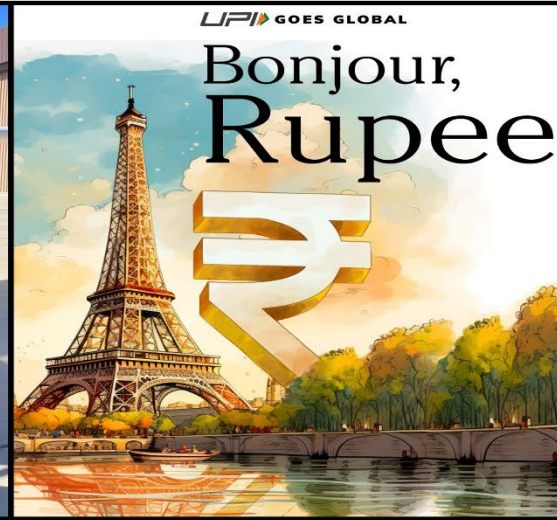




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NATIONAL NEWS

India Plays a Key Role in Shaping ITU 6G Vision Framework

- ★ International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has approved the 6G Vision Framework.
- ★ India, through the Department of Telecommunications, the Ministry of Communications played a key role in framing the Framework.
- ★ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had released India's 6G Vision "Bharat 6G Vision" document on March 23, 2023 which envisages India to be a front-line contributor in design, development and deployment of 6G technology by 2030.
- ★ Bharat 6G Vision is based on principles of Affordability, Sustainability and Ubiquity.
- ★ It ensures that India takes its rightful place in the world as a leading supplier of advanced telecom technologies and solutions that are affordable and contribute to the global good.
- ★ The 6th Generation or 6G Technology has been named 'IMT 2030' by ITU, the specialised agency for Information and Communication Technologies of United Nations.

Uttar Pradesh Launched 'Operation Conviction'

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Police Department launched 'Operation Conviction' to combat criminals and mafias in
- ★ The initiative will expedite the prosecution of cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, as well as those involving cow slaughter, religious conversion, rape.
- ★ Operation Conviction will ensure the immediate arrest of criminals, the collection of strong evidence against them, quality investigation, and effective representation of cases in courts so that they are punished in the shortest amount of time.
- ★ Each commissionerate/district will be required to identify 20 cases in each category under 'Operation Conviction' in addition to cases registered under the POCSO Act.
- ★ To ensure that victims receive prompt justice, charges will be framed within 3 days of the charge sheet being filed, and the trial will be completed within 30 days.
- ★ A monitoring cell will be established in the office of each Police Commissioner or District Police Chief to monitor the daily progress of the cases.
- ★ This cell will be led by a Gazetted Officer who will ensure the speedy trial of cases identified under 'Operation Conviction'.

National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission in Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh.
- ★ The mission aims to eliminate sickle cell anaemia by 2047.
- ★ This mission will be implemented in 278 districts of 17 states of India.
 - The targeted states include Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Bihar and Uttarakhand.
- ★ The mission focuses on creating awareness and universal testing among about seven crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in the affected tribal areas.
- ★ Collaborative efforts of Central Ministries and State Governments will be employed for consultation and implementation.

India's Largest Natural Arch in Odisha

- ★ The Geological Survey of India (GSI) discovered a 'Natural Arch' in Odisha's Sundergarh Forest Division.
- ★ This natural arch originated approximately 184 million years ago during the Lower to Middle Jurassic period.
- ★ The GSI has proposed a Geo Heritage tag for the arch, which aims to become the largest natural arch in India with this recognition.
- ★ This oval shaped arch has a base length of 30 meters and a height of 12 metres.
- ★ The maximum height and width of the natural arch are 7 meters and 15 meters respectively.
- ★ Geo-Heritage Sites (GHS) have rare and exceptional geological, geomorphological, mineralogical, petrological and paleontological features.

Kharchi Puja Commenced in Tripura

- ★ In a vibrant display of cultural heritage and religious fervour, the Historical 'Kharchi Puja' commenced in Tripura.
- ★ It is one of the main festivals of Tripura.
- ★ The auspicious event marked the revival of ancient customs and traditions, drawing enthusiastic devotees from far and wide.
- ★ It lasts for 7 days, and it takes place at old Agartala in the Fourteen Gods temple known as the 'Chaturdasha Devata' temple premises.
- ★ Kharchi Puja, also called the festival of 14 Gods, is observed on the 8th day of the new moon in July or August every year.
- ★ This year, the auspicious festival will begin on June 26 and will continue till July 2, 2023.
- ★ The meaning of Kharchi can be understood by splitting the word into two Tripuri words "Khar" or Kharta meaning sin and "Chi" or si meaning cleaning.

NADA India Signs MoU with SARADO

- ★ National Anti-Doping Agency, India (NADA India) signed a MoU with South Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organization (SARADO) on 03 July 2023 in New Delhi.
- ★ Ritu Sain, Director General and CEO, NADA India and Mohammad Mahid Sharif, Director General, SARADO signed the MoU on behalf of their organisations.
 - It includes the anti-doping organisations of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
 - It aims to enhance regional cooperation in the field of anti-doping in sports.
 - It focuses on a variety of areas including anti-doping education and prevention programs.
 - It will train and skill sample collection personnel and anti-doping Education Officers.
 - It will organise courses, seminars, workshops, research and exchange tours on anti-doping education.
- ★ The MoU supports anti-doping education activities and the production of literature.

4th Edition of 'Jagananna Amma Vodi' Scheme

- ★ YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched the 'Jagananna Amma Vodi' scheme to promote education and empower mothers.
- ★ Jagananna Amma Vodi was inaugurated on 9 January 2020 by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. was launched by Jagan Mohan Reddy.
- ★ The financial assistance provided under the 'Jagananna Amma Vodi' scheme is ₹6,392 crore.
- ★ The primary objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to around 42 lakh mothers.
- ★ The financial assistance provided to mothers is in the form of an annual gift of ₹15,000.
- ★ Mothers receive this gift for sending their children to school and thus encouraging education.

The DoT has Established the Bharat 6G Alliance

- ★ Telecom sector is a continuously evolving sector with high technological obsolescence.
- ★ It has seen the transformation from Wire-line to Mobile services, which has become the lifeline of the people.
- ★ Mobile services have also seen the transformation from 2G to 3G to 4G to 5G and now 6G is in the horizon.
- ★ Formation of the Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA), a collaborative platform consisting of public and private companies, academia, research institutions, and Standards development organizations.
- ★ The website for Bharat6G Alliance was also launched, the link for the same is <https://bharat6galliance.com>
- ★ B6GA will forge coalitions and synergies with other 6G Global Alliances, fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange
- ★ In addition, with a grant of 240.51 crores under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF), two agreements were signed for projects.

DGCA Signs MoU with European Union Aviation Safety Agency

- ★ The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) India and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) have signed an MoU for collaboration in Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and Innovative Air Mobility.
- ★ The MoU aims to enhance cooperation between DGCA and EASA in the field of unmanned aircraft systems and innovative air mobility.
- ★ The collaboration between DGCA and EASA is expected to result in harmonized standards for UAS and contribute to the accelerated growth of the Indian unmanned aviation sector.

India's First 'Police Drone Unit' Launched in Chennai

- ★ The Greater Chennai City Police (GCP) has introduced the groundbreaking 'Police Drone Unit' to bolster aerial surveillance capabilities and expedite the identification of criminal activities.
- ★ The initiative, which involves an investment of approximately ₹3.6 crore, was inaugurated by the outgoing Tamil Nadu Director General of Police (DGP) C Sylendra Babu.
- ★ It aims to enhance aerial surveillance over vast areas for improved law enforcement.
- ★ It also enables quick detection and response to criminal activities.
- ★ It provides an additional tool to monitor and secure large areas efficiently.

Scheme for Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in States

- ★ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has launched a "Scheme for Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the States" from the earmarked allocation of the Preparedness and Capacity Building Funding Window under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)
- ★ It is to strengthen fire services in the States with a total outlay of ₹5,000 crores.
- ★ An amount of ₹500 crores, out of the total outlay, has been kept for incentivizing the States based on their legal and infrastructure-based reforms.
- ★ Under the able guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, several key initiatives are being taken to ensure 'zero death' and minimum loss of property during disasters by strengthening the disaster risk reduction system in India to make it disaster resilient.
- ★ The Objective of the scheme is to expand and modernize Fire Services in the States with a view that activities for strengthening fire services at the State-level through preparedness and the capacity-building component of the NDRF will be ensured.

The Union Cabinet Approved the DPDP Bill

- ★ The Union Cabinet cleared the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Bill.
- ★ The clearance paves the way for the Bill to be introduced in Parliament in the upcoming Monsoon Session, scheduled to begin on July 20.
- ★ Along with the data protection law, the Union government may also table the Indian Telecommunications Bill, a draft of which was circulated in a public consultation last year.
- ★ The telecom Bill would overhaul the Telegraph Act, which is the legal framework for telecom firms and internet service providers.

- ★ The Bill essentially allows laypersons to complain to the Data Protection Board of India, consisting of technical experts constituted by the government, if they have reason to believe that their personal data has been used without their consent – for example, cell phone numbers or Aadhaar details.
- ★ Bill has a clause for offering voluntary undertaking in case an entity wants to admit that a breach has occurred and pay a penalty as a mitigation measure to avoid court litigation.
- ★ Penalty of up to ₹250 crores could be levied for each instance of the breach with an upward revision of ₹500 crores.
- ★ Fines for individual offences would begin from ₹10,000.

Centre to Develop Carbon Markets for Green Sectors

- ★ India plans to develop carbon markets for renewables, green hydrogen, bio-fuels and clean mobility to facilitate carbon trading between green and polluting sectors.
- ★ The Niti Aayog in India is creating a framework to set up carbon markets for renewable energy, green hydrogen, biofuels, and clean transportation.
- ★ According to the government, the expansion of carbon markets will boost economic activity and open up job opportunities.
- ★ Such markets may initially be voluntary, meaning that carbon credits will be issued, purchased, and sold voluntarily.
- ★ However, over time, the government could set up a framework of regulations to create compliance markets, which compel industries to trade carbon credits and thus produce income.
- ★ According to a report presented at the COP27 climate conference held in Egypt last year, India had the highest growth rate in carbon emissions among the major global warming contributors.
- ★ China and the European Union (EU) are expected to see reductions in emissions of 0.9% and 0.8%, respectively, while India's emissions are predicted to rise by 6.0% and the US's by 1.5%.
- ★ The United Nations Development Programme defines carbon markets as trading platforms where carbon credits are offered for sale and purchase.
- ★ Companies or individuals can use carbon markets to compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing carbon credits from entities that remove greenhouse gas emissions.

Gujarat Government Doubles Insurance Cover

- ★ The Gujarat government has doubled the insurance cover under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMAY) from 11 July 2023.
- ★ Now the beneficiaries of PMAY will be able to get an insurance cover of ₹10 lakh instead of ₹5 lakh.
- ★ According to state Health Minister Rushikesh Patel, the decision will benefit around 1.78 crore Ayushman Bharat card holders in the state.
- ★ Beneficiaries under PMAY will get free medical treatment in two thousand government hospitals and 795 private hospitals in the state.
- ★ Gujarat has received over 39 lakh claims under PMAY.

- ★ Gujarat ranks fifth in the country in terms of number of claims and second in terms of amount of claims settled so far under PMAY.

India's 1st Tele-MANAS Chat-Bot

- ★ Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched India's first Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS) Chatbot for the Union territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- ★ The initiative will ensure round-the-clock services of Health Counsellors, Clinical Psychologists and Consultants.
- ★ The service was launched after Sinha inaugurated 'J-K Health Conclave' on mental health and non-communicable diseases at Srinagar, J&K.
- ★ Tele-MANAS is a two-tier system.
- ★ Tier 1 comprises State Tele MANAS cells, which includes trained counsellors and mental health specialists.
- ★ Tier 2 comprises specialists at District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)/Medical College resources for physical consultation and/or eSanjeevani for audio visual consultation.
- ★ The MoU inked between the J-K Health and Medical Education Department and the Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre will provide significant technical support to improve cancer care services in the UT.
- ★ It helps to establish preventive oncology service, day care centres and palliative care service at district hospitals.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Launched 'Ama Pokhari'

- ★ Odisha Chief Minister (CM) Shri Naveen Patnaik launched 'Ama Pokhari' project to rejuvenate all water bodies in the urban areas of Odisha.
- ★ The project was inaugurated at Lokseva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar and is expected to effectively address water scarcity by rejuvenating water bodies in a natural and sustainable manner.
- ★ Under the Ama Pokhari scheme, 2,000 large water bodies in 115 urban areas will be rejuvenated and its periphery will be renovated for healthy space for the public.
- ★ ₹120 crore has been allocated to the implementation of the initiative.
- ★ The project will be implemented using natural and organic methodology to improve the climate of surrounding areas.
- ★ The renovation and maintenance of these water bodies will be done in collaboration with members of Mission Shakti.
- ★ The water bodies will also be developed for the recreation of citizens.
- ★ It will also help in strengthening the ecological fabric of cities.

National Law University Delhi-'Eklavya': A Research Affiliate Program

- ★ National Law University (NLU), Delhi launched a research affiliate program named 'Eklavya' to promote collaboration and inclusivity in legal scholarship.

- ★ The 'Eklavya' program is open to individuals who do not have a traditional law degree, who have at least three years of experience working on law-related issues.
- ★ Full-time or part-time employees require approval from their current organization or institution.
- ★ Self-employed individuals, freelancers, or independent consultants must provide a declaration stating their business status.

WCD Ministry- Extended the Deadline for PM Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- ★ The Ministry of Women and Child Development has extended the last date of submission for the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar till 31 August 2023.
- ★ This national-level award is given in the fields of Bravery, Sports, Social Service, Science and Technology, Environment, Arts and Culture, and Innovation.
- ★ The Ministry said that any Indian child, whose age is not exceeding 18 years as of the last date of receipt of the application, may apply for the award.
- ★ Any other person may also nominate a deserving child for the award.
- ★ The Ministry added that the applications for the award could be submitted on the official portal www.awards.gov.in
- ★ The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar, formerly called the National Child Award for Exceptional Achievement, is India's highest civilian honour for children, awarded annually by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Mega-Conference Titled 'Strengthening PACS Through FPOs'

- ★ Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will inaugurate a day-long mega conclave "Strengthening PACS through FPOs" in New Delhi.
- ★ The conclave is aimed at discussing ways to strengthen Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) through Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).
- ★ The conclave will witness the participation of experts from the sector as well as members from the FPOs across the country.
- ★ The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) is organizing the mega conclave in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Cooperation.
- ★ Being collective entities formed by farmers, enabling them to pool resources and enhance their bargaining power, the FPOs are one of the major vehicles for agricultural transformation.
- ★ Under the FPOs Scheme, financial assistance of ₹33 lakh is provided to each FPO. Further, financial assistance of ₹25 lacks per FPO is given to the Cluster-Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) to promote and handhold the FPOs.

The Third Trade and Investment Working Group Meeting

- ★ As part of India's G20 presidency, the third Trade and Investment Working Group Meeting began in Kevadia, Gujarat.
- ★ More than 75 international delegates from various G20 countries are taking part in the three-day meeting at Kevadiya.

- ★ The meeting began with delegates participating in a seminar on 'Trade Infrastructure'.
- ★ On the first day of the Trade and Investment working group meeting, a special exhibition showcasing various successful initiatives of the Indian government such as the Gatishskti Master plan, and unified logistics interface platform was inaugurated at Kevadiya.
- ★ Various issues including the need of enhancing logistics and infrastructure, and empowering MSMEs were discussed in the seminar.

India to Host ASEAN Countries Conference

- ★ The Ministry of AYUSH in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Mission to ASEAN and ASEAN Secretariat, is organizing a Conference on Traditional Medicines for ASEAN Countries on 20 July 2023.
- ★ The aim of the conference is to strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing between India and ASEAN countries in the field of traditional medicines.
- ★ The 'Act East Policy' launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a new impetus to the strategic partnership between India and ASEAN.
- ★ The ASEAN conference will serve as a platform for sharing research results and experiences in the field of traditional medicine.
- ★ It is to facilitate exchange of best practices and recent developments in the regulatory framework for the promotion of traditional medicine in ASEAN member countries.
- ★ It will strengthen international cooperation in AYUSH through collaboration and establishment of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ASEAN countries and other countries.

World's Largest International Temple Convention and Expo

- ★ The world's largest International Temple Convention and Expo (ITCX) will be organized from 22 July to 24 July 2023 at the Rudraksh Convention Center in Varanasi.
- ★ The conference will focus on nurturing and empowering the governance, management and operations of the world and temple ecosystem.
- ★ More than 450 temple functionaries from 25 countries are expected to participate in the conference.
- ★ Along with Hindus, office bearers of Math-Temples and Gurudwaras belonging to Sikh, Buddhist and Jainism have also been invited.
- ★ The three-day event is being organized as part of the Incredible India campaign in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Tourism.
- ★ In this, development, empowerment of temple management, operation and administration will be discussed.

DGCA Approves Tamil Nadu's First Flying Training School

- ★ The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approved EKVI Air Training Organization Pvt Ltd to set up the first Flying Training Organization (FTO) in Tamil Nadu, India.

- ★ This approval is for aviation education in India, as it is the 36th flight training school in the country and the first in Tamil Nadu.
- ★ EKVI Air Training Organization Pvt Ltd will operate from Salem airport, providing an opportunity to aspiring pilots in the region to get professional training and fulfill their dreams of becoming skilled aviators.
- ★ FTO's training programs will include comprehensive theoretical classes, flight simulator sessions and practical flight experience, providing students with a sound education that will prepare them for the dynamic aviation industry.

State Disaster Response Funds

- ★ The Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, has released an amount of 7,532 crore to 22 State Governments for the respective State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF).
- ★ The amount has been released as per the recommendations of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ★ The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has been constituted in each State under Section 48(1)(a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- ★ The fund is the primary fund available to State Governments for responses to notified disasters.
- ★ The Central Government contributes 75% to the SDRF in general States and 90% in North-East and Himalayan States.
- ★ The SDRF is to be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims of notified calamities like cyclones, drought, earthquakes, fires, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloud bursts, pest attacks and frost & cold wave.
- ★ Based on the 15th Finance Commission recommendations, the Central Government has allocated ₹1,28,122.40 crore for SDRF for the years 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- ★ Out of this amount, the Central Government's share is ₹98,080.80 crore.
- ★ The Central Government had already released ₹34,140.00 before the current release.
- ★ With the current release, the total amount of Central share of SDRF released to the State Governments so far has gone up to ₹42,366 crore.

50th GST Council Meeting in New Delhi

- ★ The 50th GST Council meeting chaired by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was held in New Delhi.
- ★ The meeting is being attended by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, Finance Ministers of States and UTs, and Senior officials.
- ★ In February 2023, the 49th GST Council met under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi.
- ★ In that meeting, the government decided to clear the entire pending balance GST compensation of 16 thousand 982 crore rupees for June 2022 to States and Union territories.
- ★ In its recommendations, the Council had also decided to lower the GST slabs for Rab, and pencil sharpener.

The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) Bankers'

- ★ The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Jitendra Singh inaugurated a bankers' awareness workshop at Srinagar.
- ★ The two-day workshop is organized by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) for Officers of the State Bank of India at Winter Hall, Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Center, Srinagar.
- ★ The objective of the workshops is to spread awareness of the various rules and procedures relevant to Pension Disbursing Banks and also the steps being taken by the Government of India to ensure "Ease of Living" for Pensioners.
- ★ Bankers' Awareness workshops, on similar lines, will be conducted in collaboration with other Pension Disbursing Banks in 2023-24.
- ★ The workshop is also expected to firm up a road map towards integrating 17 banks with the single-window Integrated Pensioners' Portal of DoPPW with the objective of providing pensioners with a host of services related to pension and banking.
- ★ Jitendra Singh inaugurated the integration of the SBI pension seva portal with the Integrated Pensioners Portal in October 2022.

India's First Artificial Intelligence News Anchor – Lisa

- ★ Odisha Television Limited (OTV) has introduced the state's first artificial intelligence (AI) news anchor named Lisa.
- ★ The introduction of Lisa, the AI news anchor, took place at a ceremony held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- ★ The introduction of Lisa, the first AI anchor in Odisha's regional television broadcasting arena, signifies a new era in television journalism.
- ★ It is developed by the media house in collaboration with a Mumbai, Maharashtra based startup, Lisa has the potential to speak in multiple languages.
- ★ Lisa currently presents news in Odia and English on OTV's television and digital platforms.
- ★ However, efforts are underway to enhance Lisa's proficiency in Odia.

Atal Innovation Mission Launches 'ATL Industry Visit'

- ★ The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Bayer inaugurated a one-of-a-kind industrial visit project called Atal Tinkering Labs at Bayer's production site in Vapi, Gujarat.
- ★ According to NITI Aayog, 'It is critical to raise public awareness in order to fuel the manufacturing policy and realize its potential'.
- ★ Bayer has partnered with Niti Aayog since 2021 to support various initiatives of the Atal Innovation Mission.
- ★ To nurture and strengthen science-based learning, Bayer has adopted a total of 125 ATL schools in seven states.

- ★ The 50 schools adopted in the later phase are all-girls schools aligned with Bayer's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion and empowering women.
- ★ Over the last year and a half, Bayer in partnership with its implementing partners has also trained about 150 ATL coordinators on ATL Curriculum.
- ★ Bayer has opened its manufacturing and production plants and research centers across Vapi, Shamirpet, Chandippa, and Bangalore to the ATL students to provide first-hand exposure to experience how technology, automation, and innovation are leveraged by the industry.

Assam Government Launched 'Gajah Kotha' Campaign

- ★ Assam launched 'Gajah Kotha' campaign to address the growing problem of Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC).
- ★ The 'Gajah Kotha' campaign involves over 1,200 participants and aims to promote coexistence between humans and elephants.
- ★ The focus of the campaign is on HEC affected villages in Eastern Assam.
- ★ The main objective is to educate the residents about elephant behaviour, ecology and the cultural importance of elephants in the region.
- ★ The campaign emphasizes the importance of conservation efforts in reducing HEC.
- ★ Aranyak, a renowned wildlife NGO based in Guwahati is leading the campaign.
- ★ The British Asian Trust and the Assam Forest Department are collaborating on this initiative.

Tamil Nadu's Authoor Betel Leaves Get GI Certificate

- ★ Authoor betel leaves from Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu have been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) certificate by Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Board and NABARD Madurai Agribusiness Incubation Forum.
- ★ The Authoor Vattara Vetrilai Vivasayigal Sangam, a body representing growers of the Authoor betel leaf, has been awarded the GI certificate.
- ★ This recognition as a Geographical Indication opens up new opportunities for the marketing of Authoor betel leaves.
- ★ The certification allows author betel leaves to be marketed domestically and internationally, thereby increasing their reach in different markets.
- ★ This recognition also highlights the marketing potential of Authoor betel leaves and paves the way for increased demand and popularity.

India For Banks Under Agri Infra Fund

- ★ Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Manoj Ahuja launched a new campaign called Bharat (Banks Heralding Accelerated Rural and Agricultural Transformation) for Banks under Agri Infra Fund.
- ★ The campaign will run for a month from 15 July 2023 to 15 August 2023, with a target of raising ₹7,200 crore.

- ★ Joint Secretary Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) Samuel Praveen Kumar highlighted the progress made under the Agri Infra Fund scheme which has seen construction of over 31,850 agriculture infrastructure projects in the country with a loan amount of ₹24,750 crore.
- ★ The total outlay of the scheme is ₹42,000 crore.
- ★ Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is a Central Sector Scheme launched in 2020.
- ★ Its objective is to provide medium to long term debt financing for viable projects related to post-harvest management infrastructure and community farm assets.

