as tax.
14. Salaried class and pensioner: Standard Deduction increased
15. Highest tax rate 42.74 % reduced
16. Propose to reduced Higher surcharge rate from 37 % to 25% in new tax regime.
17. Leave Encashment: Limit increased from Rs. 3,00,000 to Rs. 25,00,000

Axis Bank Partners with OPEN to Launch a Fully Digital Current Account

- ▶ Axis Bank has partnered with OPEN to provide a fully native digital current account journey for its customers including SMEs (small and medium enterprises), freelancers, homepreneurs, influencers and more. This has been the bank's first-ever partnership with a fintech player to launch a fully digital current account.
- ▶ Using this account, customers can avail 250+ banking services and claim up to 50 per cent cashback through grab-deals. With this partnership, all existing Axis bank account holders also get access to OPEN's all-in-one digital banking platform that is used by over 30 lakh businesses currently.



Aim of This Move :

- ▶ The partnership is aiming to offer access to Axis Bank's holistic banking services coupled with OPEN's end-to-end financial automation tools for business management like payments, accounting, payroll, compliance, expense management and several other services to a larger business community.

Significance of This Move :

- ▶ This digital current account product claims to help customers to save a significant amount of time and effort, as the authentication process will be completely digital using PAN and Aadhaar followed by a video KYC.
- ▶ According to a company statement, the contactless account opening process that takes away the hassle of paperwork with a zero document upload feature makes this product significantly different from others in the market.
- ▶ Additionally, it has stated that through this account, customers can avail of more than 250 banking services and claim up to 50 percent cashback through grab-deals.
- ▶ The partnership will benefit all existing Axis bank account holders and also get access to OPEN's all-in-one digital banking platform....



Bandhan Bank Launched 'Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust' Campaign

- ▶▶ Bandhan Bank launched the 'Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust' campaign along with the bank's brand ambassador Sourav Ganguly. 'Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust' is an integrated marketing campaign in which the company has emphasized the 'trust' that the brand has been able to earn in a span of seven years as a bank.
- ▶▶ The marketing campaign of the bank will have a 360-degree approach across TV, Print, OOH, Cinema, and Digital media.
- ▶▶ The campaign first went live on digital media and will go live in other media in a few days.
- ▶▶ The campaign shows parallels with Sourav Ganguly's career, who became its customer soon after the bank was launched seven years ago.
- ▶▶ The ad film shows, Sourav Ganguly, reminiscing earlier days in his career when he wasn't a star and there were only a few spectators in the group. He worked hard and started scoring runs and established himself as a dependable member. He gained the trust of millions and brought more people to the stand. Similarly, Bandhan began as an NGO and started expanding and its work received recognition from stakeholders.
- ▶▶ The campaign was conceived by Keo Burnett Orchard and the films and stills were shot by Prodigious.



About Bandhan Bank :

- ▶▶ Bandhan Bank Ltd is a banking and financial service company. The company headquarters are in Kolkata and the bank is present in 34 out of 36 states and union territories of India. The bank has 5646 banking outlets and more than 2.77 crore customers. Bandhan Bank started its operations on 23rd August 2015.

HDFC Bank collaborates with Microsoft as part of its digital transformation

- ▶▶ HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, is partnering with Microsoft in the next phase of its digital transformation journey and unlocking business value by transforming the application portfolio, modernizing the data landscape and securing the enterprise with Microsoft Cloud.
- ▶▶ HDFC Bank as a part of its Future Ready strategy is developing in house IPs as well as partnering with several companies including FinTechs' to co -create technology IPs. HDFC Bank as a part of its Future Ready strategy is developing in house IPs as well as partnering with several companies including FinTechs' to co -create technology IPs.

- ▶▶ The bank will leverage Microsoft Azure to consolidate and modernize its enterprise data landscape through a Federated Data Lake to scale its information management capabilities across enterprise reporting, and advanced analytics using artificial intelligence.
- ▶▶ Built on Microsoft Azure stack, the solution will enable the bank to democratize and monetize its data landscape catering to several business units, spanning multiple systems, reports and processes. The solution powered by its unified architecture, collaborative engineering environment, industry-leading security and ecosystem of AI/ML based deep learning capabilities.



IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ **HDFC Bank CEO:** Sashidhar Jagdishan;
- ▶▶ **HDFC Bank Founded:** August 1994, Mumbai;
- ▶▶ **HDFC Bank Headquarters:** Mumbai....

RBI Keeps SBI, ICICI, HDFC as Domestic Systemically Important Banks

- ▶▶ The Reserve Bank of India said SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank remain domestic systemically important banks (D-SIBs). D-SIBs are those interconnected entities whose failure can impact the whole of the financial system and create instability. In addition to the usual capital conservation buffer, D-SIBs will need to maintain additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1). As per the RBI's latest press release, SBI will have to maintain an additional 0.6 per cent CET1 as a percentage of its risk-weighted assets. Similarly, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank need to maintain additional 0.2 per cent each.



Why Is The Need of Additional capital conservation buffer :

- ▶▶ The additional CET1 required for D-SIBs was phased-in from April 1, 2016 and became fully effective from April 1, 2019. The additional CET1 requirement will be in addition to the capital conservation buffer.
- ▶▶ The Reserve Bank had issued the frame work for dealing with D-SIBs on July 22, 2014. The D-SIB framework requires the Reserve Bank to disclose the names of banks designated as D-SIBs starting from 2015 and place these banks in appropriate buckets depending upon their

Systemic Importance Scores (SISs). Based on the bucket in which a D-SIB is placed, an additional common equity requirement has to be applied to it.

A Continuity In This :

- ▶▶ The Reserve Bank had announced SBI and ICICI Bank as D-SIBs in 2015 and 2016. Based on data collected from banks as on March 31, 2017, HDFC Bank was also classified as a D-SIB, along with SBI and ICICI Bank. The current update is based on the data collected from banks as on March 31, 2022.

IMPORTANT

- ▶▶ D-SIBs are financial institutions that are large enough where they cannot be allowed to fall.
- ▶▶ RBI places D-SIBs in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs).
- ▶▶ The central bank's current update on D-SIBs is based on the data collected from banks as of March 31, 2021.
- ▶▶ A failure of any of these banks can lead to systemic and significant disruption to essential economic services across the country and can cause an economic panic.

Launch of Utkarsh 2.0 – Reserve Bank of India's Medium-term Strategy Framework

- ▶▶ The Reserve Bank of India's Medium-term Strategy Framework for the period 2023-2025 – 'Utkarsh 2.0' – was launched by Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI. The first strategy framework (Utkarsh 2022) covering the period 2019-2022 was launched in July 2019. It became a medium-term strategy document guiding the Bank's progress towards realisation of the identified milestones. Utkarsh 2.0 would allow the central bank to both react and act proactively to confront socio-economic challenges.



Significance of Utkarsh 2.0 :

- ▶▶ Utkarsh 2.0 harnesses the strengths of Utkarsh 2022 by retaining the six Vision statements as well as Core Purpose, Values, and Mission statement. Collectively, they create a strategic guiding path. The Vision in Utkarsh 2.0 that will guide the Reserve Bank of India over the period 2023-25 are:
- ▶▶ Excellence in performance of its functions;
- ▶▶ Strengthened trust of citizens and Institutions in the RBI;
- ▶▶ Enhanced relevance and significance in national and global roles;

- ▶▶ Transparent, accountable and ethics-driven internal governance;
- ▶▶ Best-in-class and environment-friendly digital and physical infrastructure; and
- ▶▶ Innovative, dynamic and skilled human resources.

Reserve Bank of India's Aim :

- ▶▶ The RBI plans to leverage India's Group of 20 presidency to showcase the country's strength in digital payments, and broad-base the acceptance of the rupee in bilateral and multilateral trade as part of its strategy till 2025.
- ▶▶ The central bank would also integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning-driven tools to enhance the reliability of its data analysis and information creation.

Utkarsh 2.0 Expected outcomes :

- ▶▶ The desired outputs are proposed to be realised in terms of strategies calibrated through milestones. The Reserve Bank of India attaches high importance to its medium-term strategy and monitors its implementation and progress through a Sub-committee of its Central Board.

RBI new rules for 'Loan Loss Provision' by Banks

- ▶▶ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a new set of rules governing loan loss provisioning by banks as it looks to enhance the resilience of the banking system. The central bank proposes to amend the regulations governing loan loss provisioning to incorporate a more forward looking "expected credit losses approach" as against the current "incurred loss" approach, the RBI says in a discussion paper.



- ▶▶ The RBI defines a loan loss provision as an expense that banks set aside for defaulted loans. Banks set aside a portion of the expected loan repayments from all loans in their portfolio to cover the losses either completely or partially. In the event of a loss, instead of taking a loss in its cash flows, the bank can use its loan loss reserves to cover the loss.

What is the problem with the incurred loss-based approach :

- ▶▶ The incurred loss approach requires banks to provide for losses that have already occurred or been incurred.
- ▶▶ The delays in recognising loan losses overstated the income generated by the banks which, coupled with dividend payouts, impacted their capital base because of reduced internal accruals — which too, affected the resilience of banks....

PNB Launches Credit Card Against Fixed Deposit

- ▶▶ State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) offers credit cards against Fixed Deposit to customers who don't meet the eligibility criteria for regular credit cards. This facility will be available for salary account customers, and they shall be able to apply through the mobile banking app PNB One, website or Internet Banking Service (IBS), the lender said. Customers can avail loan without visiting a bank branch, adding there is a concession of 0.25 per cent on the interest rate when applied through digital platforms like PNB One. Get the RuPay or VISA credit card digitally against single or multiple FDs with 80% credit limit, the lender added.



- 1) No document submission
- 2) No Branch visit
- 3) NIL joining fees
- 4) Instant issuance of virtual credit card
- 5) Comprehensive Insurance Coverage (on RuPay variant)
- 6) Benefits of UPI linkage on RuPay Credit Card
- 7) Exciting reward points and offers

Punjab National Bank latest FD rates :

- ▶▶ In a bid to attract deposits, PNB has increased the interest rate of fixed deposits across various tenures by 50 basis points. Interest rates on term deposits below ₹ 2 crore between one year and three years have been raised by 50 basis points to 6.75 per cent from earlier rate of 6.25 per cent. The bank said that new rates of FDs are effective from January 1, 2023.
- ▶▶ It has also said that senior citizens will be getting an additional 50 basis points hike in interest rate of fixed deposits on any domestic deposit maturities which is worth less than ₹ 2 crore.



National

Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit

- ▶▶ On January 11, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually inaugurate the 7th edition of 'Invest Madhya Pradesh-Global Investors Summit', a flagship event of the Madhya Pradesh state government. The theme of the two-day summit is 'Madhya Pradesh-The Future Ready State', showcasing the state's industrial ecosystem and promoting its policies to attract investment and spur growth. The virtual event will also feature addresses from leaders of Guyana and Suriname, as well as India's Union Commerce and Industry Minister.



Key Objectives :

- ▶▶ The key objectives of the summit are to showcase the industrial ecosystem of Madhya Pradesh, promote the state's policies, consult with industrial organizations to formulate industry-friendly policies, provide opportunities for collaboration, and promote export potential through buyer-seller meets and vendor development. The event will bring together a diverse group of international delegates, buyers, industrialists, and representatives of various international industry associations, and representatives of all G20 countries.

Participants :

- ▶▶ A total of 447 international delegates from 84 countries, 401 international buyers, more than 5,000 industrialists, and representatives of various international industry associations, and representatives of all G20 countries will take part in the event. The summit provides an opportunity for participants to engage with the government and industry leaders, explore investment opportunities, and network with potential partners and clients.

Role of the Prime Minister :

- ▶▶ The virtual inaugural address by Prime Minister Modi will set the tone for the summit and highlight the government's commitment to attracting investment and promoting economic growth in Madhya Pradesh. The participation of Guyana and Suriname President, will also be an indication of the importance the international community places on the opportunities available in the state.

120-foot-tall Polo Statue Inaugurated by Amit Shah in Manipur

- ▶▶ Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated a 120-foot-tall statue of a polo player riding a polo at Marjing Polo Complex in Imphal, Manipur. Manipur is known as the birthplace of the game polo. Chief Minister of Manipur N Biren Singh was also present during the inauguration ceremony and gave a polo mallet and a painting of the game to Home Minister Amit Shah.
- ▶▶ The union Home minister will proceed to Churachandpur, where he will inaugurate the hill district's first medical college and hospital.



- ▶▶ He will proceed to Moirang in the Bishnupur district, where he will hoist the National Flag and address the public.
- ▶▶ He will also be laying the foundation stone for a project worth Rs 1,300 crore.
- ▶▶ He will lay the foundation stone for the construction of 40 police outposts, 34 of which will be along the India-Myanmar international border and six along National Highway 37.
- ▶▶ The projects to be inaugurated by Amit Shah includes Manipur Olympian Park at Sangaithel, a paid private ward at the state-run Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS), Moreh Town water supply scheme, Nongpok Thong Bridge at the eastern side of Kangla Fort and Cave tourism project at Kangkhui Cave.

History of Polo in Manipur :

- ▶▶ Manipur is known as the birthplace of Polo in India; the modern game of Polo is derived from Manipur. The game was earlier known as 'Sagol Kangjei', 'Kanjai-bazee', or 'Pulu'. The oldest polo ground in the world is the Imphal Polo Ground in Manipur. The history of the polo ground is established in the royal chronicle "Cheitharol Kumbaba" starting from AD 33....

PM Launches Aspirational Block Programme

- ▶▶ Prime Minister has launched the government's Aspirational Block Programme (ABP), which is aimed at improving the performance of blocks lagging on various development parameters. The Aspirational Blocks Programme is on the lines of the Aspirational District Programme that was launched in 2018 and covers 112 districts across the country.

About Aspirational Block Programme (ABP) :

- ▶▶ The Centre had announced its intention to launch this initiative in the Union Budget 2022-23.
- ▶▶ The programme will cover 500 districts across 31 states and Union Territories initially.

- ▶ Over half of these blocks are in 6 states—Uttar Pradesh (68 blocks), Bihar (61), Madhya Pradesh (42), Jharkhand (34), Odisha (29) and West Bengal (29).
- ▶ However, states can add more blocks to the programme later.

Ranking of these Blocks :

- ▶ NITI Aayog in partnership with the states will release a quarterly ranking of these blocks based on their performance on development indicators covering sectors such as health, education and nutrition among others.



About Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) :

- ▶ Launched in January 2018, the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' initiative aims to remove this heterogeneity through a mass movement to quickly and effectively transform these districts.
- ▶ The broad contours of the program are Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, State level 'Prabhari' Officers & District Collectors), and Competition among districts driven by a spirit of mass Movement.
- ▶ With States as the main drivers, this program will focus on the strength of each district, identify low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement, measure progress, and rank districts....

Prez Droupadi Murmu Laid foundation Stone of SJVN's 1000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project

- ▶ President Droupadi Murmu laid the foundation stone of state-owned energy firm SJVN's 1,000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project. The event was done virtually by the President of India in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The project is being implemented by SJVN Limited through its owned subsidiary SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL).
- ▶ The solar power project is being developed on 500 acres near the village of Banderwala, district Bikaner of Rajasthan. It is one of the highest solar yield areas in India.



- ▶ The development cost of the Bikaner Solar Power Project is ₹ 5492 crore and viability gap funding support of ₹ 44.72 lacks per megawatt.
- ▶ The project is scheduled to be commissioned by March 2024.
- ▶ After commissioning the project will generate 2454.55 million units in the first year and approximately 56838 MU would be generated on a cumulative basis over 25 years.

- ▶▶ The maximum usage charges have been fixed at Rs 2.57 per unit.
- ▶▶ This will help in providing cheaper electricity to the consumer.
- ▶▶ Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra and Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also attended the event.
- ▶▶ Commissioning of this project will help the government to achieve the renewable target of 500 GW by 2030.
- ▶▶ Usage of domestically manufactured Solar Photovoltaic cells and modules shall give a push to the Make in India drive.
- ▶▶ The project will also lead to a reduction in Carbon emissions of 27,85,077 tonnes.

Dirtiest Railway Stations in India list

- ▶▶ Indian railway is well-known not just in India but even outside. Some railway stations, in addition to trains, are well-known worldwide. India is home to the second-largest platform in the world. In addition, one of the main train stations in India are the New Delhi Railway Station and Mumbai Central Railway Station. Usually, the question is that which are the cleanest railway stations in India, but here we will see the dirtiest railway stations in India.



