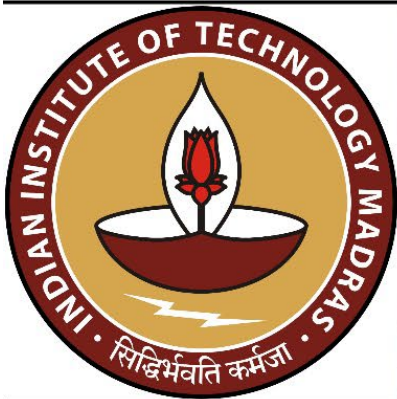




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JUNE – 2023

NATIONAL NEWS

PM Modi To Chair SCO Summit

- ★ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will chair the **22nd Summit of the SCO Council** of Heads of State.
- ★ It will be held in the virtual format. **India** assumed the **rotating Chairmanship of SCO** at the **Samarkand Summit on 16 September 2022**.
- ★ All the SCO Member States, **China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan** have been invited to attend the Summit.
- ★ In addition, **Iran, Belarus and Mongolia** have been invited as **observer states**.
- ★ As per **SCO tradition**, **Turkmenistan** has also been invited as the **Guest of the Chair**.
- ★ In addition, heads of six international and regional organizations have also been invited.
- ★ The theme of the summit is **‘Towards a Secure SCO’**.

‘Life Saving Jackets’ Mandatory for Shikara Boats

- ★ The Jammu and Kashmir government has announced making ‘life jackets’ mandatory for shikara boats in Dal and Nigeen lakes, besides other water bodies in the region.
- ★ These instructions have been issued to ensure the safety of tourists riding shikaras in Dal and Nigeen lakes and other water bodies and to prevent any untoward incident due to inclement weather conditions or any other reasons.
- ★ Ordered that as per the guidelines of J&K Tourism Policy, every Shikara boat registered under J&K Tourism Trade Act, 1978 shall maintain availability of minimum three lifesaving jackets of recommended quality and specifications in the boat at all times.
- ★ Failure to do so will result in cancellation of registration under the said Act.

Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana

- ★ The Maharashtra government has approved a new financial scheme under which ₹6,000 will be paid annually to over one crore farmers in the state.
- ★ ‘Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana’ was approved in a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde in Mumbai.
- ★ Chief Minister Shinde said that this amount is in addition to the ₹6,000 being given to farmers by the Center under PM Kisan Yojana.
- ★ The Maharashtra cabinet also approved the implementation of ‘Gender Inclusive Tourism Policy’ named ‘I’ to empower women in the tourism sector.
- ★ The cabinet also approved the starting of women bike-taxi service at some tourist places.

Bandra-Versova Sea Bridge to be named after Veer Savarkar

- ★ Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has announced that the Bandra-Versova sea route in Mumbai will be renamed as 'Veer Savarkar Bandra-Versova Sagari Setu'.
- ★ Maharashtra will also introduce the 'Veer Savarkar Shaurya Puraskar' award to honour individuals who have made notable contributions to the state, similar to the gallantry awards given by the central government.
- ★ Veer Savarkar, born on May 28, 1883 in Bhagur, Nashik, Maharashtra, was a prominent politician, activist and writer.
- ★ While imprisoned in Ratnagiri, Savarkar developed the ideology of Hindutva, a Hindu nationalist movement in 1922.

'Mo Ghara' Housing Scheme Launched by Odisha

- ★ The Odisha government launched the 'Mo Ghara' (My Home) housing scheme.
- ★ The scheme provides credit-linked financial assistance to economically and socially weaker families and the scheme is fully funded from the state budget.
- ★ Applications for the loan will open from June 15, 2023 and the scheme covers families who were earlier excluded from the housing schemes.
- ★ Beneficiaries can avail housing loans up to ₹3 lakh.
- ★ The state government waives off registration fee, stamp duty and processing fee for bank loan approval.
- ★ The 'Mo Ghara' housing scheme is in addition to the Biju Pakka Ghar Yojana (BPGY) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin.