The G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance Summit

- ★ Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said the successful launch of Chandrayaan-3 will boost Space StartUps and Space entrepreneurs.
- ★ Addressing the G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance Summit in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi unlocked the Space Sector in 2020 for private participation, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) made history in November last year by launching successfully India's maiden private Vikram-suborbital (VKS) rocket.
- ★ He called upon the young scientists and youth of the G20 Nations to explore the space possibilities through lucrative StartUp ventures even in a Joint Mission Mode to herald a New Age of Space Entrepreneurship.
- ★ The Minister informed the gathering that out of 424 foreign satellites launched to date by India, 389 were launched in the last nine years of the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ★ He also added that from January 2018 to till date, ISRO has successfully launched over 200 foreign satellites belonging to major G20 countries.

Free Online AI Training Program

- ★ Education and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched AI for India 2.0, a free online training programme on Artificial Intelligence, on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day.
- ★ It is a joint initiative of Skill India and GUVI, which is an IIT Madras incubated startup tech platform that enables tech learning in vernacular languages.
- ★ This programme has been curated in nine Indian languages.
- ★ He added that this is a good beginning towards dismantling the language barrier in technology education and future-proofing the nation's Yuva Shakti, particularly in rural areas.

Rajasthan Cabinet Gives Approval to 'Minimum Guaranteed Income Bill'

- ★ The Rajasthan Government has announced the minimum income guarantee to provide social security to citizens of Rajasthan.
- ★ The Rajasthan government plans to bring a law that promises 'guaranteed minimum income' for the poor.

- ★ With this scheme, all families in the state will be able to get an employment guarantee of 125 days every year, and a minimum pension of 1,000 per month in case of aged/disabled/single women.
- ★ For this, an additional expenditure of 2500 crore is being proposed.
- ★ The Rajasthan government provides social security pension to around 10 million beneficiaries at an annual expenditure of 9,000 crore.
- ★ The central government provides 300 crore annually for pensions of up to ₹300 per month to 1 million people in the state.
- ★ Through the CM Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, 125 days of employment is provided, instead of 100 days of employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA).

PM Mitra Park Inaugurated in Amravati, Maharashtra

- ★ Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde virtually inaugurated the PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Park (PM Mitra Park) in Amravati.
- ★ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for PM Mitra Park was signed between the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra during the event.
- ★ MoUs were also signed with interested investors in PM Mitra Park.
- ★ The Government of India had earlier announced the selection of seven sites for setting up PM Mitra Parks in the textile industry.
- ★ The parks aim to develop high-quality industrial infrastructure that will attract significant investment, including foreign direct investment (FDI), and promote innovation and job creation in the textile sector.

Launch of 'CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal'

- ★ Union Home Minister and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the 'CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal' in New Delhi.
- ★ The Ministry of Cooperatives is actively working to strengthen the cooperative movement in India and protect the interests of cooperative members.
- ★ 'CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal' has been developed to facilitate submission of valid claims by genuine depositors of Sahara Group of Co-operative Societies.
- ★ Eligible depositors include members of Sahara Credit Cooperative Society Limited, Saharayan Universal Multipurpose Society Limited, Hamara India Credit Cooperative Society Limited and Stars Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited.
- ★ With the launch of the portal, the refund process has been streamlined, ensuring that genuine depositors receive their dues from Sahara Group of Cooperative Societies.

India Government Mint Celebrates its Anniversary in Hyderabad

- ★ The 120th anniversary of the India Government Mint has been celebrated in Hyderabad with commemorative souvenir coins.

- ★ These souvenir coins were crafted of silver and copper and serve as a tribute to the rich legacy and contributions of the India Government Mint in the field of coinage and minting.
- ★ Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd (SPMCIL) Chairman and Managing Director SK Sinha released the commemorative coins and said the India Government Mint in Hyderabad has been at the forefront of producing high-quality coins and other minted products for over a century.
- ★ He said its commitment to precision, craftsmanship, and technological advancements has earned it a reputation as one of the leading mints in the country.
- ★ Mr Sinha also applauded the mint's role in preserving the nation's numismatic heritage and emphasized its dedication to maintaining the highest standards of quality and security in the production of coins, medals, and other minted products.

President Conferred Bhoomi Samman 2023

- ★ Indian President Draupadi Murmu presented the “Bhoomi Samman” 2023 at a function organized by the Union Ministry of Rural Development at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- ★ The awards were received by the State Secretaries and District Collectors along with their teams who have shown excellence in achieving completion of major components of the Digital India Land Records Modernization Program (DILRMP).
- ★ Officers of the team of total 68 districts including nine secretaries of Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura and West Bengal were honored at the Bhoomi Samman-2023 function held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- ★ Among these, 57 Officers from 19 districts of Odisha, 35 Officers from 15 districts of Madhya Pradesh, who received maximum awards, were awarded Bhoomi Samman by the President.

TCRM Matrix Framework Unveiled by NITI Aayog

- ★ NITI Aayog released the Techno-Commercial Readiness and Market Maturity Matrix (TCRM Matrix) framework for promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in India.
- ★ The TCRM Matrix Framework released by NITI Aayog is a pioneering assessment tool developed to revolutionize technology assessment, foster innovation and encourage entrepreneurship in India.
- ★ This action plan paper highlights the historical evolution of the Technology Framework, including the Technology Readiness Level (TRL), Commercialization Readiness Level (CRL), and Market Readiness Level (MRL) scales.
- ★ By building on the core principles of these frameworks, the TCRM Matrix Framework presents an integrated assessment model that provides deep insights and actionable intelligence to stakeholders at every stage of the technology development cycle.
- ★ The Action Plan paper provides clear guidelines for integrating the TCRM Matrix framework within the wider innovation ecosystem.
- ★ The launch of the Techno-Commercial Readiness and Market Maturity Matrix (TCRM Matrix) framework is a milestone for India's innovation and entrepreneurship landscape.

New Panel to Review All Surveys Conducted Under NSO

- ★ The Union government has established a new oversight mechanism to review data from the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- ★ The Standing Committee on Economic Statistics (SCES) set up in 2019 will be replaced by a Standing Committee on Statistics (SCoS).
- ★ Pronab Sen, India's first chief statistician, has been named as the Chairman of the new committee.
- ★ SCES was responsible for reviewing economic indicators related to the industrial sector, the services sector, and the labour force statistics.
- ★ The SCoS will have a broader mandate to review the framework and results of all surveys being conducted under the NSO.
- ★ SCoS jurisdiction will be beyond economic data and advise the Ministry on technical aspects for all surveys.
- ★ This new panel will have 10 members and 4 non-official members who are eminent academics.
- ★ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) issued notification regarding this on 13 July 2023.
- ★ SCoS work includes the identification of data gaps that need to be filled by official statistics.
- ★ It has also been given authority to explore the use of administrative statistics to improve data outcomes.

The Foundation for Numerous Development Projects in Lucknow

- ★ Union Defence Minister and Lucknow MP Rajnath Singh will inaugurate and lay the foundation of many development projects in Lucknow.
- ★ Two national highway projects worth rupees 3300 crores will also be inaugurated.
- ★ Mr Singh will inaugurate the Madiaon-IIM Crossing flyover which is part of the national highways project.
- ★ Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath are expected to be present during the inauguration.
- ★ He will also inaugurate the newly developed Alamnagar railway station that will help passengers of the western part of the city including Alamnagar and Rajajipuram to board and alight trains for New Delhi.
- ★ They won't be required to travel to Charbagh, the main railway station of the city.
- ★ The railway station has been redeveloped for ₹50 crore, including ₹42 crore invested in electronic interlocking, signal, two loop lines and the development of three platforms, a circulating area of the station and other amenities of the station.
- ★ Railways have also constructed two-foot over bridges at the station. Premium superfast trains such as Lucknow Mail will also take a halt at Alamnagar station.
- ★ The Lucknow MP will also open a trauma centre in Jankipuram Extension.

Government of Odisha Approved Kui Language Inclusion in 8th Schedule

- ★ The Government of Odisha cabinet approved the inclusion of the Kui language in the 8th schedule.
- ★ The cabinet led by Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik recommended including the Kui language in the 8th schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- ★ Kui (also known as Kandh, Khondi, Khond, Khondo), is a South-Eastern Dravidian language spoken by the Kandha community.
- ★ With 941,988 registered native speakers, it figures at rank 29 in the 1991 Indian census.
- ★ The inclusion of the Kui language will help in its preservation, promotion and propagation.
- ★ The publication of content in the Kui language will get momentum and create an ecosystem for its preservation and propagation.
- ★ More than 7 lakh Kui-speaking people will benefit from the inclusion of the Kui language.
- ★ The Kandh tribe of Odisha will get several benefits with the inclusion of Kui.
- ★ The 8th Schedule to the Constitution consists of 22 languages.

India and ASEAN Conference on Traditional Medicines

- ★ The Ministry of AYUSH in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Mission in ASEAN organized a conference of India and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Traditional Medicines in New Delhi.
- ★ The conference pledged to strengthen sustainable and resilient health care systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage.
- ★ A total of 75 delegates from India and ASEAN including two ASEAN countries participated in the conference through virtual mode.
- ★ The Conference on Traditional Medicine between India and ASEAN countries provides a platform to deliberate on various dimensions of traditional systems of medicine to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

DPIIT and Government of Gujarat

- ★ One District One Product (ODOP) programme, an initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry collaborated with the Government of Gujarat to promote indigenous crafts and artisans of the state.
- ★ Gujarat, with its 33 districts, offers a wide range of unique products, including traditional crafts such as Gamathi block prints and Mata-ni-Pachedi, as well as agricultural goods such as groundnut and cumin.
- ★ The collaboration between ODOP and the Government of Gujarat includes product tagging and story cards to enhance the promotion and recognition of Gujarat's unique products.
- ★ The partnership aims to increase the visibility of Gujarat products at the national level and drive consumers towards the emporia, thereby boosting sales.
- ★ Specific interventions have been made to enhance the market presence of certain products in Gujarat.

Centre Approved Market Development Assistance of ₹1500 Per MT

- ★ Minister of State for Chemical and Fertilizers Bhagwanth Khuba informed the Lok Sabha that the Centre has approved the Market Development Assistance, MDA of 1500 rupees per metric tonne to promote organic fertilizers.
- ★ The government is promoting balanced and judicious use of fertilizer based on soil tests in conjunction with organic and biofertilizers.
- ★ The Minister said the Indian Council of Agricultural Research conducts research to test and develop organic inputs for different crops. It also promotes these products among the stakeholders through the network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
- ★ The manure is produced at plants under the GOBARdhan initiative, PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness Generation, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth, PM-PRANAM and Sulphur Coated Urea also known as Urea Gold.

Startup20 and the Jagriti Foundation to Launch 'Global Yatra'

- ★ Startup20 Engagement Group, under India's G20 presidency, has taken another transformative leap towards revolutionizing entrepreneurship across India by collaborating with Jagriti Foundation, a renowned non-profit organization dedicated to fostering robust entrepreneurship ecosystems in Tier 2/3 cities in India.
- ★ This strategic partnership is poised to significantly reshape the region's entrepreneurial landscape.
- ★ The Jagriti-Startup20-G20 Yatra 2023 – a one-of-a-kind event that embodies the spirit of inclusive entrepreneurship, cross-border collaboration, sustainability, and innovation on both a national and international scale was launched at the premises of Atal Innovation Mission NITI Aayog.
- ★ It is set to be one of the world's largest entrepreneurship journeys ever undertaken, with a diverse cohort of 350 Indian participants and 70 foreign delegates from G20 countries.
- ★ This diverse group of entrepreneurs, innovators, and change-makers will come together to exchange ideas, forge partnerships, and create solutions for some of the most pressing challenges faced by our societies over a 14-day national train journey.

NITI Aayog Hosts an E-Mobility Conference

- ★ A one-day conference titled 'Policy Support and Enablers to Accelerate India's Electric Mobility', organized by NITI Aayog and supported by WRI India and Asian Development Bank, was held on the sidelines of the fourth Energy Transition Working Group (ETWG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency.
- ★ The conference served as a crucial platform to convene national and international stakeholders, engaging in meaningful discussions and exploring viable financing, regulatory, and policy avenues to catalyze India's decarbonization trajectory and advance the growth of electric mobility in the country.
- ★ NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Shri Suman Bery, Chief Minister of Goa Dr Pramod Sawant, India's G20 Sherpa Shri. Amitabh Kant and other prominent dignitaries were present on the occasion.

- ★ The conference featured in-depth discussions revolving around key themes, such as ‘Develop Vibrant EV Ecosystem in States’ and ‘the National Electric Bus Programme’.
- ★ Moreover, high-level dialogues and G20 talks centred around Electric Vehicle Finance Innovations and the Future Electric Mobility Landscape offered valuable insights for stakeholders to navigate the evolving electric mobility ecosystem.

Delhi Launches First ‘Water ATM’

- ★ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal recently inaugurated the city’s first ‘Water ATM’, which aims to provide clean water to areas lacking piped water supply.
- ★ The ‘Water ATM’ initiative aims to reduce dependence on water tankers and ensure that underprivileged sections of society have access to the same quality of reverse osmosis (RO) water as more affluent areas.
- ★ The Delhi government, through the Delhi Jal Board, plans to tackle water scarcity by setting up 500 RO plants with integrated ‘water ATM machines’ in areas facing water supply issues.
- ★ Each of the 500 RO plants will have a capacity of 30,000 litres and will be strategically located depending on the availability of tubewells.
- ★ The government will provide the necessary land, and the cost of ₹10 lakh per plant will be borne by the Delhi Jal Board.
- ★ Beneficiaries of this initiative will receive RFID cards from DJB, which will give them access to a daily free water quota of 20 litres.
- ★ Usage beyond this limit will attract a charge of 8 paise per litre.
- ★ The initiative is led by Delhi’s Water Minister, Saurabh Bhardwaj and aims to ensure free and safe access to clean drinking water for residents of areas facing water scarcity.

Odisha CM Approves Mission Shakti Scooter Scheme

- ★ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik approved the Mission Shakti Scooter Scheme, a scheme designed to provide interest subsidy to beneficiaries on bank loans up to ₹1,00,000 to buy scooters.
- ★ The initiative targets Mission Shakti federation leaders and community support staff, providing affordable access to two-wheelers.
- ★ This is expected to increase their efficiency, effectiveness and reach within the community.
- ★ The scheme aims to benefit about 75,000 community support staff members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and about 1,25,000 federation leaders associated with SHGs.
- ★ For the next five years, the state government has allocated a budget of ₹528.55 crore to implement the Mission Shakti scooter scheme while ensuring wider reach.
- ★ The goal is to empower a large number of Community Support Staff and Executive Committee (EC) members across the state.

National Nursing and Midwifery Commission, Bill

- ★ The Union government introduced the National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Bill, 2023 in the Lok Sabha.
- ★ The Bill seeks to provide for regulation and maintenance of standards of education and services by nursing and midwifery professionals.
- ★ The Bill was introduced by Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya.
- ★ The Minister also introduced The National Dental Commission Bill, 2023 in the Lok Sabha.
- ★ The Bill is intended to regulate the profession of dentistry in the country.
- ★ It also aimed at providing quality and affordable dental education.
- ★ The two Bills were introduced amid continuous protests by opposition parties over the Manipur violence issue.

'Semicon India 2023' in Gandhinagar

- ★ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate 'Semicon India 2023' in Gandhinagar.
- ★ Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel will inaugurate a special exhibition for the public.
- ★ The exhibition will inform about the manufacturing process of semiconductors and the progress made in this field.
- ★ The exhibition will remain open till the 30th of July.
- ★ The national-level event will showcase the latest technology related to semiconductors.
- ★ Leading companies involved in the semiconductor sector will participate in Semicon India 2023.
- ★ Students of engineering and other disciplines can learn about semiconductor manufacturing at the exhibition.
- ★ They will get a great opportunity to get specialized knowledge useful for a career in this field.

Roadmap to Achieve the Target of \$250 Billion in Textiles Production

- ★ Union Minister for Textiles, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal discussed the roadmap to achieve the target of \$250 billion in textiles production and \$100 billion in exports by 2030.
- ★ The Narendra Modi government is targeting \$250 billion in textiles production and exports of \$100 billion by 2030.
- ★ This roadmap for achieving this production and export target was discussed by Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Textiles, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Commerce and Industry, at the Chintan Shivir organized by the Ministry of Textiles.
- ★ The Chintan Shivir was organised by the Ministry of Textiles to brainstorm on various issues relating to the sector.
- ★ India presently ranks behind China as the world's second-largest manufacturer of textiles and garments.
- ★ The textile and apparel industry represents over 4% of India's total GDP and more than 14% of the country's export earnings yearly, making it India's largest manufacturing sector.

- ★ In FY 2022, India's annual textile exports stood at \$44.4 billion with an increase of 41% compared to the previous year.

Jammu to Spearhead India's first Cannabis Medicine Project

- ★ CSIR-IIIM Jammu is all set to lead India's first cannabis medicine project, a pioneering initiative by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ★ This Cannabis Medicine project, initiated in collaboration with Canadian firm IndusScan, aims to explore the medicinal potential of cannabis to benefit patients with neuropathy, cancer and epilepsy, known for its abuse potential.
- ★ The collaboration between CSIR-IIIM Jammu and IndusScan is historic and of great importance to Jammu and Kashmir and the country as a whole.
- ★ It has the potential to revolutionise drug production in India, enabling the country to produce and export drugs that were earlier sourced from abroad.
- ★ The project will play a vital role in raising awareness about the diverse medicinal applications of cannabis, especially in providing relief to patients suffering from fatal diseases and various other ailments.

Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia Inaugurates Heli Summit 2023

- ★ Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel inaugurated Heli Summit 2023 in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh.
- ★ Shri Scindia also launched RCS UDAN 5.2 and HeliSewa-App during the event.
- ★ The 5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Summit (Heli Summit 2023) was jointly organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, in association with the Government of Madhya Pradesh, Pawan Hans Ltd., and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- ★ The theme of the event was 'Reaching the Last Mile: Regional Connectivity through Helicopters & Small Aircraft'.
- ★ The event format included an inaugural session followed by a technical session.
- ★ Shri Scindia also launched Heli-Sewa mobile application during the event.
- ★ The HeliSewa Portal is an initiative of the Ministry of Civil Aviation under Digital India to create a common platform to create an ecosystem between the helicopter operators and the district authorities.
- ★ The mobile application will make it more convenient to use in terms of user experience, loading content, and usability of functions.
- ★ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Pawan Hans and Jetserve was signed for advancing the Helicopter and Small Aircraft sector in India.

164th Income Tax Day Celebrations at New Delhi

- ★ The 164th anniversary of Income Tax Day was observed by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and all its field offices across India.
- ★ The main function was held at the Plenary Hall, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

- ★ Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman presided over the event.
- ★ Union Minister of State (Finance) Shri Pankaj Choudhury also graced the occasion with his presence. Shri Sanjay Malhotra, Secretary, Revenue and Shri Nitin Gupta, Chairman, CBDT, were also present on the occasion apart from other Officers and officials of the Department.
- ★ Sitharaman also appreciated the contribution made by taxpayers, tax practitioners/professionals and stakeholders for having been instrumental in driving India's economic growth and prosperity.
- ★ The Finance Minister observed that an increase in tax collection has been achieved in recent years without any increase in tax rates.
- ★ It has been made possible through an increase in the efficiency of the Department.

India's First Gig Workers Rights Bill 2023

- ★ In a bid to become India's first state to guarantee social security to gig workers, Rajasthan tabled the Rajasthan Platform Based GIG Workers (registration and welfare) Bill, 2023.
- ★ The provisions of the bill prescribe heavy monetary penalties if the aggregator fails to comply.
- ★ The bill will provide gig workers with the unique id which will be uniform across all the platforms.
- ★ Gig workers are those who work temporary jobs, typically in the service sector as an independent contractor or freelancer.
- ★ Delivery partners for food aggregators such as Swiggy or Zomato are gig workers.
- ★ The Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers Welfare Board' will be established in Rajasthan where the gig workers of the state will be registered with all the aggregators of Rajasthan.
- ★ The unique Identity Document (ID) provided will grant these workers the opportunity to utilize both broad and targeted social security programs.
- ★ The ID will enable such workers to access general and specific social security schemes, heard in case there is a complaint, and participate in all decisions taken for their welfare through representation in the board.

Nagaland Officially Declared Lumpy Skin Disease Positive State

- ★ Nagaland has been officially declared as lumpy skin disease positive state with the disease being detected in four districts of the state.
- ★ The announcement has been made as per the Prevention and Control of Contagious and Contagious Diseases in Animals Act, 2009.
- ★ The Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services will be responsible for implementing all necessary preventive measures in collaboration with the concerned State Department.
- ★ The advisories and guidelines issued by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying will be followed to deal with the situation.
- ★ Lumpy dermatitis is a pox viral disease affecting cattle, which causes significant morbidity.
- ★ It is classified as a Notable Disease by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) due to its rapid spread and significant economic losses.

Amit Shah will Launch the 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar'

- ★ The Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will launch a unique initiative 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar' as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- ★ It is a pan-India initiative of the Ministry of Culture under the National Mission on Cultural Mapping.
- ★ Shri Amit Shah will officially launch the virtual platform during a grand projection mapping show at the Qutub Minar.
- ★ The virtual platform <https://mgmd.gov.in> will connect people with villages of India.
- ★ The Ministry of Culture initiated the 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar' (MGMD) project under National Mission on Cultural Mapping in coordination with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).
- ★ The main objective of the project is to culturally map India's 6.5 lakh villages, spanning 29 States and 7 Union Territories, on a comprehensive virtual platform.
- ★ Through MGMD, people will get an opportunity to immerse themselves in India's diverse and vibrant cultural heritage.

The 4th ECSWG and Environment and Climate Ministers' Meeting

- ★ The 4th Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) and Environment and Climate Ministers meeting began in Chennai.
- ★ The three-day meeting brings together around 300 delegates from G20 member countries, invitee countries, and several International Organisations, with a focus on finalising the Ministerial Outcome and the Presidency Documents.
- ★ The 4th ECSWG and Minister's Meeting will focus on three key areas – land restoration, circular economy, and blue economy.
- ★ These topics will take centre stage during the meeting to address environmental and sustainability challenges.
- ★ On the first day of the event, there will be two parallel sessions: the Environment Track and the Climate Track.
- ★ These sessions will delve into different aspects of environmental and climate issues, focusing on in-depth discussions about land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change.
- ★ The 4th ECSWG and Environment and Climate Ministers meeting deliberations will end with the G20 Environment and Climate Ministers' Meeting on Day 3, wherein the Outcome and the Presidency documents will be released.

Flight Training Academies in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh

- ★ Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel inaugurated three Flight Training Organizations (FTO) in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh.
- ★ With the opening of three FTOs in Khajuraho, the total number of FTOs in Madhya Pradesh will be six, three at Khajuraho, one at Indore, one at Sagar, and one at Guna.

- ★ These six FTOs will enhance the potential of the state to be a major contributor to pilots in the aviation industry.
- ★ Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia announced soon begin wide-body aircraft between Khajuraho and Varanasi.
- ★ Indian Flying Academy is a unit of Shaurya Flight Sim Pvt Ltd that has been established at Khajuraho Airport under the 'Aatam Nirbhar Bharat' initiative taken by the honourable Prime Minister.