Selection of Dirtiest Railway Stations in India:

- ▶▶ In addition to direct observation, QCI assessors gathered comments from 1.2 million passengers to determine which Indian railway stations were the cleanest and dirtiest.
- ▶▶ In accordance with revenue creation, the ranking has classified Indian railway stations into a number of categories for the third consecutive year.
- ▶▶ There are 75 railway stations in the A1 category that generate more than 75 crore in annual passenger income.
- ▶▶ There are 332 stations that are classified as A stations since they bring in between 6 and 50 crores in annual passenger income.
- ▶▶ Draft Guidelines for Online Gaming, Self-regulation proposed

List of top 10 Dirtiest Railway Stations in India

Perungalathur (Tamil Nadu), Guindy (Tamil Nadu), Delhi Sadar Bazar, Velacheri (Tamil Nadu), Guduvancheri (Tamil Nadu), Singaperumalkoil (Tamil Nadu), Ottappalam (Kerala), Pazhavanthangal (Tamil Nadu), Araria Court (Bihar), and Khurja (Uttar Pradesh), among several others.

Uttarakhand Women Reservation Bill

- ▶ Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen (Retd) Gurmit Singh has approved a bill providing 30% horizontal reservation for domiciled women citizens of the state in public services and posts. The bill, known as the Uttarakhand Public Services (Horizontal Reservation for Women) Bill 2022, was passed by the Uttarakhand assembly during the winter session on November 30. This move is a significant step forward in ensuring gender equality and social justice in the state's government jobs.



Reservation for Women :

- ▶ The bill provides for 20% horizontal reservation for direct recruitment in public services and posts in the vacancies to be recruited until July 24, 2006. After that, 30% horizontal reservation will be given in favor of the women candidates permanently domiciled in Uttarakhand. The bill cites the need for reservation for women as a way to ensure "social justice, equality of opportunity, improvement in living standards."

Need for the Bill :

- ▶ The bill was introduced following developments in the Uttarakhand high court, where the women reservation was challenged. On August 24, the high court had stayed the 2006 state government order regarding providing 30% reservation in state services to women having domicile of the state until further orders. The petitioners had argued that the state government had no power to provide domicile-based reservation as the Constitution of India allows reservation on the basis of domicile only by an act of parliament.

Cabinet Approval :

- ▶ On October 12, the state cabinet authorized Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami to bring an ordinance on the issue of women's reservation in the state government jobs. This move came after the high court ruling and was aimed at ensuring that the 30% reservation for women in state services would be implemented.

Kerala 'Year of Enterprises' Project

- ▶ The Kerala government's 'Year of Enterprises' project has been selected as a best practices model in the thrust on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) session during the recent Chief Secretaries National Conference held in the national capital. The project, which began in the current fiscal, aimed at creating one lakh enterprises in one year. However, the state government achieved this goal in just eight months, setting a new benchmark for promoting small and medium-sized enterprises in India.



Creating Enterprises at an unprecedented scale :

- ▶▶ The project was aimed at creating one lakh enterprises in one year and the state government achieved this goal in eight months. In November, as many as 1,01,353 enterprises were set up under the project, and the total investment stood at around Rs 6,282 crore. This is an unprecedented scale of creating enterprises in such a short period of time and showcases the dedication of the Kerala government towards promoting MSMEs in the state.

Efficient Infrastructure and Ease of Doing Business :

- ▶▶ The Kerala government has made significant efforts to improve the infrastructure and ease of doing business in the state. The government has streamlined the process of starting and running a business, making it easier for entrepreneurs to get their ventures off the ground. In addition, the government has also provided easier access to land and other resources to entrepreneurs. These efforts have helped to create a conducive environment for MSMEs to grow and thrive in the state.

Financial Assistance and Training :

- ▶▶ The Kerala government has set up a dedicated fund for MSMEs, which provides financial assistance to eligible businesses. In addition, the project also provides training and mentorship to MSMEs to help them improve their business skills and knowledge. This is an important aspect of the project as it helps to ensure that entrepreneurs are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to run their businesses effectively.

Gujarat and Rajasthan Emerge as Top Investment Destinations in India

- ▶▶ According to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), Gujarat has surpassed all other Indian states in attracting new investments from both domestic and foreign corporations. Fresh investments worth Rs 3.98 trillion were announced for Gujarat during the financial year (FY) 2022, representing a 273 percent increase over the FY 2021 figure of Rs 2.91 trillion.
- ▶▶ Rajasthan, on the other hand, emerged as the second most attractive destination for investments in India in FY 2022. Interestingly, the state witnessed the highest rate of growth during the period, soaring by almost 535 percent and attracting new investments worth Rs 2.37 trillion.
- ▶▶ In this article, we will discuss why these two states are the leading investment destinations in India.



Why Gujarat is an Ideal Investment Destination ?

- ▶▶ Gujarat is India's top industrial state in terms of manufacturing capacity, investment opportunities, and operational special economic zones.
- ▶▶ Gujarat is the second-largest producer of crude oil (onshore) and the fourth largest producer

of natural gas, and it hosts the world's largest petroleum refining hub at Jamnagar district.

- ▶▶ Gujarat's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) which reached USD260 billion in FY 2022 and showed a 7 percent year-over-year (y-o-y) growth rate, is anticipated to reach USD280 billion in FY 2023.
- ▶▶ Gujarat has 42 ports, comprising one major port and 41 non-major ports in terms of logistics and connectivity.
- ▶▶ Gujarat is an ideal investment destination due to its industrial and investment-friendly policies and is one of the leading industrialized states in India. The state is recognized as an "Achiever" among the coastal states by DPIIT in Logistics Ease (LEADS 2022).
- ▶▶ There are 21 operational Special Economic Zones (SEZs), with 26 SEZs having formal approvals, eight notified Special Investment Regions (SIR), and 202 industrial derivatives in Gujarat.

Kerala Becomes Country's First Fully Digital Banking State

- ▶▶ Kerala has become the first state in India to enable digital banking in all eligible accounts. According to the State-Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), the state now has at least one product enabled digitally in 3.76 crore accounts. The state government, led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, has implemented this move under the 'Expanding and Deepening of Digital Payments Ecosystem' scheme of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).



Thrissur : The First District to Implement Digital Banking :

- ▶▶ In 2021, Thrissur became the first district in Kerala to implement digital banking under the scheme. This has been a major step towards digitization of the state's economy, and the government is hopeful that this will lead to a significant boost in the state's economy.

Digital Banking as a Stimulus for the State Economy :

- ▶▶ The Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, has emphasized that digital banking targets can only be fully achieved when there are sweeping social interventions that complement infrastructure additions and technological advances in the banking sector. He said that the digital divide should disappear for digital facilities and services to be universally accessible.

Kerala Fiber Optic Network (KFON) :

- ▶▶ The state government has been working on the Kerala Fiber Optic Network (KFON) project, which is aimed at providing cost-effective internet access to the public. The Chief Minister has announced that 90% of the work on the project has been completed and that optical fibre cable has been drawn over a distance of 17,155 km. The project envisions linking government offices to the network and arranging over 2,000 free Wi-Fi hotspots across the state.

Cybercrimes and Digital Literacy :

- ▶▶ The government is also aware of the need to be vigilant against cybercrimes in the banking sector. The state police has created an Economic Offences Wing to tackle such offences. However, the government has stressed that preventing cybercrimes through public awareness and cooperation of the banking sector is of paramount importance.
- ▶▶ To raise digital literacy among citizens, the government has undertaken a programme through local bodies. Kerala has won three awards at the recent Digital India Awards instituted by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, which is a testament to the state's commitment to implementing efficient digital mechanisms.

“UP Global City” Campaign Launched in Uttar Pradesh

- ▶▶ The Uttar Pradesh government has launched a 100-day “UP Global City” campaign in advance of the Global Investors Summit and G20 summit. The campaign aims to bring urban areas in the state up to global standards, with a focus on improving urban facilities, air quality, cleanliness, and beautification, as well as proper garbage disposal. The campaign will be implemented in all 762 urban bodies in the state.



Significance :

- ▶▶ The “UP Global City” campaign was launched by state Urban Development and Energy Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma. A high-level meeting on the campaign was chaired by Sharma, who directed officers to make the campaign a success. The Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government has set a goal of making the state a USD 1 trillion economy in the next five years.

Global Investors Summit :

- ▶▶ The Global Investors Summit, which takes place from February 10-12, 2023 in Lucknow, will bring together business delegations, corporate and industry leaders, policy makers, academia, think-tanks, and political and government leadership from around the world. The Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government has set a target of making the state a USD 1 trillion economy in the next five years.

G20 Summit Preparations :

- ▶▶ In preparation for the G20 summit, the Uttar Pradesh government will introduce “Brand UP” and has planned a number of events in Agra, Varanasi, Greater Noida, and Lucknow. The government will also implement door-to-door garbage collection from February 1 to March 31, 2023, and will hold a marathon race later this month.

International Kite Festival 2023

▶▶ The International Kite Festival 2023 officially started on January 7th in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, with a theme centered around the G20 countries. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the event, which runs from January 8th to 14th and marks the first time the festival has been held in two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



▶▶ During the inauguration, Chief Minister Patel praised the progress made by India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, specifically citing the country's strengthening defense system and digital economy which have helped it become the 5th largest economy in the world.

Key Points -

- ▶▶ The International Kite Festival has been held in Ahmedabad annually since 1989 as part of the official celebration of Uttarayan.
- ▶▶ The event brings together master kite makers and flyers from around the world to showcase their unique creations and demonstrate impressive flying techniques.
- ▶▶ Past festivals have featured kites from a variety of countries, including Malaysia's wau-balang kites, Indonesia's layang-layang, American giant banner kites, Japanese rokkaku fighting kites, Italian sculptural kites, Chinese flying dragons, and more.
- ▶▶ One particularly notable attraction is the demonstration by master kite maker and flyer Rasulbhai Rahimbhai, who is known for training up to 500 kites on a single string.

G20 Countries Invited to Share Cultural Traditions -

- ▶▶ This year, delegates from the G20 countries have been invited to participate in the inaugural celebration and share their cultural traditions through kite flying. The International Kite Festival is a beloved tradition in Ahmedabad and an exciting opportunity for kite enthusiasts from around the world to come together and enjoy this unique form of art and entertainment.

Odisha wins World Habitat Award 2023 for JAGA Mission

▶▶ Odisha has been recognized by the United Nations-Habitat (UN-Habitat) for its efforts to empower the lives of slum dwellers and create a slum-free state in India through its 5T initiative, Jaga Mission.

Jaga Mission -

- ▶▶ According to an official statement, Jaga Mission is the world's largest land titling and slum upgrading program. It aims to upgrade all 2,919 slums in the state of Odisha, under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.
- ▶▶ In the last five years of the initiative, 1,75,000 families have been granted land tenure security.

This means that they have received legal ownership of the land on which their homes are located, providing them with a sense of security and stability.

- ▶ In addition to providing land tenure security, the Jaga Mission has also made significant progress in improving living conditions for slum dwellers. 100 percent of households in 2,724 slums have been provided with piped water connections, and 707 slums have been transformed into fully livable habitats. 100 percent of households in 666 slums also have individual toilets, and 8 cities have become slum-free as a result of the initiative.



Previous Recognition and Current Award -

- ▶ These efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2019, the Jaga Mission received the World Habitat Award for its success in providing land security for slum dwellers. And now, in 2023, the state of Odisha has won the UN-Habitat World Habitat Award for its 5T initiative, Jaga Mission.
- ▶ The World Habitat Award is a prestigious recognition given by the charity organization, UN-Habitat, which is recognized by the United Nations Department of Public Information. It recognizes innovative, effective, and sustainable solutions that address the challenges of urbanization and improve the quality of life for those living in cities and towns.

World's first Palm-leaf Manuscript Museum in Kerala

- ▶ The recently opened Palm Leaf Manuscript Museum in Thiruvananthapuram has added to the cultural and intellectual life of the state of Kerala. The museum, which is the world's first of its kind, contains 187 manuscripts and other artefacts related to the former Travancore kingdom from 650 AD until the end of the 19th century. It also has documents from the regions of Kochi and Malabar.



Exhibits at the Museum -

- ▶ The museum's exhibits include palm leaf manuscripts, styluses, carriers for Cadjan bundles, copper plates, and bamboo splints. The museum is divided into eight galleries, each focused on a different aspect of Travancore history, including "History of Writing," "Land and People," "Administration," "War and Peace," "Education and Health," "Economy," "Art and Culture," and "Mathilakam Records." Some galleries also include films and QR code technology for gathering additional information.
- ▶ The museum is particularly notable for its manuscripts, which are written on cured and treated palm leaves and contain primary source material on a variety of topics. One of the most famous manuscripts is the account of the Battle of Colachel, in which Travancore's Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma defeated the Dutch East India Company in 1741. This battle put a halt to Dutch expansion in India and cemented Travancore's place as a major power in the region.

- ▶▶ The museum is divided into eight galleries representing different segments of Travancore history: 'History of Writing', 'Land and people', 'Administration', 'War and peace', 'Education and Health', 'Economy', 'Art and culture', and 'Mathilakam Records'. These galleries also include films and QR code technologies for gathering information.

Kerala : WhatsApp grievance redress mechanism for industries

- ▶▶ The industries department of the Kerala government has launched a new system for entrepreneurs to submit complaints or seek redressals using WhatsApp. This temporary solution will be in place until the statutory grievance settlement mechanism is put into effect.

Details of the Complaint System :

- ▶▶ Complaint messages will be attended to within 10 minutes of submission.
- ▶▶ Complainers will be contacted through the relevant district.
- ▶▶ The goal is to resolve all complaints within seven days of submission.
- ▶▶ The system will have both district-level and state-level operations.



Other Support for Entrepreneurs in Kerala :

- ▶▶ The Margin Money Grant for nano units has been utilized by 56 entrepreneurs, 42 of whom are women.
- ▶▶ A total of Rs 1.59 crore has been disbursed during the current financial year.
- ▶▶ 88 units have received subsidy support totaling Rs 2.44 crore under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme.
- ▶▶ 84 units have taken advantage of the entrepreneurs' support programme, with a total of Rs 6.95 crore being disbursed during the period 2022-23.
- ▶▶ The Kerala government is dedicated to providing resources and support to entrepreneurs in the state, and the introduction of the WhatsApp complaint system is just one example of their efforts.

Bikaner Solar Power Project to Boost India's Renewable Energy

- ▶▶ President Droupadi Murmu virtually laid the foundation stone for the 1,000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project on Tuesday in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The project is being implemented by state-owned energy firm SJVN Limited through its subsidiary, SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL), and is being developed on 5,000 acres of outright purchased land near the village of Banderwala, district Bikaner in Rajasthan.

Details of the Project :

- ▶▶ The project is expected to be commissioned by March 2024 and will generate approximately 2454.55 million units in the first year, with a cumulative total of 56838 MU over 25 years. The maximum usage charges have been set at Rs. 2.57 per unit, which will provide cheaper electricity to consumers. In addition to helping the government achieve its renewable energy target of 500 GW by 2030, the project will also reduce carbon emissions by 27,85,077 tones.
- ▶▶ The project is expected to create direct and indirect employment for 150-200 and 800-1000 people, respectively, and will stimulate the local economy and create green jobs. The project will also utilize domestically manufactured solar photovoltaic cells and modules, supporting the "Make in India" initiative.



Funding and Implementation :

- ▶▶ The development cost of the project is ₹ 5492 crores, with viability gap funding support of ₹ 44.72 lakh per megawatt provided by IREDA. SJVN has been awarded the 1,000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project under the Central Public Sector Undertaking Scheme Phase-II, Tranche-III (Government Producer Scheme) through competitive bidding. The power generated by the project will be for self-use or use by the government or government entities, either directly or through distribution companies (DISCOMS).

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann Launched 'School of Eminence' Project

- ▶▶ Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann launched the 'School of Eminence', an ambitious project of the Punjab government. CM Bhagwant Mann noted that it is a revolutionary step towards ensuring a bright future for students. The Punjab government fixed a budget of Rs 200 crore for the 'School of Eminence' project.

Key Points -

- ▶▶ The five pillars of the 'School of Eminence' are state-of-the-art infrastructure, academics, human resource management, sports, co-curricular activities, and community engagement.
- ▶▶ The project is also concerned with inducing innovative teaching methods for the students to guide for professional examinations.
- ▶▶ CM Bhagwant Mann noted that the schools are being set up keeping in mind the aspirations of the freedom fighters which prepare students for future needs and help make Punjab a role model in the field of education.



- ▶▶ He described teachers as Nation-builders and informed that teachers have played an important role in bringing qualitative change in the field of education.

Objectives of the 'School of Eminence' Project :

- ▶▶ The 'School of Eminence' project aims to rejuvenate education in government schools and ensure the holistic development of students. Under the 'School of Eminence' project the Punjab government will upgrade 117 government schools in 23 districts with special emphasis on classes 9 to 12....