Ahmednagar to be Named after Ahilyabai Holkar

- ★ Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced that Ahmednagar district will be named after warrior queen Ahilyabai Holkar.
- ★ The announcement was made during a program organised at the birthplace of Ahilyabai Holkar on her 297th birth anniversary at Chondi village in Ahmednagar district.
- ★ Ahilyabai Holkar, born in 1725, was a famous ruler of the Indore kingdom, known for her wisdom and compassion.
- ★ Earlier, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde had announced on May 28 that the Bandra-Versova sea-link bridge would be named 'Veer Savarkar Setu'.

First Vande Bharat Express in Assam

- ★ **North-East's first Vande Bharat Express** will connect **Guwahati to New Jalpaiguri**.
- ★ It is the **third Vande Bharat** train of **West Bengal**.
- ★ It will reduce the travel time to 5 hours and 30 minutes.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi also inaugurated Diesel Electric Multiple Unit and Mainline Electric Multiple Unit shed at Lumding in Assam.

- ★ He also dedicated 182 Route kilometers of newly electrified sections.
- ★ It will open the door to running electric trains.
- ★ Around 425 kilometers of railway tracks in Assam and Meghalaya have been electrified.
- ★ Prime Minister also announced that **all capital cities of the Northeast will be connected through a broad gauge network.**

World's Largest Food Storage Scheme in Co-Operative Sector

- ★ The Union Cabinet approved forming and empowering an **Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC)** to create the “**world's largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector**” by **converging 8 ongoing schemes of three ministries.**
- ★ This **₹1 trillion scheme** will be the world's largest grain storage scheme in the cooperative sector.
- ★ The scheme will help cooperatives set up decentralized storage facilities across the country, which is likely to reduce the burden on the Food Corporation of India (FCI).
- ★ This will reduce wastage of agricultural produce and help farmers to plan their sales better.
- ★ An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) will be constituted under the Chairmanship of the Cooperation Minister.

UPU Regional Office in New Delhi

- ★ The Cabinet approved the setting up of a Regional Office of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) at New Delhi.
- ★ The purpose of the office is to carry out the development cooperation and technical assistance activities of the UPU in the region through an agreement with the UPU.
- ★ India will actively participate in multilateral organizations in the postal sector with a focus on South-South and triangular cooperation.
- ★ India will provide field project experts, staff and office infrastructure for the UPU Regional Office.
- ★ The office will formulate and implement projects for capacity building, training, improving postal service efficiency and quality, enhancing postal technology, promoting e-commerce and trade in the region.
- ★ These projects will be coordinated with UPU.

Araku Coffee and Black Pepper are now Organic Certified

- ★ Araku Coffee and Black Pepper received organic certification from APEDA.
- ★ Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has granted organic certification to Girijan Co-operative Corporation (GCC), Visakhapatnam for Araku coffee and black pepper crops.
- ★ This certification will have a positive impact on the market value of these products.
- ★ The certification covers an extensive cultivation area of 21,104 acres. 1,300 farmers in the Gondipakalu, Lammasingi, Kappalu, GK Veedhi, Pedavalasa, and Erracheruvulu clusters grow coffee and pepper.

- ★ The process of obtaining certification crossed various challenges including third-party verification, online registration, geo-tagging of farms, etc.
- ★ Araku Coffee is cultivated in the Araku Valley of Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ Arabica Coffee is grown around Vishakapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh and Koraput district in Orissa.

‘Odisha for AI, and AI for Youth’ Initiative

- ★ Odisha Chief Minister (CM) Shri Naveen Patnaik launched ‘Odisha for Artificial Intelligence’ (AI) and ‘Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Youth’ initiatives.
- ★ ‘Odisha for AI, and AI for Youth’ initiative will be implemented in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack in the first phase.
- ★ Odisha Electronics and IT Department has collaborated with Intel India.
- ★ ‘Odisha for AI’ is a free 4-hour course on AI by Intel on its app/site.
- ★ ‘Odisha for AI’ is a self-learning online program designed to raise public awareness about artificial intelligence.
- ★ AI for youth is an initiative for students (below 18) of 2000 5T schools and Odisha Adarsh Vidyalayas.
- ★ The Odisha government is focused on technology-driven transformation. It is one of the key components of the Government’s 5-T (Team Work, Technology, Transparency, Transformation & Time Limit) initiative.
- ★ The initiative will promote digital literacy among the masses and make them familiar with new-generation technology.
- ★ It will also create an ecosystem for improving research, innovation, and application of AI across various sectors.