South Eastern Coalfields Ltd to Invest ₹169 Crores on Plantation

- ★ Chhattisgarh-based Coal India subsidiary, South Eastern Coalfields (SECL), will invest ₹169 crores on a plantation in its operating States of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh during the next five years.
- ★ The company has recently signed MoU with Chhattisgarh Rajya Van Vikas Nigam (CGRVNN) and Madhya Pradesh Rajya Van Vikas Nigam (MPRVVN) for carrying out plantation work in these States.
- ★ The plantation will be carried out for a period of five years from 2023-24 to 2027-28 with its subsequent maintenance of 4 years for each consecutive year of the plantation.
- ★ As per the MoU, SECL will spend ₹131.52 crore in Chhattisgarh and ₹38.11 crore in Madhya Pradesh for plantation work.
- ★ The company in partnership with the state nigams will plant more than 26 lakh saplings in the state of Chhattisgarh and almost 12 lakh saplings in Madhya Pradesh.

India's First Fisheries Atal Incubation Centre

- ★ After receiving a grant of ₹10 crore from NITI Aayog, the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) will set up India's first Atal Incubation Center (AIC) in fisheries.
- ★ Fisheries Atal Incubation Centre will act as a focal point to foster innovation and inspire young individuals to create advanced technologies and solutions that will address challenges faced by our marine ecosystem and fishing communities.
- ★ Its primary objective is to promote progress in the fisheries industry by providing a supportive and encouraging environment for startups and innovative initiatives within the sector.
- ★ The centre will play a key role in creating employment opportunities, creating a conducive environment for startups and entrepreneurs to flourish and succeed.
- ★ NITI Aayog, as the premier policy think tank of the Government of India, provided a grant to KUFOS to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the fisheries sector.
- ★ The AIC initiative is part of the Atal Innovation Mission, which aims to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across various industries in the country.

India's First Online Gaming Academy

- ★ Madhya Pradesh is launching its first online gaming industry "MP State e-sports Academy".
- ★ The Academy aims to provide a platform for aspiring gaming and e-sports professionals to advance their skills and reach a professional level.

- ★ “MP Junior e-sports Championship” is a 10-day talent hunt tournament from 27 July to 07 August 2023.
- ★ It is exclusively for e-sports enthusiasts in the age group of 12 to 17 years.
- ★ The tournament provides a platform for young participants to engage, compete and showcase their gaming skills.
- ★ Selected e-sports athletes will receive 12 months of intensive coaching and high-quality eSports education.

First Indian City to Join the World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF)

- ★ Karnataka capital Bengaluru has achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first Indian city to join the prestigious World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF).
- ★ The World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) is a global network of cities that collaboratively research and share intelligence to explore the important role of culture in shaping future prosperity.
- ★ Bengaluru is the 41st city to join WCCF, which already includes 40 cities across six continents such as New York, London, Paris, Tokyo and Dubai.
- ★ In the past year, the cultural essence of Bengaluru has been showcased through multimedia assets by WCCF as part of a collaborative project called ‘Unboxing Bangalore’.
- ★ WCCF was established in 2012.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Handed Over Torch of Startup 20 to Brazil

- ★ The Startup 20 Gurugram Summit, organized by the Startup 20 Engagement Group under the India G20 Chairmanship, concluded in Gurugram.
- ★ During the closing ceremony, Dr. Chintan Vaishnav, President of Startup20, officially handed over the torch to Brazil as Brazil is to chair the G20 next year.
- ★ The two-day summit served as a platform to foster innovations, collaborations, knowledge sharing and strategic alliances within the global startup ecosystem.
- ★ Underlining the importance of Startup20, Saudi Arabia’s Prince Fahd bin Mansour announced an ambitious allocation of \$1 trillion per year to the startup ecosystem by 2030.
- ★ Saudi Arabia became the first country to provide support for global startups to reach \$1 trillion.

First Country to Ban Plastic Product Bags

- ★ New Zealand has become the first country to ban plastic produce bags in supermarkets.
- ★ New Zealand has banned the thin plastic bags commonly used in supermarkets for the collection of fruit and vegetables.
- ★ Plastic straws and silverware are also included in the ban as part of the government’s campaign against single-use plastics.

- ★ The ban bans the manufacture, sale and distribution of single-use plastic product bags, plastic plates, bowls and cutlery.
- ★ Some establishments, such as supermarkets, pharmacies, hospitality venues and health and disability services, are exempt and can still sell and provide plastic straws to people with disabilities.
- ★ Since the 2019 ban on take-home plastic bags, customers in New Zealand have been using reusable tote bags for their shopping.

67th TAAI Conference

- ★ The three-day 67th Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) convention began in Colombo on 6 July.
- ★ Special guests include Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and High Commissioner of India Gopal Baglay.
- ★ The conference provides valuable business opportunities for stakeholders in the Indian and Sri Lankan travel industries.
- ★ It serves as a platform to promote business partnership and cooperation between the two countries.
- ★ With 500 participants and 50 Indian media personnel, the conference attracts a large number of industry professionals.
- ★ The agenda of the conference includes thought-provoking sessions on a wide range of topics.

India Hosted 23rd Summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- ★ India virtually hosted the 23rd Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
- ★ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the 23rd Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State.
- ★ All SCO member states China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan were invited to participate in the summit.
- ★ Iran, Belarus and Mongolia were invited as observers.
- ★ As per SCO tradition, Turkmenistan was also invited as the guest chair.
- ★ The heads of two SCO bodies, the Secretariat and the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure – the Rats, also participated in the summit.
- ★ The theme of India's Chairmanship of SCO-SECURE is derived from the acronym given by the Prime Minister at the 2018 SCO Qingdao Summit.
- ★ SECURE stands for Security, Economic development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and Environmental protection.
- ★ India has established new pillars of cooperation under its Chairmanship by prioritising startups and innovation, traditional medicine, digital inclusion, youth empowerment, and shared Buddhist heritage.

Third World Hindu Conference

- ★ According to the World Hindu Foundation, the third 'World Hindu Congress' (WHC) 2023 will be organized in Bangkok in November.
- ★ The three-day Vishwa Hindu Sammelan will be organized by the Vishwa Hindu Foundation from November 24 at the Convention Center in Bangkok.
- ★ The World Hindu Congress is being organized by the World Hindu Foundation.
- ★ Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath, Sarsanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Mohan Bhagwat and Ma Amritanandamayi have been invited to this event.
- ★ Representatives of Hindu organizations and prominent Buddhist teachers from all over the world have been invited to the conference.

'Ozone UV Bulletin' Released by WMO

- ★ The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) issues Ozone and UV bulletins at an interval of seven years, according to which the ozone layer is continuously improving.
- ★ To monitor and understand changes in the ozone layer, WMO has released its first Ozone and UV Bulletin.
- ★ According to the information given by WMO, with the help of Montreal Protocol and amendments made from time to time, the use of substances that damage the ozone layer has been limited by 99 percent.
- ★ The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty on the prevention of substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- ★ It is designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out emissions of substances known to be responsible for depleting the ozone layer.

India and Panama Agree on Electoral Cooperation

- ★ The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Electoral Tribunal (ET) of Panama signed an MoU on Electoral Cooperation.
- ★ Under this agreement, both the countries will set up an institutional framework for ongoing cooperation in the field of election management and administration.
- ★ This MoU reflects the commitment of the Election Commission to engage with election bodies around the world and strengthen democratic processes.
- ★ The Election Commission is expanding its connectivity and collaboration with foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) through the 'International Cooperation Programme'.
- ★ Both the Election Commission of India and the Electoral Tribunal of Panama are members of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB).
- ★ ET of Panama officials also participated in the International Conference on 'Inclusive Elections and Electoral Integrity' organized by the ECI in March 2023.
- ★ It was a part of the operation of 'Cohort on Elections Integrity' under the aegis of 'Summit for Democracy'.

China Released Its First Open-Source Computer Operating System

- ★ China has rolled out its first-ever homegrown computer operating system called OpenKylin.
- ★ It is China's first open-source desktop operating system (OS).
- ★ It is a Linux-based operating system built by a community of about 4,000 developers and is used in its space programme and industries such as finance and energy.
- ★ OpenKylin users have access to the software's lines of code and can modify them as they wish, unlike Microsoft and Apple, which keep the workings of Windows and MacOS systems secret.
- ★ The term "open source" refers to computer software or applications where the owners or copyright holders enable the users or third parties to use, see, and edit the product's source code.
- ★ The source code of an open-source OS is publicly visible and editable.

Taiwan To Open 3rd Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre

- ★ The Taiwanese government will establish a Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in Mumbai, Maharashtra as part of a broader aim to further deepen cooperation with India.
- ★ At present, Taiwan has TECCs in Delhi and Chennai.
- ★ The main aim of opening the Cultural Centre is to enhance cooperation between both countries.
- ★ Also, the move to set up the TECC in Mumbai comes at a time when major companies in Taiwan are increasingly looking at relocating their production bases to India from China.
- ★ Taiwan has set up an office in Chennai in December 2012.
- ★ Trade volume between both the countries increased from USD 2 billion in 2006 to USD 8.9 billion in 2021.
- ★ India and Taiwan's cooperation has increased in the area of trade, critical supply chains, science and technology, culture, and education in recent years.

India-United States Conduct 'Operation Broader Sword'

- ★ The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and US Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) in collaboration with the Indian Government Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) conducted 'Operation Broader Sword'.
- ★ It is a special bilateral multi-agency enforcement operation targeting illicit pharmaceuticals, devices, or precursor chemicals shipped using the international mail system.
- ★ Operation Broader Sword was built upon the success of Operation Broadsword, which targeted mail parcels containing illicit medical products from India and was carried out in 2020, at Chicago IMF.
- ★ Operation "Broader Sword", which was carried out in June 2023, targeted shipments of illicit, potentially dangerous, unapproved prescription drugs, combination medical devices, and synthetic drug precursors shipped through International Mail Facilities (IMF).
- ★ The operation targeted packages entering the US from India through the New York (JFK International Airport) and Chicago (ORD International Airport) International Mail Facilities (IMFs) during June 12-23, 2023.

Status On Asia-Pacific Money Laundering

- ★ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become the first Arab country to receive observer status in the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a regional body similar to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- ★ The UAE is participating as an observer at the plenary session of the APG, which is currently taking place in Vancouver, Canada.
- ★ Obtaining observer status reflects the UAE's commitment to international cooperation in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.
- ★ Observer status is awarded to countries that actively and cooperatively combat financial crime, and the UAE has demonstrated this through its participation in organizations such as MENAFATF and other multilateral fora.

India to Open Consulate in Southern French City

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on 14 July 2023 that India will open a consulate in the southern city of Marseille, France.
- ★ Prime Minister Modi is on an official visit to France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 13 to 15 July 2023. This is the sixth visit of Prime Minister Modi to France.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Indian community at La Seine Musicale in Paris during his visit to France.
- ★ This year 2023 also marks the 25th anniversary of the India-France Strategic Partnership and the Prime Minister's visit will provide an opportunity to chart out a roadmap for the future of the partnership in various areas such as strategic, cultural, scientific, educational and economic cooperation.

India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway

- ★ The India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Highway is a regional connectivity project covering approximately 1,360 km (845 mi) that aims to connect India, Myanmar and Thailand.
- ★ The project was proposed by former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and approved in 2002. Its construction began in 2012 and is being implemented in several phases.
- ★ The Ministry of External Affairs in India, in collaboration with Myanmar and Thailand, is responsible for project implementation, with funds allocated from the Ministry of Finance.
- ★ The highway starts from Moreh in Manipur, India, passes through Myanmar and ends at Mae Sot in Thailand. The India-Myanmar Friendship Road is the first section connecting Tamu/Moreh to Kalemmyo and Kalewa.
- ★ India's contribution to the project includes the construction of 69 bridges along with access roads on the 74-km Kalewa-Yagyi road section and the 70-km Tamu-Kyygon-Kalewa (TKK) road section in Myanmar.

Tata To Set up EV Battery Factory in UK

- ★ Tata group has announced setting up a factory in the United Kingdom with an investment of four billion pounds (₹42,500 crore) to make batteries.

- ★ In Britain, the Tata group is working on plans to make batteries for Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) as well as other vehicle companies.
- ★ The factory will be located in Bridgwater, Somerset, England.
- ★ Tata Sons has chosen the Bridgwater area of Somerset in south-west England for the factory instead of Spain.

First Woman to Lead The US Navy

- ★ US President Joe Biden has nominated Admiral Lisa Franchetti to lead the US Navy.
- ★ If confirmed by the Senate, Admiral Franchetti would become the first female member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- ★ She is currently serving as the 42nd Deputy Chief of Naval Operations from September 2022.
- ★ Previous roles include Director of strategy, plans, and policies of the Joint Staff (2020–2022) and commander of the United States Sixth Fleet (2018–2020).
- ★ Made history as the second woman to be promoted to the rank of four-star admiral in the US Navy.

Sri Lankan President Two-Day Visit to India

- ★ Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe made a two-day visit to India on 20 and 21 July 2023, during which several important agreements were signed between the two countries, which is considered very important in terms of relations between the two countries.
- ★ During the talks, a vision document has been adopted to take the bilateral economic partnership between the two countries to a new level.
- ★ Through this, both the countries will increase mutual cooperation in tourism, energy, trade, higher education and skill development.
- ★ Through this vision, it has been decided to strengthen maritime, air, energy and people-to-people connectivity among people.
- ★ Both countries have decided to increase air connectivity.
- ★ Along with this, it has also been decided to start passenger ferry services between Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu and Kanke-Santurai in Sri Lanka.

2nd Quad Partner to Sign Semiconductor Pact with India

- ★ Japan has become the second Quad partner after the United States (US) to sign an agreement with India for the joint development of the semiconductor ecosystem.
- ★ The aim is to bolster the resilience of the global supply chain, particularly in the crucial semiconductor industry.
- ★ India is to sign agreements with institutions like Georgia Tech University and has already signed one with Caldwell University to build talent for advanced packaging.
- ★ In July 2023, US-based Micron Technologies announced its plans to set up a \$2.75-billion chip packaging (assembly, testing, marking, packaging) unit in the country.

- ★ The first made-in-India chip under the project will be rolled out by December 2024, and annual production worth \$1 billion is expected once the plant is fully operational.
- ★ Japan has expressed keen interest to invest Yen five trillion, or around ₹2.95 trillion, in India across various sectors, which includes steel, exploring new technologies and decarbonization pathways.

India And Argentina Have Agreed to a Bilateral Exchange

- ★ India and Argentina have agreed to a bilateral exchange of young researchers and Startups, particularly in the field of Biotechnology and Agriculture.
- ★ The two countries also decided to hold comprehensive talks between delegations comprising academia, R&D Institutes and Industry in the field of Science and Technology and Biotechnology.
- ★ A total of 82 joint proposals were received under the said call. These are under the evaluation process.
- ★ India and Argentina have an Inter-governmental Agreement to promote technical and scientific cooperation signed in 1985.
- ★ The objective of this programme is to strengthen and expand relations between scientific communities, making possible the exchanges between Indian and Argentine research groups, in the framework of joint scientific and technological projects, selected by the parties.
- ★ India is the 4th largest trading partner of Argentina.

Italy Inaugurates VC Yashwant Ghadge Sundial Memorial

- ★ Italy inaugurated the “VC Yashwant Ghadege Sundiyal Memorial” in honor of the Indian Army’s significant contribution during World War II.
- ★ The memorial, located in Monton, Perugia, Italy, commemorates the bravery and sacrifice of Naik Yashwant Ghadege, who lost his life in the Upper Tiber Valley.
- ★ The monument’s motto, “Omines sub-eodem soul”, translates to “We all live under the same sun” in Hindi.
- ★ The ceremony was attended by India’s Ambassador to Italy and Indian Defense Attache, Dr. Nina Malhotra, along with numerous Italian citizens, distinguished guests, and members of the Italian Armed Forces.
- ★ Notably, Indian soldiers were awarded six out of the twenty Victoria Crosses given in Italy for their extraordinary valour.

Prime Minister Announced India’s UPI To Be Used in France

- ★ In a significant move, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced the launch of the Unified Payments System (UPI) in France.
- ★ To make it an iconic move, the countries have decided to start its operations from the Eiffel Tower, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site where Indian tourists will now be able to pay in rupees.
- ★ This move will allow Indian tourists to make rupee payments using UPI while in France.

- ★ The announcement is seen as a significant development for bilateral trade and tourism between India and France.
- ★ With this development, France became the first European country to have UPI.
- ★ Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is India's mobile-based payment system and allows people to make round-the-clock payments through a virtual payment address created by the customer.

UNESCO Urges Global Ban on Smartphones in Schools

- ★ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published its 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report titled "Technology in Education: A Tool on Whose Terms".
- ★ It supports a worldwide ban on smartphones in schools where technology integration Does not improve learning outcomes.
- ★ UNESCO advocates a more "human-centred approach" to education and highlights the need to reduce reliance on digital technology.
- ★ Excessive use of smartphones has negative effects on children's academic performance and emotional competence.
- ★ UNESCO's Manos Antoninis raised concerns about data leaks in educational technology, revealing that only 16 percent of countries have laws guaranteeing data privacy in the classroom.
- ★ The shift to online-only learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the loss of approximately 500 million students worldwide.

BANKING, FINANCE & ECONOMICS

World Bank Approves \$700 Million for Crisis-Hit Sri Lanka

- ★ The World Bank has approved a substantial funding package of 700 million dollars for Sri Lanka, providing a significant boost to the country's financial situation.
- ★ Out of the approved funds, approximately 500 million dollars will be allocated for budgetary support, aimed at stabilizing the country's economy.
- ★ The remaining 200 million dollars will be dedicated to welfare support, with the objective of assisting those most affected by the ongoing crisis.
- ★ The World Bank's assistance represents the largest amount of financial support received by the crisis-stricken nation since the approval of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement in March.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Partners with actyv.ai

- ★ Kotak Mahindra Bank's subsidiary, Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company has partnered with ai to offer bite-sized insurance products to new-age Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) companies in India.

- ★ Kotak General Insurance will leverage actyv.ai's AI-powered platform to provide insurance solutions to support the business sustainability of small businesses.
- ★ Through actyv.ai's technology stack and Kotak General Insurance's customized insurance products, this tie up will offer innovative insurance products to the enterprise and close to one lakh supply chain partner ecosystem to focus on driving growth without worrying about business risks.

RBI Cancels Mahalaxmi Cooperative Bank Dharwad's Banking Licence

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the banking license of the Karnataka-based Mahalaxmi Cooperative Bank, Dharwad, and allowed it to function only as a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC).
- ★ The RBI cancelled the banking licence dated March 23, 1994 granted to the Mahalaxmi Cooperative Bank Dharwad.
- ★ This will not stop the bank from conducting the business of 'banking' and acceptance of deposits from non-members with immediate effect.
- ★ Further, the bank shall ensure to repay unpaid and unclaimed deposits of non-members held by it, whenever demanded, even after being notified as a non-banking Institution.
- ★ Earlier, In April 2023, the RBI cancelled the banking licence of Adoor Co-operative Urban Bank and allowed it to operate only as NBFC.

GNPA Ratio of Scheduled Commercial Banks

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India has informed that the Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio of Scheduled Commercial Banks has fallen to 10 year low of 3.9 percent in March 2023 and net non-performing assets (NNPA) ratio declined to 1 percent.
- ★ RBI released its Financial Stability report.
- ★ As per the report Scheduled commercial banks bolstered their capital base with Capital to risk-weighted assets ratio at a historical high of 1 per cent and common equity tier1 capital ratio at 13.9 percent in March 2023.
- ★ The report says, Indian economy presents a picture of resilience, supported by strong macroeconomic fundamentals.
- ★ Sustained growth momentum, moderating inflation, narrowing current account deficit and rising foreign exchange reserves, ongoing fiscal consolidation, and robust financial system are setting the economy on a path of sustained growth.

RBI Slaps ₹30 Lakhs Penalty on Standard Chartered Bank

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹30.00 lakh on Standard Chartered Bank-India for non-compliance with certain provisions of the 'Reserve Bank of India (Know Your Customer (KYC)) Directions, 2016'.
- ★ This penalty has been imposed in the exercise of powers vested in RBI conferred under the provisions of section 47A(1)(c) read with section 46(4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

- ★ This action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.
- ★ The Statutory Inspection for Supervisory Evaluation (ISE 2021) of the bank was conducted by RBI with reference to its financial position as on March 31, 2021.

SBI Launched an Upgraded Version of the YONO App

- ★ As a part of the 68th Bank Day celebrations, the State Bank of India (SBI) has launched its upgraded digital banking application, 'YONO (You Only Need One) for Every Indian', and introduced the Interoperable Cardless Cash Withdrawal (ICCW) facilities.
- ★ The YONO app has been revamped, keeping in mind the expectations of customers for a seamless and pleasant digital experience.
- ★ This will further fulfil the goal of making the 'YONO for Every Indian' mission a reality.
- ★ With 'YONO for Every Indian', bank customers will have access to UPI features like Scan and Pay, Pay by contacts, and Request money, among others on YONO's new avatar.
- ★ The transaction will be facilitated through a single-use dynamic QR code displayed on the ATM screen.
- ★ By eliminating the need to enter a PIN or physically handle a debit card, the ICCW facility minimises the risks associated with shoulder surfing or card cloning.

State Bank of India Grants ₹22.5 Crore to IIT-Bombay

- ★ On the occasion of 68th Foundation Day of the State Bank of India (SBI), the bank through its CSR arm SBI Foundation, has pledged a grant of ₹22.5 Crores to establish a Banking Data and Analytics Hub at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B).
- ★ The focus of the Hub will be to address the unique challenges faced by the Indian banking and financial services sector.
- ★ The collaboration aims to leverage SBI's extensive experience in banking and IIT Bombay's research expertise.
- ★ The Banking Data and Analytics Hub will include a modern 10,000 square feet lab facility where innovative research will be undertaken to solve growing banking concerns.
- ★ The goal is to create new and efficient solutions for the industry.
- ★ In addition to conducting research, the Hub will focus on skill development in data analytics and AI, cultivating a talent pool of banking analytics specialists.

Punjab National Bank Partners with Amul

- ★ State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has partnered with Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMFL), better known as Amul, to offer financial services to Amul's supply network pan-India under the MUDRA scheme.
- ★ Through this association, both partners are aiming to provide support to more than 11 lakh retailers, wholesale dealers and others.

- ★ PNB will provide small-scale financing through MUDRA to support Amul's retailers, wholesale dealers/area milk distributors, and exclusive Amul preferred outlets such as milk parlours.
- ★ The partnership will also involve the integration of various digital channels like QR codes, point of sale (POS) systems, and Unified Payment Interface (UPI).
- ★ Additionally, it will facilitate supply chain finance and digital collection of Equated Monthly Instalments (EMIs).
- ★ Moreover, PNB will offer working capital limits and other relevant services.

Bank of India launched 'Centralised Pool Buy-Out and Co-Lending Cell'

- ★ Bank of India (BoI) has launched a 'Centralized Pool Buy-Out and Co-Lending Cell' to boost priority sector lending.
- ★ Pool Buy-Out is a well-accepted practice in the banking industry to buy out the retail portfolios of Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) in return for immediate payment.
- ★ The Cell, will be equipped with an end-to-end digital underwriting system to onboard pool buy-out and co-lending of loans in partnership with NBFCs (non-banking finance companies).
- ★ Through this platform, seamless integration will be provided between the Bank and multiple NBFCs.
- ★ The Cell will onboard loan assets under Retail, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) and the Agriculture segment with a dedicated team.
- ★ So far, the Bank had been underwriting the aforementioned loans via various branches spread across the country.