PM Modi Launched Development Programs in Karnataka and Maharashtra

- ▶▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated several development programs in Karnataka and Maharashtra ahead of the elections. PM Modi visited the Yadgiri and Kalaburagi districts of Karnataka and laid the foundation stone and inaugurated various developmental projects related to irrigation, drinking water, and a National Highway development project at Kodeka in the Yadgir district.



PM Modi Launched Development Programs in Karnataka and Maharashtra- Key Points

- ▶▶ The foundation stone of the Yadgir multi-village drinking water supply scheme under the Jal Jeevan Mission was laid at Kodekal.
- ▶▶ A water treatment plant of 117 MLD will be built under the development schemes launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ▶▶ The project which cost ₹ 2,050 crore will provide potable water to about 2.3 lakh households of more than 700 rural habitations and three towns in the Yadgir district.
- ▶▶ PM Modi will also inaugurate Narayanpur Left Bank Canal- Extension Renovation and Moderation Project (NLBC-ERM).
- ▶▶ The project with a canal carrying a capacity of 10,000 cusecs can irrigate 4.5 lakh hectares of command area.
- ▶▶ It will also benefit more than three lakh farmers in 560 villages of Kalaburagi, Yadgiri, and Vijaypur districts.
- ▶▶ The total cost of the project is estimated to ₹ 4,700 crores.
- ▶▶ The Prime Minister will also distribute title deeds (Hakku Patra) to the eligible benefit of the newly declared revenue Village in Kalaburagi district.
- ▶▶ During the program, he will also lay the foundation stone of the 71 km section of NH-150C.
- ▶▶ The six-lane Greenfield road project is also a part of the Surat-Chennai Expressway.
- ▶▶ It is being built at a cost of more than ₹ 2,100 crores.
- ▶▶ Surat-Chennai Expressway will pass through six states including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu

Republic Day 2023, Interesting Facts About 74th Republic Day of India...

- ▶▶ Republic Day 2023: India will celebrate its 74th Republic Day this year, and we are all thrilled and delighted to take part in and watch the celebration. When Dr. Rajendra Prasad took office and started serving as president of India in 1950, we observed our first republic day.

Interesting Unknown facts about Constitution of India :

- ▶▶ Republic Day and Independence Day, are the two national holidays that are observed with fervour and patriotism everywhere. This year's weeklong Republic Day celebrations will also feature a parade, the Beating Retreat ritual, a military tattoo and tribal dance festival, and a drone show.
- ▶▶ The Indian National Congress (INC) announced Purna Swaraj (full independence) on January 26, 1930, in opposition to the British government's dominion status in the country. As a result, this day was chosen for the Constitution's implementation. India annually invites the leader of a specific country as the chief guest for the Republic Day parade. The first head of state to visit India's Republic Day festivities was Indonesian President Sukarno in 1950.

Who will be the guest for Republic Day 2023 ?

Republic Day 2023: Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, the Egyptian president, will be the special guest this year.

- ▶▶ The Constitution of India came into effect on January 26, 1950. Republic Day has since been observed on January 26. On November 26, 1949, the Constituent Assembly did, however, adopt the Constitution. The Constitution was created in 2 years, 11 months, and 18 days.
- ▶▶ On January 26, 1950, the Indian Constitution became effective, and that day is known as Republic Day.
- ▶▶ With 444 articles divided into 22 parts, 12 schedules, and 118 amendments to date, the Indian constitution is the longest in the world.
- ▶▶ The Constituent Assembly enacted the constitution on November 26, 1949, and it became effective in 1950.
- ▶▶ The first Republic Day parade was held in 1950 at the Irwin Amphitheater (now Major Dhyan Chand Stadium), where over 100 aircraft and 3,000 members of the Indian military participated.
- ▶▶ One of only two times a Pakistani governor was granted the privilege, the inaugural parade at Rajpath was held in 1955 with Governor General Malik Ghulam Muhammad of Pakistan as the chief guest.
- ▶▶ The date of January 26 was chosen since it was on this day in 1930 that the Indian National Congress unveiled Purna Swaraj, which rejected the British Regime's Dominion status and declared India's independence from colonial authority.



- ▶▶ The principal guest for the Republic Day parade is often the head of a specific country. The first head of state to visit India's Republic Day celebrations was Indonesian President Sukarno in 1950.
- ▶▶ Each army participant in the march undergoes a thorough four-layer assessment, including a close examination of their armaments....

Navy's Republic Day tableau to reflect Nari Shakti

- ▶▶ "Nari Shakti" (women power) will be driving the theme of this year's Republic Day tableau of Navy.
- ▶▶ "Nari Shakti" (women power) will be driving the theme of this year's Republic Day tableau of Navy. Not just the front of the tableau will feature a woman aircrew of a Dornier aircraft flying overhead, but Lt. Commander Disha Amrith has been tasked with commanding its parade contingent.
- ▶▶ Amrith, a naval air operations officer, will be leading the contingent of 144 sailors and will be assisted



by another woman officer, Sub Lt Valli Meena S, who is one of the three platoon commanders. Lt. Ashwani Singh and SLt. M Aditya are the two others, according to the Navy. Its world-renowned brass band of 80 musicians will be led by M Antony Raj, MCPO (Musician Second Class), while Lt. Cdr. Inderjeet Chauhan has been designated as overall Tableau Commander.

The Navy Tableau :

- ▶▶ The theme of the naval tableau would be 'Indian Navy — Combat Ready, Credible, Cohesive and Future Proof'.
- ▶▶ The Tableau is designed with an aim to showcase the multi-dimensional capabilities of the Indian Navy as well as highlight key indigenously designed and built platforms.
- ▶▶ The tableau would endeavour to highlight its sustained focus on 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' initiatives towards being a "future proof and maintaining combat readiness in service of the nation."
- ▶▶ The forward part of the tableau will showcase a woman aircrew of Dornier aircraft (flying overhead), highlighting the all-women crew of a surveillance sortie undertaken last year.
- ▶▶ The main section of the tableau will illustrate the 'Make in India' initiatives of the Navy....

NCERT Launched India's First National Assessment Regulator "PARAKH"

- ▶▶ The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) has released India's first national assessment regulator, PARAKH, which will work on setting norms, standards, and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognized school boards in the country.

- ▶▶ The PARAKH regulator aims to set up assessment guidelines for all boards to help remove disparities in the scores of students enrolled with different state boards. PARAKH stands for The Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development. It is established within the education survey division of the NCERT.



NCERT Launched India's First National Assessment Regulator "PARAKH" – Key Points

- ▶▶ PARAKH has been launched as a part of the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- ▶▶ It has envisaged a standard-setting body to advise school boards regarding the new assessment patterns and the latest research and promote collaboration between them.
- ▶▶ PARAKH will work in three major assessment areas including large-scale assessments, school-based assessments, and examination reforms.
- ▶▶ It will work on bringing an equivalence in the recognized school boards in India in terms of the academic standards among learners.
- ▶▶ PARAKH will closely work with the state directorates of education, state, education boards, and international organizations, working in the area of assessment and evaluation.
- ▶▶ Last year in September, NCERT invited expressions of interest (EoI) from international agencies to help in setting up PARAKH.
- ▶▶ PARAKH will be responsible for conducting large-scale assessments, including the National Achievement Survey (NAS).
- ▶▶ The center will also manage India's participation in international assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)....

Low Carbon Cruise Flagged off by Union Petroleum Minister on Mahabahu Brahmaputra

- ▶▶ The Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India Hardeep S. Puri inaugurated the demo run of an Inland Water Vessel.
- ▶▶ India Energy Week 2023 is going to be hosted in Bengaluru from 6th to 8th February 2023. The Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India Hardeep S. Puri inaugurated the demo run of an Inland Water Vessel powered by Methanol blended Diesel (MD15).
- ▶▶ The Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Labour, and Employment, Government of India Rameswar Teki was also present during the inaugural ceremony.

Low Carbon Cruise Flagged off by Union Petroleum Minister on Mahabahu Brahmaputra – Key Points

- ▶▶ The boat ride was done on a 50-seater motor launch marine vessel named 'SB Gangadhar'.
- ▶▶ The marine vessel is equipped with two Ruston make diesel engines (each engine of 105 hp). The boat will be run on MD-15 (15% methanol blended HSD).
- ▶▶ Methanol is a low-carbon hydrogen carrier fuel that is produced from high-ash coal, agricultural residue, CO2 from thermal power plants, and natural gas. It is the best pathway for meeting India's commitment to COP 21.
- ▶▶ It is slightly lower in energy content than petrol and diesel, methanol can replace both these fuels in the transport sector, the energy sector, and retail cooking.
- ▶▶ The Minister informed that in Assam, Assam Petrochemical Limited (APL), Namrup currently produces about 100 TPD of Methanol and is implementing a new project for the production of 500 TPD of Methanol.
- ▶▶ He further added that work is in progress to set up Coal-to-Methanol plants in the country using indigenous technology, which is being developed by BHEL (Hyderabad and Trichy), Thermax, and IIT Delhi.
- ▶▶ NITI Aayog's 'Methanol Economy' program is aimed at reducing India's oil import bill, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and converting coal reserves and municipal solid waste into methanol.



About India Energy Week 2023 :

- ▶▶ India Energy Week 2023 is the first major event under India's G20 Presidency, which follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge at COP26 to cut India's emissions to net zero by 2070. India Energy Week is being held under the patronage of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.
- ▶▶ The only all-encompassing international energy event supported at the highest level of the Indian government, with participation from all the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), and officially supported by the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI).

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Inaugurates National Logistics Portal

- ▶▶ Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the National Logistics Portal (marine) in New Delhi. It is a one-stop platform aimed at connecting all the stakeholders of the logistics community using IT. The National Logistic Portal (marine) (NLP) is a project of national importance. This will improve efficiency and transparency by reducing costs and promote the growth of the logistics sector.
- ▶▶ National Logistics Portal will be a single window for all trade processes of the logistics sector spread across the country covering all modes of transport in the waterways, roadways, and airways to provide a seamless end-to-end logistic service coverage.

Key features of the National Logistics Portal:

- ▶▶ NLP will serve as a single point of contact for all logistics trade processes across the country, including all modes of transportation via waterways, roads, and airways. The activities of NLP Marine are categorized into four distinct verticals-
- ▶▶ The Latch On feature facilitates the trade in providing the required features that are not directly embedded into NLP Marine, by linking through systems developed by other agencies seamlessly without duplication of efforts.
- ▶▶ It is envisaged that many standalone applications, developed by multiple vendors, users, and other stakeholders will integrate with NLP Marine through appropriate curation.
- ▶▶ It also enables digital transactions for payments required for the clearance processes such as Port charges, CFS charges, shipping line charges, transportation charges.



Udyan Utsav 2023 – Rashtrapati Bhavan's Amrit Udyan open from January 3

- ▶▶ The Mughal Garden of Rashtrapati Bhavan has been called Amrit Udyan. As President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday inaugurated Udyan Utsav-2023, the opening of the Rashtrapati Bhavan grounds, the renowned park is expected to open to the public on January 31.
- ▶▶ Once a year, the gardens are made available to the public.
- ▶▶ It will be accessible to tourists this year from January 31 to March 26 between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm.
- ▶▶ However, it will be closed every Monday, March 1 and 2, the G20 summit, and March 8. (Holi).
- ▶▶ Visitors will be able to view 12 different species of carefully cultivated tulips that are anticipated to bloom in stages, among other things.
- ▶▶ This time, the public will be able to visit the Herbal Garden, Bonsai Garden, Central Lawn, Long Garden, and Circular Garden for around two months.
- ▶▶ During Udyan Utsav, there is no charge for slot reservations or access to Rashtrapati Bhavan's gardens. In a single booking, reservations can be made for up to 30 people.
- ▶▶ East Lawn, Central Lawn, Long Garden, and Circular Garden were all original parts of Rashtrapati Bhavan's garden. Additional gardens, including Herbal-I, Herbal-II, Tactile Garden, Bonsai Garden, and Arogya Vanam, were created under the administrations of former presidents Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam and Ram Nath Kovind.



Udyan Utsav 2023

- ▶ Visitors will be able to observe specially produced tulips of 12 distinct species that are anticipated to blossom in stages at this year's Udyan Utsav, among other attractions....

Aero India 2023 to be held in Bengaluru

- ▶ The biennial air show and aviation expo, Aero India 2023, is scheduled for February 13–17. Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru, which has hosted it since 1996, will serve as the venue. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the programme. More than 730 exhibitors from India and other countries will take part in the event this year.



Aero India 2023

Aero India 2023 : Key Points

- ▶ A significant aerospace and defence trade show and an Indian Air Force aerial display will be part of the five-day event.
- ▶ There will be involvement from international think tanks in addition to major aerospace investors and world leaders.
- ▶ So far, 737 exhibitors have signed up to take part in the event. According to the Aero India website, 643 of the 737 exhibitors are from India, while 94 are from 30 different international nations.
- ▶ The goal of the Aero India event is to offer a special opportunity for the exchange of knowledge, concepts, and innovations in the aviation sector.
- ▶ It would help the Make in India movement and boost the local aviation sector.
- ▶ Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, event participation was impacted in 2021. Over 55 countries' worth of participants and more than 540 exhibitors took part in the event.

Aero India 2023 : Ban on Sale of Non-veg Food near Air Force Station

- ▶ In anticipation of Aero India 2023, the Bengaluru local government has ordered the closure of meat stands, non-vegetarian hotels, and restaurants.
- ▶ The prohibition was put in place because non-vegetarian food left out in the open attracts scavenging birds, which could cause accidents in mid-air, according to local body authorities.
- ▶ The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has put a ban on the sale and serving of beef within a radius of 10 kilometres of Yelahanka's Air Force Station in anticipation of "Aero India 2023," which will be held in Silicon City Bengaluru.
- ▶ The choice was made because the non-vegetarian food left out in public places draws a lot of scavenger birds, particularly kites, who might cause accidents in mid-air.
- ▶ Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru will host the 14th iteration of "Aero India 2023" from February 13 to 17.
- ▶ From January 30 to February 20 in the vicinity of the venue, the Bengaluru local authority has ordered the closure of meat stands, non-vegetarian hotels, and restaurants.

Indian Railways Launches 'Ideal Train Profile' Maximize Seat Utilization

- ▶▶ The Indian Railways has successfully concluded the trial of an Artificial Intelligence Programme it built to fix the endless problem of the Waiting list.
- ▶▶ The Indian Railways has successfully concluded the trial of an Artificial Intelligence Programme it built to fix the endless problem of the Waiting list. The Indian Railways has also introduced the Ideal Train Profile to maximize the capacity utilization and revenue generation in reserved mail express trains by regularly analyzing the demand pattern of every single train.



- ▶▶ The AI module has been developed by an in-house team led by R Gopalakrishnan of the Centre of Railways Information System (CRIS). The module is completed after an extensive effort by the team for over two years.

Indian Railways Launches 'Ideal Train Profile' Maximize Seat Utilization- Key Points

- ▶▶ The Ideal Train Profile is seat capacity optimization decision support, which is done because the number of ticket class combinations on a single train journey can exceed 5,000.
- ▶▶ The Railways Ministry has announced that the pattern of demand for accommodation is not always on an end-to-end basis.
- ▶▶ The Pattern will also vary in all trains depending on various factors like its origin-destination pairs, date and timings, class of accommodation, or availability of alternate trains.
- ▶▶ The ministry has also informed that the development of the Ideal Train Profile utility will provide the railway administrators is the passenger profile cells in various zonal railways.
- ▶▶ The AI program will also help zonal railways to conduct a periodic review of the trains quotas to address the changing demand mix on account of holidays, seasonality, etc.
- ▶▶ The pilot project was started on seven zonal railways including Eastern, Central, Northern, Southern, South Central, Western, and West Central Railway.
- ▶▶ The project so far has been rolled out in over 200 trains in Indian Railways.
- ▶▶ It is also expected that the utility will help to enhance confirmed seat availability and increase the occupancy of a train by 5 percent to 6 percent.
- ▶▶ This is the most effective way to resolve by allocation of accommodation quotas based on the business need of serving the demands for different origin-destination pairs....

Visakhapatnam will be the new Andhra Pradesh capital: CM Jagan Reddy

- ▶▶ Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's government announced that Visakhapatnam would be the new capital of the state.
- ▶▶ Visakhapatnam, a port and industrial city brimming with cosmopolitan culture has been in the news ever since Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's government announced that it would be the new capital of the state, indicating plans to develop Amaravati – on the banks of the Krishna river – as the capital city have been scrapped. The announcement of Visakhapatnam, a new capital for Andhra comes nine years after the state of Telangana was carved out of its territory and given Hyderabad as its capital.
- ▶▶ At the International Diplomatic Alliance meet in Delhi CM Jagan urged investors to 'visit Visakhapatnam and see how easy it is do to business in the state of Andhra Pradesh'.
- ▶▶ In March last year, the Andhra Pradesh High Court had ruled against the proposal to establish three capitals in the state and directed the YSRC government to develop Amaravati as the state capital as envisaged. The Court had also in its verdict on March 3, 2022 said the state Legislature lacked competence to make any legislation for shifting, bifurcating or trifurcating the capital.
- ▶▶ The state government has filed a petition in the Supreme Court, challenging the High Court order.