Committee for Conservation of Seeds Preserved by Tribal Farmers

- ★ The Odisha government has established a committee called **the Landrace Varietal Release Committee (LVRC)** to release traditional millet varieties in accordance with standard operating protocols (SoP) for seed systems.
- ★ **Odisha is the first state in India to develop a protocol for releasing indigenous millet varieties conserved by tribal farmers for centuries.**
- ★ Landraces refer to ecotypes that have been cultivated for a long time in their original habitats.
- ★ It is crucial to preserve these landraces before they become extinct.
- ★ The initiative aims to preserve traditional landraces, promote agrobiodiversity, and empower custodian farmers in Odisha while supporting sustainable agricultural practices.
- ★ The objective of the committee is to recognize the efforts of custodian farmers, particularly tribals, in conserving traditional millet landraces.

Karnataka State to Join the DBT Bandwagon

- ★ The Congress-led government in Karnataka formally approved the implementation of two Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes, Griha Lakshmi and Yuvanidhi.
- ★ The Griha Lakshmi scheme aims to transfer ₹2,000 per month to all women heads of households.
- ★ Yuva Nidhi provides an unemployment allowance of ₹3,000 per month for graduates and ₹1,500 per month for diploma holders.
- ★ Griha Lakshmi is inspired by Tamil Nadu's Magalir Urimai Thogai scheme, but differs as it covers all female heads of households, not just eligible women.

India's First Carbon Neutral Village

- ★ Union Minister of State, **Kapil Patil**, recently announced the development of **India's first carbon-neutral village** in **Bhiwandi Taluka**, located in **Thane district**.
- ★ The government is actively working towards developing a carbon-neutral village in Bhiwandi Taluka, Thane district.
- ★ This initiative aims to minimize carbon emissions and promote sustainable practices for a cleaner and greener environment.
- ★ Along with the carbon-neutral village, **121 tribal villages** are being developed as **model villages**.
- ★ These model villages serve as examples for sustainable development, showcasing effective infrastructure, amenities, and improved living conditions.
- ★ This scheme provides financial support to farmers, enhancing their livelihoods and promoting agricultural growth.

Lavender Festival Inaugurated in Bhaderwah

- ★ Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the two-day lavender festival at Bhaderwah in Jammu.
- ★ Bhaderwah has emerged as the Lavender capital of India and Agri StartUp destination.
- ★ CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu organized the event as part of its 'One Week One Laboratory' campaign.
- ★ Dr Jitendra Singh described Bhaderwah as the birthplace of India's 'Purple Revolution' and a destination for agri-startups.
- ★ This is a flagship project of CSIR, under which lavender cultivation is being promoted in the temperate regions of Jammu and Kashmir region.
- ★ The objective of this project is to increase the income of small and marginal farmers and to develop agri-based startups.

Uttar Pradesh Government Launches 15-Day Mega Registration Drive

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh (UP) government launched a 15-day registration campaign for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in all 75 districts across UP.
- ★ The registration campaign will be organized across the state from 15 June 2023.

- ★ It is to cover around 14 lakh such MSMEs that are not yet registered with the MSME Udyam portal, and providing them all the benefits of the schemes of the state government.
- ★ More than 90 lakh MSMEs are active in the state but only 14 lakh are registered.
- ★ In each district, the Directorate of Industries will organize camps for the registration of MSMEs.
- ★ Additionally, the MSMEs themselves can also register by visiting the portal.
- ★ The registration of MSMEs will provide them an identity, which will be essential for their operation.