Indian bank Collaborate with National E-Governance Services Limited

- ★ Public sector lender Indian Bank in collaboration with National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL), has unveiled new services under its digital transformation initiative – Project WAVE (world of advanced virtual experiences)
- ★ In January 2022, the process of digitization under Project WAVE was first launched.
- ★ As part of the digital transformation initiative, the Indian bank and NeSL has introduced an electronic bank guarantee (e-BG) service to ease traditional paper-based processes.
- ★ This move is expected to significantly reduce the turnaround time for issuing and delivering bank guarantees from the industry average of 3-4 working days to just a few minutes.
- ★ Besides, the facility would replace the need for physical stamp paper and physical signatures of customers by replacing them with digital stamping and e-signing making the entire process digital.
- ★ Indian Bank has launched a facility to avail pre-approved business loans, an end-to-end digital journey, for eligible individuals and proprietor firms to cater to their respective businesses.
- ★ The newly launched digital vehicle loan product enables individual customers of the bank to get their dream vehicle with hassle-free loan processes.
- ★ This facility would be available for loan value up to ₹25 lakh.

Piramal Finance Opens First All-Women Branch in Kochi

- ★ Piramal Finance opened the first all women branch named 'Maitreyi' at Thripunithura near Kochi to cater to the unique needs of women customers.
- ★ Kerala was chosen as the location for the inaugural branch due to its demographic and market dynamics, 50% of customers in Kerala are women, as against the national average of 20%.
- ★ Kerala also has a high percentage of self-employed individuals, highlighting the entrepreneurial spirit of the state's population.
- ★ Each Maitreyi branch has a dedicated team of 7-15 women employees to cater to the specific needs of the customers.
- ★ The branch offers a wide range of services including home loans, MSME loans with a focus on home construction and property loans.

1st Bank to Offer Mahila Samman Savings Certificate Scheme

- ★ The Bank of India (BoI), one of the largest public sector banks (PSBs) in the country, has become the first bank to officially roll out Mahila Samman Savings Certificate (MSSC) scheme.
- ★ The MSSC is a government-guaranteed limited-period small savings scheme aimed at empowering women and fostering their financial inclusion.
- ★ Under the scheme, individual girls or women can open an account, or a guardian can open one on behalf of a minor girl.
- ★ The scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her Budget speech FY 2023-24.
- ★ The scheme offers an interest rate of 5% per annum, compounded quarterly.
- ★ While the minimum investment is ₹1,000, any sum in multiples of ₹100 can be deposited, up to a maximum limit of ₹2 lakh.
- ★ Individuals can open multiple accounts with a gap of 3 months between each account, subject to the overall investment cap of ₹2 lakh.
- ★ The account will mature after 2 years from the date of opening.
- ★ Accounts under this scheme can be opened until March 31, 2025.

India Post and Canada Post Join Hands

- ★ India Post has entered into an agreement with Canada Post to introduce International Tracked Packet Service (ITPS) between the two countries to facilitate e-commerce exports.
- ★ India Post already provides ITPS service with 38 partner countries and Canada will be the 39th country.
- ★ The service was expanded to 38 countries from 16 nations by adding 22 new partners, including Britain, France, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Oman, etc.
- ★ The International Tracked Packet Service (ITPS) is a competitive service that enables the transmission and delivery of packets and is designed to meet the cross-border shipping requirements of e-commerce exporters, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

(MSMEs), small businesses, merchants, etc to promote exports of their products using local post offices.

- ★ The ITPS rates are kept very economical in comparison to International EMS (Speed Post) and other market products.
- ★ The postage for the first 50 gms would be ₹400 and ₹35 for every additional 50 gms.
- ★ This will provide an affordable shipping solution up to 2 kg to exporters along with the pick-up and volume-based discount to contractual customers.

Indian Overseas Bank Unveils RuPay Select Debit Card

- ★ The Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) unveiled an all-new RuPay Select Debit card.
- ★ The RuPay Select debit card will provide “luxury, convenience, and security, all in one card”.
- ★ The introduction of the RuPay Select debit card will offer users with gym memberships, free health check-up, complimentary golf lessons, spa services, and lounge access in selected domestic and international airports.
- ★ The Eligible One is required to have a savings bank account or a certificate of deposit (CD) with IOB, maintaining an average daily balance of ₹1 lakh.
- ★ Cash withdrawal limit is set to ₹50,000.
- ★ Daily limit for usage in merchant establishments (PoS) is set at ₹5 lakh.
- ★ An amount of up to ₹3,50,000 is set for daily usage in e-commerce platforms.
- ★ Charges for the issuance of the card and annual maintenance fee is ₹800 along with GST, respectively.

Flipkart Ties-up with Axis Bank

- ★ Walmart-owned Flipkart has partnered with Axis Bank to offer personal loan service to its 450 million e-commerce customers.
- ★ The personal loan service allows customers to avail instant, end-to-end digital loans of up to ₹5 lakhs.
- ★ The lending service is accessible through Flipkart’s app and boasts a 30-second approval time while removing the need for document submission.
- ★ The move also comes after Amazon, one of Flipkart’s largest competitors, signalled a slowdown in India.
- ★ By introducing personal loans, Flipkart is expanding its range of financial services, which already includes a ‘buy now, pay later’ option, EMI payments, and a co-branded credit card.
- ★ Expanding on the financing options available to customers alleviates the immediate burden of large purchases, encouraging higher transaction volumes and fostering customer loyalty and trust.

ADB Provides Loan for Ongoing Urban Development Project in India

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$200 million additional financing for the Rajasthan Secondary Towns Development Sector Project to improve water supply and sanitation systems and support the enhancement of urban resilience and heritage living in India.
- ★ The ongoing project earlier approved in September 2020 has so far laid 1,451 kilometres (km) of water supply pipes and 1,110 km of sewer pipes and connected 68,098 households to water services in selected secondary towns in Rajasthan.
- ★ The loan will improve water supply systems in at least 7 project towns by converting all groundwater sources to surface water, replacing about 700 km of leaking water pipes, installing 1,400 km of new water supply pipelines, and providing 77,000 households connections with water metres.
- ★ It will also establish 3 new water treatment plants.
- ★ Sanitation systems will be upgraded in at least 8 project towns by rehabilitating about 580 km of sewers, building 7 sewage treatment plants with co-treatment units to process faecal sludge and septage and connecting more than 50,000 households to the sewage system.
- ★ The project will encourage private sector investments and financing to improve water services in Rajasthan's manufacturing areas.
- ★ The plan is to establish designated pipe networks to carry treated wastewater from the sewage treatment plants to industrial facilities.

Punjab National Bank Launched India's First Virtual Branch

- ★ Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched India's first virtual branch in Metaverse.
- ★ With this, the bank will be able to deliver a unique experience to its customers, who can now explore bank deposits, digital payments, senior citizen deposits, and flagship schemes of the government of India.
- ★ With the help of this, customers can explore the bank's products and services such as bank deposits, retail/Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) loans, digital products, women/senior citizens, 'Do It Yourself', and government flagship schemes.
- ★ In addition, the bank will offer an immersive 3D experience to customers while they perform traditional banking activities through their digital avatars.
- ★ The metaverse is the emerging 3-D-enabled digital space that uses virtual reality, augmented reality, and other advanced internet and semiconductor technology to allow people to have lifelike personal and business experiences online.

OECD Marginally Raises India's GDP Growth Forecast

- ★ The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has marginally raised its 2023-24 (FY24) growth forecast for India to 6 per cent, from 5.9 per cent estimated earlier, while maintaining that "weak global demand and the effect of monetary policy tightening will constrain" growth in the world's fifth-largest economy in the current fiscal year.
- ★ Moderating inflation and monetary policy easing in the second half of 2024 will help discretionary household spending regain momentum.

- ★ This, along with improved global conditions, will help economic activity to accelerate, with a growth of 7 per cent in real gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024-25
- ★ Global GDP growth in 2023 is projected to be 2.7 per cent, the lowest annual rate since the global financial crisis, except for the 2020 pandemic period.
- ★ The robust FY23 GDP data and encouraging signs of high-frequency indicators led to a spate of upward revisions in FY24 GDP growth forecasts by analysts.

NHB Operationalises ₹10,000-crore Urban Infrastructure Development Fund

- ★ The National Housing Bank (NHB) has operationalised the ₹10,000-crore Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) announced in 2023 Budget for the creation of urban infrastructure in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.
- ★ UIDF has been launched to supplement the efforts of the State governments by providing a stable and predictable source of finance for the creation of urban infrastructure in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.
- ★ As many as 459 tier-2 cities with a population of 50,000 to less than a lakh and 580 tier-3 cities with a population of one lakh to less than a million as per the 2011 census are being covered under UIDF as of now.
- ★ Interest rate on UIDF loans has been kept at the bank rate minus 5% i.e., 5.25% at present.
- ★ The loan (principal) will be repayable in 5 equal annual instalments within 7 years from the date of withdrawal, including a moratorium period of 2 years while interest will be payable on a quarterly basis.
- ★ The minimum size and maximum size of the project proposal shall be ₹5 crores (₹1 crore for northeast & hilly States) and ₹100 crore.

Indian Banks' Association Sets Up 5-Member Group

- ★ The Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has constituted a 5-member working group for implementing the recommendations of the Reserve Bank of India's committee on the "working of the Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs)".
- ★ The group has been formed on the orders of RBI.
- ★ The RBI desires that the IBA and SLMA, in consultation with the lenders and ARCs, take appropriate measures for early implementation of the recommendations of the committee.
- ★ Committee's recommendations aimed at enabling ARCs to fulfil the increasing financial sector demand.
- ★ The working group will undertake a thorough review of the assignment agreements and trust deed templates.
- ★ This review will focus on the acquisition of stressed assets from lenders by ARCs and will include necessary updates in line with evolving changes and expectations within the ARC sector.

RBI Panel Suggests Measures for Internationalisation of Rupee

- ★ A Reserve Bank-appointed committee suggested a host of short-term and long-term measures for the internationalisation of the Indian rupee, including efforts for inclusion of the Indian currency in the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket.
- ★ The recommendations by an Inter-Departmental Group (IDG), headed by RBI Executive Director Radha Shyam Ratho.
- ★ The group was constituted by RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar to review the position of the rupee as an international currency and to frame a road map for the internationalisation of the domestic currency.
- ★ Internationalisation of the rupee is a process that involves increasing use of the local currency in cross-border transactions.
- ★ It is a process of promoting and increasing the use of the INR as a widely accepted currency for international transactions and investments.
- ★ It involves enhancing the currency's acceptance, liquidity, and usability in global markets.
- ★ In December 2022, India saw its first settlement of foreign trade in rupee with Russia – as part of the 'International Settlement of Trade in Indian Rupee' mechanism initiated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in July, 2022.

SEBI Permits Private Equity Funds to Become Mutual Fund Sponsors

- ★ The Capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has laid down new rules for private equity funds sponsoring mutual fund houses and self-sponsored asset management companies (AMCs).
- ★ Any entity that owns 40% or more stake in a mutual fund is considered a sponsor.
- ★ Currently, mutual fund houses must have a sponsor and must be a business in financial services such as banking, stock broking, housing finance company.
- ★ The new regulatory framework for Private equity firms acting as sponsors will be effective from August 1, 2023 with the deployment of liquid net worth by AMCs becoming applicable from January 1, 2024.
- ★ Under the new framework, applicants for sponsorship must have at least 5 years of experience as a fund manager, with experience in investing and managing at least 5,000 crore in the financial sector.
- ★ The PE funds should have an initial shareholding of sponsor equivalent to capital contributed to an AMC to the extent of over ₹150 crore which will be locked-in for 5 years.
- ★ In addition, the mutual fund sponsored by a private equity fund cannot participate as an anchor investor in public issues of investee companies where the sponsor has a 10% or more investment or a board representation.
- ★ For becoming a self-sponsored AMC, it should have been in the financial services business for over 5 years and positive net worth in all the immediately preceding 5 years.
- ★ To become a self-sponsored AMC, the entity should have an average net annual profit of at least ₹10 crore during the preceding 5 years.

PhonePe Launched a One-Stop Point-of-Sale Solution

- ★ PhonePe launched its Point-of-sale (POS) device that enables merchants to accept payments via Debit Cards, Credit Cards and UPI, providing them with a simple and seamless settlement experience.
- ★ The device comes preloaded with the PhonePe POS App and supports transactions through tap/swipe/dip and interoperable QR codes.
- ★ The POS device, built on the Android platform, revolutionises the checkout experience for businesses.
- ★ Its reliability and security are topnotch, backed by the PCI-PTS 6 certification, safeguarding both merchant and consumer data.
- ★ With automatic batch closure and unified reconciliation, the device becomes a one-stop solution for hasslefree account settlement, streamlining merchant operations.
- ★ The device is offered at a nominal monthly rental, and comes with world-class product quality and service from PhonePe.

Utkarsh Small Finance Bank's ₹500-Crore Initial Public Offering

- ★ Utkarsh Small Finance Bank (SFB) will launch its ₹500 crore initial public offering (IPO) on 12 July 2023 with the price band being set at ₹23-25.
- ★ The IPO, entirely a fresh issue of shares, will close for subscription on 14 July 2023.
- ★ Minimum Bid Lot is 600 equity shares.
- ★ While not less than 75% of the issue would be available for allocation to QIBs, up to 15% is reserved for non-institutional investors and the balance 10% for retail individual investors.
- ★ The IPO proceeds will be used to expand the bank's business over the next 2 years and help it become a multi-product bank.
- ★ As of March 2023, it had operations in 26 states and union territories, employed 15,424 people at 830 banking locations, and served 3.59 million customers, the majority of whom lived in rural and semi-rural areas, mostly in the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand.

Razorpay India Launched 1st International Payment Gateway in Malaysia

- ★ India's fintech giant and leading Full-Stack Payments, and Business Banking Platform, Razorpay, launched its first international Payment Gateway in Malaysia for the Malaysian market with Curlec, now known as 'Curlec By Razorpay'.
- ★ The new Curlec payment gateway will serve more than 5,000 businesses with a target of Malaysian ringgits 10 billion in annualized gross transaction value (GTV) by 2025.
- ★ In February 2022, Razorpay had acquired a majority stake in Kuala Lumpur-based fintech Curlec at a valuation of \$20 million with an aim to fuel its global expansion plans.
- ★ The balance stake acquisition was to be completed in 2023.

New Travel Credit Card to Redefine Travel Experiences

- ★ IDFC FIRST Bank has collaborated with Club Vistara and Mastercard to introduce a travel credit card.
- ★ It is designed to provide exciting travel and lifestyle-related offers to cardholders.
- ★ The new card will combine seamless banking services with numerous travel benefits.
- ★ Joining Benefits: A free Premium Economy flight ticket along with an upgrade voucher.
- ★ Tiered Annual Rewards: Unlock free tickets basis the cumulative annual spending on the card.
 - More than ₹1,50,000: 1 additional Premium Economy Class Ticket
 - More than ₹3,00,000: 1 additional Premium Economy Class Ticket
 - More than ₹4,50,000: 1 additional Premium Economy Class Ticket
 - More than ₹9,00,000: 1 additional Premium Economy Class Ticket
 - More than ₹12,00,000: 1 additional Premium Economy Class Ticket
- ★ CFAR Insurance: The card offers a cover on non-refundable components of any travel booking with up to two claims worth up to 10,000 on Flight & Hotel booking for the cardholder, under Cancelled For Any Reason (CFAR) Insurance.

Max Life Insurance Partnered with DCB Bank

- ★ Max Life Insurance Company has partnered with DCB Bank to provide a variety of life insurance products, including term, savings, and retirement plans, allowing them to protect their financial future and expand their investment portfolio.
- ★ The aim is to empower DCB Bank's customers by providing them with innovative and flexible life insurance products that cater to their needs.
- ★ The business tie-up will offer bank customers access to Max Life's protection and long-term savings solutions, offering financial stability for themselves and their families.

Local Currency Settlement in Cross-Border Transactions

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Central Bank of UAE (CBUAE) signed two Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) in Abu Dhabi for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions; and cooperation for interlinking their payment and messaging systems.
- ★ The MoUs were signed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das and the CBUAE Governor Khaled Mohamed Balama.
- ★ The MoUs is to facilitate seamless cross border transactions and payments, and foster greater economic cooperation between the two countries.
- ★ The 1st MoU focuses on establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies, specifically the Indian rupee (INR) and the UAE Dirham (AED), for cross-border transactions.
- ★ The creation of a Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) will enable exporters and importers to invoice and transact in their respective domestic currencies, fostering an INR-AED foreign exchange market.

- ★ By optimizing transaction costs and settlement time, this arrangement will promote investments, remittances, and bilateral trade between India and the UAE.
- ★ The 2nd MoU centers on cooperation between the payment and messaging systems of the two central banks.
- ★ This collaboration encompasses linking India's Fast Payment Systems (FPSS- Unified Payments Interface, UPI) with the UAE's Instant Payment Platform (IPP), as well as connecting their respective card switches (RuPay switch and UAESWITCH).
- ★ Additionally, the MoU explores the potential linking of India's Structured Financial Messaging System (SFMS) with the messaging system in the UAE.
- ★ These integrations aim to facilitate seamless and efficient cross-border funds transfers, card transactions, and financial messaging between the two countries.

First Bank to Link Digital Rupee with UPI QR Code

- ★ HDFC Bank has launched Unified Payments Interface Quick Response Code (UPI QR code) interoperable with India's sovereign digital currency, Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).
- ★ With this, HDFC Bank became one of the first banks in the country to complete the integration process.
- ★ With the interoperable UPI QR code, HDFC Bank merchants who have been onboarded on its CBDC platform can accept payments from their customers in the form of Digital Rupee currency.
- ★ HDFC Bank has signed up 1,70,000 merchants and over 1 lakh customers in pilot programmes using the digital rupee.
- ★ **Benefits of UPI QR Code Interoperable with Digital Rupee: (17 | 7)**

For Consumers:

- Transact money available in their CBDC wallet across UPI QR code
- No need to scan different QR codes at the same merchant

For Merchants:

- Only need to display one QR code at the storefront or through the acquiring bank's mobile application
- No need for merchants to change their existing QR codes.

Campaign 'The Great Indian FD Fest'

- ★ Fincare Small Finance Bank Limited (FSFBL) has launched its multilingual campaign 'The Great Indian Fixed Deposit (FD) Fest' featuring brand ambassador Viswanathan Anand.
- ★ The aim is to raise awareness about the bank's interest rate offering for all categories of customers.
- ★ Additionally, it emphasises the importance of fixed deposit as a stable and long-term investment vehicle which is suitable for everyone.
- ★ At present the bank is offering rates as high as 9.11% for senior citizens and 8.51% for general citizens.

- ★ This campaign celebrates the spirit of financial empowerment and presents a golden opportunity for every Indian to secure their financial future through fixed deposits.

SEBI Tightens Disclosure Norms for Listed Firm

- ★ Capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has tightened the disclosure norms for listed companies with strict timelines and introduced criteria for determining the materiality of events.
- ★ Under the framework, the regulator asked listed companies to disclose family settlement agreements, which can impact the management and control of such firms to stock exchanges.
- ★ These agreements must be disclosed in 12 hours if a listed entity is a party and in 24 hours if the listed entity is not a party.
- ★ For material events or information which emanate from the listed entity, including those related to acquisitions, Scheme of Arrangement, consolidation of shares and buyback of securities, the timeline for disclosure by the entity has been reduced from 24 hours to 12 hours.
- ★ For information from a decision taken in a board meeting, the disclosure must be made within 30 minutes from the closure of such meeting.

Fintech Startup Accelerator Programme

- ★ Payments service provider PayU has launched a 45-day fintech accelerator program, inFINity for early-stage Indian startups in collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) India, a cloud platform, and venture capital firm Chiratae Ventures.
- ★ The aim is to support the growth of early-stage fintech startups by providing access to mentorship from industry experts, curated resources, and AWS Activate credits.
- ★ The deadline to apply for the cohort is 11 August 2023.
- ★ Selected applicants will be announced on 17 August 2023 and the program will commence on 31 August 2023 with 3 days of in-person boot camp in Bengaluru, Karnataka followed by four weeks of intensive online training.
- ★ To apply for the program, startups must be either bootstrapped or have raised funding of less than \$5 million, seek to raise Seed to Series A funding and have a minimum viable product (MVP) already developed.
- ★ The cohort will receive training and mentorship sessions, including access to experts from PayU, 'guiding them to scale their business operations and expand their customer base'.

DICGC Asks Insured Banks to Display Its Logo and QR Code

- ★ The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) has asked all insured banks to display the DICGC Logo and QR code (quick-response code) linked to its website on the banks' internet banking portals and websites.
- ★ These decisions have been taken to enhance awareness about Deposit Insurance.
- ★ This will allow customers to conveniently identify banks covered by the Deposit Insurance Scheme of DICGC.
- ★ All banks are required to comply with the circular effective from September 1, 2023.

- ★ All commercial banks including branches of foreign banks functioning in India, local area banks and regional rural banks are insured by the DICGC.

Tata AIG General Insurance as Lead Non-Life Insurer for Maharashtra

- ★ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has selected Tata AIG General Insurance Company Limited as the non-life insurer for the State of Maharashtra.
- ★ It is to initiate and drive activities in collaboration with all other non-life and health insurance companies to increase insurance penetration in the State in line with its vision “Insurance for all by the year 2047”.
- ★ Tata AIG General Insurance Company Limited will collaborate with all non-life and health insurance companies working in the state of Maharashtra, the IRDAI, and the State Government.
- ★ It will create awareness of existing government schemes, enhancing insurance reach and accessibility across the state at the Gram Panchayat, district and state levels.
- ★ The IRDAI has also identified key segments such as Motor Insurance, Health Insurance, and Crop Insurance, support of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and employment-related.
- ★ Tata AIG will also assist in promoting the adoption of flagship government schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

Inclusion of ‘Nonghyup Bank’ in the Second Schedule of The RBI Act, 1934

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a notification addressing all banks regarding the inclusion of “NongHyup Bank” in the Second Schedule of the RBI Act, 1934.
- ★ This notification informs banks about the recent addition of NongHyup Bank to the regulated list.
- ★ NongHyup Bank (formerly National Agricultural Cooperative Federation) is a commercial bank in Seoul, South Korea.
- ★ On 29 April 2021, Nonghyup Bank was granted a Hong Kong banking licence.

PNB Launched ‘Project PNB PALAASH’

- ★ Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched its environmental initiative ‘PNB Palaash’, an 8-month period campaign to embrace sustainability.
- ★ The campaign would lead to cost savings and operational efficiencies through measures such as energy and resource conservation, paper reduction, waste management and streamlined digital processes.
- ★ Under this initiative, 1 lakh plus employees of PNB will plant a minimum of two saplings each.
- ★ Some of the campaign themes under this project include Digi Branches, Green Data Center, Electrical Vehicle Finance, Green Project Finance, Recycling Camps, Tree Plantation Drive, Paper Conservation Drive, Energy Conservation Olympics, Paper Conservation drive.
- ★ The campaign is in line with the RBI’s vision of sustainable finance and the sixth iteration of Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE 6.0), an initiative by the Department of Financial Services (DFS).

SBI Raised ₹3,101 Crores through AT1 Bond

- ★ Country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), has raised ₹3,101 crore capital via additional tier I bonds (AT1) or perpetual bonds at a coupon of 8.1%.
- ★ This is 15 basis points lower than the pricing for its previous AT1 bond issued at 8.25% in March, 2023.
- ★ The AT-1 bonds had a base issue of ₹3,000 crore and received total bids worth ₹5,920 crore and also included a call option after 10 years.
- ★ Additionally, the Board of Directors of SBI approved a ₹50,000 crore bond issue in the current fiscal year in June.
- ★ AT-1 bonds, or Additional Tier-1 bonds, are unsecured, perpetual bonds issued by banks to strengthen their core capital base in compliance with Basel-III norms.
- ★ AT-1 bonds are considered riskier than other debt instruments because they can be written down before equity, resulting in losses for investors.