A Rich History of Visakhapatnam :

- ▶▶ According to Vizag port website, the city, which is home to the headquarters of Eastern Naval Command had trade relations with the Middle East and Rome during ancient times and in 1682 it became a settlement of a branch of East India Company.
- ▶▶ The Visakhapatnam Port was formally inaugurated by Lord Willingdon, the then Viceroy and Governor General of India on December 19, 1933.
- ▶▶ The city shot into limelight after the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi laid foundation stone for a Steel Plant which was dedicated to the nation by former PM PV Narasimha Rao in 1992 after the facility started production.

Significance of This Development :

- ▶▶ According to a study by Andhra University, the population of Vizag will grow to 30 lakh by 2035 from 23.5 lakh in 2021. Visakhapatnam has necessary infrastructure like international airport, road and port connectivity which is important for the capital city.

HYDERABAD TO VISAKHAPATNAM
Distance: 617km
Time: approx. 11 hours

Route: Take the overnight Train No. 12728, Godavari SF Express, Tier 2, Rs.140, 540/- - 5:50am

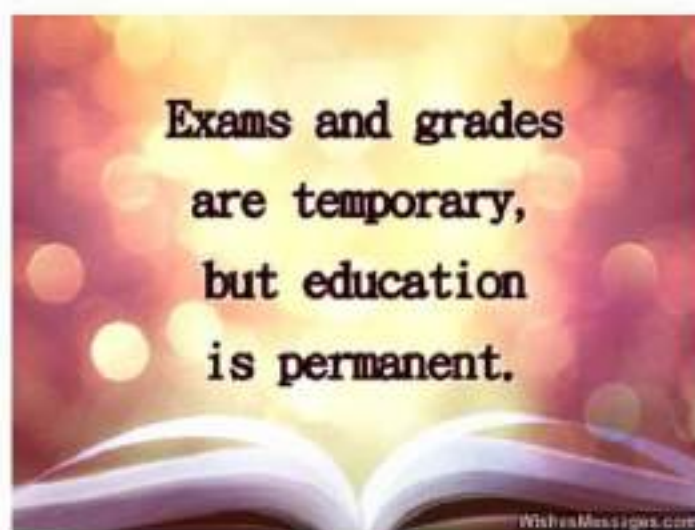
Stay: Jagan, www.jagan.com doubles starting from Rs.759 plus taxes, including breakfast

Top Tip: Visit the Lepakshi Handicrafts store to buy Andhra-themed souvenirs like Kondapalli toys and Uppada saree.

- ▶ The announcement that Visakhapatnam, nicknamed "City of Destiny," would be the new state capital, has elicited mixed response from different sections of people in the city.
- ▶ Former chairman of Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India (CREDAI) Visakhapatnam chamber G V Satyanarayana hailed Jagan's announcement. The real estate industry will have a good future once the capital is established in Visakhapatnam...

GST Collection in January

- ▶ The GST collection has been increasing in recent times. The three main reasons for the hike in GST collection are decisions made by GST Council, changes made in tax collection, and rising inflation. The highest GST Collection was achieved in the month of April 2022. GoI collected Rs 1.68 lakh crores GST in that month. The January 2023 GST Collection is now the second highest. In Jan 2023, the GST collected was Rs 1.55 lakh crores. This is the third time GST collection crossed Rs 1.5 lakh crores.



International

India to Host Virtual Summit of 120 Countries of Global South

- ▶▶ India will host 'The Voice of Global South' Summit on January 12-13, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said. As many as 120 countries will participate in the summit. The virtual summit is significant as India currently holds the presidency of the G20 group and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier indicated that priorities would be shaped in consultation with developing countries.

Theme of The Voice of Global South Summit:

- ▶▶ The 'Voice of Global South Summit' under the theme 'Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose' envisages bringing together countries of the Global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform.

More About The Summit :

- ▶▶ The MEA said that the summit envisages ten sessions, four sessions on January 12 and six sessions on January 13. Each session is expected to witness the participation of leaders or ministers from 10-20 countries.
- ▶▶ The inaugural and concluding sessions would be at the head of state or government level and hosted by the Prime Minister. The theme of the Inaugural Leaders' session is 'Voice of Global South –for Human-Centric Development' and that of the Concluding Leaders' session is 'Unity of Voice -Unity of Purpose'.



India-China Trade Reaches All-Time High

- ▶▶ The trade between India and China reached an all-time high of USD 135.98 billion in 2022, even as New Delhi's trade deficit with Beijing crossed the USD 100 billion mark for the first time, according to data released by the Chinese customs. This marks a significant increase from the USD 125 billion recorded in 2021. Despite border tensions following the military standoff in eastern Ladakh in May 2020, the trade between the two countries continues to boom.

Trade Deficit :

- ▶▶ The trade deficit for India stood at USD 101.02 billion, crossing the 2021 figure of USD 69.38 billion. This is the first time the trade deficit, a serious concern constantly expressed by India,

has crossed the USD 100 billion mark. In 2021, the overall trade with China totalled USD 125.62 billion, an increase of 43.32 per cent year on year crossing the USD 100 billion mark for the first time. The trade deficit in 2021 stood at USD 69.56 billion as India's imports from China witnessed an increase of 46.14 per cent to reach USD 97.59 billion. India's exports to China increased by 34.28 per cent year on year to reach USD 28.03 billion in 2021.



Trade Growth :

- ▶ According to an official brief on trade posted on the Indian Embassy website in Beijing, the rapid expansion of India-China bilateral trade since the beginning of this century has propelled China to emerge as India's largest goods trading partner by 2008. Since the beginning of the last decade, bilateral trade between the two countries has recorded exponential growth. From 2015 to 2021, India-China bilateral trade grew by 75.30 per cent, an average yearly growth of 12.55 per cent.

Trade Concerns :

- ▶ Officials say that while trade with China thrived on the availability of cheap Chinese goods to India, it has continuously resulted in the spiralling trade deficit India had with any other country. "Our trade deficit concerns are two-pronged. One is the actual size of the deficit. Two is the fact that the imbalance has continuously been widening year after year," the Embassy brief said. "The growth of trade deficit with China could be attributed to two factors: narrow basket of commodities, mostly primary, that we export to China and second, market access impediments for most of our agricultural products and the sectors where we are competitive in, such as pharmaceuticals, IT/ITES," it said. Despite placating statements to address India's concerns, China has not taken any major steps to open up pharma and IT sector.

Global South Centre of Excellence

- ▶ Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will establish a Global South Centre of Excellence to undertake research on development solutions for developing countries. He also called for a human-centric globalisation to address the concerns of these countries. The announcement was made during his opening address at the concluding session of the Voice of Global South virtual summit.



Challenges Faced by Developing Countries :

- ▶ In his address, Prime Minister Modi acknowledged that the challenges of COVID-19, rising prices of fuel, fertilisers, and food grains, and increasing geo-political tensions have adversely impacted the developing countries. He said that these countries desire a globalisation that does not create a climate crisis, debt crisis, or trigger unequal distribution of vaccines or over-concentrated global supply chains.

- ▶▶ “We want a human-centric globalisation. We, the developing countries, are concerned about increasing fragmentation of the international landscape,” he said. “These geopolitical tensions distract us from focusing on our development priorities. . . To address this geopolitical fragmentation, we urgently need fundamental reform of international organizations including the UN Security Council and Bretton Woods institutions,” he added.

Global South Centre of Excellence :

- ▶▶ To address these challenges, Prime Minister Modi announced that India will establish a Global South Centre of Excellence. This center will undertake research on “development solutions or best practices of any of our countries which can be scaled up and implemented in other members of the Global South”. The prime minister also noted that the summit has seen participation from more than 120 developing countries.
- ▶▶ This center will act as a platform for developing countries to share their best practices and solutions to common development challenges, as well as to collaborate and learn from each other. It will play an important role in promoting sustainable development and addressing the needs of developing countries.

India Hosts “The Voice of Global South” Summit, Gathers 120 Countries

- ▶▶ India will host the virtual ‘The Voice of Global South’ Summit on January 12-13, according to Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra. The summit will bring together 120 countries from the Global South to share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform. India currently holds the presidency of the G20 group, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has indicated that priorities would be shaped in consultation with developing countries.

**VOICE OF
GLOBAL SOUTH
SUMMIT**
UNITY OF VOICE

Theme and Sessions :

- ▶▶ The theme of the summit is ‘Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose’, and it will consist of ten sessions over the course of two days. The inaugural and concluding sessions will be at the head of state or government level and will be hosted by the Prime Minister. The theme of the Inaugural Leaders’ session is ‘Voice of Global South – for Human-Centric Development’, and the theme of the Concluding Leaders’ session is ‘Unity of Voice -Unity of Purpose’.

Eight ministerial sessions will take place on the following themes :

- ▶▶ Finance Ministers’ session on ‘Financing People-Centric Development’
- ▶▶ Environment Ministers’ session on ‘Balancing Growth with Environment Friendly Lifestyles (LiFE)’
- ▶▶ Foreign Ministers’ session on ‘Priorities of the Global South – Ensuring a Conducive Environment’
- ▶▶ Energy Ministers’ session on ‘Energy Security and Development – Roadmap to Prosperity’
- ▶▶ Health Ministers’ session on ‘Cooperation to Build Resilient Healthcare Systems’
- ▶▶ Education Ministers session on ‘Human Resource Development and Capacity Building’

- ▶▶ Commerce and Trade Ministers' session on 'Developing Synergies in the Global South – Trade, Technology, Tourism and Resources'

What is Global North and Global South ?

- ▶▶ The classification of countries as 'Global North' or 'Global South' is based on similarities in terms of wealth, indicators of education and healthcare, etc. 'Global North' refers loosely to countries like the US, Canada, Europe, Russia, Australia, and New Zealand, while 'Global South' includes countries in Asia, Africa, and South America. In recent years, some countries in the Global South, such as India and China, have experienced significant economic growth, challenging the idea that the North is the ideal.

India and UK Launch Young Professionals Scheme

- ▶▶ The governments of India and the UK marked Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on January 9, 2023 by launching the Young Professionals Scheme, which allows up to 3,000 degree-holding citizens aged between 18 and 30 to live and work in each other's countries for a period of two years. The scheme, which was announced in November at the G20 summit in Bali, is part of the India-UK Migration and Mobility Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2021.



Details of the Young Professionals Scheme :

- ▶▶ According to High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami, the Young Professionals Scheme will hopefully be "up and running in March," although he noted that there are still some processes that need to be completed before a March launch can be confirmed. Successful candidates will be able to search for job, educational, or cultural opportunities in their host country, or simply visit for the two-year period. The scheme allows for exchange visas for up to 3,000 individuals per year. It is not necessary for candidates to have a job lined up when they apply for the visa.

Benefits of the Young Professionals Scheme :

- ▶▶ The Young Professionals Scheme offers a unique opportunity for young Indians and Britons to gain international experience and expand their cultural horizons. It also has the potential to strengthen ties between the two countries by fostering cultural exchange and building networks of professionals.

Ongoing India-UK Trade Negotiations :

- ▶▶ The launch of the Young Professionals Scheme comes amidst ongoing negotiations for a free trade agreement between the two countries, which have been complicated by issues surrounding the movement of persons across borders. The UK has also been seeking greater ease in the movement of skilled professionals and students from India to the UK as part of the trade talks.

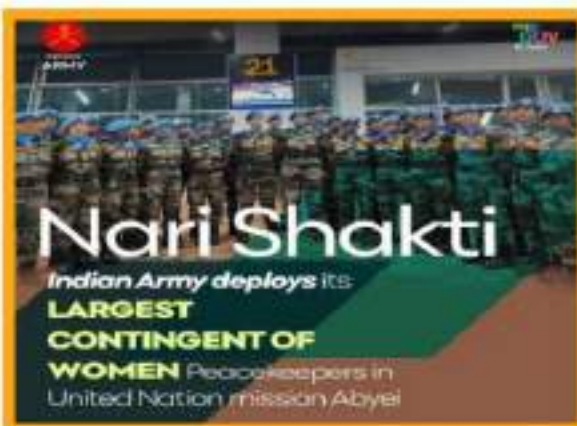
History of India-UK Migration and Mobility Agreement :

- ▶▶ The Migration and Mobility agreement between India and the UK was signed in May 2021

and seeks to address a number of issues related to the movement of persons between the two countries. One aspect of the agreement aims to facilitate the return of illegal migrants to their home countries.

India is set to deploy female peacekeepers to the UN Mission in Abyei

- ▶▶ India is set to deploy a platoon of female peacekeepers to the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA) on the border of Sudan and South Sudan on January 6. This marks the largest single unit of women peacekeepers in a UN mission since India deployed the first all-female contingent in Liberia in 2007. The deployment is part of India's efforts to increase the number of women in peacekeeping contingents and will be particularly welcomed in Abyei, where recent violence has led to humanitarian concerns for women and children in the conflict zone.



Women Peacekeepers :

- ▶▶ Women peacekeepers are highly regarded in peacekeeping missions worldwide for their ability to connect with women and children in local populations, particularly victims of sexual violence in conflict zones. India has a long history of participating in peacekeeping efforts and has had several notable female peacekeepers, including Dr. Kiran Bedi, the UN's first police adviser, and Major Suman Gawani and Shakti Devi. Indian teams in the Congo and South Sudan have also contributed to community and social development projects at the grassroots level.

Indian Contingent :

- ▶▶ The Indian contingent for the UNISFA mission consists of two officers and 25 other ranks, who will specialize in community outreach and carry out various security-related duties. India is one of the largest contributors of troops to UN peacekeeping missions and this deployment marks a significant increase in the proportion of women in its peacekeeping contingents.

Importance of Women in Peacekeeping :

- ▶▶ The effectiveness of the UN's peace and security efforts depends heavily on the contribution of women peacekeepers. More women than ever before hold executive positions in UN peacekeeping, with women working with the UN as citizens, police officers, and military personnel. The UN has recognized the importance of women in peacekeeping and has implemented a number of initiatives to increase the representation of women, including the establishment of a gender unit and the adoption of a resolution on the role of women in peace and security.

India-France Strategic Dialogue

- ▶▶ The 36th India-France Strategic Dialogue is set to take place on January 5, with a focus on addressing China's militarization of the Indo-Pacific region and ways in which the two nations can work together to counter it. In addition to the strategic talks, Diplomatic Advisor Bonne will also meet with India's Defence Minister and External Affairs Minister. Though the Indian government has not disclosed further details about the content of the dialogue, it is clear that India is seeking to strengthen its self-reliance in weapons and hardware with the help of key allies like France due to Russia's preoccupation with the war in Ukraine.



Aircraft Engines and Submarines :

- ▶▶ One area where India is seeking French assistance is in the manufacturing of aircraft engines. India is looking for a transfer of technology to enable it to make engines for its indigenous twin-engine fighter, as well as the design and development of next-generation military and civilian engines for future fighter and transport platforms. The Tata group has already teamed up with Airbus to manufacture C295 tactical transport aircraft in Gujarat, and this partnership is set to be expanded to include the production of other civilian and military aircraft through a joint venture with France.
- ▶▶ In addition to aircraft engines, India is also interested in continued French assistance with the production of submarines. The Kalvari (French Scorpene) class submarine line is set to deliver its final submarine this year, and India is hoping that France will help to continue the manufacturing line at Mumbai Dockyards. The plan is to retrofit diesel attack submarines with indigenous air independent propulsion (AIP) systems for long endurance. It is expected that progress will be made on both aircraft engines and long-range submarines during this year's strategic dialogue with France.

Indo-Pacific Security and Space Cooperation :

- ▶▶ Another key topic of discussion during the strategic dialogue will be the Indo-Pacific region, where France is ready to help India with ocean bed mapping and the development of underwater drones and sensors. With the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China becoming increasingly aggressive in the Indo-Pacific, and rapidly expanding its warship and nuclear submarine force, India and its allies must be prepared for any eventualities in the Indian Ocean, which is fast becoming a new frontier. In order to ensure maritime domain awareness and security from the east coast of Africa to the far Pacific, India and France have formed a trilateral group with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

New Members Join United Nations Security Council

- ▶▶ On January 3, Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland officially began their two-year term as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The flag installation

ceremony, initiated by Kazakhstan in 2018, marked the start of their responsibilities and was presided over by Kazakhstan's permanent representative, Akan Rakhmetullin. Rakhmetullin expressed confidence that the new council members would bring a wealth of knowledge and perspective to global issues of peace and security.