Maiden International Cruise Vessel, MV Empress in Chennai

- ★ **Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal** flagged off India's first international cruise vessel - **MV Empress, from Chennai to Sri Lanka.**
- ★ This is the launch of the International Cruise Tourism Terminal at Chennai built at a cost of ₹17.21 crore, ushering in a new era of cruise tourism and maritime trade in the country.
- ★ On the occasion of Environment Day, Sonowal along with the port officials also planted 2,500 saplings at the port.
- ★ The launch of the first cruise service between Chennai and Sri Lanka has opened a new chapter in the cruise tourism sector in the country.
- ★ This is the result of an MoU signed during the Incredible India International Cruise Summit in 2022.

Wage Payments Made Through Aadhaar Based Payment Bridge System

- ★ The Rural Development Ministry has informed that about 88 per cent of the wage payment has been made through Aadhaar Based Payment Bridge System (ABPS) till May this year (2023).
- ★ States will organise camps and follow up with beneficiaries to achieve hundred per cent % ABPS.
- ★ The Ministry has made it clear to all the States that the beneficiary who comes for work should be requested to provide the Aadhaar number but will not be refused work on this basis.

MP Government to Launch CM Learn and Earn Scheme

- ★ In Madhya Pradesh, the Chief Minister's Learn and Earn scheme is set to be launched with the aim of providing employable skills to the youth.
- ★ Chief Minister's Learn and Earn scheme in Madhya Pradesh focuses on providing training, financial support, and employment opportunities to the youth.
- ★ By identifying numerous work areas and involving various industries, the scheme aims to equip the young workforce with the necessary skills to enhance their employability and contribute to the state's development.
- ★ A significant aspect of the Learn and Earn scheme is that it not only focuses on skill acquisition but also provides financial support to the youth.
- ★ Participants in the scheme will receive a monthly allowance ranging from ₹8,000 to 10,000.
- ★ This allowance aims to assist the youth in meeting their financial needs while they learn and work.

- ★ The Learn and Earn scheme is a proactive measure taken by the government to address the issue of unemployment by equipping young individuals with necessary skills.

NHPC Inks MoU with Maharashtra Government

- ★ State-owned NHPC Limited has announced its collaboration with the Department of Energy, Maharashtra government through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- ★ The primary objective of this partnership is to establish Energy Storage Systems, specifically Pumped Storage Systems, alongside other Renewable Energy Sources like Solar, Wind, and Hybrid, with a total combined capacity of 7,350 MW.
- ★ The introduction of energy storage systems, such as Pumped Storage Systems, is crucial for storing excess energy during periods of low demand and utilizing it during peak hours.
- ★ These systems play a vital role in ensuring a reliable and uninterrupted power supply.
- ★ They contribute to grid stability, enable efficient energy management, and facilitate the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources into the power grid.
- ★ By combining pumped storage systems with solar, wind, and hybrid power generation, this collaboration aims to optimize the utilization of renewable energy resources.

First AIIMS in Country to Get NABH Accreditation

- ★ **AIIMS Nagpur**, the branch of the **All-India Institute of Medical Sciences** in Nagpur, has emerged as the first AIIMS in India to be accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH).
- ★ This accreditation places AIIMS Nagpur at par with the world's leading hospital standards in terms of quality and patient care.
- ★ The NABH accreditation serves as validation of their efforts in these fields.
- ★ The NABH accreditation is a voluntary and internationally recognized certification that signifies a healthcare organization's commitment to delivering high-quality healthcare services and ensuring patient safety.

KFON Internet Connectivity Launched by Kerala Government

- ★ The Pinarayi Vijayan-led Kerala government officially launched the Kerala Fiber Optical Network (KFON).
- ★ **Kerala** is the **first state to declare the right to internet** as a **fundamental right**.
- ★ The main objective of KFON is **to bridge the digital divide** and ensure high-speed broadband **internet access to all households and government offices in Kerala**.
- ★ KFON uses fibre optic technology to provide fast and reliable internet connection.
- ★ The Government of Kerala aims to bridge the digital divide and promote digital inclusion through the implementation of KFON.
- ★ The initiative aims to create a robust digital infrastructure that fosters innovation, economic growth and social development.