UPU to Evaluate UPI Platform for Cross-Border Remittances

- ★ The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has announced plans to evaluate the integration of the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) with cross-border remittances using the global postal network.
- ★ It is to explore the potential of UPI in facilitating secure and efficient international money transfers.
- ★ UPI offers a secure, convenient, and real-time payment experience, making it a promising platform for cross-border remittances.
- ★ Leveraging the global postal network, which has extensive reach and infrastructure, can further expand the reach of UPI-enabled remittances.
- ★ The integration of UPI with postal channels can provide a reliable and accessible remittance solution for individuals, particularly in remote areas where traditional banking services may be limited.

ESAF Small Finance Bank Scores High in ESG Assessment

- ★ ESAF Small Finance Bank has achieved a high score of 71 in an Environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) assessment conducted by CareEdge Research.
- ★ By surpassing the industry average of 8 the Bank has showcased that its environmental, social and governance practices are set at a higher standard than the industry average.
- ★ For the environmental pillar, the bank achieved a score of 62%.
- ★ This demonstrates the banks' commitment to green finance and environment conscious operations.
- ★ Additionally, the Bank has demonstrated a decisive ESG roadmap in Sustainable Development Goal initiatives, foster local sustainable economic growth, ensure food security, foster energy security, and align with net-zero targets through its commitment to green finance and environmental consciousness.

- ★ For the social pillar, the Bank achieved a score of 68% by demonstrating healthy labour management practices.
- ★ For the governance pillar, the bank achieved a score of 76% due to its board governance and disclosure practices.

India's PFRDA Approves Sovereign Green Bonds

- ★ The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) in India approved the inclusion of Sovereign Green Bonds (SGBs) in pension funds.
- ★ These bonds issued by the government will be used to finance projects focused on environmental initiatives.
- ★ The decision to allow pension funds to invest in SGBs facilitates direct allocation of funds to environmentally beneficial projects, thereby contributing to India's sustainable development objectives.
- ★ Issuance of Sovereign Green Bonds reflects the government's commitment to address environmental challenges and promote a green economy.
- ★ The main purpose of Sovereign Green Bonds is to finance initiatives and projects that aim to address environmental challenges and promote sustainability.
- ★ Green bonds are a type of debt security that helps raise capital for projects that have a positive impact on the environment or contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Agreement between Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank

- ★ An MoU has been signed between the Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank for the disbursement of financial assistance to the selected beneficiaries under the 'Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists' earlier known as 'Scheme for Pension and Medical Aid to Artists'.
- ★ As per the MoU, master data of selected beneficiaries both for fresh as well as legacy data is to be uploaded by the Ministry in the online portal to be developed by the Canara Bank for this purpose.
- ★ Based on the scheme guidelines Canara Bank is required to work out the quarterly requirement of funds and raise the demand for the same to the Ministry.
- ★ Upon receipt of the demand of funds from Canara Bank, the same will be released in advance every quarter by the Ministry to the Bank for releasing the same every month to the eligible beneficiaries.
- ★ An artist aged 60 years and above who has contributed to the field of art and culture in their active age and whose annual income is not more than ₹48,000/- can apply under the scheme either through the Art & Culture Department of the concerned State Government/UT or Zonal Cultural Center.
- ★ Under this scheme an amount of ₹26.00 crore has been allocated in B.E. for the year 2023-24.

Indian Bank Ties up With TAFE, TMTL for Tractor Financing

- ★ Indian Bank has partnered with TAFE (Tractors and Farm Equipment) and its wholly-owned subsidiary TMTL (TAFE Motors and Tractors Ltd.) for tractor financing.

- ★ The tie-up would allow farmers and individuals to avail tractor loans at affordable interest rates, with the benefit of hassle-free loan processing, the public sector lender said in a statement.
- ★ Interested buyers can avail of tractor financing benefits from more than 5,700 branches.
- ★ TAFE (Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited) is a renowned tractor manufacturer in India, offering a comprehensive range of tractors and agricultural machinery.
- ★ With a rich legacy spanning decade, TAFE has been a trusted partner to farmers, empowering them with cutting-edge agricultural solutions.

ADB Retained India's GDP Growth Forecast at 6.4%

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) retained India's economic growth forecast at 6.4% for the current financial year (FY2023) and 6.7% for the next financial year (FY2024).
- ★ This comes after the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee projected GDP growth of 2023-24 at 6.5%.
- ★ The real GDP growth for 2022-23 fiscal ended March 2023 was recorded at 7.2%.
- ★ ADB forecast 3.6% inflation this year for developing economies in Asia, and 3.4% in 2024.
- ★ China has been pegged to grow at 5% this year and 4.5% the next year.
- ★ Growth in Southeast Asia is now expected at 4.6% this year and 4.9% next year, down from 4.7% and 5% previously.
- ★ For developing Asia, the forecast has been 4.8% this year and 4.7% next year.
- ★ Developing Asia consists of 46 economies in the Asia-Pacific and excludes Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

BoI Plans Share Sale to Meet SEBI's Minimum Public Holding Norms

- ★ State-owned Bank of India (BoI) is exploring the possibility of share sale to investors over the next one year to meet the minimum public holding requirement of 25%.
- ★ Currently, the Government of India (GoI) holds an 81.41% stake in the Mumbai-based bank.
- ★ Public sector banks have time till August 2024 for meeting the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) requirement.
- ★ Post share-sale, depending on the quantum, the holding of the Government of India would come down below 75%.

Interest Rate for Employees' Provident Fund in FY 2022-23

- ★ The Union government approved the interest rate of 8.15% recommended by the Central Board of Trustees of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for its over 6 crore subscribers for the financial year 2022-23.
- ★ The Ministry of Labour and Employment has conveyed the approval of the Central Government under para 60(1) of Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952 to credit interest@ 8.15 % for the year 2022-23 to the account of each member of the EPF Scheme as per the provision under para 60 of EPF Scheme, 1952.

- ★ The order comes after the Finance Ministry's concurrence to the EPF rate of interest approved by the EPFO trustees earlier in March, 2023.
- ★ The EPF scheme, managed by the EPFO, is an essential social security and retirement benefit program that aims to provide financial security to employees after their retirement.
- ★ Each month, an employee contributes 12% of their earnings to their EPF account, with the entire contribution directed towards the EPF account.
- ★ On the employer's part, only 3.67% is deposited into the EPF account, while the remaining 8.33% is allocated to the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS).

Indian Bank Launched Resources Acquisition Centre

- ★ India's 7th largest Public Sector Bank, Indian Bank launched Resources Acquisition Centre (RAC).
- ★ It is to strengthen the retail deposit portfolio, which encompasses current deposit, savings bank and term deposit accounts.
- ★ The dedicated RAC team will spearhead the concept of Relationship Banking, aiming to deepen existing client relationships while attracting potential New High-Value clients.
- ★ The bank will focus on specific customer segments, including HNIs, Government/Institutional Clients, Salaried Class, Corporates, Business community, and Traders.
- ★ The bank plans to open 20 RACs at ultra potential centres in phase-I to bolster its deposit portfolio.
- ★ The RACs will play a pivotal role in driving innovation, enhancing customer experiences, and fortifying the bank's deposit base.

Indian Banks get ₹5,729 crores from DEAF

- ★ The Union Minister of State for Finance, Shri Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad announced that Indian banks have received ₹5,729 crores from the "Depositor Education and Awareness" (DEA) Fund to facilitate the refund of unclaimed deposits in the last 5-years.
- ★ The "Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014", which was issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), outlines regulations pertaining to unclaimed deposits and details the usage of the fund, including its role in promoting depositors' interests and supporting specified purposes.
- ★ Dr Karad stated that RBI has taken various steps to reduce the quantum of unclaimed deposits and return such deposits to rightful claimants.
- ★ Banks are, inter-alia, advised to:
 - Display the list of unclaimed deposits which are inactive/inoperative for 10 years or more on the bank's websites.
 - Find the whereabouts of the customers and their legal heirs to return unclaimed deposits to the rightful claimants.

PhonePe Introduces an Income Tax Payment Feature on Its App

- ★ PhonePe, a digital payments platform, has partnered with PayMate, a leading digital business-to-business (B2B) payments and service provider, to allow users to pay their income tax on the PhonePe app called “Income Tax Payment”.
- ★ It is to allow taxpayers to pay self-assessment and advance tax directly from the app using Unified Payments Interface (UPI) or credit card payments.
- ★ This eliminates the need to log in to the tax portal, creating a seamless and efficient experience for taxpayers.
- ★ Users can choose to pay their taxes using their credit card or UPI.
- ★ With credit card payments, users also get a 45-day interest-free period and earn reward points on their tax payments, depending on their bank.
- ★ After the completion of the payment, taxpayers will receive a Unique Transaction Reference (UTR) number as a proof of tax payment.
- ★ The UTR will be available within a day, whereas the challan is generated within 2 working days.

HDFC Mutual Fund Launched Charity Fund for Cancer Cure

- ★ HDFC Asset Management Company (HDFC AMC), investment manager to HDFC Mutual Fund (HDFC MF), has launched the HDFC Charity Fund for Cancer Cure in partnership with the Indian Cancer Society (ICS).
- ★ The donated amount will be used for the treatment of underprivileged cancer patients.
- ★ It is a closed-ended income scheme and a fixed maturity plan with a tenure of 1,196 days.
- ★ The new fund offer (NFO) will open on July 28, 2023 and close on August 8, 2023.
- ★ This NFO marks the 4th edition of the cancer cure series that started in 2011.
- ★ The HDFC Charity Fund for Cancer Cure provides investors with an opportunity to contribute to a noble cause while combining their investments with philanthropy.
- ★ These donations will be eligible for deduction under Section 80G of the Income-tax Act, 1961 (under the old regime).

Canara Bank to Sign ₹3,000 Crore IT Transformation Deal

- ★ Public sector bank Canara Bank will be signing a ₹3,000 crore IT transformation deal to revamp and enhance its tech infrastructure.
- ★ In a highly competitive bidding race, global tech giants IBM and its managed infrastructure services spin-off Kyndryl are the frontrunners, positioning themselves to secure the partnership.
- ★ It is to modernise and enhance Canara Bank’s technological capabilities, enabling it to provide efficient banking solutions to its customers.

SEBI Introduced 6 New Mutual Fund Strategies Under ESG Theme

- ★ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has allowed asset management companies (AMCs) to launch funds under 6 new strategies under the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) thematic category.
- ★ Currently, regulatory requirements allow mutual funds to launch only one scheme with ESG investing under the thematic category for equity schemes.
- ★ 'Exclude' securities will be based on certain ESG-related activities, business practices, or business segments.
- ★ This strategy should specify the characteristic or type of exclusion such as adverse impact, controversy or Faith.
- ★ 'Integration' themed funds would consider ESG-related factors that are material to the risk and return of the investment, alongside traditional financial factors, when making investment decisions.
- ★ 'Best-in-class & Positive Screening' strategy would aim to invest in companies and issuers that perform better than peers on one or more performance metrics related to ESG matters.
- ★ 'Impact' investing would seek to generate a positive, measurable social or environmental impact alongside a financial return and how the fund manager intends to achieve the impact objective.
- ★ 'Sustainable' objective funds would invest in sectors, industries, or companies that are expected to benefit from long-term macro or structural ESG-related trends.
- ★ 'Transition or Transition Related' schemes would focus on companies and issuers that support/facilitate environmental transition and just transition.
- ★ These measures will facilitate green financing with a thrust on enhanced disclosures and mitigation of greenwashing.

Reliance General Insurance to Get ₹200 Crore Capital Infusion

- ★ Reliance General Insurance will soon receive an equity infusion of ₹200 crore from its parent Reliance Capital which is undergoing bankruptcy proceedings.
- ★ Following the infusion, the insurance firm will raise an additional ₹400 crore, mostly through debt, to fund its growth.
- ★ The committee of creditors (CoC) of RCap has approved ₹200-crore capital infusion, which is likely to be made by the end of August, 2023.
- ★ Reliance General Insurance is the most valuable asset through which lenders hope to recover a substantial part of their dues, and any dip in its valuation would correspondingly lower the company's valuation.
- ★ Reliance General had earlier stated that the capital infusion was crucial to increase its solvency margin to 175% from 155%.
- ★ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) requires companies to maintain a minimum solvency margin of 150%.

BUSINESS NEWS

By 2075, India's Economy will Overtake the United States

- ★ Investment Bank Goldman Sachs has announced that India is poised to become the world's second-largest economy by 2075 crossing Japan, Germany, and the U.S.
- ★ With a population of 1.4 billion people, India's GDP is estimated to expand remarkably, reaching 52.5 trillion dollars surpassing the US GDP projection.
- ★ In a recent report, Goldman Sachs said, on top of a burgeoning population, driving the forecast is India's progress in innovation and technology, higher capital investment, and rising worker productivity.
- ★ It said this is an appropriate time for the private sector to scale up on creating capacity in manufacturing and services to generate more jobs and absorb the large labour force.
- ★ Labor force participation, a vast pool of talent, and a working-age population ratio are a few of the factors set to make India the second-largest economy in the world by 2075.

SPORTS

Lausanne Diamond League 2023

- ★ Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra topped the Lausanne Diamond League 2023.
- ★ Neeraj Chopra achieved the best throw of 87.66m during the competition.
- ★ He has recently recovered from a hamstring injury sustained during training.
- ★ Due to injury, he had to withdraw from three events in June: FBK Games, Paavo Nurmi Games and Ostrava Golden Spike.

Asian Kabaddi Championship

- ★ India emerged winner in the final of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2023 held in Busan, Korea on 30th June defeating Iran with a score of 42-32.
- ★ This victory marks India's eighth title out of nine editions of the championship, highlighting their dominance in the sport.
- ★ Pawan Sehrawat, the captain of the Indian team, played a crucial role by securing a super 10, leading the team to success.
- ★ India finished the league stage undefeated, winning all five matches and securing the top position in the points table.

FIFA Men's Football Rankings

- ★ 'World Men's Football Ranking' released by 'FIFA' in June 2023.
- ★ Argentina with 1843.73 points has topped the list.

- ★ India has been ranked 100th (with a total score of 1204.90) in the ‘World Men’s Football Ranking’ by ‘FIFA’.
- ★ The Indian men’s football team has leapfrogged teams like Lebanon and New Zealand to reach the 100th spot in the latest FIFA world rankings.
- ★ It is after five years that the Indian men’s football team entered the top 100 club after slipping from the 96th position in 2018.
- ★ This is the fourth best ranking achieved by the Indian men’s football team in history.

132nd Durand Cup Tournament Organized in Kolkata

- ★ The ‘Trophy Tour’ of the 132nd edition of Durand Cup, India’s oldest football tournament, was started at a function held at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt.
- ★ It was flagged off by Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pandey, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhary and President of All India Football Federation (AIFF) Kalyan Choubey.
- ★ This tournament will be organized from 3rd August to 3rd September 2023 in Kolkata.
- ★ 24 teams including teams from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh will participate in the 132nd edition of the tournament.
- ★ Foreign teams are participating in the tournament after a gap of 27 years. The tournament is open to all club teams.
- ★ It is organized by the Durand Football Tournament Society (DFTS) under the aegis of the All-India Football Federation (AIFF).
- ★ Basically, the tournament has always been a symbol of excellence, sportsmanship and high point of competitiveness in the field of sports.

Austrian Grand Prix 2023

- ★ Max Verstappen took a stunning victory in the Austrian Grand Prix 2023.
- ★ The Austrian Grand Prix victory marked Verstappen’s fifth consecutive victory and seven from nine races in the current season.
- ★ Charles Leclerc, finished second at the Austrian Grand Prix, crossing the finish line 5.2 seconds behind Verstappen.
- ★ Sergio Pérez, driving for the Red Bull team, finished third, 17.2 seconds behind the race leader.

SAFF Championship 2023

- ★ India won the final of the South Asian Football Federation Championship 2023.
- ★ The Indian men’s football team beat Kuwait 5-4 in a thrilling penalty shootout.
- ★ The win secured India’s 9th title in the SAFF Championship out of 14 editions.
- ★ The final took place at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bangalore.
- ★ India served as the host of the tournament.

First Indian Cricketer to be a Part of WCPL

- ★ Shreyanka Patil became the first Indian cricketer to be signed for the Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL).
- ★ She is the first Indian player to get a contract in a foreign league before making her international debut.
- ★ He has been selected to represent the Guyana Amazon Warriors in the WCPL, which will take place from 31 August to 10 September.
- ★ Shreyanka Patil was awarded the title of 'Player of the Tournament' in the Women's Emerging Asia Cup held in Hong Kong.
- ★ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) allowed Indian women cricketers to participate in overseas cricket leagues.

ATP Doubles Title in Spain

- ★ Indian tennis player Yuki Bhambri won his maiden ATP doubles title at the Mallorca Championships in Spain.
- ★ Yuki Bhambri stitched a partnership with South African player Lloyd Harris to seal the victory in the final match.
- ★ The pair won 6-3, 6-4 over the Dutch-Austrian pair of Robin Hasse and Philipp Oswald.
- ★ The tournament took place on grass courts.
- ★ The 30-year-old Indian Bhambri, has reached the 58th spot in the ATP doubles tennis rankings.

First Male Archer to Win a Gold Medal in The Recurve Event

- ★ Parth Salunkhe has become the first male archer to win a gold medal in the recurve event at the World Youth Archery Championships held in Ireland.
- ★ India finished with its highest ever medal tally of 11 medals in this championship.
- ★ The 19-year-old from Satara in Maharashtra won the gold medal on July 9 after defeating a Korean in the Under-21 men's recurve individual final.
- ★ Salunkhe, who topped the ranking round, defeated seventh seed Song Injun 7-3 in a hard-fought five-set match.
- ★ India finished with six gold, one silver and four bronze medals, the highest in terms of total medal tally.
- ★ In terms of rankings, they were second only to Korea, which took the pole position with six gold and four silver medals.

34th International Biology Olympiad

- ★ India emerged as the top country in the 34th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) by securing the highest number of medals.
- ★ This year, India achieved a remarkable feat by winning four gold medals, marking the first time it has achieved an all-gold performance and topped the medal tally in IBO.

- ★ The winners from India are:
 - Megh Chhabda from Maharashtra's Jalna district,
 - Dhruv Advani from Bengaluru in Karnataka,
 - Ishan Pednekar from Kota, Rajasthan
 - Rahit Panda from Risali, Chhattisgarh.
- ★ The IBO took place in Al Ain, UAE, from July 3 to July 11 2023.
- ★ A total of 293 students from 76 different countries participated in the IBO.
- ★ Singapore, along with India, also secured four gold medals, making it the only other country to achieve this feat.

Canada Open 2023

- ★ Lakshya Sen has won the men's singles title in Canada Open 2023 by defeating world number-10 player Li Shi Feng of China in straight sets 21-18, 22-20.
- ★ Commonwealth Games gold medalist Lakshya Sen has clinched the men's singles title at the Canada Open 2023 by defeating the current All England champion Li Shi Feng of China.
- ★ This is Lakshya's second BWF World Tour title this season.
- ★ He has already won the India Open title in January 2022.
- ★ Lakshya's current world ranking in men's singles is 19.

ICC 'Player of the Month' for June

- ★ The ICC (International Cricket Council) honoured Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and Australian women's team all-rounder Ashley Gardner with the 'Player of the Month' awards in June for their exceptional performances.
- ★ Wanindu Hasaranga received the prestigious accolade for his remarkable achievements during the World Cup qualifier matches held in Zimbabwe.
- ★ Ashley Gardner became the first player to win the Player of the Month award three times. She was recognized for her outstanding contribution during the Women's Ashes series.
- ★ The ICC honoured both the players during the month of June for their remarkable skill, performance and impact on their respective teams.

Para Athletics World Championships 2023

- ★ India's Nishad Kumar has clinched a silver medal in the ongoing Para Athletics World Championships 2023.
- ★ Paris will host the Para Athletics World Championships from 8 to 17 July at the Charlety Stadium.
- ★ Over 1200 athletes from 107 nations are set to take part in this year's competition.
- ★ Nishad bagged this medal in the High Jump T47 Event.
- ★ With this win, Nishad has become the second athlete at this event to grab a medal.

- ★ The top-four ranked athletes at the 2023 World Para Athletics Championships in each of the individual medal events qualify for the 2024 Paralympic Games, also to be held in Paris.

Kerala's First Woman Cricketer to Play for India

- ★ Minnu Mani creates history as the first woman cricketer from Kerala to represent the Indian senior team.
- ★ Her debut performance includes a wicket in the first over, impressing teammates and coaches alike.
- ★ As India and Bangladesh women's cricket teams were preparing for the first T20I in Mirpur, far away at Mananthavady in Kerala's Wayanad district, the Mani household suddenly came alive.
- ★ Nonetheless, Minnu finished with respectable figures of 3-0-21-1, contributing to India's effort in restricting Bangladesh to 114/5.
- ★ India later secured a comfortable seven-wicket victory, chasing down the target in just 16.2 overs.
- ★ Hailing from the Kurichiya tribe in Wayanad, Minnu had previously made waves by being the sole player from Kerala to participate in the Women's Premier League (WPL), where she was bought by the Delhi Capitals for a staggering ₹30 lakh.

Wimbledon 2023

- ★ Marketa Vondrousova became the first unseeded player in the Open Era to win the women's singles championship at Wimbledon 2023.
- ★ In the final, Marketa Vondrousova defeated Ons Jabeur, who had been runner-up in the previous year's tournament.
- ★ Marketa Vondrousova is a Czech tennis player who achieved her career-highest career ranking of world No. 14 according to the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).
- ★ It has been held at the All-England Club in Wimbledon, London since 1877, played on grass courts.
- ★ Wimbledon is one of the four Grand Slam tournaments, along with the Australian Open, the French Open and the US Open.

64th International Mathematical Olympiad 2023

- ★ The six-member Indian team secured two Gold medals at the 64th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2023 held in Chiba, Japan.
- ★ The event took place from the 02 July to 13 July 2023.
- ★ The Indian team also managed to get two Silver and two Bronze medals and finished 9th out of 112 countries.
- ★ This is the fourth time India secured a position in the top 10.
- ★ The final team is selected through various stages of the National Olympiad Examination conducted by HBCSE.
- ★ The International Mathematical Olympiad is a mathematical olympiad for pre-university students and is the oldest of the International Science Olympiads.

- ★ It is one of the most prestigious mathematical competitions in the world.

Wimbledon Title 2023

- ★ In the men's singles, Carlos Alcaraz defeated four-time defending champion Novak Djokovic to win the Wimbledon title 2023.
- ★ Alcaraz won the match with a score of 1–6, 7–6(6), 6–1, 3–6, 6–4 to secure his first Wimbledon title.
- ★ The match was played on the Center Court of the All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in London, England.

Para Athletics Championship in Paris

- ★ Indian athlete Ajit Singh won the gold medal in the final of men's javelin throw F46 at the Para Athletics Championships in Paris.
- ★ Ajit Singh topped the event with a throw of 65.41.
- ★ He broke the previous championship record of 61.89 held by Chunliang Guo of China.
- ★ Rinku, another Indian athlete, won the silver medal with a best throw of 65.38.