Role of Non-Permanent Members :

- ▶▶ The United Nations Security Council is composed of 15 members, with 5 permanent members (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China) and 10 non-permanent members. The non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms by the UN General Assembly, with five new members replacing outgoing ones each year. In addition to participating in the decision-making process of the Security Council, non-permanent members also have the opportunity to bring attention to specific issues and regional concerns.



Outgoing Members :

- ▶▶ The incoming members (Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland) are replacing India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, and Norway, whose two-year terms have now come to an end. These countries have made significant contributions to the Security Council during their tenure and will continue to play important roles in global affairs.

Continuing Members :

- ▶▶ Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, and the United Arab Emirates are currently in the middle of their two-year term as non-permanent members of the Security Council. These countries will continue to work alongside the new members to address the pressing issues facing the international community.

UNSC Membership :

- ▶▶ The UNSC is the most powerful body within the United Nations and is responsible for maintaining international peace and security. It has 15 members in total, including the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) who have veto power, and 10 elected members who serve two-year terms. The elected members are allocated by global regions and are replaced every two years.

India-Austria Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement

- ▶▶ As part of its efforts to facilitate the mobility of students, academics, and researchers, and promote migration for professional and economic reasons, India is set to sign a Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA) with Austria during External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Vienna. This follows similar agreements signed with other European countries such as France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Finland.

About the MMPA :

- ▶▶ The main objective of the MMPA is to provide for the equal treatment of nationals of both Parties in similar situations, while also ensuring that the provisions of the Agreement do not prejudice the application of national laws on the stay of foreigners on all points not dealt with in the Agreement.

Significance of the Agreement :

- ▶▶ One of the key benefits of the MMPA is that it will help to curb illegal migration between India and Austria. Both countries are keen to finalize the Agreement as a stepping stone towards resolving issues related to the long-pending India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement and facilitating the movement of Indian professionals working in European countries. In addition, the European countries see the Agreement as a way to curb illegal immigration from India.
- ▶▶ In light of the sharp increase in illegal migration that Austria faced last year, including over 15,000 illegal migrants from India with practically no chance of asylum, the Agreement is seen as a useful tool to combat illegal migration together, as it enables the swift return of illegal migrants.

Skill Development and Exchange Programs :

- ▶▶ Another significant aspect of the MMPA is that it will regulate multiple entry visas for professionals and student exchange programs. These programs will be reviewed regularly by a Joint Working Group (JWG) to ensure that they are meeting their objectives and delivering the desired outcomes.



Croatia's switch to Euro

- ▶▶ Croatia has taken two major steps towards further integration with the European Union (EU) by adopting the euro and joining the Schengen zone. The country officially became the 20th member of the eurozone on January 1st, and the removal of land border controls with neighboring Slovenia and Hungary marks its inclusion in the Schengen zone.

The Adoption of the Euro :

- ▶▶ Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković hailed the adoption of the euro as a "historic moment" that would better protect Croatian citizens from financial crises. The euro was already widely used in the country, with about 80% of bank deposits denominated in the currency and many shops and restaurants in tourist areas accepting payment in euros. The adoption of the euro is expected to improve borrowing conditions in Croatia and shield its economy at a time when inflation is soaring worldwide. In November, Croatia's inflation rate was 13.5%, higher than the 10% in the eurozone.



Joining the Schengen Zone :

- ▶▶ The inclusion of Croatia in the Schengen zone, which allows for passport-free travel between

26 European countries, is expected to boost tourism in the country. The tourism industry accounts for 20% of Croatia's GDP, and the end of land border controls with Slovenia and Hungary is expected to make it easier for tourists to visit the country's popular Adriatic coastline.

A Symbol of Croatia's Journey :

- ▶▶ Croatian politicians have described the adoption of the euro and the removal of borders with neighbouring countries as symbolic steps that mark the end of the country's post-independence journey. Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 and fought a war to cement its existence as an independent state, in which 20,000 were killed and hundreds of thousands were displaced. The country joined the EU in 2013, making it the most recent member.

International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023

- ▶▶ The Government of India has sponsored the proposal for the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023, which has been accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This has given the Indian Government the opportunity to celebrate the IYM and position India as the global hub for millets. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also shared his vision for the IYM to become a "People's Movement".



What are Millets ?

- ▶▶ Millets are small-seeded grasses that are often referred to as "Nutri-cereals". Some common types of millets include sorghum (jowar), pearl millet (bajra), finger millet (ragi), little millet (kutki), foxtail millet (kakun), proso millet (cheena), barnyard millet (sawa), and kodo millet (kodon). These grains are a staple cereal crop for millions of smallholder dryland farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and offer a variety of benefits such as nutrition, income, and livelihood for farmers. They can also be used for food, feed, fodder, biofuels, and brewing.

Significance and Benefits of Millets :

- ▶▶ Millets are nutritionally superior to wheat and rice due to their higher protein levels and a more balanced amino acid profile. They also contain various phytochemicals which have therapeutic properties due to their anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidative properties. In addition to being climate resilient, millet grains are rich in nutrients like carbohydrates, protein, dietary fiber, and good-quality fat; minerals like calcium, potassium, magnesium, iron, manganese, zinc, and B complex vitamins. Importantly, millet production does not depend on the use of chemical fertilizers, making it a sustainable and environmentally friendly option.

India's Prioritization of Millets :

- ▶▶ In April 2018, millets were rebranded as "Nutri Cereals" in India, and the year 2018 was declared as the National Year of Millets with the goal of increasing promotion and demand for these grains. The global millets market is expected to have a CAGR of 4.5% between 2021 and 2026.

India Assumes Chairmanship of Wassenaar Arrangement

- ▶▶ The Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), a voluntary export control regime that monitors the transfer of conventional weapons and dual-use goods, has announced that India will assume the chairmanship of its plenary for the next year. The 26th annual plenary of the WA, held in Vienna on November 30 and December 1, saw Ireland's ambassador Eoin O'Leary hand over the chairmanship to India's ambassador Jaideep Mazumdar, the permanent representative to the UN and international organizations in Vienna. India joined the WA in December 2017 as its 42nd participating state.



What is the Wassenaar Arrangement ?

- ▶▶ The Wassenaar Arrangement is a multilateral export control regime that promotes transparency and responsibility in the transfer of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies through regular exchanges of information among its members. The regime aims to track such transfers and prevent "destabilizing accumulations" of conventional arms and dual-use goods. The WA operates on a consensus basis and its plenary is the main decision-making body.
- ▶▶ The WA is an elite group of countries that subscribe to arms export controls, similar to the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime. It was established in 1996 to succeed the Cold War-era Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls and is named after Wassenaar, a suburb of The Hague where the agreement to start such multilateral cooperation was reached in 1995. The WA is headquartered in Vienna and currently has 42 members, with all permanent members of the UN Security Council (except for China) being signatories.

How Does the Wassenaar Arrangement Work ?

- ▶▶ The goal of the WA is to "promote transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies," according to the WA website. Participants are required to ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities that undermine the goal of the WA, which is also to prevent the acquisition of these items by terrorists. The WA operates using what it calls WA Control Lists, which are subject to ratification by the participants. Members of the WA agree to exchange information on sensitive dual-use goods and technologies and report on such transfers and denials of controlled items to non-participants.

Chris Hipkins will replace Jacinda Ardern as prime minister of New Zealand

- ▶▶ New Zealand's former COVID-19 response minister, Chris Hipkins will replace Jacinda Ardern as prime minister. The 44-year-old senior politician must be formally backed by Labour members of parliament to take over as the country's 41st prime minister, following Ardern's shock resignation. As leader of the governing party, Hipkins will also become prime minister when Ardern steps down.
- ▶▶ Besides holding the education portfolio, Hipkins is also minister for police and the public service, and leader of the House. He is known as a political troubleshooter who has taken on a variety of roles to try to iron out problems created by other lawmakers. A lawmaker for 15 years, Hipkins is considered more centrist than Ardern and colleagues hope that he will appeal to a broad range of voters....



UAE and India discussing settling non-oil trade in Rupees

- ▶▶ The United Arab Emirates is in early discussions with India to trade non-oil commodities in Indian rupees.
- ▶▶ The United Arab Emirates is in early discussions with India to trade non-oil commodities in Indian rupees, Minister for Foreign Trade Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi said in World Economic Forum, Davos. The minister said other countries, including China, had also raised the issue of settling non-oil trade payments in local currencies. He added that the UAE is hoping to conclude a trade agreement with Cambodia in the first quarter.



Significance of This Move :

- ▶▶ The move would build on an agreement signed in 2022, which aimed to increase trade excluding oil between the two countries to \$100 billion by 2027. Trading in India's currency would also signal a stark move away from the US dollar, which dominates global commodities markets as well as trade for countries along the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia's finance minister also this week expressed openness to trade in non-dollar currencies.

India and China Pushing Trade in local Currencies :

- ▶▶ India and China are among the largest trade partners of Gulf Arab oil and gas producers, which largely peg their currencies to the dollar. China has also weighed settling non-oil trade in local currencies that exclude the dollar. Despite Gulf trade being largely conducted in dollars, China and India are both leaning harder into making use of local currencies, citing lower transaction costs....

Indian-American attorney Janani Ramachandran becomes first LGBTQ woman of colour city council

▶▶ A 30-year-old Indian-American attorney, Janani Ramachandran has emerged as the youngest and the first queer woman of colour to take oath as the Oakland City Council member in the U.S. state of California. She took the ceremonial oath wearing a saree as the Oakland City Council member for District 4 in an inauguration ceremony.



▶▶ Ramachandran currently serves on the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. Ramachandran has previously held the position of Commissioner at the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission in addition to her current position on the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. The graduate of Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley has held positions in a number of legal charities. As a first-time candidate in her 2021 run for State Assembly, she shocked political experts by advancing to the special election runoff, coming out on top amongst a field of previously elected officials....

What does LGBT mean ?

▶▶ LGBT is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. In use since the 1990s, the initialism, as well as some of its common variants, functions as an umbrella term for sexuality and gender identity. The LGBT term is an adaptation of the initialism LGB, which began to replace the term gay (or gay and lesbian) in reference to the broader LGBT community beginning in the mid-to-late 1980s. When not inclusive of transgender people, the shorter term LGB is still used instead of LGBT....

UN Declares Pakistan Based Abdul Rehman Makki a Global Terrorist

▶▶ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has listed Pakistan-based terrorist Abdul Rehman Makki as a global terrorist. Makki is the brother-in-law of LeT chief and 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed.



▶▶ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has listed Pakistan-based terrorist Abdul Rehman Makki as a global terrorist. Makki is the brother-in-law of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief and 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed. The development comes after India last year slammed China after it blocked the proposal

to list Makki under the Sanctions Committee. Makki, who has been involved in raising funds, recruiting, and radicalizing the youth to plan attacks in India, especially in Jammu and Kashmir, has already been listed as a terrorist by India and the United States. Makki has been in various leadership roles within the terrorist organisation.

- ▶▶ The UN Security Council's 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee added 68-year-old Makki, the brother-in-law of JUD/LeT Chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, to its list of designated terrorists after China withdrew its hold on a joint proposal by India and the US.

Who Is Abdul Rehman Makki :

- ▶▶ Makki has been a long-time aide to LeT's Amir Hafiz Saeed, and is considered crucial to the organization's operations. In addition to being a member of the Jamaat-UI-Dawa/top Lashkar-e-Taiba's family, Makki has served as a member of the Shura and a member of the JuD's central and proselytising teams.
- ▶▶ His primary strength is in raising funds for the LeT's operations. He was born in Bahawalpur, Punjab Province of Pakistan, and is the deputy chief of LeT and head of the political affairs wing of JUD/LeT. Makki has occupied various leadership roles within Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a US-designated Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO). He has also played a role in raising funds for LeT operations.
- ▶▶ Makki is also said to have close links to Taliban. In 2012, he was close to Taliban's Mullah Omar and al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. In Pakistan, he is well-known for his anti-India speeches.

Joe Biden Nominates Indian-American Astronaut Raji Chari for US Air Force Brigadier General Post

- ▶▶ Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari was nominated by US President Joe Biden for the post of Air Force brigadier general. The nomination has yet to be confirmed by the US Senate. The senate approves all senior civilian and military appointments, according to the US Defense Department. Brigadier General (BG) is a one-star General Officer rank of the United States Air Force.

More About This Development :

- ▶▶ Air Force Col. Raja J Chari for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Chari is currently serving as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center, Texas.

Who is Raja Chari :

- ▶▶ Raja Chari is a US Air Force Colonel, who is 45 years old and earned a master's degree in aeronautics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
- ▶▶ Chari is also graduated from the the US Naval Test Pilot School in Patuxent River, Maryland.



- ▶▶ In his career, Chari has served as the commander of the 461st Flight Test Squadron and the director of the F-35 Integrated Test Force at Edwards Air Force Base in California.
- ▶▶ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and European Space Agency made Chari the Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
- ▶▶ As a pilot, Chari has over 2,500 hours of flight time in his career

Canada to Commercialise World's First Photonic-based Quantum Computer

- ▶▶ Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced a new federal investment to build and commercialise the world's first photonic-based, fault-tolerant quantum computer. According to a news release from the Prime Minister's website, the investment of 40 million Canadian dollars (\$32 million) will enable Xanadu Quantum Technologies Inc., a Toronto-based Canadian quantum computing company, to develop the quantum computer which will have the potential to provide world leading capabilities to help solve complex data problems and could be used in a variety of sectors such as finance, transportation, environmental modelling, and health.



More About This Development :

- ▶▶ Supported through the government's Strategic Innovation Fund, this project of 177.8 million Canadian dollars (\$142 million) is expected to create 530 new highly skilled positions in the high-tech and quantum computing fields, the release said.

Canada's National Quantum Strategy :

- ▶▶ Earlier this month, Canada launched its National Quantum Strategy, which invests an additional 360 million Canadian dollars (\$288 million) to help solidify Canada as a global leader in quantum technologies.
- ▶▶ Founded in 2016, Xanadu, with the mission to build quantum computers that are useful and available to people everywhere, leads the development of PennyLane, an open-source software library for quantum computing and application development

US President Biden Nominated Julie Turner as North Korea Human Rights Envoy

- ▶▶ President Biden nominated Julie Turner, director of the Office of East Asia and the Pacific in the Bureau of Democracy, at the Department of State, as North Korea Human Rights Envoy.
- ▶▶ The White House nominated a special envoy for human rights in North Korea, moving to fill a post that has been empty since 2017 amid debate over how rights issues fit with efforts to counter

Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme. President Joe Biden nominated Julie Turner, a long-time diplomat and current director of the Office of East Asia and the Pacific in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the Department of State. The announcement comes amid a hardening line toward Pyongyang from the United States and South Korea, whose new conservative leader, Yoon Suk Yeol, has also turned his attention to human rights issues.



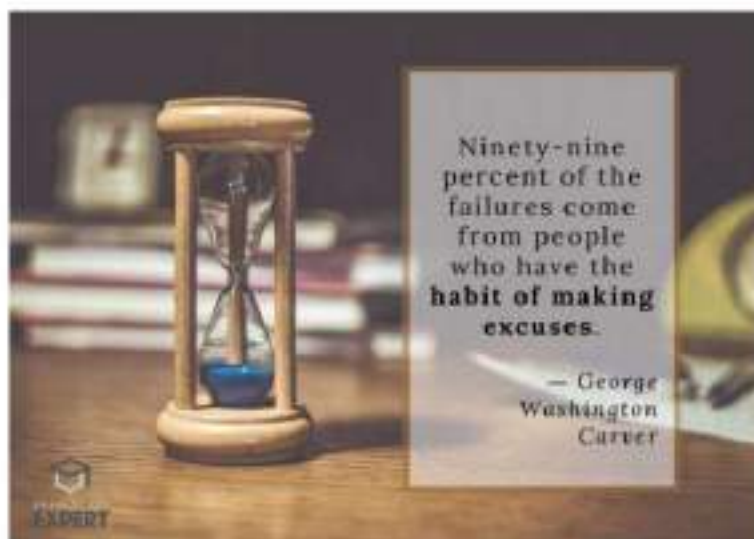
- ▶▶ The special envoy position, and a similar one in South Korea, had become controversial as preceding administrations tried to bring North Korea to the negotiating table. Some activists said human rights had been shunted aside in favour of national security priorities.

Human Rights Push By President Biden :

- ▶▶ Biden vowed repeatedly after taking office in 2021 that human rights would be at the centre of his foreign policy, but the position had remained vacant.
- ▶▶ South Korea's ambassador on North Korean human rights expressed disappointment last year that Biden's administration had yet to appoint an envoy for the issue at the time.