Nand Baba Milk Mission Scheme

- ★ Uttar Pradesh, a leading state in the field of milk development and milk production, the state government has launched the Nand Baba Milk Mission scheme at a cost of ₹1,000 crore.
- ★ The mission is implemented to facilitate milk producers to sell their milk at reasonable prices in villages through dairy cooperatives.
- ★ Under this mission, it is proposed to form a Dairy farmer producer organisation (Dairy FPO) in order to facilitate sale of milk in producers' villages itself.
- ★ There is a plan to set up five dairy FPOs in five districts of the state as a pilot project in the financial year 2023-24, in which women will also play a major role.

India Joins Centralised Laboratory Network (CLN) for Testing Vaccines

- ★ **India** has joined the **Centralized Laboratory Network (CLN)** which currently has 15 partner facilities in 13 countries that works to test vaccines which can be used during pandemic, epidemic disease outbreak.
- ★ **CLN** is a part of the **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)** and the Network is the largest global group which has standardised methods and materials for testing.
- ★ CEPI-funded network aims to identify the most promising vaccine candidates rapidly and accurately against emerging infectious diseases and the expanded network is working at supporting sustainable regional outbreak preparedness infrastructure also.

New Metro Line between HUDA City Center and Cyber City

- ★ The Union Cabinet approved the construction of a new metro line between HUDA City Center and Cyber City in Gurugram, Haryana.
- ★ The expansion project includes Metro connectivity extension from HUDA City Center to Cyber City, which also includes the Dwarka Expressway.
- ★ The entire project will be elevated and the estimated cost of this project is around ₹5,452 crore.
- ★ The metro line will cover a distance of over 28 kilometres and the line will have a total of 27 stations along the route.
- ★ The network will also be connected to Gurgaon Railway Station and the main feature of this metro line is to connect New Gurugram to Old Gurugram.
- ★ In the next phase, plans were made to provide connectivity to the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI Airport).

Water Resources Action Plan-2023-25

- ★ Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal will inaugurate the integrated Water Resources Action Plan-2023-25 under the Amrit Jal Kranti initiative.
- ★ This plan, aimed at conserving water resources, represents a significant and proactive step in addressing water conservation in the state.
- ★ Under the leadership of the Chief Minister, a two-day water conservation seminar was conducted in Panchkula on April 26-27.

- ★ The seminar witnessed the participation of various departments from Haryana, along with experts from India and abroad, who shared their research and insights on water conservation.
- ★ Taking into account the suggestions and inputs received during the water conservation seminar, all the departments have collaborated to prepare an action plan for water conservation.
- ★ This plan reflects the collective efforts and expertise of multiple departments in tackling the challenges related to water resources.

Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) Method of Paddy Cultivation

- ★ The Punjab government recently has set a target of five lakh acres to be sown under direct seeded rice (DSR) method of paddy cultivation this Kharif season.
- ★ The DSR target for this season is 2.5 times more than the previous season (2.12 lakh acres).
- ★ The state government has identified varieties suitable for different agro-climatic zones of the state and made arrangements for their availability to the farmers.
- ★ To encourage farmers to adopt the DSR method, the government has provided subsidy on seed drill, herbicides and weedicides.
- ★ The state government has engaged experts from Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Agriculture Department to provide technical guidance and monitoring to the farmers.
- ★ Direct Seeded Rice (DSR), also known as the 'broadcasting seed technique', is a water-saving method of sowing paddy in agriculture.

GeM to Organise District Level Buyer-Seller Workshops

- ★ Government e-Marketplace (GeM), India's premier online procurement platform, is organising Buyer-Seller Workshops in all the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh from 12 June to 31 August 2023.
- ★ These workshops aim to enhance the understanding of GeM's functionalities among buyers and sellers in the state, as well as provide a platform to address any queries or concerns they may have.
- ★ The Buyer-Seller Workshops are a significant step towards ensuring accessibility and participation from every corner of the state.
- ★ GeM believes in empowering buyers and sellers in the remotest districts of Uttar Pradesh by providing them with the necessary knowledge and resources to leverage the benefits of the platform effectively.
- ★ These workshops will serve as a platform to address queries, provide guidance, and discuss any issues faced by the users at the district level.