Creates Guinness World Record with Fastest Badminton Hit

- ★ Indian badminton player Satwiksairaj Rankireddy created a new Guinness World Record for the fastest hit in badminton during the Korea Open 2023.
- ★ Satwiksairaj Rankireddy's smash reached an incredible speed of 565 km/h, breaking a decade-old record previously held by Malaysian player Tan Boon Heong, who clocked 493 km/h.
- ★ The record-breaking event took place at the Yonex factory gym in Soka, Saitama, Japan, and was officially verified by Guinness World Records under controlled conditions.
- ★ Satwik's smash also surpassed the top speed of 372.6 km/h achieved by a Formula 1 car.
- ★ In Korea Open 2023, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and his doubles partner Chirag Shetty defeated Thailand's Supak Jomkoh and Kittinpong Kedren with a score of 21-16, 21-14 to enter the pre-quarterfinals.

ISSF Shotgun World Cup 2023 in Italy

- ★ In shooting, India shooter Prithviraj Tondaiman bagged the bronze medal in the men's trap event at the ISSF Shotgun World Cup Lonato 2023 in Italy.
- ★ Prithviraj Tondaiman's bronze was India's only medal at the Lonato shooting meet.
- ★ This was his second individual ISSF World Cup medal, having won a bronze in Doha in March.
- ★ Prithviraj Tondaiman finished third in the final with 34 points. Britain's Nathan Hales won the gold medal with 49 points while Qi Ying of the Republic of China bagged the silver medal with 48 points.
- ★ In the women's trap event, none of the Indians managed to progress beyond the qualification round.

- ★ Overall, India finished ninth in the medals tally at Lonato, which was topped by the USA with two golds and one silver.
- ★ The ISSF Shotgun World Cup in Italy was a qualifying event for the Paris 2024 Olympic.

Brand Ambassador for ICC World Cup 2023

- ★ Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan has been roped in as the brand ambassador for the ICC World Cup 2023.
- ★ Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan launched the World Cup 2023 campaign 'It Takes One Day' with his iconic voiceover.
- ★ The ICC World Cup 2023 is scheduled to be held in India from 05 October to 19 November 2023.
- ★ India's first match will be against Australia on October 8 and it will face Pakistan on October 15 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.
- ★ A total of 10 teams will participate in the tournament, with India, Afghanistan, Australia, England, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Pakistan and South Africa qualifying directly based on their performance in the 2020–2023 ICC Cricket World Cup Super League.

ISSF Junior Shooting World Championship

- ★ India's Kamaljeet clinched Gold Medal in Men's individual 50-metre Pistol Event at ISSF Junior Shooting World Championship 2023 at Changwon Shooting Range, Korea.
- ★ India went in with a strong contingent of 90 shooters in the tournament and bagged 17 medals including 6 Golds, 6 Silvers and 5 Bronzes.
- ★ Over 550 shooters from 44 countries participated in the Championships.
- ★ The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic shooting events. It also regulates several non-Olympic shooting sports events.

ISSF World Championship held in South Korea

- ★ India secured the 2nd position on the medals tally at the ISSF Junior Shooting World Championships 2023 held in Changwon, South Korea.
- ★ The Indian shooters claimed a total of 17 medals in the under-21 age category, including 6 Gold, 6 Silver, and 5 Bronze.
- ★ The competition had 90 Indian participants who competed in pistol, rifle, and shotgun events.
- ★ The majority of the medalists were Khelo India athletes, and seven Indian participants won more than one medal.
- ★ Abhinav Shaw and Kamaljeet both won two gold medals each, while Sainyam secured three medals – one gold in the 10m air pistol women's category, and one bronze each in the 10m air pistol mixed team and women's team events.

Tampere Open 2023 ATP Challenge

- ★ 25-year-old Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal won the Tampere Open 2023 ATP Challenger men's singles title, his fourth ATP Challenger Tour title in Finland.

- ★ In the final, Nagal defeated Dalibor Svracina of the Czech Republic by a score of 6–4, 7–5 to win his second ATP Challenger event of the year.
- ★ His previous win came at the Garden Open in Rome, ending a four-year title drought.
- ★ Prior to this, Sumit Nagal had won two other ATP Challenger titles: Buenos Aires Challenger in 2019 and Bengaluru Challenger in 2017.
- ★ Nagal’s win in Tampere and his win in Rome made him the first Indian tennis player to claim two ATP Challenger titles on European soil.

Junior Asian Judo Championship 2023 in Macau, China

- ★ Asmita De, who hails from Tripura, achieved a significant feat by winning the gold medal in the Junior Asian Judo Championship 2023 held in Macau, China.
- ★ Competing in the 48 kg category, Asmita faced stiff opposition from judokas representing 27 different countries including Korea, Bhutan, Iraq and the US.
- ★ Asmita showed her strength and finally won the gold medal by defeating Annaliese Fielder of Australia.
- ★ The win adds to Asmita Dey’s already impressive record as she has earlier won a silver medal at the Asian Open 2023 in Kuwait City and a bronze at the Asian Junior Championships in 2022.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Global Livability Index 2023

- ★ According to the global livability index 2023, Austria’s capital Vienna has been named the world’s ‘most livable city’ for 2023.
- ★ The Global livability index 2023 has been released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- ★ It has ranked 173 cities around the world on different factors including health care, education, stability, infrastructure and the environment.
- ★ In this ranking, Denmark’s Copenhagen is in second place while Australia’s Melbourne and Sydney are in third and fourth positions.
- ★ India’s five cities: Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Chennai, New Delhi and Mumbai – are also on the list of most livable cities.
- ★ New Delhi and Mumbai secured 141st position. Chennai, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru are ranked 144th, 147th and 148th, respectively.
- ★ The average index score across 172 cities (eliminating Kyiv in Ukraine) has now reached 76.2 out of 100.
- ★ It is the highest in the last 15 years.
- ★ UK capital London and Sweden’s capital Stockholm have reached 46th and 43rd positions.
- ★ As per the report, the health care scores have improved the most.
- ★ Canada has the highest number of livable cities in the top 10.

- ★ These cities are Calgary (7th), Vancouver (5th) and Toronto (9th).
- ★ Damascus is the least livable city in the world.
- ★ Kyiv is also in the bottom 10.

WEF's Energy Transition Index

- ★ World Economic Forum (WEF) published a report titled 'Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2023' which ranked 120 countries on the basis of energy transition.
- ★ In this ranking, WEF has placed India at 67th position globally in the Energy Transition Index (ETI).
- ★ According to WEF, India is the only major economy where the pace of energy transition is accelerating in all dimensions.
- ★ Despite sustained economic growth, India has successfully reduced the energy intensity of its economy and the carbon intensity of its energy mix, achieved universal energy access and managed electricity affordability effectively.
- ★ According to ETI the top five countries in the world are Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Switzerland respectively.

Performance Grading Index for States

- ★ The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education released the Performance Grading Index (PGI) report for States/UTs, an index for evidence based comprehensive analysis of school education system in State/UTs.
- ★ This year's report released by the Ministry of Education has been named PGI 2.0.
- ★ No state has been found in the top-5 category of PGI.
- ★ Punjab and Chandigarh have been placed at the top position with the highest number of points in the overall ranking of PGI.
- ★ While on the parameters of learning outcome and quality, Rajasthan has also topped with Punjab and Chandigarh with the highest marks.
- ★ The Ministry has set six standards and ten categories in place of the earlier five standards and eight categories to determine the performance of the states in school education, in which the subject of teacher education has been added anew.

2023 Forbes' 100 Richest Self-Made Women List

- ★ Four Indian-origin women, including Jayshree Ullal and Indra Nooyi, have made it to the Forbes list of America's 100 most successful self-made women, with a combined net worth of a whopping USD 4.06 billion.
- ★ Building supply distributor Diane Hendricks, with a \$15 billion net worth, retained the top spot for the sixth year in a row.
- ★ This year's list has eight entrants, including television producer Shonda Rhimes and Insitro CEO Daphne Koller.

- ★ Jayshree Ullal, President and CEO of computer networking firm Arista Networks, ranked 15th on the list, the highest among Indian-origin business leaders.
- ★ Neerja Sethi, with a net worth of USD 990 million, has been ranked 25th on the list.
- ★ Narkehe, co-founder and former Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of cloud company Confluent is ranked 50th on the list with a net worth of USD 520 million.
- ★ Nooyi, the former chair and CEO of PepsiCo, retired in 2019 after 24 years with the company, half of which she spent in the top job. The 67-year-old has a net worth of USD 350 million and is ranked 77th on the Forbes list.

Henley Passport Index 2023

- ★ Singapore has topped the Henley Passport Index 2023, becoming the most powerful passport in the world.
- ★ India is currently ranked 80th along with Togo and Senegal.
- ★ Indian passport holders now enjoy visa-free access to 57 countries, reflecting the country's enhanced global travel privileges.
- ★ Singapore passport holders are granted visa-free access to an impressive 192 out of 227 global travel destinations.
- ★ Three European countries, namely Germany, Italy and Spain, now rank second in the index. Their passports provide visa-free access to 190 destinations.
- ★ Japan, which held the top position for the last five years, is now ranked third in the index.
- ★ Austria, Finland, France, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, and Sweden are also in third place, their passport holders can travel to 189 destinations without visa.

'Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2022' Report

- ★ The ITI Commission released the 3rd edition of 'Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2022' for the States/UTs of India.
- ★ The report was released by Vice President Suman Berry and other officials.
- ★ It aims to promote India as a global export player by leveraging regional competitiveness and diversity.
- ★ The focus is on export performance both at the state and district levels.
 - Policy pillar: Evaluates the adoption of the export-related policy ecosystem and institutional framework at the state and district levels.
 - Business Ecosystem: Assesses the business environment, supporting infrastructure and transport connectivity in the States/UTs.
 - Export ecosystem: Focuses on export-related infrastructure, business support and research and development (R&D) to foster innovation.
 - Export Performance: Measures the growth, concentration and global market footprint of a state's exports.
- ★ Coastal states including Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat performed well in all categories.

HDFC Bank Enters \$100 Billion Market-Cap List

- ★ Private lender HDFC Bank entered the coveted \$100 billion market-cap club becoming the 7th largest global lender.
- ★ The HDFC bank's market capitalization reached \$151 billion, surpassing that of Morgan Stanley and Bank of China.
- ★ The league table of the world's most valuable banks is topped by two US banks – JP Morgan Chase (\$438 billion) and Bank of America (\$232 billion).
- ★ China's Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) and Agricultural Bank of China occupy 3rd and the 4th place.
- ★ At present, Wells Fargo and HSBC are slightly ahead of HDFC Bank.
- ★ As the merged entity, HDFC Bank has more m-cap muscle than global investment firms Morgan Stanley (\$143 bn) and Goldman Sachs (\$108 bn).
- ★ According to the latest shareholding pattern of the merged HDFC Bank disclosed, foreign portfolio investors have a 53.93% stake.
- ★ ICICI Bank is ranked 16th and SBI is at the 22nd spot in the list of the world's most valuable banks.

Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Launched Heat Index

- ★ The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has come out with the heat index for different regions of the country on the basis of recent tests.
- ★ This was announced by Union Earth Sciences Minister Kiren Rijiju.
- ★ The heat index is designed to provide general guidance and information about the level of discomfort caused by high temperatures in the hot regions of India.
- ★ By releasing the Heat Index, the IMD aims to provide valuable insights into heat-related conditions to help people better cope with extreme temperatures.
- ★ Colour-coded system: The Heat Index uses a colour-coded system to indicate the severity of weather conditions:
 - Green: Experimental heat index below 35°C.
 - Yellow: Experimental heat index in the range of 36–45°C.
 - Orange: Experimental heat index in the range of 46–55°C.
 - Red: Experimental heat index above 55°C.

India's Second Longest Serving Chief Minister

- ★ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik holds the distinction of being the second longest serving Chief Minister in India.
- ★ Patnaik held the office of Chief Minister for an impressive period of 23 years and 138 days, assuming office on 5 March 2000.
- ★ In achieving this feat, he surpassed the previous record holder, former Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu, who served for 23 years and 137 days from June 21, 1977 to November 5, 2000.

- ★ The title of longest-serving Chief Minister is held by former Chief Minister of Sikkim, Pawan Kumar Chamling, who held the post for an even longer period of 24 years and 166 days.
- ★ He began his political journey by winning the election from the Aska Lok Sabha constituency in his home district of Ganjam, marking the beginning of his successful leadership tenure.

AWARDS & PRIZES

The PEN Pinter Prize 2023

- ★ Renowned children’s writer and performance poet, Michael Rosen, has been awarded with the PEN Pinter Prize 2023.
- ★ This award is bestowed upon a writer hailing from the United Kingdom, Ireland, or the Commonwealth, whose body of work fearlessly uncovers and reveals truths about the realities of modern-day existence.
- ★ Michael Rosen, who served as the British Children’s Laureate from 2007 to 2009, is celebrated for his efforts to make poetry engaging and relatable to children through his works and performances.
- ★ His poetry delves into social, political, and ethical themes.

Points of Light Award

- ★ 101-year-old man Rajinder Singh Dhatt was awarded the Points of Light award by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.
- ★ Rajinder Singh Dhatt was recognized for his outstanding service and unwavering commitment to uniting veterans of the British Indian War.
- ★ He played an important role as the driving force behind the “Undivided Indian Ex-Servicemen Association”.
- ★ Rajinder Singh Dhatt served in the British Indian Army during World War II, which highlights his devotion to his country.

ASSOCHAM Business Excellence Awards 2023

- ★ National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) was honored with two prestigious awards at the ASSOCHAM Business Excellence Awards 2023 in Kolkata.
- ★ The awards received by NMDC were the ‘Mineral Development Award’ and the ‘Employer Brand of the Year Award’.
- ★ These awards recognize NMDC’s significant contributions to the mining sector and its exemplary human resources practices.
- ★ The awards were presented by Anurag Srivastava, IAS, Secretary of the Industry, Commerce, and Enterprise Department, Government of West Bengal.
- ★ NMDC is the largest producer of iron ore in India and the sixth largest in the world, playing a pivotal role in the country’s mineral development.

- ★ The company's state-of-the-art Research and Development (R&D) Centre focuses on enhancing productivity, promoting sustainable mining practices, and developing advanced beneficiation technologies.
- ★ NMDC is committed to zero-waste mining and continuous innovation, contributing to the growth and advancement of the mining industry.

British National Award

- ★ Noted film Director Shekhar Kapur has been presented with the British National Award for Best Director for 'What's Love Got To Do With It'.
- ★ At the award ceremony, the film 'What's Love Got To Do With It' was nominated in nine categories, out of which the film won four.
- ★ Apart from Best Director, the film was also awarded Best British Film, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor.
- ★ Shekhar Kapur is best known for directing films ranging from Bandit Queen, Mr. India to Elizabeth.

GeM Award for 2023 in the "Timely Payments (CPSEs)" Category

- ★ NLC India Limited, a navratna company under the Ministry of Coal, bagged the GeM award in the category "Timely Payments (CPSEs)" for the year 2023 for its outstanding contribution to improving the reliability of e-market practices in line with the vision of GeM.
- ★ NLCIL registered and on-boarded in the GeM portal in the year 2017.
- ★ NLCIL's growth in GeM procurement started from a small value of ₹2.21 crore during the year 2018-19 and the company has registered an impressive growth of ₹984.93 crore during the year FY 2022-23.
- ★ Government e-Marketplace GeM is a dedicated e-Market service platform, a National public procurement portal, governed by the Government of India for marketing different goods and services.
- ★ To promote the power market in line with GEM's vision of transparent, inclusive and efficient public procurement in India, awards are being presented by the Government of India.

Lokmanya Tilak Award in 2023

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be awarded the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak Award
- ★ An official announcement in this regard was made by the President of Tilak Smarak Trust Dr Dipak Tilak and Rohit Tilak at a press conference in Pune.
- ★ The award will be conferred by the hands of the President of the Trust Dr. Deepak Tilak on 01 August 2023, the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak.

Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor Award

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the highest French award 'Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour' by the President of the Republic of France, Emmanuel Macron.

- ★ Prime Minister Modi was honored at an award ceremony held at the Elysee Palace in Paris.
- ★ The Prime Minister thanked President Macron on behalf of the people of India for this distinguished honour.
- ★ Prime Minister Modi is on an official visit to France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 13 to 15 July 2023.
- ★ The Prime Minister is the Chief Guest at the Bastille Day Parade on 14 July 2023, in which a contingent of the Indian Armed Forces from the three Services is also participating.

Golden Peacock' Environment Management Award 2023

- ★ Indian company Adani Transmission Limited (ATL) has been awarded the 'Golden Peacock Environment Management Award' by the 'Institute of Directors' in the 'Power Transmission Sector'.
- ★ The award is given for reducing its ecological footprint through programs such as zero waste in landfills, single-use plastic free, water-positive operations, promoting renewable energy integration and implementation of best-in-class environmental management strategies.
- ★ ATL was declared the 'Winner' by its B2C arm i.e. Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited for its unique strategic initiative of increasing renewable energy in bulk power purchase for distribution in Mumbai region.
- ★ Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been awarded the prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2021 in the steel sector by the Institute of Directors. SAIL has been the winner of this award for three consecutive years.

ET HR World Future Skills Awards 2023

- ★ Power major NTPC has been honoured with the prestigious Economic Times (ET) HR World Future Skills Awards 2023.
- ★ The company received awards in two categories: "Best Use of AI/AR/VR in Learning and Upskilling" and "Best Advances in Creating Extended Enterprise Learning Programs".
- ★ Director HR, NTPC, Dilip Kumar Patel accepted the award on behalf of the company during a function held at Gurugram on July 13, 2023.
- ★ These accolades are in recognition of NTPC's dedication to incorporate cutting-edge technologies, especially Virtual Reality (VR), in its Learning and Development (L&D) initiatives.
- ★ They serve as testimony to NTPC's commitment to enhance the skill sets of both its own employees and outsourced workers through various L&D programs including iGuru that utilise VR-based training.

Eni Award

- ★ Professor Thalappil Pradeep of IIT Madras has received the prestigious 'Eni Award' for scientific research in energy and environment.
- ★ The Eni Award was established in 2007 and is a globally recognized honour.
- ★ Professor Pradeep's research focuses on cost-effective and clean water solutions using advanced nanoscale materials.

- ★ His groundbreaking work led to the discovery of sustainable materials that remove toxic pollutants from water.
- ★ These water purification technologies benefit 1.3 million people in India every day.
- ★ The President of Italy will confer the Eni Award on Professor T. Pradeep.
- ★ They are awarded in three categories: Energy Transitions, Energy Frontiers and Advanced Environmental Solutions.
- ★ Yu Huang from the University of California (Los Angeles, USA) and Jeffrey R. Long from the University of California (Berkeley, USA) were awarded in the Energy Transition category.
- ★ Matthew Rosensky from the University of Liverpool (UK) received the award in the Energy Frontiers category.
- ★ The primary purpose of the Eni Award is to promote and recognize unprecedented progress in energy efficiency, renewable energy, decarbonization and environmental protection.

British Prime Minister's 'Points of Light' Award

- ★ Indian-origin seven-year-old Moksha Roy has been honored with the British Prime Minister's 'Points of Light' award.
- ★ Indian-origin Moksha Roy has been working for the United Nations' sustainable initiative against microplastic pollution since she was just three years old.
- ★ British Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden presented the award to seven-year-old Moksha Roy in the third week of July.
- ★ Moksha Roy has been given the title as the world's youngest sustainability advocate.
- ★ Moksha is recognized for her work in several sustainable campaigns including raising funds to help children in need.

Miles Franklin Literary Award

- ★ Sri Lankan-born Australian author Shankari Chandran has been awarded the prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Prize in 2023 for the novel 'Tea Time at Cinnamon Gardens'.
- ★ Chandran's award-winning novel, titled 'Tea Time at Cinnamon Gardens', revolves around themes of family, memories, community, race and highlights Australia's complex relationship with multiculturalism and the consequences of colonialism.
- ★ Chandran's story emphasises that our personal stories play an important role in shaping us as individuals and the fabric of society.
- ★ 'Tea Time at Cinnamon Gardens' is Chandran's third published novel, which shows his growth and dedication as a writer.
- ★ Miles Franklin Literary is an annual award given to a novel of the highest literary merit that explores some aspect of Australian life.
- ★ The Miles Franklin Literary Award is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious literary awards in Australia.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Special Director in CBI

- ★ Ajay Bhatnagar, a Senior IPS Officer of the 1989 batch from Jharkhand cadre, has been appointed as the Special Director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as per a Personnel Ministry order.
- ★ Currently serving as Additional Director in the CBI, Bhatnagar will hold the position of Special Director until his superannuation on November 20, 2024.
- ★ Anurag, who was previously Joint Director in the CBI, has been promoted to the role of Additional Director in the agency for a period until July 24, 2023, which completes his seven-year tenure.
- ★ The Central Bureau of Investigation plays a crucial role in tackling high-profile cases, maintaining national security, and upholding the rule of law in India.

Chief Operating Officer of LIC Housing Finance Limited

- ★ LIC Housing Finance Limited (LIC HFL) has appointed Tribhuwan Adhikari as Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the company.
- ★ Tribhuwan Adhikari, joined LIC of India in September 1989.
- ★ During his career in LIC, spanning more than 3 decades he has worked all over the country and has been posted in West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra.
- ★ He had the privilege of holding independent charge of two Divisions of LIC i.e., Dehradun in Uttarakhand and Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh (UP).
- ★ Prior to this assignment, he was posted as Additional Director at Zonal Training Center, Eastern Zone, Kolkata.

First Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh

- ★ TS Singh Deo has been appointed as the first Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge.
- ★ Singhdeo's appointment has been made after the discussion held on Chhattisgarh elections.
- ★ Ever since winning the election in 2018, there has been a tussle between Bhupesh Baghel and TS Singhdev over becoming the Chief Minister.
- ★ The post of CM was fixed between Baghel and Singhdev for two and a half years each but it was not implemented.
- ★ This year elections are to be held in November 2023 on all the 90 seats of the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly.

Solicitor General of India

- ★ Tushar Mehta was reappointed as the current Solicitor General of India for a three-year term.
- ★ The reappointment of Tushar Mehta was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

- ★ Reappointment ensures continuity in handling the country's complex legal matters.
- ★ Tushar Mehta's role as Solicitor General involves representing the Government of India in legal matters.
- ★ The government aims to maintain a strong legal framework in India and uphold justice through these appointments.

SBI Appoints Kameswar Rao Kodavanti as CFO

- ★ Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) appointed Kameswar Rao Kodavanti as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
- ★ Kameswar Rao Kodavanti officially assumed the position of CFO on July 1, 2023.
- ★ Kodwanti's appointment follows the resignation of Charanjit Surinder Singh Attra.
- ★ As CFO, Kodwanti will play a key role in overseeing the financial operations of State Bank of India and ensuring regulatory compliance.

President of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI)

- ★ Aadhav Arjuna, the President of the Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA), emerged victorious in the election held at Nehru Stadium and secured the position of President of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI).
- ★ Aadhav received an impressive 38 out of the 39 votes, defeating the Incumbent President, K Govindaraj.
- ★ Kulvinder Singh Gill, a former player and the President of the Madhya Pradesh Basketball Association, was elected as the Secretary General.
- ★ BFI was established in 1950 and is the governing body for basketball in India.
- ★ It holds affiliation with FIBA Asia and the Indian Olympic Association.

Acting Chairman of NGT

- ★ The Central Government has authorized Justice Sheo Kumar Singh-I, Judicial Member of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), to act as the Chairperson of the Tribunal till a new Chairperson is appointed.
- ★ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a notification on 6 July 2023 authorizing Justice Sheo Kumar Singh-I to act as the Chairperson.
- ★ He was appointed as a judicial member of NGT in 2020.
- ★ He is currently working as Judicial Member in the Central Zone Bench of Bhopal.

President of OCA

- ★ Sheikh Talal Fahd Al Ahmad Al Sabah of Kuwait has been elected as the new President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).
- ★ Sheikh Talal succeeded his elder brother, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, who led the OCA until 2021.