North Korea's Position :

- ▶▶ North Korea has repeatedly rejected accusations of human rights abuses and blames sanctions for a dire humanitarian situation. It accuses Washington and Seoul of using the issue as a political tool to smear Pyongyang's reputation.
- ▶▶ A landmark 2014 U.N. report on North Korean human rights concluded that North Korean security chiefs – and possibly leader Kim Jong Un himself – should face justice for overseeing a state-controlled system of Nazi-style atrocities.
- ▶▶ Since then, North Korea's coronavirus curbs have aggravated human rights violations, United Nations investigators have said, citing extra restrictions on access to information, tighter border security and heightened digital surveillance.



Technology

NASA spots Earth-sized, rocky Planet

- ▶▶ NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) mission has discovered a second Earth-sized, rocky planet within the habitable zone of its star – the range of distances where liquid water could occur on a planet's surface. The planet, named TOI 700 e, is one of only a few systems with multiple, small, habitable-zone planets that we know of. The discovery was made by a team led by Emily Gilbert, a postdoctoral fellow at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California.



Previously Discovered Planets in the TOI 700 System :

- ▶▶ Astronomers have previously discovered three planets in the TOI 700 system, named TOI 700 b, c, and d. Planet d also orbits within the habitable zone, but the scientists needed an additional year of TESS observations to discover TOI 700 e. "That makes the TOI 700 system an exciting prospect for additional follow up. Planet e is about 10 per cent smaller than planet d, so the system also shows how additional TESS observations help us find smaller and smaller worlds," said Gilbert.

About the TOI 700 Star System :

- ▶▶ TOI 700 is a small, cool M dwarf star located around 100 light-years away in the southern constellation Dorado. In 2020, Gilbert and others announced the discovery of the Earth-size, habitable-zone planet d, which is on a 37-day orbit, along with two other worlds. The innermost planet, TOI 700 b, is about 90 per cent Earth's size and orbits the star every 10 days. TOI 700 c is over 2.5 times bigger than Earth and completes an orbit every 16 days.

Habitable Zone and Tidal Locking :

- ▶▶ The newly discovered planet, TOI 700 e, takes 28 days to orbit its star, placing it between planets c and d in the so-called optimistic habitable zone. Scientists define the optimistic habitable zone as the range of distances from a star where liquid surface water could be present at some point in a planet's history. This area extends to either side of the conservative habitable zone, the range where researchers hypothesize liquid water could exist over most of the planet's lifetime. TOI 700 d orbits in this region. TOI 700 e, which may also be tidally locked, is one of the planets that have the possibility of having liquid water on its surface.

BharatPe Gets Nod for ePayment Aggregator Licence

- ▶ Fintech unicorn BharatPe recently announced that it has received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator. The approval was granted to the company's wholly-owned subsidiary, Resilient Innovations Private Ltd. This comes as a relief for BharatPe, which has been facing controversies and high-profile exits since last year, including a court battle with its former co-founder.



Payment Aggregator Framework :

- ▶ Payment aggregators are entities that facilitate e-commerce sites and merchants to accept various payment instruments from customers. They do not require merchants to create a separate payment integration system of their own. The RBI had issued a Payment Aggregator Framework, mandating payment gateways to obtain a license for acquiring merchants and providing them with digital payment acceptance solutions. This in-principle approval will help BharatPe to expand its reach and provide digital payment acceptance solutions to millions of merchants.

Fintech Firms Approval :

- ▶ Several fintech firms like Razorpay, Pine Labs, Open, Cashfree, and IPay have already received approval from the RBI for a Payment Aggregator license in recent months. Over 185 fintech enterprises and startups submitted their proposals for a Payment Aggregator licence.

Conditions for Final Authorization :

- ▶ The final authorization for BharatPe is subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions, which the company will work to fulfill within the given timelines. BharatPe, which was founded in 2018, began by launching the first interoperable UPI code. It serves more than 1 crore merchants across 400+ cities.

BharatPe's Current Situation :

- ▶ The company's board is currently searching for a new CEO to replace Suhail Sameer, who resigned from his position. Nalin Negi, the company's Chief financial officer, has been appointed as the interim CEO. He has previously worked with GE Capital and SBI Card. This in-principal approval for Payment Aggregator license, is a vital step for BharatPe to continue its operations and provide digital payment acceptance solutions.

IISER Ionic organic material to remove pollutants

- ▶ Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) in Pune, India have developed a unique molecular sponge-like material that can effectively clean polluted water. The material, called a macro/microporous ionic organic framework, is able to absorb and remove

a wide range of toxic contaminants, including organic dyes, antibiotics, pesticides, iodides, and oxo-pollutants such as perchlorate. These contaminants can pose a direct threat to human health and the environment, and are commonly found in freshwater sources.



Conventional Sorbent Materials Lack Efficiency :

- ▶ Traditionally, sorbent materials have been used to purify water by trapping pollutants through an ion-exchange process. However, these materials often suffer from poor kinetics and specificity, leading to limited effectiveness in removing contaminants. In an effort to address this issue, the researchers at IISER Pune developed a new material called viologen-unit grafted organic-framework (iVOFm).

iVOFm Utilizes Electrostatics and Macropores to Remove Pollutants :

- ▶ The iVOFm material combines ion-exchange with nanometer-sized macropores and specific binding sites to target and remove pollutants from water. The size and number of the macropores, as well as the strong electrostatic interaction of the material, allow for the swift capture of a variety of toxic pollutants. To create the material, the researchers employed a “make-and-break” strategy, using a charged porous organic polymer (POP) as a sponge-like framework on silica nanoparticles. The silica nanoparticles were then removed, resulting in an ordered, hierarchical, interconnected macro/microporous structure.

iVOFm Shows Fast and Effective Removal of Pollutants :

- ▶ The iVOFm material has an inherent cationic nature and large macropores, allowing for fast diffusion of pollutants. In testing, the material was able to remove over 93% of a wide range of contaminants within 30 seconds. It was particularly effective at removing the sulfadimethoxine antibiotic. In addition to its efficiency, the material can also be reused multiple times to clean contaminated water.

Draft Online Gaming Policy

- ▶ The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has released the Draft Rules for Online Gaming, which have been introduced as an amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. These proposed rules aim to regulate the online gaming industry in India and ensure a safe and fair gaming ecosystem for users.



Self Regulatory Body: Online gaming companies in India will be required to register with a self-regulatory body. Only games that have been cleared by this body will be allowed to legally operate in the country. The self-regulatory body will have

by this body will be allowed to legally operate in the country. The self-regulatory body will have

a board of directors with five members from various fields, including online gaming, public policy, IT, psychology, and medicine. It is possible for there to be more than one self-regulatory body, and all of them will need to inform the government about the games they have registered, along with a report detailing the criteria for registering these games.

- ▶▶ **Due Diligence:** Online gaming firms will also have to undertake additional due diligence measures, including KYC (know your customer) checks for users, transparent withdrawal and refund policies for money, and fair distribution of winnings. For KYC checks, these firms will need to follow norms set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ▶▶ **Random Number Generation Certificate and No Bot Certificate:** Gaming companies will be required to obtain a Random Number Generation Certificate, which is typically used by platforms offering card games to ensure that game outputs are randomly generated and unpredictable. They will also need to obtain a "no bot certificate" from a reputed certifying body, which will confirm that the platform does not use bots or automated processes.
- ▶▶ **Restrictions on Betting:** Online gaming companies will not be allowed to engage in betting on the outcome of games.

India's First Green Hydrogen Blending Project

- ▶▶ NTPC Limited and Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL) have commissioned India's first green hydrogen blending project in the piped natural gas (PNG) network of NTPC Kawas township, Surat. The project, which aims to supply H₂-NG (natural gas) to households in the Kawas township, was made possible through the electrolysis of water using power from a 1 MW floating solar project. The first molecule of green hydrogen from the project was set in motion by P. Ram Prasad, head of the project Kawas, in the presence of other senior executives of NTPC Kawas and GGL.



What is Green Hydrogen ?

- ▶▶ Green hydrogen is produced through the electrolysis of water, using electricity generated from renewable sources such as solar or wind power. This process splits water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen, with the hydrogen being captured and stored for use as a fuel. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere.
- ▶▶ The main advantage of green hydrogen is that it is a clean, renewable fuel that can be used to power a variety of applications, including transportation and electricity generation. It also has the potential to play a significant role in the decarbonization of the energy sector, as it can be used to replace fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Benefits of Green Hydrogen Blending :

- ▶▶ The green hydrogen blending project in Surat is being carried out with the approval of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB). The regulatory body has given permission for

a 5% vol./vol. blending of green hydrogen with PNG to start with, with the blending level to be gradually increased to reach 20%.

- ▶ The addition of green hydrogen to the natural gas network has a number of benefits. First and foremost, it reduces CO₂ emissions while maintaining the same net heating content. This is an important step in the fight against climate change and will help India reduce its hydrocarbon import bill while also bringing in foreign exchange through the export of green hydrogen and green chemicals to the rest of the world.



Sports

India beat England to win inaugural ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup



- ▶▶ India registered a cakewalk win in the Final of the U-19 Women's T20 World Cup. Shafali Verma's India Team has created history as they clinched the first-ever World Cup in Women's cricket.
- ▶▶ India beat England in the first-ever ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup final in Potchefstroom, South Africa. India bowled out England for a paltry 68 and won by 7 wkts. This is the first ICC trophy India has won in women's cricket. The Indian women's cricket team has never won a World Cup at any level.

ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup : Key points

- ▶▶ England captain and stellar all-rounder Grace Scrivens has been named Player of the Tournament after a run of outstanding performances with bat and ball.
- ▶▶ Titas Sadhu of India poses after being named Player of the Match following the ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup 2023 Final match.

FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023

- ▶▶ The 15th edition of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup is set to begin on January 13th in India. The tournament, which is held every four years, will feature 16 teams from around the world competing for the coveted title. India, who is the host nation, will be looking to secure a podium finish after a 48-year hiatus. The tournament has a rich history, with Pakistan being the most successful team with four titles, followed by Netherlands and Australia with three titles each, and Germany with two titles.



Host Nation India :

- ▶▶ India has only won the World Cup once, back in 1975. The home team will be looking to change that this year and secure a podium finish. The Indian team has been preparing for the tournament for the past year and will be looking to make the most of the home advantage. The opening match of the tournament will see Argentina take on South Africa, followed by Australia playing against France and England taking on Wales. In the final match of the opening day, hosts India will take on Spain in their first group-stage match at 7 pm IST.

Live Streaming and Broadcast Details :

- ▶▶ The match between India and Spain will be broadcast live on Star Sports First, Star Sports Select 2HD, and Star Sports Select 2SD. The match will also be streamed live on the Disney+ Hotstar app and website.

Recent World Cup Winners :

- ▶▶ In the last edition of the tournament, Belgium became the sixth team to win the World Cup after defeating Netherlands in the penalty shoot-out. The team will be looking to defend their title this year and secure their second World Cup win. Other teams to look out for in the tournament include Argentina, Australia, Belgium, England, France, and South Africa.
- ▶▶ The FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023 is set to be an exciting tournament, with 16 teams from around the world competing for the coveted title. Host nation India will be looking to secure a podium finish after a 48-year hiatus, while recent winners Belgium will be looking to defend their title. The tournament will be broadcast live on television and streamed live on various platforms, making

Sania Mirza to Retire from Professional Tennis

- ▶▶ India's former doubles World No. 1 champion, Sania Mirza, has announced that she will retire from professional tennis in February at the WTA 1000 event in Dubai. The 36-year-old has had a successful career, winning six Grand Slam doubles titles and becoming the first Indian to win a WTA singles title when she won the Hyderabad event in 2005. Mirza reached a career-high ranking of world number 27 and is regarded as her country's greatest women's tennis player.

Earlier Retirement Plans :

- ▶▶ Mirza had originally planned to retire at the end of the 2022 season, but an elbow injury in August forced her to miss the US Open and led to her deciding to bring forward her retirement plans. "I really don't have the capacity in my mind to emotionally push that much anymore," Mirza said in an interview with the Women's Tennis Association (WTA). "I turned pro in 2003. ...Priorities change, and now my priority is not to push my body to the limit every single day."



Injuries and Final Major Appearance :

- ▶▶ Injuries have plagued Mirza in recent years, including a lingering calf injury. She will make her final appearance at a Grand Slam event in January at the Australian Open, where she will play in the women's doubles alongside Kazakhstan's Anna Danilina. Mirza won the women's doubles title at the Australian Open in 2016.

After Retirement :

- ▶▶ After retiring from professional tennis, Mirza will focus on her academics in Dubai, where she has lived with her husband, former Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik, for over a decade.

Mixed Doubles Success :

- ▶▶ In addition to her success in women's doubles, Mirza has also had a successful career in mixed doubles. She won her first mixed doubles title at the Australian Open in 2009, partnering with Mahesh Bhupathi. The pair earned a second victory at the 2012 French Open. Mirza's third mixed doubles title came at the 2014 US Open, where she partnered with Brazilian player Bruno Soares. In 2015, she partnered with Swiss legend Martina Hingis and won three back-to-back Grand Slam doubles titles.

India's Pranesh M, becomes Youngest Grandmaster at 16

- ▶▶ India has gained its 79th Grandmaster with the title being awarded to 16-year-old Pranesh M from Tamil Nadu. Pranesh achieved the required 2500 ELO rating and won the Rilton Cup in the final round of the competition, which featured 136 players representing 29 national federations. Pranesh finished in first place, while his compatriot and fellow Grandmaster, R Raja Rithvik, finished in eighth place with six points.



Pranesh's Road to Grandmaster Status :

- ▶▶ Pranesh won his first norm at the 18th Delhi GM Open in January 2020 and his second norm at the Sunway Sitges International Chess Festival in Spain in December 2021. In November 2022, he won his third norm at the Asian Continental

Chess Championship in Stockholm, Sweden, finally achieving the required ELO rating to become a Grandmaster.

Reactions to Pranesh's Accomplishment :

- ▶▶ Pranesh received praise on social media for his achievement, including a special mention from India's first Grandmaster and five-time World Champion, Viswanathan Anand, who tweeted, "Congratulations to GM Pranesh on an excellent performance. He won with an incredible score. We have added three grandmasters in quick succession..." Pranesh's coach, RB Ramesh, also praised him, stating, "Pranesh is a very practical player. Hard working, raw talent... his openings are not that good but his middle-game and end-game skills are quite good."

FIDE Circuit Leader :

- ▶▶ With 6.8 circuit points, Pranesh is currently the leader of the FIDE Circuit. Qualification for the 2024 FIDE Candidates is determined by the accumulation of the most points by the end of the year.

Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium

- ▶▶ Recently, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the world's largest dedicated hockey stadium in Rourkela, Odisha. The Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium (BMHS) was built at a cost of over Rs 260 crore in a record 15 months and has the capacity to host over 20,000 spectators. The BMHS will host 20 of the 44 matches of the Men's FIH Hockey World Cup, which is set to begin on January 13. The remaining matches will be held at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.



Infrastructure and Facilities :

- ▶▶ The BMHS is equipped with world-class infrastructure and facilities. It includes a practice pitch, fitness center, hydrotherapy pool, dressing and changing rooms, and a 225-room residential complex with five-star accommodations capable of housing 400 players.
- ▶▶ The complex, which was developed in a record nine months, is expected to offer a holistic environment for the participating World Cup teams.
- ▶▶ Taj Group has been enlisted by Hockey India to offer hospitality services that reflect the culture of Odisha for the Men's FIH Hockey World Cup.
- ▶▶ The Chief Minister stated that the BMHS is the most valued gift of Odisha to the nation and a glory for the state. He added that the stadium will serve as the main center for international hockey and provide opportunities for players from around the world to showcase their talent.

Promotion of Hockey in Odisha :

- ▶▶ The Odisha government, under the leadership of CM Naveen Patnaik, has actively encouraged and funded the promotion of hockey in the state in recent years. In 2018, when the Indian national men's and women's hockey teams were struggling to find a sponsor, Patnaik stepped forward to offer support. As a result, both teams made it to the semifinals of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, with the men's team winning the bronze medal, their first medal in almost four decades.

Women's IPL teams auction : Adani wins Ahmedabad team with top bid of Rs 1,289 cr

▶▶ Women's IPL teams auction: BCCI secretary Jay Shah has confirmed that the total bids received from the winners were worth Rs 4,669.99 crore (USD 572.78 million approx).

▶▶ BCCI secretary Jay Shah has confirmed that the total bids received from the winners were worth Rs 4,669.99 crore (USD 572.78 million approx). The owners of men's IPL teams Mumbai Indians, Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bangalore, as well as the Adani Group and Capri Global, have won bids to own the five women's IPL teams at the auction ahead of the inaugural edition to be played in March this year. The tournament will be known as the Women's Premier League (WPL), and the teams will be based in Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Lucknow respectively.