Mukhyamantri Ladli Bahna Yojana

- ★ Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the 'Mukhya Mantri Ladli Bahna Yojana'.
- ★ The Ladli Bahna Yojana 2023 was officially inaugurated by CM Chouhan, who took the initiative to deposit the first instalment of ₹1,000 in the accounts of eligible women beneficiaries.

- ★ This scheme was launched in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh with the primary objective of empowering women and providing financial assistance to them.
- ★ The Chief Minister outlined plans to increase the monthly support to ₹1,200, ₹1,500, ₹1,700 and eventually ₹2,000, thereby increasing the financial assistance provided to beneficiaries.
- ★ This scheme provides financial assistance to women in Madhya Pradesh.
- ★ Under the scheme, an amount of ₹12,000 per year i.e., ₹1,000 per month is sent directly to the bank accounts of eligible women.
- ★ The state government has allocated a budget of ₹60,000 crore for the implementation of the scheme.

IICA and RRU Signed MoU

- ★ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) and Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU).
- ★ The objective of the MoU is to synergize the professional capabilities of IICA and RRU towards capacity building, education, research and consultancy in the areas of internal security, financial crime, law enforcement, corporate fraud and other subjects.
- ★ The MoU also provides for exchange of knowledge and resources between IICA and RRU for conducting research, training and consultancy.

Girl Child Empowerment Mission (GeM) – 2023

- ★ NTPC Kanti launched Girl Child Empowerment Mission (GeM)-2023 as part of its CSR initiative.
- ★ The program is a four-week residential workshop aimed at empowering 40 underprivileged rural girls from Kanti Block.
- ★ This initiative is the first of its kind organised by NTPC Kanti.
- ★ The primary objective of the GeM program is to provide academic training, skill development and overall personality enhancement to the participants.
- ★ The program focuses on inculcating curiosity among the participants and developing better communication and social skills.
- ★ By empowering underprivileged rural girls, NTPC Kanti aims to contribute to their holistic development and provide them opportunities for a better future.

Ten National Highway Projects Worth Over ₹8000 Crore

- ★ Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for ten National Highway projects worth over ₹8000 crore at Pratapgarh and Deoria in Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ The Union Minister laid the foundation stone of 5 NH projects worth ₹2,200 crore in Pratapgarh region and 5 NH projects worth ₹6,215 crore in Deoria in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- ★ According to the Union Minister, the 43 km widening of National Highway 330 from Pratapgarh to Sultanpur being constructed at a cost of ₹1290 crore will reduce the travel time from Prayagraj to Pratapgarh via Ayodhya.

- ★ He said that the construction work of the proposed 14 km bypass in Pratapgarh at a cost of ₹309 crore would also start soon.
- ★ Road safety work for street lights, bus shelter etc. will be done on National Highway 31 at a cost of ₹27 crore.

G20 Third Framework Working Group Meeting

- ★ The G-20 Third Framework Working Group meeting is currently held in Kochi, Kerala under the G20 Presidency of India.
- ★ More than 75 delegates from G-20 member states, invited countries and international/regional organisations participated.
- ★ The focus of the meeting includes discussions on the global economic outlook, the macroeconomic impact of food and energy insecurity, and the impact of climate change and transition pathways on the economy.
- ★ The purpose of the meeting is to facilitate a shared understanding of member countries' policy experiences and to identify areas where global cooperation can support national efforts.
- ★ A panel discussion on 'Financial Globalization - Opportunities and Risks' was organised along with the working group meeting.