- ★ The OCA was founded in 1982 by Sheikh Talal's father, Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.
- ★ It serves as the governing body of the Games in Asia and currently consists of 45-member National Olympic Committees.

New Chairperson of IFSCA

- ★ A 1989-batch senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer and Telecom Secretary, K Rajaraman has been appointed as the new Chairperson of International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) by central government.
- ★ He has been appointed as IFSCA chief for 3 years from the date of his assuming charge of the post, or till attaining the age of 65 years, or until further orders, whichever is the earliest.
- ★ He assumed charge as the Telecom Secretary in October 2021.
- ★ Under him, the Department of telecommunication (DoT) successfully conducted first-ever fifth generation or 5G auction, with the government fetching more than ₹1.5 lakh crore.
- ★ He had served as the Additional Secretary (Investments and Infrastructure) in the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA).
- ★ He will succeed Injeti Srinivas, who had taken over as the first Chairman of the IFSCA in early July 2020 for a period of 3 years.

MD and CEO of SBI Cards

- ★ The country's largest pure-play credit card issuer, SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card), has appointed Abhijit Chakravorty as its new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- ★ He will replace Rama Mohan Rao Amara, who will cease to be MD from August 11, 2023.
- ★ Chakravorty's appointment would be effective from August 12, 2023 for a period of two years.
- ★ Abhijit Chakravorty started his banking career as a Probationary Officer with State Bank of India (SBI) in 1988.
- ★ He has gained over 34 years of rich experience in retail and corporate banking, overseas operations, and the IT vertical of the bank.

1st Female Governor of Central Bank of Australia

- ★ Australia has appointed a woman, Michele Bullock to lead its central bank, the first time ever in the 63-year history of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) for the next 7 years.
- ★ She will succeed Philip Lowe, who will leave office on September 17, 2023 marking the end of his 43-year career at the central bank.
- ★ Bullock who currently serves as the RBA's Deputy Governor will start her 7-year term on 18 September 2023.
- ★ The decision not to reappoint Lowe for a second term comes amidst public backlash over the sharp increase in interest rates.

- ★ Australian Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Prime Minister Anthony made the announcement, highlighting Bullock's qualifications and her ability to lead the RBA through an upcoming reorganization.

25th Director General of the ICG

- ★ Rakesh Pal has been appointed as the 25th Director General of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). He has the distinction of being the first gunner of ICG.
- ★ Shri Pal is an alumnus of the Indian Naval Academy and had joined the Indian Coast Guard in January 1989.
- ★ Mr. Pal has done Electro-Optics Fire Control Solution courses from the United Kingdom.
- ★ Rakesh Pal has served the nation in various capacities in his illustrious career spanning over 34 years.
- ★ Shri Pal was awarded the Tatrakshak Medal in 2013 and President Tatrakshak Medal in 2018 for his distinguished service.

Managing Director and CEO of Invest India

- ★ Renowned global business and technology expert Nivriti Rai has been appointed as the Managing Director and CEO of Invest India.
- ★ Ms. Rai joins Invest India after an illustrious 29 years of service as a global business and technology veteran at Intel.
- ★ She was leading Intel India as Country Head for the last 07 years and spearheaded Intel's growth and investments in the country.
- ★ Ms. Rai was also conferred with the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar for her outstanding contribution in the field of technology.
- ★ Ms Rai replaced Manmeet K Nanda.

Director General of Railway Protection Force

- ★ The Union government has appointed Haryana cadre 1988 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) Officer Manoj Yadava as next Director General of the Railway Protection Force (RPF).
- ★ Currently, he is serving as DG, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).
- ★ He will replace incumbent Sanjay Chander, a 1987-batch IPS Officer of West Bengal cadre who will retire on July 31, 2023.
- ★ Manoj Yadava will serve in his new posting till his retirement i.e. up to July 31, 2025.

Governor of the Central Bank of China

- ★ Pan Gongsheng was appointed as the Governor of the Central Bank of China.
- ★ Pan Gongsheng, a Deputy Governor of the Central Bank and a seasoned expert in China's government banking sector, assumed the position, succeeding Yi Gang, an American-trained economist who served in the role for five years.

- ★ The Governor of the People's Bank of China, Pan Gongsheng, holds a preeminent position within Chinese finance circles, as the bank is under the control of the ruling Communist Party.
- ★ Previously, in 2015, Pan was appointed as the head of China's foreign exchange regulator.
- ★ Prior to that, he held the position of Vice-Chairman at Agricultural Bank of China Limited, one of the country's four major commercial lenders.

MD and CEO of Tata Steel

- ★ Tata Steel has reappointed TV Narendran as Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director for a period of five years from September 19, 2023 to September 18, 2028.
- ★ The decision was taken on the basis of the recommendation of the 'Nomination and Remuneration Committee'.
- ★ TV Narendran has an impressive career span of 34 years in the mining and metals industry and has held various key positions in Tata Steel.
- ★ He has been a member of the board of Tata Steel Limited and has served as the Chairman of both Tata Steel Europe and Tata Steel Long Products Limited.
- ★ In addition to his role as CEO and MD of Tata Steel, Narendran holds important Chairmanship positions in other subsidiaries and associates of Tata Steel.

Institute of Cost Accountants of India's Central Council Member

- ★ City-based Cost and Management Accountant (CMA) Neeraj Joshi has been elected as the Central Council Member (CCM) of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India (ICMAI) and CMA Chaitanya Moharir elected as the Western India Regional Council Member (RCM).
- ★ This is the second time that Joshi and Moharir represented Pune at the central and regional council.
- ★ The ICMAI is a professional accountancy body in India under the administrative control of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India.
- ★ The Institute was established by a special act of Parliament, namely, the Cost and Works Accountants Act, 1959 as a statutory professional body for the regulation of the profession of cost and management accountancy.

Chief Justice of Bombay High Court

- ★ The President of India Droupadi Murmu appointed Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya from the Allahabad High Court (HC) as the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.
- ★ Currently he was Senior Judge of Allahabad High Court at Lucknow Bench.
- ★ The position of Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court had been vacant since the retirement of CJ RD Dhanuka on May 30, 2023.
- ★ Justice Upadhyaya's name was recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud.
- ★ Currently, the Bombay HC, which has a sanctioned strength of 94 judges, is functioning with 66 judges, including 40 permanent and 26 additional judges.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

A New Book 'Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow'

- ★ National Award-winning filmmaker-writer Vinod Mankara's new book titled "Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow" was released from the rocket launchpad of Satish Dhawan Space Center (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ The book release coincided with preparations for India's upcoming moon mission, Chandrayaan-3, at SDSC-SHAR.
- ★ ISRO Chairman S Somnath released the book by handing it over to Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (VSSC) Director S Unnikrishnan Nair.
- ★ The book, "Prism: The Ancestral Abode of the Rainbow", is a collection of science articles, providing readers with unique insights and perspectives.

Malayalam Translation of 'Krishna – The 7th Sense'

- ★ Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan released the Malayalam translation of the book 'Krishna – The 7th Sense' written by Debasish Chatterjee, Director, IIM-Kozhikode.
- ★ 'Krishna – The 7th Sense' is Professor Chatterjee's award-winning debut novel.
- ★ The novel explores themes of love, passion, pain, acceptance, affection, trust, and satisfaction, combining both ancient and contemporary elements.
- ★ The event was significant as it marked the release of the Malayalam version of the novel, making it accessible to a wider audience in Kerala.
- ★ During the event, the Hon'ble Governor also unveiled the latest edition of Chatterjee's book "Karma Sutra - Leadership and Wisdom in Uncertain Times", a flagship book in the IIMK-Penguin series for budding managers.
- ★ Debasish Chatterjee is a globally acclaimed management guru and an accomplished educationist, with 18 books to his credit in the non-fiction category.

Former Vice President Released Ranjit Pratap's Book 'As the Wheel Turns'

- ★ Former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu released a new book "As the Wheel Turns" authored by Ranjit Pratap, Managing Director of Rayala Corporation.
- ★ The book marks the Diamond Jubilee of Rayala Corporation, and provides a captivating account of Ranjit Pratap's extraordinary journey in the business world.
- ★ 'As the Wheel Turns' aims to inspire readers by sharing Ranjit Pratap's personal experiences, struggles and successes.
- ★ Each chapter of the book vividly depicts the ups and downs, personal growth and professional achievements that shaped Ranjit Pratap's corporate journey of half a century.
- ★ The title "As the wheel turns" symbolises the cyclical nature of life and business, emphasising the importance of adaptability and flexibility in the face of change.

DEFENCE

Biggest Air Exercise ‘Tarang Shakti’

- ★ The Indian Air Force is making preparations to organize a large-scale multilateral exercise in 2023, aimed at enhancing military cooperation with 12 nations.
- ★ The exercise, named Tarang Shakti, is set to be the largest air exercise ever conducted in India, showcasing the country’s commitment to strengthening international military partnerships.
- ★ Among others, air forces of France, Australia, the US and the UK are likely to participate in the exercise.
- ★ The participating countries will contribute their military combat jets, as well as transport aircraft and other assets, showcasing their collective capabilities and fostering interoperability.
- ★ Tarang Shakti will provide a platform for air forces from different nations to engage in joint training, exchange knowledge, and improve coordination in various operational scenarios.
- ★ The exercise aims to enhance the mutual understanding and compatibility between the participating air forces, promoting regional stability and security.
- ★ By hosting this mega-multilateral exercise, India seeks to demonstrate its commitment to regional cooperation and its capability to conduct large-scale joint military operations.
- ★ The exercise will provide valuable insights into the operational capabilities of different air forces, facilitating the exchange of best practices and fostering stronger military ties.

Indian Navy Launched Powerful Anti-Submarine Warfare Vessel

- ★ Indian Naval Ship (INS) Anjadip, the 3rd of the eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project, was launched at the Larsen and Toubro (L&T) Kattupalli Port, Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN).
- ★ It was built by Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) for the Indian Navy.
- ★ It is an anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft vessel built for the Indian Navy.
- ★ The Launch Ceremony was presided over by Vice Admiral R.B. Pandit, C-in-C (SFC).
- ★ In keeping with the naval maritime tradition, Smt Priya Pandit launched the ship to the chanting of invocation from Atharva Veda.
- ★ Anjadip is the 3rd of the eight ships of the contract that was signed between Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in April 2019.
- ★ The vessel was named after the island of Anjadip, located off Karwar Port, Karnataka, signifying its strategic maritime importance.
- ★ The ship is a 900-ton, 77-metre-long vessel powered by water-jet propulsion.
- ★ It can achieve a maximum speed of 25 knots (46 km/h) and has an endurance of 1,800 nautical miles (3,300 km) at 14 knots (26 km/h).
- ★ It is designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low intensity maritime operations (LIMO) and subsurface surveillance among others.

Indian Navy Launched The 4th Ship of Survey Vessels

- ★ Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sanshodhak', the fourth of four ships of Survey Vessels (Large) (SVL) Project, being built by Larsen and Toubro (L&T)/ Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) for the Indian Navy was launched at Kattupalli, Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN).
- ★ The Chief Guest of the Launch Ceremony was Vice Admiral Adhir Arora, Chief Hydrographer to Government of India (GoI).
- ★ The ship named 'Sanshodhak', meaning 'Researcher', signifies the primary role of the ship as a Survey Vessel.
- ★ As per the contract signed between MoD and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, the first ship was to be built at GRSE, Kolkata and construction of the remaining three ships up to outfitting stage, has been subcontracted to M/s L&T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli.
- ★ The first three ships of the project, Sandhayak, Nirdeshak and Ikshak were launched on 05 Dec 21, 26 May 22 and 26 Nov 22.
- ★ SVL ships will replace the existing Sandhayak Class survey ships, with new-generation hydrographic equipment, to collect oceanographic data.
- ★ The hull of these ships is made by Steel Authority of India Limited from indigenously developed DMR 249-A steel.
- ★ It can carry four Survey Motor Boats and an integral helicopter.
- ★ These ships have a length of 110 metres, a width of 16 meters, and a displacement of 3,400 tons.

Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX 23) 2023

- ★ The seventh edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX 23) 2023 being conducted by the Indian Navy is being conducted at Visakhapatnam from 5 to 10 July 2023.
- ★ Units of the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) under the command of RADM Nishiyama Takahiro while Indian Navy ships under the command of Admiral Gurcharan Singh are participating in the exercise.
- ★ The exercise will see the participation of INS Delhi, India's first indigenously built Guided Missile Destroyer, INS Kamorta, an indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, Fleet Tanker INS Shakti, Maritime Patrol Aircraft P-8I and Dornier.
- ★ The JMSDF will be represented by the guided missile destroyer JS Samidare and its integral helicopters.
- ★ The exercise will be conducted over six days in two phases:
 - a harbor phase at Visakhapatnam which will include professional, sports and
 - social interactions.
- ★ Both the navies will jointly hone their warfare skills at sea and enhance interoperability in the surface, sub-surface and air domains through complex multi-discipline operations.

The Indian Coast Guard and MoD have Signed a Contract

- ★ Ministry of Defence signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in New Delhi for the procurement of two Dornier Aircraft for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) along with an associated Engineering Support package at an overall cost of ₹458.87 crore.
- ★ The aircraft will be procured under the Buy (Indian) Category.
- ★ The aircraft will be fitted with several advanced equipment viz., Glass Cockpit, Maritime Patrol Radar, Electro-Optic Infra-Red device, Mission Management System etc.
- ★ The addition will further bolster the aerial surveillance capability of maritime areas of responsibilities of the ICG.
- ★ The Dornier aircraft are being indigenously manufactured at HAL (Transport Aircraft Division), Kanpur and will significantly contribute to achieving Aatmanirbharta in defence, in consonance with the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh's Visit to Malaysia

- ★ Defense Minister Rajnath Singh is on an official visit to Malaysia from 10 July to 11 July 2023.
- ★ The main objective of this visit is to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation and further enhance political partnership.
- ★ Rajnath Singh will hold bilateral talks with Malaysian Defense Minister Dato' Seri Mohd Hassan, in which the two ministers will review defense cooperation between the two countries and explore new ways to further strengthen these ties.
- ★ The two countries will also exchange views on regional and global issues of bilateral interest.
- ★ Rajnath Singh will also call on Malaysian Prime Minister C YB Dato' Seri Anwar Bin-Ibrahim during his visit.
- ★ Both India and Malaysia have a common interest in the peace and prosperity of the entire region.
- ★ The two democracies share a strong and multi-faceted relationship, which extends to a number of strategic areas, including defense and security.

The Bastille Day Parade of France

- ★ France celebrates Bastille Day, also known as Fête Nationale Française, on 14 July each year.
- ★ The event commemorates the historic demolition of the Bastille in 1789 during the French Revolution.
- ★ In 2023, France and India are celebrating 25 years of their strategic partnership.
- ★ As part of the celebrations, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been invited as the Guest of honor at the Bastille Day parade in France.
- ★ All the three branches of the Indian Armed Forces will participate in the Bastille Day parade along with their French counterparts.
- ★ This highlights the growing military cooperation between the two countries.

MoD Launches A Single Window NCC Integrated Software

- ★ In a major step towards promoting digitisation and in sync with Digital India mission, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launched an NCC Integrated Software in New Delhi.
- ★ The NCC Integrated Software, developed in partnership with Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo Informatics (BISAG), is a single window interactive software for Cadets, designed on the 'Entry to Exit Model'.
- ★ The Software is based on the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Once a Cadet always a cadet", and will digitalize the entire process from the stage of enrolment as a cadet in NCC till exit registration as alumni.
- ★ This will enable seamless issue of certificates, creation of an all-India database of NCC cadets at the time of their employment.
- ★ During this event, the NCC and State Bank of India (SBI) also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of Raksha Mantri to open zero balance accounts of all NCC Cadets with debit card, cheque book & passbook facility under SBI's "Pahli Udaan" scheme.
- ★ About 5 lakh cadets will be benefitted by this MoU every year.

INS Sunayana Participated in Operation Southern Readiness – 2023

- ★ INS Sunayna participated in 'Operation Southern Readiness 2023' conducted by the Combined Maritime Force (CMF) being conducted off Seychelles from 10 July to 12 July.
- ★ It was aimed at strengthening multilateral relations and enhancing cooperation through CMF exercise in the region.
- ★ During the visit, personnel from the participating navies of the US, Italy, UK, Seychelles Defense Forces and Marine Police, EUNAVFOR member states were involved in extensive professional interactions, subject matter expert exchanges and visits.
- ★ During this, a joint yoga session was conducted onboard with the participation of the ship's crew as well as personnel from Seychelles Defense Forces and CMF.

INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata Arrive at Jakarta

- ★ INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata, two flagship ships of the Indian Navy, arrived at Jakarta on to participate in a bilateral maritime exercise with the Indonesian Naval Forces.
- ★ On arrival at Jakarta, both the naval ships of the mission deployed in the South-Eastern IOR were accorded a warm welcome by the Indonesian Navy.
- ★ The Indian and Indonesian navies will engage in an elaborate program of professional interactions, joint yoga sessions, sports events and cross-deck visits, with an aim to strengthen mutual cooperation and understanding between the two navies.
- ★ Both the ships will also participate in the Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) at sea with the Indonesian Navy to further strengthen the high level of interoperability that both navies have from the Middle East.
- ★ INS Sahyadri is the third indigenously designed and built stealth frigate of the Project-17 class.
- ★ INS Kolkata is the first indigenously designed and built Project-15A class stealth destroyer.

- ★ Both these ships have been built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai.

Joint Military Exercise ‘Nomadic Elephant – 2023’

- ★ An Indian Army contingent comprising 43 personnel left for Mongolia to take part in a joint military exercise ‘Nomadic Elephant 2023’ between India and Mongolia.
- ★ Nomadic Elephant 2023 is the 15th edition.
- ★ Nomadic Elephant 2023’ is scheduled from 17 July 2023 till 31 July 2023.
- ★ Indian Army soldiers from the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regiment and Soldiers of the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 are participating in the exercise.
- ★ It will focus on counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain under a United Nations mandate.
- ★ It is to strengthen positive military relations, share best practices, enhance interoperability, and foster camaraderie, bonhomie, and friendship between the two armies.
- ★ During the exercise, Indian and Mongolian troops will engage in various training activities designed to enhance their skills and capabilities.

Indian Navy Launches Second Edition of ‘G20 THINQ’ Quiz

- ★ The Indian Navy, in association with the Navy Welfare and Wellness Association (NWWA) and the G20 Secretariat, launched the second edition of “G20 THINQ”.
- ★ The initiative aims to bring together young individuals from different walks of life and geographies, fostering lasting friendship with the spirit of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ – The World is One Family.
- ★ “G20 THINQ” is a national and international quiz competition designed for students studying in classes IX to XII and their counterparts.
- ★ More than 10,000 schools from across the country will participate in the national round.
- ★ Sixteen schools will qualify for the semi-finals to be held in Mumbai on 16 November 2023.
- ★ The top eight teams will compete in the National Championship Finals on 18 November 2023 at the iconic Gateway of India.
- ★ The primary objective of G20 THINQ is to enlighten the brightest young minds about the Indian Navy, which is considered to be the leader of the future.

India Hands Over Missile Corvette Indian Naval Ship Kirpan

- ★ On completing 32 years of illustrious service to the nation, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kirpan has been decommissioned from the Indian Navy and Handed Over to Vietnam People’s Navy (VPN) at Cam Ranh, Vietnam.
- ★ The Decommissioning and Handing Over Ceremony of INS Kirpan to VPN was presided over by Adm R. Hari Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff, Indian Navy and Rear Adm Pham Manh Hung, Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Chief of Staff, VPN.
- ★ INS Kirpan is an indigenously-built in-service missile Corvette.
- ★ It is a Khukri class missile corvette commissioned into the Navy on January 12, 1991.

- ★ It has a displacing capacity of close to 1,400 tonnes.
- ★ It is capable of a speed of more than 25 knots.
- ★ It performs a wide variety of roles, including coastal and offshore patrol, coastal security, surface warfare, anti-piracy, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operation.

Massive ‘Talisman Saber’ Military Exercise

- ★ The 10th edition of the multilateral military exercise, ‘Talisman Sabre’, commenced at HMAS Canberra in Townsville, involving Australia, the United States, and eleven partner nations.
- ★ Talisman Sabre is the largest military exercise of its kind, with over 30,000 military personnel participating.
- ★ Notably, this year’s exercise will feature practice sessions around Norfolk Island, marking the first time this location is included in the training.
- ★ Alongside the United States and Australia, other participating countries include Canada, Fiji, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, and Tonga.
- ★ Germany is taking part in the ‘Talisman Sabre’ exercise for the first time, adding to the international collaboration.
- ★ Additionally, personnel from India, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand will participate as observers, strengthening the exercise’s cooperative and learning aspects.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Virgin Galactic Completes First Manned Mission to Space

- ★ Virgin Galactic, founded by Richard Branson, successfully completed its first manned mission to the edge of space, marking a significant milestone for the company after two decades of dedicated efforts.
- ★ The mission had a research-oriented focus and featured two Italian Air Force personnel, Colonel Walter Villadei and Lieutenant Colonel Angelo Landolfi, who were funded by Virgin Galactic.
- ★ Pantaleone Carlucci, an engineer affiliated with Italy’s National Research Council, and Colin Bennett, a Virgin Galactic astronaut instructor, were also part of the group.
- ★ The mission aimed to assess the flight’s comfort and functionality, providing valuable feedback to enhance Virgin Galactic’s rocket-powered spaceplane, VSS Unity.
- ★ The journey began at Virgin Galactic’s spaceport in New Mexico, where the passengers boarded VSS Unity attached beneath the wing of the twin-fuselage mothership, VMS Eve.
- ★ VMS Eve accelerated down the runway and ascended to an altitude exceeding 40,000 feet before releasing VSS Unity.

ESA Launches 'Euclid Space Telescope'

- ★ The European Space Agency (ESA) has launched the specially designed Euclid Space Telescope to review solar system bodies and obtain new information.
- ★ Through this telescope, the scientist will prepare a three-dimensional map of billions of galaxies spread over a wide area of 10 billion light years of the universe.
- ★ Also, it is expected that its observations will help in solving the mysteries of dark matter and dark energy.
- ★ This telescope is named after the Greek mathematician Euclid.
- ★ This telescope will be installed at a distance of about 1.5 million kilometers from the Earth by going to the second Lagrange Point (L2) and from there it will also be able to observe those waves which are difficult to reach the surface of the Earth.
- ★ The goal of the Euclid telescope is to create the most accurate three-dimensional map of the universe by observing billions of galaxies that span an area of 10 billion light-years.
- ★ The age of this campaign has been kept at six years.
- ★ Through this detailed map, scientists will be able to collect a lot of data to solve the mystery of the expansion of the universe and will get a lot of information about its development.

Dell Partners with Intel

- ★ Dell Technologies and Intel collaborated to set up an AI lab at Lord's Institute of Engineering and Technology in Telangana.
- ★ The primary goal of this partnership is to address the digital skills gap and empower students by incorporating Intel's 'AI for Youth' program into their educational curriculum.
- ★ The initiative aims to equip students with the expertise required for the job market of the future and make them industry ready.
- ★ The program focuses on enhancing the capabilities of selected faculty members through training provided by Intel, which includes over 170 hours of AI curriculum.
- ★ The training includes various activities such as bootcamps, AI-thons and virtual showcases designed to train students in the field of AI.
- ★ The partnership aims to set up an AI skills lab on campus, fostering an environment that supports artificial intelligence initiatives.