The winners were identified after opening sealed bids :

The Ahmedabad team was sold for the highest price: INR 1289 crore (USD 158 million approx), followed by

- ▶▶ Mumbai (INR 912.99 crore/USD 111 million approx),
- ▶▶ Bengaluru (INR 901 crore/USD 110 million approx),
- ▶▶ Delhi (INR 810 crore/USD 99.35 million approx) and
- ▶▶ Lucknow (INR 757 crore/USD 92.85 million approx).

Business Model of this WIPL

▶▶ The BCCI recently earned a big sum from the sale of the women's IPL media rights, which were bagged by Viacom 18 for INR 951 crore (USD 116.7 million approx.) for a five-year period between 2023 and 2027. Under the revenue-sharing model, the women's IPL will distribute 80% of the media rights money to the five franchises in the first five years. This is significant – as was seen in the men's IPL – in offsetting a major part of the franchises' operational costs.

BCCI BAGS RS 4,670 CR FROM SALE OF 5 WPL TEAMS

Adani Sportsline, which will own the Ahmedabad side, emerged as the most expensive franchise with a successful bid of **₹1,289 cr**

Three Men's Indian Premier League franchises - **Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Delhi Capitals** - made successful bids

The WPL auction for the inaugural edition will take place next month, with each team having a purse of **₹12 crore**

FRANCHISES WITH OWNERSHIP RIGHTS	Successful bidder	City	Amount
	Adani Sportsline Pvt. Ltd	Ahmedabad	Rs 1,289 crore
	Indiawin Sports Pvt. Ltd	Mumbai	Rs 912.99 crore
	Royal Challengers Bangalore Pvt. Ltd	Bengaluru	Rs 901 crore
	JSW GMR Cricket Pvt. Ltd	Delhi	Rs 810 crore
	Capri Global Holdings Pvt. Ltd	Lucknow	Rs 757 crore



Today is a historic day in cricket as the bidding for teams of inaugural WPL broke the records of the inaugural Men's IPL in 2008!
— Jay Shah, BCCI secretary

International Cricket Council's most followed international sports federation on social media

- ▶▶ The International Cricket Council's (ICC) 92.2 million followers across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and YouTube makes it the most followed international sports federation on social media, according to a study from BCW Sports. The ICC's dominance can be attributed to having a huge fanbase in markets that are highly active on social media. The ICC will hope this study supports its case to be included at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. It has reportedly recommended six-team Twenty20 events for men and women to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).



Key points of the news -

- ▶▶ The ICC increased its following by 16 per cent, putting it a massive 40.8 million followers ahead of second-placed Fifa (51.4 million);
- ▶▶ The International Basketball Federation (Fiba) was ranked third with 15.5 million followers, ahead of fourth-placed Volleyball World (12.5 million) and fifth-placed World Athletics (9.9 million); Volleyball World had the biggest overall growth in social media following for 2022, with a 35 per cent increase across all platforms;
- ▶▶ The International Automobile Federation (FIA) is a new entry in the top ten, placing ninth with 3.7 million followers
- ▶▶ The International Teqball Federation (FITEQ) sees following drop 46 per cent to 3.4 million but is still ranked tenth

MOST FOLLOWED INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS			
	FEDERATION	FOLLOWERS	
1	ICC	International Cricket Council	92'046'874
2	FIFA	FIFA	51'758'132
3	FIBA	FIBA	15'233'701
4	VW	Volleyball World	12'431'837
5	WR	World Rugby	9'123'643
6	WA	World Athletics	9'038'494
7	ITF	International Teqball Federation	3'783'708
8	FIA	International Automobile Federation	3'432'398
9	FITEQ	FITEQ	3'254'180
10	WFF	World Floorball Federation	3'109'672

About the ICC :

- ▶▶ The International Cricket Council is the global governing body of cricket. It was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 by representatives from Australia, England and South Africa. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965, and took up its current name in 1987.

ICC announced five Teams of the Year in ICC Awards 2022

► The International Cricket Council (ICC) has completed announcements of the ICC Teams of the Year, a feature of the ICC Awards 2022 which captures the best combined XIs across the different formats of men's and women's international cricket after an action-packed year of competition. The announcements have seen five lineups revealed; the ICC Men's and Women's T20I Teams of the Year, the ICC Men's and Women's ODI Teams of the Year and the ICC Men's Test Team of the Year.



Teams were identified from selections submitted by the specialist panel of media representatives that make up the ICC Voting Academy.

Here is the list of players

- Usman Khawaja (Aus)
- Kraigg Brathwaite (WI)
- Marnus Labuschagne (Aus)
- Babar Azam (Pak)
- Jonny Bairstow (Eng)
- Ben Stokes (c) (Eng)
- Rishabh Pant (wk) (Ind)
- Pat Cummins (Aus)
- Kagiso Rabada (SA)
- Nathan Lyon (Aus)
- James Anderson (Eng)

Here is the list of players

- Alyssa Healy (wk) (Aus)
- Smriti Mandhana (Ind)
- Laura Wolvaardt (SA)
- Nat Sciver (Eng)
- Beth Mooney (Aus)
- Harmanpreet Kaur (c) (Ind)
- Amelia Kerr (NZ)
- Sophie Ecclestone (Eng)
- Ayabonga Khaka (SA)
- Renuka Singh (Ind)
- Shabnim Ismail (SA)

Laxman Rawat Won National Sports Club of India Snooker Open Crown 2023

- Laxman Rawat of PSPB overcame fellow PSPB challenger Aditya Mehta 9-6 in a best-of-17-frame final. Laxman Rawat of PSPB emerged victorious in the 'Baulkline' NSCI All India Snooker Open. Previously, Laxman Rawat won the runner-up in the last edition of the All India Snooker Open losing to Sourav Kothari in the finals. This win marks Laxman Rawat's first major title after 2 to 3 years.
- Laxman Rawat of the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) won the NSCI Snooker Open 2023 against Aditya Mehta.

- ▶▶ Laxman Rawat received Rs 3 lakh cash prize while Aditya Mehta received Rs 1.5 lakh.
- ▶▶ The summit clash contested between the accomplished Indian Oil Cueists Rawat and Mehta witnessed top-quality positive play as both were aggressive and went for their shots.
- ▶▶ Rawat was more consistent and managed to wrest the initiative and enjoy a 5-3 lead at the break.
- ▶▶ Rawat was a bit scratchy, and Mehta did well to win frames to draw level at 5-all and stay in the fight.
- ▶▶ Rawat gained the moment in the next three frames to surge to an 8-5 lead.
- ▶▶ Aditya Mehta managed to take some time in the 14th frame.
- ▶▶ However, Rawat was destined to win the game in the next frame.



About NSCI Snooker Open Crown :

- ▶▶ The NSCI Snooker Open Crown is a snooker tournament organized by the National Sports Club of India (NSCI). The tournament is open to players from all over India and features a best-of-17-frame final. The tournament is considered a major title in Indian snooker and the champion of the tournament is awarded the NSCI Snooker Crown....

Rohit Sharma shattered MS Dhoni's record of most sixes in ODIs in India

- ▶▶ Indian captain Rohit Sharma has shattered a long-standing record held by MS Dhoni to become India's most prolific six-hitter in the history of ODI cricket. At the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Hyderabad, Rohit achieved this remarkable feat during the first ODI between India and New Zealand. The Indian captain's knock included two maximums, breaking MS Dhoni's long-standing record. Rohit is now India's leading six-getter in the history of ODI cricket, with a total of 125 sixes to his name....



Most sixes in ODI in India :

1. Rohit Sharma -125 Sixes
2. MS. Dhoni -123 Sixes
3. Yuvraj Singh -71 Sixes

- ▶▶ During his innings, Rohit Sharma surpassed former Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist's ODI run tally of 9619. Rohit, who is currently batting, has scored more than 10,000 runs in ODIs, which comprises 29 centuries. Rohit and Dhoni are the only two Indians with more than 100 sixes in the 50-over format, with Yuvraj Singh a distant third in the list.

Virat Kohli Climbs Back Into Top-Five In ODI Rankings

▶▶ Virat Kohli who scored two centuries and scored 283 runs in three matches against Sri Lanka, jumped two places to break into top-five in the latest ICC ODI rankings released.

▶▶ Back at his vintage best, former India skipper Virat Kohli, who scored two centuries and scored 283 runs in three matches against Sri Lanka, jumped two places to break into top-five in the latest ICC ODI rankings released. Kohli now has 750 points and has second-placed Rassie van der Dussen (766) and third-placed Quinton de Kock (759) in his sights,



while Pakistan skipper Babar Azam remains way out in front with 887 points. Kohli has the opportunity to close the gap further in the ongoing three-match ODI series against New Zealand...

Shubman Gill Also Moved Up In Latest ODI Rankings :

▶▶ Kohli's team-mates Shubman Gill, Mohammed Siraj and Kuldeep Yadav have also moved up in rankings. Gill, who hit his maiden ODI century in India to complement his fifty during the series, has moved up 10 spots to 26th. The young Indian opener scored 207 runs at an average of 69.

Md Siraj Bags 3rd Position In ODI Bowlers Ranking :

▶▶ Siraj, who emerged the leading wicket-taker in India's 3-0 series win against Sri Lanka, climbed 15 spots to rise to third on the list for ODI bowlers with his nine scalps. The performance helped Siraj improve to a career-best rating of 685 points and close in on pace-setters Trent Boult (730) and Josh Hazlewood (727).

▶▶ Kuldeep Yadav was also rewarded for his five wickets from just two matches against Sri Lanka, with the left-arm spinner moving up seven spots to 21st in the latest rankings for bowlers.



Important Days & Dates in January 2023

Date	Days
1st January	English New Year, Army Medical Corps Establishment Day, Global family day, World Peace Day
4th January	World Braille Day
6th January	World War Orphans Day
8th January	African National Congress Foundation Day
9th January	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas NRI Day
10th January	World LAugusthter Day, World Hindi Day
11th January	Death anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri
12th January	National Youth Day (Birth Day of Swami Vivekanand)
15th January	Army Day (Field Marshall K.M. Cariappa took over the command of Army on this day in 1949 from the British), Pongal, Makar Sankranti
23rd January	Netaji Subhash Chandra bose birthday
24th January	National Girl Child day of India
25th January	India Tourism Day, National Voters Day
26th January	Republic Day of India and International Customs day
27th January	International Holocaust Day (The largest Nazi deathcamp, Auschwitz-Birkenau was liberated by Soviet troops on Jan27, 1945) International Day of Commemoration
28th January	Birth Anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai
28th January	Data protection day
30th January	Mahatma Gandhi's Martyrdom Day (Martyr's day) World Leprosy Eradication Day

Person In News

Fighting Emergency to championing Mandal, Sharad Yadav passes away

- ▶ Socialist stalwart and former JD(U) chief Sharad Yadav passed away. He was 75. He is survived by his wife, daughter and son. A 7-term Lok Sabha and 4-term Rajya Sabha member, Yadav, a former Union Minister, had not been keeping well for some time....

Early Life :

- ▶ Born on July 1, 1947 at Babai in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh, Yadav was a gold medallist in engineering from the Jabalpur Engineering College. He soon became active in youth politics, greatly influenced by socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia.
- ▶ He participated in a number of mass movements and was detained under MISA during the turbulent 1970s. Much later, he was among the leaders who played a significant role in the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations.



Sharad Yadav

Year	Position held
1974	Elected to 5th Lok Sabha in bye-election from Jabalpur constituency.
1977	Re-elected to 6th Lok Sabha (2nd term) from Jabalpur constituency and President, Yuva Janata Dal
July 1986	Elected to Rajya Sabha
1989-1991	Elected to 9th Lok Sabha (3rd term) from Badaun constituency.
1991-1996	Re-elected to 10th Lok Sabha (4th term) from Madhepura constituency and Member, Public Accounts Committee
1996-1997	Re-elected to 11th Lok Sabha (5th term) from Madhepura constituency and Chairman, Finance Committee
1999-2004	Re-elected to 13th Lok Sabha (6th term) from Madhepura constituency and defeated Lalu Prasad Yadav
2014	Re-elected to Rajya Sabha (3rd term)
June 2016 December 2017	Re-elected to Rajya Sabha (fourth term)

Political Career :-

- ▶▶ An earthy politician with rustic wit and charm, Yadav, who always preferred to wear dhoti and kurta, was one of those pre-Emergency Janata leaders who rose in politics, championing and practising strident anti-Congressism to carve out a space for themselves in the 1980s and the post-Mandal 1990s.
- ▶▶ Bihar was his political home. In fact, he was one of the few who had been instrumental in installing Lalu Prasad as Chief Minister of Bihar in 1990. Having played a role in implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations, Yadav emerged as one of the frontline leaders of the Janata Parivar in the 1990s.

Rehman Rahi Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee, passes away

- ▶▶ Professor Rehman Rahi, renowned poet and Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee took his last breath in the early hours on Monday at his residence.
- ▶▶ Professor Rehman Rahi, renowned poet and Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee took his last breath in the early hours on Monday at his residence in the Nowshera area of Kashmir. At the time of his death, the globally acclaimed poet was 98 years old. He is survived by four children.



About Rehman Rahi :

- ▶▶ Born on May 6, 1925, Rahi wrote several collections of poems and translated the works of some of the celebrated poets in other languages into Kashmiri.
- ▶▶ He had started his career as a clerk in a government department in 1948 after which he continued his education and completed MA in Persian and English in 1950s and 60s. He was an academic at Kashmir University for most part of his life.
- ▶▶ Rahi had received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1961 for his poetry collection Nawroz-i-Saba and got the Padma Shri in 2000.
- ▶▶ He received the highest literary honour of the country — Jnanpith award — in 2007 for his collection 'Siyah Rood Jaeren Manz' (In Black Drizzle).

About Sahitya Akademi Award :-

- ▶▶ The Sahitya Akademi Award is a literary honour in India, which the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, annually confers on writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the 22 languages of the 8th Schedule to the Indian constitution as well as in English and Rajasthani language.
- ▶▶ Established in 1954, the award comprises a plaque and a cash prize of ₹ 1,00,000. The award's purpose is to recognise and promote excellence in Indian writing and also acknowledge new trends. The annual process of selecting awardees runs for the preceding twelve months. The plaque awarded by the Sahitya Akademi was designed by the Indian film-maker Satyajit Ray.

Prior to this, the plaque occasionally was made of marble, but this practice was discontinued because of the excessive weight. During the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965, the plaque was substituted with national savings bonds.

About Padma Shri :-

- ▶▶ Padma Shri , also spelled Padma Shree, is the fourth-highest civilian award of the Republic of India, after the Bharat Ratna, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan. Instituted on 2 January 1954, the award is conferred in recognition of "distinguished contribution in various spheres of activity including the arts, education, industry, literature, science, acting, medicine, social service and public affairs". It is awarded by the Government of India every year on India's Republic Day.

About Jnanpith award :-

- ▶▶ The Jnanpith Award is the oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature". Instituted in 1961, the award is bestowed only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English, with no posthumous conferral....

Former West Bengal Governor Keshri Nath Tripathi passes away

- ▶▶ Senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and former West Bengal governor, Keshari Nath Tripathi passed away at 88 at his home in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj.

Keshari Nath Tripathi :

- ▶▶ Senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and former West Bengal governor, Keshari Nath Tripathi passed away at 88. Born on November 10, 1934 in erstwhile Allahabad, Tripathi was also a senior advocate at the Allahabad High Court. He joined RSS when he was just 12 and later switched to Bharatiya Jana Sangh. He was jailed in Naini Central Jail in 1953 for participating in the 'Kashmir Andolan' and again in 1990 for taking part in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.



Keshri Nath Tripathi

About the Keshari Nath Tripathi :

- ▶▶ A senior advocate of Allahabad high court, Tripathi served as a member of the UP Legislative Assembly six times. He represented the Jhunsi seat between 1977-1980) and Allahabad South seat for five consecutive terms between 1989-2007). He also served as the Speaker of the UP Legislative Assembly thrice between 1991 and 2004.
- ▶▶ On July 14, 2014, Tripathi was appointed as the governor of West Bengal. He had additional charge of Bihar as governor twice and additional charge as governor of Meghalaya and Mizoram as well.
- ▶▶ An active leader who was admired across ranks in the BJP, Tripathi was elected MLA for the first time in 1977 from Jhunsi assembly constituency in Prayagraj district. He went on to win six more Assembly elections and his last victory was in 2002 from Allahabad South seat. He contested the 2007 and 2012 Assembly polls too but faced defeat both the times..

BANK-SSC-RLY-INS-IBPS-RRB Quiz



- Which Union Ministry launched the 'Prajwala Challenge'?
[A] Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
[B] Ministry of Rural Development
[C] Ministry of Home Affairs
[D] Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- Which institution has urged stock exchanges to set up Investor Risk Reduction Access (IRRA) platform?
[A] RBI [B] SEBI [C] NITI Aayog [D] Supreme Court
- What is the target for agricultural and processed food products from India for 2022-23?
[A] USD 3.56 billion [B] USD 13.56 billion
[C] USD 23.56 billion [D] USD 43.56 billion
- Which Department under the 'Ministry of Finance' notifies changes in rates on small savings schemes?
[A] Department of Expenditure [B] Department of Economic Affairs
[C] Department of Revenue [D] Department of Financial Services
- New Jalpaiguri, which was in the news related to Vande Bharat Express, is located in which state?
[A] Assam [B] West Bengal
[C] Andhra Pradesh [D] Gujarat
- What is the target of number of Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres under the Ayushman Bharat?
[A] 1 Lakh [B] 1.5 Lakh [C] 2.5 Lakh [D] 5 Lakh
- Which institution released the 'Statistical Tables relating to Banks in India'?
[A] Finance Ministry [B] Reserve Bank of India
[C] NITI Aayog [D] World Bank
- Zuari Bridge, the second largest cable-stayed bridge in India, is located in which state/UT?
[A] Arunachal Pradesh [B] Punjab
[C] Goa [D] Jammu and Kashmir
- Which state organises the world's largest open-air theatre 'Dhanu Yatra' festival?
[A] Gujarat [B] Odisha [C] West Bengal [D] Kerala

1-B 2-B 3-C 4-B 5-B 6-B 7-B 8-C 9-B

10. Which country has taken over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first six months of 2023?
[A] Finland [B] Sweden [C] Italy [D] Germany
11. Which institution launched its Medium-term Strategy Framework named 'Utkarsh 2.0'?
[A] ISRO [B] RBI [C] DRDO [D] NITI Aayog
12. 'Future Engineer Program' is an initiative of which multi-national company?
[A] Meta [B] Amazon [C] Samsung [D] IBM
13. Which institution developed the Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) app?
[A] RBI [B] NPCI [C] SEBI [D] NASSCOM
14. Which sports person won both the World Rapid and World Blitz chess titles?
[A] R Praggnananda [B] Magnus Carlsen
[C] Koneru Humpy [D] Harika Dronavalli
15. India recently signed a 'Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement' in which country?
[A] Sri Lanka [B] Austria [C] UAE [D] Bangladesh
16. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva recently took charge as the President of which country?
[A] Brazil [B] France [C] Italy [D] Argentina
17. Which country recently switched to euro from its kuna currency and became the 20th member of the Eurozone?
[A] Slovenia [B] Croatia [C] Serbia [D] Romania
18. As per the CMIE's latest report, which state had recorded the highest unemployment rate among states in December 2022?
[A] New Delhi [B] Uttar Pradesh
[C] Haryana [D] Andhra Pradesh
19. Which country inaugurated the Pokhara Regional International Airport (PRIA), with the support of China?
[A] Sri Lanka [B] Nepal [C] Bangladesh [D] Bhutan
20. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, who is a recipient of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award, is the President of which country?
[A] Israel [B] Guyana [C] Ukraine [D] UAE
21. Who is the first woman officer to be operationally deployed at Kumar Post, Siachen?
[A] Captain Shiva Chouhan [B] Captain Bhawana Kanth
[C] Captain Avani Chaturvedi [D] Captain Mohana Singh Jitarwal
22. Which High Court has directed the city government to ensure free food and medical treatment to HIV-positive persons?
[A] Delhi High Court [B] Bombay High Court
[C] Chennai High Court [D] Allahabad High Court

10-B 11-B 12-B 13-B 14-B 15-B 16-A 17-B 18-C 19-B
20-B 21-A 22-A

23. Where is the 'Institute of Mathematical Sciences' located?
[A] Mumbai [B] Mysuru [C] Chennai [D] Panaji
24. Which state hosted the 'National Scout and Guide Jamboree'?
[A] Karnataka [B] Rajasthan [C] Tamil Nadu [D] Gujarat
25. 'Bailey Suspension Bridge' has been inaugurated in which state/UT?
[A] Jammu and Kashmir [B] Arunachal Pradesh
[C] Assam [D] Karnataka
26. India's first online gaming Centre of Excellence is to be set up in which state/UT?
[A] Sikkim [B] Karnataka [C] Meghalaya [D] Gujarat
27. Which state government has implemented a policy for blindness control?
[A] Punjab [B] New Delhi [C] Rajasthan [D] Kerala
28. Hiruvalluvar is a famous poet of which language?
[A] Tamil [B] Telugu [C] Urdu [D] Malayalam
29. Which Union Ministry runs the MAARG (Mentorship, Advisory, Assistance, Resilience, and Growth) Platform?
[A] Ministry of Commerce and Industry
[B] Ministry of Science and Technology
[C] Ministry of Education
[D] Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
30. Shang Juncheng, who was seen in the news recently, plays which sports?
[A] Badminton [B] Squash
[C] Tennis [D] Chess
31. Which start-up built the 'AzaadiSAT' satellite, which is made by 750 school girls?
[A] Dhruv Aerospace [B] Pixxel
[C] Space Kidz India [D] Astra
32. Which state houses the world's first Palm-leaf Manuscript Museum?
[A] Karnataka [B] Kerala
[C] Tamil Nadu [D] Odisha
33. Which city is the host of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention 2023?
[A] Varanasi [B] Indore [C] Pune [D] Chennai
34. Which Union Ministry is organising the 'Startup India Innovation Week'?
[A] Ministry of MSME [B] Ministry of Commerce and Industry
[C] Ministry of Home Affairs [D] Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
35. The Aspirational Block Programme (ABP), which was launched recently, covers how many districts initially?
[A] 100 [B] 200 [C] 500 [D] 1000

23-C 24-B 25-A 26-C 27-C 28-A 29-A 30-C 31-C 32-B
33-B 34-B 35-C

36. What is the estimated GDP Growth of India in 2022-23, as per the NSO first advance estimates?
[A] 6 per cent [B] 7 per cent
[C] 8 per cent [D] 8.5 per cent
37. Which institution awards 'Eat Right Station' certification to Railway stations?
[A] Railway Ministry [B] FSSAI
[C] FCI [D] NITI Aayog
38. Kilauea Volcano, which was seen in the news, is located in which country?
[A] Indonesia [B] Philippines
[C] Hawaii (USA) [D] Japan
39. Which state launched a facility for entrepreneurs to submit complaints using WhatsApp?
[A] Telangana [B] Kerala
[C] Odisha [D] West Bengal
40. What is the purpose of the 'Aamantran' Portal, which was recently launched?
[A] Grievance Redressal [B] Invitation Management
[C] Issuance of Electoral Bonds [D] Donation to Places of Worship
41. Which Indian public sector bank received RBI approval to hold special rupee vostro accounts of three banks from Sri Lanka?
[A] State Bank of India [B] Canara Bank
[C] Indian Bank [D] Punjab National Bank
42. Which Indian state launched the caste-based census?
[A] Bihar [B] Assam [C] West Bengal [D] Jharkhand
43. Which state won the UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023 for Jaga Mission?
[A] Kolkata [B] Tamil Nadu [C] Odisha [D] Rajasthan
44. Which institution launched the 'Portal for mapping of Industrial Units and Laboratories'
[A] DPIIT [B] BIS [C] FICCI [D] NITI Aayog
45. Which organisation publishes the Food Price Index (FFPI)?
[A] UNICEF [B] FAO [C] IMF [D] World Bank
46. 'Kumarakom and Beypore', which were selected under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme, are located in which state?
[A] Tamil Nadu [B] Kerala [C] Rajasthan [D] Haryana
47. 'Centralised Receipt and Processing Center (CRPC)' and 'Integrated Ombudsman Scheme' are related to which institution?
[A] NITI Aayog [B] Reserve Bank of India
[C] DPIIT [D] ISRO
48. What is the theme of the "National Science Day 20233 ?
[A] Sustainable Science [B] Atmanirbhar India and Science
[C] Global Science for Global Wellbeing [D] Behavioural Science

36-B 37-B 38-C 39-B 40-B 41-C 42-A 43-C 44-B 45-B
46-B 47-B 48-C

49. Bhitarkanika National Park, which was seen in the news, is located in which state/UT?
[A] West Bengal [B] Odisha
[C] Jharkhand [D] Maharashtra
50. Which institution launched a new system to measure and grade hospital performance under AB PM-JAY?
[A] NITI Aayog [B] NHA
[C] NSO [D] IMA
51. What is the name of the short-range ballistic missile which was recently test-launched by India?
[A] Prithvi II [B] Agni V
[C] Vikas II [D] Bhim I
52. Which song from an Indian film won Golden Globe award 2023 for Best Original Song?
[A] Mareng Toh Wahin Jaakar [B] Naatu Naatu
[C] Pasoori [D] Kalakatha
53. What is the name of the international agreement signed in 1987 to ban Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)?
[A] Paris Agreement [B] Montreal Protocol
[C] Chicago Agreement [D] Kyoto Protocol
54. As per the World Bank's Global Economic Prospects Report, what is the expected economic growth of India in 2023-24?
[A] 5.5 % [B] 6.6 % [C] 7.0 % [D] 7.7 %
55. 'Year of Enterprises' Project is a flagship scheme of which Indian state?
[A] Haryana [B] Odisha [C] West Bengal [D] Kerala
56. What is the name of the world's longest river cruise, which was flagged off by the Prime Minister?
[A] MV Ganga Vilas [B] MV Bharat Vilas
[C] MV Gangayaan [D] MV Uttarayaan
57. India's first 3x platform wind turbine generators (WTG) has been installed in which state?
[A] Rajasthan [B] Karnataka [C] Telangana [D] Odisha
58. After Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Punjab, which state recently restored the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for government employees?
[A] New Delhi [B] Telangana
[C] Kerala [D] Himachal Pradesh
59. The Supreme Court recently struck down a provision of Income Tax which denied exemption to women of which state?
[A] Sikkim [B] Arunachal Pradesh
[C] Assam [D] Jammu and Kashmir
60. Buxwaha Mine, which was seen in the news, is located in which state?
[A] Chhattisgarh [B] Madhya Pradesh
[C] Assam [D] Andhra Pradesh

49-B 50-B 51-A 52-B 53-B 54-B 55-D 56-A 57-B 58-D
59-A 60-B

61. Vidisha, the first district for deployment of innovative 5G use cases, is located in which state?
[A] Odisha [B] Madhya Pradesh
[C] West Bengal [D] Assam
62. Which institution released the 'Rural Health Statistics report'?
[A] NITI Aayog [B] Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
[C] AIIMS [D] IMA
63. Which public sector bank partnered with 'Garuda Aerospace' under the Kisan Pushpak Scheme?
[A] Canara Bank [B] State Bank of India
[C] Union Bank of India [D] Punjab National Bank
64. Which state/UT suggested the Centre to grant "migrated minority" status?
[A] Punjab [B] Delhi
[C] Jammu and Kashmir [D] Assam
65. 'Pineapple Express' phenomenon, which was seen in the news, is related to which field?
[A] Agriculture [B] Transport [C] Meteorology [D] Tourism
66. Which institution recently released the 'Survey on dietary supplements'?
[A] FCI [B] FSSAI [C] NITI Aayog [D] Union Health Ministry
67. Which organisation released the 'Global Risks Report 2023'?
[A] World Bank [B] World Economic Forum
[C] International Monetary Fund [D] Asian Development Bank
68. Who is the author of the 'Revolutionaries- The Other Story of How India Won Its Freedom' Book?
[A] Amit Shah [B] Sanjeev Sanyal
[C] Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit [D] Manoj Soni
69. Which is the first European country to have a Reciprocal Access Agreement with Japan?
[A] Germany [B] UK [C] Italy [D] France
70. Which state launched the 'shared school bus system' and agriculture response vehicle scheme?
[A] Assam [B] Meghalaya [C] West Bengal [D] Bihar
71. Which armed force started the 'Ops Alert' exercise to enhance security?
[A] Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force [B] Border Security Force
[C] Central Railway Protection Force [D] Central Industrial Security Force
72. Chris Hipkins has sworn in as the Prime Minister of which country?
[A] France [B] Australia [C] New Zealand [D] Brazil
73. Which Union Ministry released 'Endorsements Know-hows!' guide for celebrities, influencers and virtual influencers on social media?
[A] Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
[B] Ministry of Home Affairs
[C] Ministry of External Affairs
[D] Ministry of Defence

61-B 62-B 63-C 64-B 65-C 66-B 67-B 68-B 69-B 70-B
71-B 72-C 73-A

74. What is the name of the Indigenous mobile operating system developed by IIT Madras?
[A] IndOS [B] BharOS [C] MadrasOS [D] TamilOS
75. What is the theme of the 'India International Science Festival'?
[A] Marching towards Amrit Kaal with Science, Technology, and Innovation
[B] Innovation for Sustainable Development
[C] Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
[D] Bharat Vigyan
76. Indian Army launched a joint Training exercise 'Cyclone - I' with which country?
[A] USA [B] Egypt [C] France [D] Sri Lanka
77. Bhopal declaration, which was seen in the news, was launched after which meeting?
[A] ASEAN [B] SAARC [C] G-20 [D] G-7
78. NASA has awarded 425 million dollars to which Company for the agency's sustainable flight demonstrator project?
[A] Boeing [B] AirBus [C] Tesla [D] Apple
79. India is set to start supplying diesel to which country through a Friendship pipeline?
[A] Japan [B] Nepal [C] Sri Lanka [D] Bangladesh
80. Which is the first country to back the debt restructure programme of Sri Lanka?
[A] India [B] Pakistan [C] China [D] Australia
81. Which institution releases the 'Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)'?
[A] NITI Aayog [B] Pratham
[C] Oxfam International [D] UNICEF
82. India has been urging which country to implement '13th Amendment' to its Constitution?
[A] USA [B] UK [C] Sri Lanka [D] Bangladesh
83. Which financial services company announced the new phase of its Girls4Tech programme in India?
[A] Mastercard [B] Visa [C] Maestro [D] Paypal
84. Which country's population has declined for the first time in 61 years with a fall of roughly 850,000?
[A] India [B] China [C] Indonesia [D] Pakistan
85. What is the wholesale price inflation in December 2022 in India?
[A] 4.95% [B] 5.15% [C] 6.25% [D] 7.15%
86. India's first online gaming Centre of Excellence is to be set up in which state/UT?
[A] Sikkim [B] Karnataka [C] Meghalaya [D] Gujarat
87. Which state government has implemented a policy for blindness control?
[A] Punjab [B] New Delhi [C] Rajasthan [D] Kerala
88. Thiruvalluvar is a famous poet of which language?
[A] Tamil [B] Telugu [C] Urdu [D] Malayalam

74-B 75-A 76-B 77-C 78-A 79-D 80-A 81-B 82-C 83-A
84-B 85-A 86-C 87-C 88-A

89. Which Union Ministry runs the MAARG (Mentorship, Advisory, Assistance, Resilience, and Growth) Platform?
[A] Ministry of Commerce and Industry [B] Ministry of Science and Technology
[C] Ministry of Education [D] Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
90. Shang Juncheng, who was seen in the news recently, plays which sports?
[A] Badminton [B] Squash [C] Tennis [D] Chess
91. Which city is the host of the 'G-20 Working Group on Environment and Climate Sustainability' meeting?
[A] Chennai [B] Bengaluru [C] Kochi [D] Varanasi
92. Narayanpur left bank canal with modern irrigation system has been inaugurated in which state?
[A] Kerala [B] Tamil Nadu [C] Karnataka [D] Odisha
93. 'Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity' is to be set up in which state/UT?
[A] Assam [B] New Delhi [C] Uttarakhand [D] Telangana
94. Which country is the host of the 'FIDE World Championship 2023'?
[A] Kazakhstan [B] Italy [C] Israel [D] India
95. Prime Minister Modi to name 21 islands of Andaman & Nicobar after which awardees?
[A] Bharat Ratna [B] Padma Vibhushan
[C] Padma Bhushan [D] Param Vir Chakra
96. Which institution released the 'World Economic Situation and Prospects 2023' report?
[A] World Bank [B] United Nations
[C] World Economic Forum [D] Asian Development Bank
97. India signed an MoU with which country to exchange programmes of different genres in radio and TV platforms?
[A] Bangladesh [B] Egypt
[C] UAE [D] Singapore
98. Dilip Mahalanabis, who was awarded the Padma Vibhushan award in 2023, was associated with which profession?
[A] Statistician [B] Politician
[C] Doctor [D] Businessperson
99. Odesa Port City, which was seen in the news, is located in which country?
[A] Russia [B] Ukraine [C] Australia [D] UAE
100. After China, which is the second country in the world to start the 'trade-plus-one' (T+1) settlement cycle?
[A] USA [B] Russia [C] India [D] France

89-A 90-C 91-B 92-C 93-B 94-A 95-D 96-B 97-B 98-C
99-B 100-C

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