India's Third Moon Mission Chandrayaan-3 Successfully Launched

- ★ India successfully launched Chandrayaan-3 with LVM3-M4 rocket from Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota.
- ★ With the success of ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 mission, India will be the fourth country after Russia (Soviet Union), America and China to have soft-landed on the Moon.
- ★ ISRO launched Chandrayaan-1 in 2008. Chandrayaan-2 was launched in 2019. Chandrayaan-3 was launched from Sriharikota on 14 July 2023.
- ★ Chandrayaan-3 has a propulsion module, lander and rover.

- ★ The Lander + Rover of Chandrayaan-3 weighs about 250 kg more than the Lander + Rover of Chandrayaan-2.
- ★ The Chandrayaan-3 mission aims to gather more information about the lunar surface.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme 2.0 for IT Hardware

- ★ Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 2.0 for IT hardware has been approved in an announcement made by PIB Delhi.
- ★ The plan, with a budget of ₹17,000 crore, aims to grow and expand the IT hardware manufacturing ecosystem in India.
- ★ The Production Linked Incentive Scheme 2.0 is a government initiative aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and attracting large investments in the value chain.
- ★ The scheme provides a financial incentive to companies operating in specific target segments, such as Laptops, Tablets, All-in-One PCs, Servers, and Ultra Small Form Factor devices.
- ★ The incentives provided under the PLI 2.0 Scheme will be applicable for a period of six years.

IIT Roorkee Announces Research Awards for 2022

- ★ Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) has announced its Research Awards 2022.
- ★ The award is given to recognize the outstanding contribution of Institute awardees in their chosen careers.
- ★ The research awards given by IIT Roorkee are open to all Indian citizens and include winners from various prestigious institutions across the country.
- ★ This year's award has five awardees in different categories including 'Khosla National Award' (Science).
- ★ These awards have been in existence since the inception of the University.
- ★ Dr. Kanishka Biswas, recipient of the Khosla National Award, is a Professor in the New Chemistry Unit at the Jawaharlal Nehru Center for Advanced Scientific Research, Bangalore, whose research interests focus on renewable energy and a clean environment.
- ★ Recipient of the HRED Hydro and Renewable Energy Award, Dr. RP Saini has been Professor in the Department of Hydro and Renewable Energy at IIT Roorkee.
- ★ IIT Bombay Professor Dr. Dipankar Chowdhary received the Gopal Ranjan Technology Award.
- ★ Dr. Satish Chandra was honored with the SR Mehra Memorial Award. He is a Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Roorkee.

China Launches World's First Methane-Fuelled Space Rocket

- ★ China's ZhuQue-2 Y-2 became the world's first methane-fuelled rocket to successfully reach orbit.
- ★ The methane-powered rocket, known as Metalox, followed the anticipated trajectory and completed its flight as planned.
- ★ Methane engines provide improved performance while significantly reducing operating costs, contributing to the advancement of reusable rocket technology.

- ★ Metalox rockets use methane as the fuel and liquid oxygen (LOX) as the oxidizer, with specific design considerations compared to conventional rockets.
- ★ Methane offers advantages as a rocket propellant, including high energy density, favourable combustion characteristics, and wide availability.

IIT-Kharagpur to Develop Tamper-Proof Signalling System

- ★ The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, is developing a tamper-proof signalling system based on blockchain technology for the Indian Railways.
- ★ The system is going to be embedded with enhanced safety measures; the new system would complement the existing Data Logger which is considered the 'Black Box' of rolling stock.
- ★ The system would complement the Data Logger which was limited by its centralised storage facility, lack of tamper-evident data, and limited access control.
- ★ The new blockchain system would address these limitations by storing data in a distributed ledger, using cryptography to ensure data integrity, and making data accessible to all stakeholders.
- ★ This would make the new system more secure, transparent, and efficient than the current system.
- ★ It would enable secure data sharing among stakeholders and automate processes with smart contracts and create tamper-evident audit trails.
- ★ The new blockchain system would address all these limitations by storing data in a distributed ledger by using cryptography to ensure data integrity and make data accessible to the involved stakeholders.

Twitter Unveils New Logo 'X'

- ★ Popular social media platform Twitter launched a new logo 'X' as part of a massive rebranding effort.
- ★ The blue bird logo has been replaced by an 'X', which is now featured prominently on the website.
- ★ Media reports have confirmed the unveiling of the new logo, which features a white 'X' on a black background, symbolising the platform's updated identity.
- ★ The new logo was announced jointly by Twitter founder Elon Musk and CEO Linda Yacarino, indicating their involvement in the rebranding process.
- ★ The 'X' logo introduced during Twitter's rebranding marks a shift towards turning the platform into an all-encompassing app similar to China's WeChat.
- ★ The change is aimed at enabling users to perform various tasks beyond social media including making payments and booking hotels.

New Image of Webb Space Telescope's First Year of Science

- ★ The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) released a new image of a small star-forming region captured by James Webb Space Telescope to celebrate the completion of the telescope's first year of science.

- ★ The new image features the nearest star-forming region in the Rho Ophiuchi cloud complex.
- ★ Its proximity at 390 light-years allows for a highly detailed close-up, with no foreground stars in the intervening space.
- ★ The region contains approximately 50 young stars, all of them similar in mass to the Sun, or smaller.
- ★ Webb's image of Rho Ophiuchi allows us to witness a very brief period in the stellar life cycle with new clarity.
- ★ The pictured cloud complex, known as Rho Ophiuchi, is the closest 50 baby stars -forming region to Earth and is found in the sky near the border of the constellations Ophiuchus and Scorpius, the serpent bearer and scorpion.
- ★ The telescope is the result of an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Canadian Space Agency which was launched in December 2021.

Simplifai Launched World's 1st Generative AI Tool for Insurance

- ★ Simplifai, an AI automation solutions firm, has launched Simplifai InsuranceGPT, a custom-built, world-first GPT tool fuelled by the company's no-code AI-powered platform.
- ★ The first custom-built AI GPT tool for insurers offers ChatGPT-like enhanced decision making for automated claims management, while maintaining privacy and data security.
- ★ With InsuranceGPT, Simplifai has strengthened its end-to-end business process automation capabilities, providing enriched communication between insurers and their customers through the power of generative AI – delivering fast, concise, and accurate responses in a secure way.
- ★ By offering the insurance industry's first custom, cloud-based, private Software-as-a-Service LLM, Simplifai can allay these concerns through:
 - Fitting into existing ecosystems
 - Being ever vigilant about security
 - Maintaining 'No code necessary'.

European Satellite Being Made to Crash Intentionally on Earth

- ★ The European Space Agency's (ESA) Aeolus wind satellite, after exceeding its planned life in orbit, is making its way back to Earth.
- ★ The satellite, which has been orbiting our planet for nearly 5 years, is currently falling at a rate of around 1 km per day, with its descent accelerating.
- ★ Aeolus was initially designed as a research mission to demonstrate novel technology.
- ★ However, it proved so successful that it provided data to Europe's leading meteorology centres for most of its life in orbit, significantly improving global weather forecasts.
- ★ Now, gravity, Earth's atmosphere, and solar activity are dragging Aeolus down from its operational altitude of 320 km.
- ★ Aeolus is a satellite mission launched by the European Space Agency (ESA) to study Earth's winds and their influence on the planet's climate and weather patterns.

ISRO to Launch PSLV-C56

- ★ On July 30, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is all set to launch the PSLV-C56 rocket from the first launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota.
- ★ The PSLV-C56 mission will also carry six co-passenger satellites along with a DS-SAR satellite from Singapore.
- ★ The DS-SAR satellite, weighing 3600 kg, has been developed by DSTA and ST Engineering, representing the Government of Singapore.
- ★ It will be launched into a Near Equatorial Orbit (NEO) at an inclination of 5 degrees and an altitude of 535 km.
- ★ The DS-SAR satellite is equipped with a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), which allows it to provide day and night coverage in all-weather with 1-metre resolution at full polarimetry.
- ★ Once operational, the DS-SAR satellite will meet the satellite imagery requirements of various government agencies within Singapore.
- ★ ST Engineering will use the satellite to provide multi-responsive imagery and geospatial services for its commercial customers.

SpaceX Successfully Launched 22 Starlink V2 'Mini' Satellites

- ★ The Space Exploration Technologies Corporation, commonly referred to as SpaceX launched 22 Starlink V2 'Mini' satellites into Low Earth Orbit (LEO) from Space Launch Complex 40 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, the United States of America (USA).
- ★ The Falcon 9's first stage came back down to Earth for a landing about 5 minutes after liftoff as planned.
- ★ It touched down on the SpaceX drone ship Just Read the Instructions, which was stationed in the Atlantic Ocean.
- ★ According to a SpaceX mission description, it was the sixth launch and landing for this particular booster.
- ★ The spacecraft were deployed there on schedule, about 65 minutes after launch.
- ★ The V2 Minis feature enhanced technologies, including more powerful phased array antennas and the use of E-band for backhaul.
- ★ This allows each satellite to offer approximately four times more capacity than their predecessors.

SpaceX Launches 'Jupiter 3'

- ★ SpaceX launched the world's largest private communications satellite 'Jupiter 3' using a Falcon Heavy rocket from Launch Complex-39A of NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- ★ The 'Jupiter 3' satellite, developed by Maxar Technologies in Palo Alto, California, holds the record as the largest commercial communications satellite ever built.
- ★ Its size would be comparable to the wingspan of a commercial airliner, measuring between 130 and 160 feet (40 to 50 m).

- ★ Its larger size will enable it to double current internet capacity to 500 Gbps, significantly improving connectivity in areas with limited cable and fibre options.
- ★ ‘Jupiter 3’ will play a key role in enhancing enterprise networks, meeting the connectivity needs of businesses across North and South America.
- ★ Additionally, the satellite will serve as a reliable backhaul solution for mobile network operators (MNOs), ensuring smoother and more efficient data transmission within the region’s mobile networks.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Asteroid Day

- ★ World Asteroid Day is an annual global event observed on June 30.
- ★ It is to commemorate the Tunguska event of 1908, in which a meteor airburst caused significant destruction in central Siberia, Russia.
- ★ The Tunguska event is recognized as the Earth’s largest recorded asteroid impact, resulting in the devastation of approximately 2,000 square kilometers (500,000 acres) of pine forest.
- ★ The primary objective of World Asteroid Day is to raise public awareness about the potential hazards posed by asteroid impacts and to inform people about crisis communication strategies in the event of a threat from a near-Earth object (NEO).
- ★ NEOs are asteroids or comets that come close to Earth’s orbit. NASA’s Center for NEO Studies has discovered over 16,000 Near Earth Asteroids.

International Day of Parliamentarism

- ★ International Day of Parliamentarism is celebrated every year on 30 June.
- ★ It commemorates the founding of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in 1889.
- ★ This day holds significance as it provides an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the progress made by parliaments worldwide in achieving their predetermined goals.
- ★ The theme is ‘Parliaments for the Planet’, which urges parliaments around the world to lead by example in building a greener and more sustainable future.
- ★ The goals of the International Day of Parliamentarism encompass several key aspects, including self-assessment and evaluation of parliamentary performance.

National Doctor’s Day

- ★ National Doctor’s Day is celebrated every year on 01 July.
- ★ It is to appreciate and honour the valuable contribution of doctors and health care professionals in the world.
- ★ The day is celebrated in India to recognize the selfless service and efforts of doctors for the betterment of the people.

- ★ The Indian Medical Association (IMA) organises various programs and activities on National Doctor's Day.
- ★ The theme for National Doctor's Day 2023 is 'Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands'.
- ★ It aims to recognize and appreciate the tireless efforts of medical professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ★ The day is celebrated in the memory of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, a physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal.

World Sports Journalists Day

- ★ World Sports Journalists Day is celebrated across the world on 2 July every year.
- ★ The day honours the achievements of sports media professionals and inspires them to put in more efforts to spread knowledge about sports among the general public.
- ★ Many news companies organize special events to honor sports journalists on this special day.
- ★ It aims to recognize the efforts of individuals involved in sports journalism.
- ★ It serves as a platform to honour his outstanding work in the field of sports journalism.

International Day of Cooperatives

- ★ International Day of Cooperatives is observed annually on 1 July.
- ★ The purpose of International Day of Cooperatives is to acknowledge the contribution of cooperatives in solving major international issues as recognized by the United Nations.
- ★ The theme for International Day of Cooperatives 2023 is 'Cooperatives for Sustainable Development'.
- ★ In 1923, the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) established the first International Cooperative Day.
- ★ The aim was to commemorate the values and principles of cooperation.
- ★ It highlights the values of self-help, democratic decision making and mutual cooperation.

World Population Day

- ★ The annual celebration known as World Population Day is observed on 11 July every year.
- ★ It serves as a platform to raise awareness about global population-related concerns.
- ★ The theme is 'Unleashing the Power of Gender Equality: Elevating the Voices of Women and Girls to Unlock the Infinite Potential of Our World'.
- ★ The theme underlines the importance of gender equality in harnessing the full potential of women and girls and the immense opportunities they present for our global society.
- ★ It was established in 1989 by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme.

International Malala Day

- ★ International Malala Day is observed every year on July 12.
- ★ The day is celebrated to honour Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani advocate for girls' education and the youngest Nobel laureate.
- ★ It serves as a worldwide awareness day, emphasising the need for girls to fight for their right to education.
- ★ The theme for World Malala Day 2023 is inspired by the book "I Am Malala", which focuses on the influence of celebrities as heroes and role models for social progress.
- ★ The theme highlights Malala's courage in facing hatred and fighting for her beliefs.

World Youth Skills Day 2023

- ★ World Youth Skills Day 2023 is celebrated every year on 15 July.
- ★ It is to mention the significance of developing skills among young people worldwide.
- ★ The theme for World Youth Skills Day 2023 is Skilling teachers, trainers and youth for a transformative future.
- ★ World Youth Skills Day was created by the United Nations General Assembly on November 11, 2014, through a resolution initiated by Sri Lanka, and supported by some other countries.
- ★ The first World Youth Skills Day was celebrated on July 15, 2015.
- ★ The day intends to "raise awareness on the importance of investing in youth skills development" with that in mind.

World International Justice Day

- ★ World International Justice Day is celebrated every year on 17 July.
- ★ The day focuses on promoting international criminal justice and advocating for the rights of victims.
- ★ It commemorates the adoption of the Rome Statute on 17 July 1998, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- ★ The ICC is tasked with protecting individuals from heinous crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression.
- ★ The primary mission of the ICC is to ensure justice and accountability for these heinous crimes, thus contributing to global peace, security and prosperity.

National Mango Day

- ★ National Mango Day is celebrated every year on 22 July.
- ★ The history of the International Mango Festival can be traced back to 1987 when the National Horticulture Board of India came up with the idea of celebrating the mango fruit.
- ★ Mango cultivation in India dates back more than 5,000 years and has an important place in Indian folklore, with legends linking it to Lord Buddha.

- ★ The English and Spanish name “mango” has its roots in the Malayan word “manna”, which was transformed into “manga” by the Portuguese during their spice trade ventures in Kerala in the 1490s.

World Brain Day

- ★ World Brain Day, also known as International Brain Day, is an annual health care event observed around the world on 22 July.
- ★ The event has been happening for the past nine years and is dedicated to raising awareness about brain diseases.
- ★ The theme for World Brain Day 2023 is “Brain health and disability: leaving no one behind”. This global initiative focuses on bridging the knowledge gap and raising awareness of brain health disorders.
- ★ The main goal is to advocate for improved health care, education and research related to neurological disorders with a special emphasis on providing high quality health care to persons with disabilities.
- ★ The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) was established on July 22, 1957, which serves as an important organisation in the field of neurology.

World Nature Conservation Day

- ★ World Nature Conservation Day is observed globally on 28 July every year.
- ★ The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of conserving nature and biodiversity.
- ★ It emphasizes that a healthy environment is important for a stable and healthy society.
- ★ World Nature Conservation Day promotes the idea that a healthy environment is the foundation of a prosperous mankind.
- ★ The day serves as an opportunity to create positive opinions and attitudes towards climate change.
- ★ The theme for World Nature Conservation Day 2023 is “Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet”.
- ★ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was established in 1948 to address environmental concerns caused by industrialization and human activities.

World Hepatitis Day

- ★ World Hepatitis Day is observed globally on 28th July.
- ★ Its main objective is to raise awareness and drive meaningful change about the global burden of viral hepatitis, which causes liver inflammation, chronic disease and liver cancer.
- ★ The theme for World Hepatitis Day 2023 is ‘We are not waiting’.
- ★ The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a campaign to make the world free of hepatitis.
- ★ The World Hepatitis Alliance was established in 2007.

- ★ The date of 28 July was chosen because it is the birthday of Nobel-prize winning scientist Dr. Baruch Blumberg.

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

- ★ World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is an annual event observed every year on 30 July.
- ★ The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons aims to raise awareness and prevent the widespread issue of people trafficking and modern slavery, which affects many countries around the world.
- ★ The theme for the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2023 is “Reach every victim of trafficking, leave no one behind”.
- ★ It stresses the need to support and protect all victims, while ensuring that no one is overlooked or neglected in the fight against trafficking.
- ★ The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons aims to integrate the fight against trafficking into wider United Nations initiatives, contribute to global development and enhance security around the world.

OBITUTARY NEWS

Oscar-winning American Actor Alan Arkin

- ★ Veteran United States (US) Actor Alan Arkin Best Known For ‘Little Miss Sunshine’ Passes Away at the age of 89 in California, United States of America (USA).
- ★ He was an American actor, director, and screenwriter.
- ★ He started his career in comedy and theatre before establishing himself as a character actor in film and television in a career spanning over six decades.
- ★ Arkin gained stardom with his roles in the films The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming (1966), Wait Until Dark (1967), The Heart is a Lonely Hunter (1968), Popi (1969), Catch-22 (1970), and The In-Laws (1979).
- ★ Alan Arkin was nominated for the Academy Award 4 times and also won a Tony Award (Broadway’s top honour), **in**
- ★ For his work on television, he received 6 Primetime Emmy Award nominations.

Madhya Pradesh’s 1st Woman Chief Secretary Nirmala Buch

- ★ Retired Indian Administrative Madhya Pradesh’s first woman Chief Secretary Nirmala Buch passed away at the age of 96.
- ★ She had served the Yojana Aayog (now NITI Ayog) and she did a pioneering role in framing of ‘gramin vikas’ and ‘panchayati raj’ system in MP.
- ★ She had also served as Financial and Education Secretary from 1975-1977.
- ★ Buch had served as the Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh (MP) from September 1991 to 1993.

Spain's Only Ballon d'Or Winning Player Luis Suarez

- ★ Luis Suárez Miramontes, the so-called 'Golden Galician' who is the only Spanish man to win soccer's most prestigious individual award, the Ballon d'Or, has passed away at the age of 88 in Milan, Italy.
- ★ He began his career at Deportivo La Coruna, before moving to Barcelona in 1954.
- ★ Throughout seven seasons, he played a total amount of 253 matches for Barcelona, scoring 141 goals.
- ★ He also won 32 caps for Spain and was part of the squad which won the European Championship in 1964, making 32 appearances for the national team.
- ★ He won two La Liga trophies (1958-59 and 1959-60) with the Catalan giants.
- ★ He coached the Spanish National Team (La Roja) at the 1990 World Cup in Italy.
- ★ In 1960 Suárez became the first and only male Spanish-born player to win the Ballon d'Or.

Senior Congress Leader Oommen Chandi

- ★ Former Chief Minister of Kerala and senior Congress leader Oommen Chandy passed away on 18 July 2023. He was at the age of 79.
- ★ Chandi contributed significantly to the regional and national politics of Kerala for more than 5 decades.
- ★ Chandy was elected to the Kerala Legislative Assembly at the age of 27 and won 11 consecutive elections.
- ★ He was also the Chief Minister of Kerala from 2004–2006 and 2011–2016.
- ★ Chandy served as a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Kerala four times.

Former Australian and New South Wales wicketkeeper Brian Taber

- ★ Former Australia and New South Wales wicketkeeper Brian Taber passed away at the age of 83.
- ★ He represented Australia in 16 Tests from 1966 to 1970, making his debut against South Africa in Johannesburg.
- ★ During his debut match, he achieved an impressive feat of seven catches and one stumping.
- ★ In recognition of his significant contribution to cricket, Brian Tabor has been elected to the Cricket NSW Hall of Fame in 2021.
- ★ Known for his affable personality, he was regarded as one of the best men in Australian cricket, earning him a reputation as a 'wonderful team man', as described by former Test captain Brian Booth.
- ★ In 2014, a book detailing Tabor's life was published, highlighting his remarkable journey and achievements in the world of cricket.

The 'World's Most Famous Hacker Kevin Mitnick

- ★ One of the most famous Computer hackers in the history of cybersecurity, Kevin Mitnick passed away at the age of 59.

- ★ He was an American computer security consultant, author, and convicted hacker.
- ★ He is best known for his high-profile 1995 arrest and 5 years in prison for various computer and communications-related crimes.
- ★ He began his hacking journey at the young age of 12 years in 1979.
- ★ He became a White Hat hacker and cybersecurity consultant after serving a five-year term in Prison.
- ★ He established the Mitnick Security Consulting firm in 2003.
- ★ He provided cybersecurity advice to Fortune 500 companies and government agencies.
- ★ He became the part owner of KnowBe4, a company offering phishing security awareness training.
- ★ Mitnick published a memoir on his hacking career, “Ghost in the Wires: My Adventures as the World’s Most Wanted Hacker”, in 2011.

MISCELLANEOUS

Youngest Indian To get Commercial Pilot Licence

- ★ Sakshi Kochhar has become the youngest commercial pilot in India at the age of 18.
- ★ She achieved this milestone by surpassing Maitri Patel, who previously held the record by obtaining her licence at the age of 19.
- ★ Sakshi, born on May 30, 2005, in a small town Parwanoo, the Gateway of Himachal Pradesh (HP).
- ★ She confesses to initially wanting to be a choreographer.
- ★ Her first solo flight was on December 21, 2022, and this year, she received her commercial pilot licence from the United States (US) on May 30, which is also her birthday.

Guinness World Record for Largest Display of Lambani Items

- ★ The Guinness World Record for the Largest Display of Lambani Items was created on the sidelines of the G-20 Culture Working Group meeting in Hampi, Karnataka.
- ★ The event took place on the sidelines of the third G-20 Culture Working Group meeting in Karnataka.
- ★ This achievement was announced by PIB Bengaluru.
- ★ A total of 450 Lambani women artisans and cultural practitioners associated with Sandur Kushala Kala Kendra collaborated to create G1 tagged Sandur Lambani embroidery consisting of 1755 patchwork.

Rare Bird ‘Jerdon’s Babbler’ Spotted in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

- ★ A rare and globally endangered bird species called ‘Jerdon’s Babbler’ was recently spotted in the grasslands of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) in Uttar Pradesh.

- ★ According to surveyors, more than 95% of ‘Jerdon’s Babbler’ in India are from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.
- ★ The Jordanian babbler lives in pairs in small flocks in tall grasslands.
- ★ This globally threatened bird has been listed as ‘vulnerable’ by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1994.

Youngest Person to Cross the North Channel

- ★ Anshuman Jhingran, an 18-year-old open water swimmer from Navi Mumbai, achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the youngest person to cross the North Channel.
- ★ The North Channel is a challenging strait located between the northeast coast of Northern Ireland and the southwest coast of Scotland, which serves as the end of the Irish Sea and flows northwest into the Atlantic Ocean.
- ★ Anshuman accomplished this incredible feat in just 125 days, earning him a place in the prestigious Guinness World Records.
- ★ His successful crossing was the 114th of its kind since 1947, showing the difficulty of swimming the North Channel.