GSITI Hyderabad Recognized as 'Athi Uttam'

- ★ The **Geological Survey Training Institute of India (GSITI)** located at **Hyderabad** has been accredited as '**Athi Uttam**' by the **National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET)**.
- ★ The accreditation recognizes GSITI's excellent services and high standards in the field of Earth Science training.
- ★ The accreditation was granted to GSITI after an on-site assessment conducted by Capacity Building Commission (CBC), NABET and Quality Control of India.
- ★ GSITI, established in 1976, functions under the Ministry of Mines and is headquartered in Hyderabad.
- ★ The institute consists of six Regional Training Divisions (RTDs) located at Hyderabad, Nagpur, Jaipur, Lucknow, Kolkata and Shillong.
- ★ The Institute conducts courses on Remote Sensing sponsored by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) under the NNRMS programme.

Karnataka Government Introduces Shakti Scheme

- ★ The Congress government in Karnataka has rolled out its first of the five poll guarantees, the 'Shakti' scheme, that offers free travel to women and transgender people in government-run buses in Karnataka.
- ★ Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy launched the scheme
- ★ They have also issued smart cards to 5 beneficiaries at an event on the steps of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru.

- ★ The windscreens of city, ordinary, and express buses run by the state's 4 road transport corporations (Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC), and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC)) will have "Free travel for women" labels placed on them.
- ★ The smart cards for free bus travel would be granted after three months.
- ★ Women can apply for the Shakti Smart Card by registering on the SevaSindhu government portal.
- ★ The scheme does not apply to air-conditioned and luxury buses and is limited to travel within Karnataka.
- ★ It also reserves 50% of seats for men in 3 transport corporations.

Tiger Safari in Ramgarh Reserve

- ★ The Forest Department is making preparations to launch a wildlife safari within the buffer zone of the recently established **Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve (RVTR)** in **Rajasthan's Bundi district**.
- ★ By setting up wildlife safaris within the buffer zone of the tiger reserve, the forest department aims to promote eco-tourism and raise awareness about wildlife conservation.
- ★ It will provide visitors a chance to see tigers and other wildlife in their natural habitat.
- ★ This will ensure the protection of wildlife and reduce the distress caused to the animals.
- ★ Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary was designated as a tiger reserve on 05 July 2021, after receiving in-principle approval from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

Women 20 Summit Begins at Mahabalipuram

- ★ The third and final working group of the summit on W-20 began at Mahabalipuram near Chennai.
- ★ The conference also emphasised the importance of women's health and gender empowerment, and the role of families in supporting the rights of children.
- ★ Emphasis was placed on the private sector to actively participate and contribute positively in gender-specific planning.
- ★ The first session focused on the convergence of women's health, gender equality, and social and economic development in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Aviation Fuel Plant in Haryana

- ★ Indian Oil Corp (IOC) partnered with LanzaJetto set up an aviation fuel plant in Haryana.
- ★ The aim of the collaboration is to produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).
- ★ The investment for the aviation fuel plant is around 23 billion rupees (\$280.1 million).
- ★ The collaboration promotes sustainable aviation solutions in India.
- ★ It contributes to addressing the environmental impact of the aviation industry.
- ★ Sustainable aviation fuel reduces greenhouse gas emissions and mitigates climate change.

Kerala Government Launched a Reward System

- ★ The Government of Kerala (local self-government (LSG) department) has launched a new scheme to reward for reporting illegal waste dumping on roads.
- ★ It is to make the state garbage-free by 2024.
- ★ This scheme is a part of the 'Malinya Muktham Nava Keralam' campaign.
- ★ The person who informs authorities of such violations will be given ₹2,500 (maximum) or 25% of the fine imposed on those resorting to illegitimate disposal of garbage.
- ★ Under this scheme, citizens would report about the littering/dumping (solid and liquid waste) in public spaces, private property and water bodies.
- ★ The report must be backed with evidence, including credible photographs or video clips, along with details such as the place and time of the wrongdoing.

Agriculture Festival 'Raja' Organised in Odisha

- ★ Raja or Mithun Sankranti is a three-day festival of womanhood celebrated in Odisha, India.
- ★ This is a unique festival of Odisha where Mother Earth is revered.
- ★ Agricultural activities like ploughing and digging are suspended during the festival.
- ★ Like a menstruating woman, Mother Earth is given rest without any disturbance.
- ★ Farmers believe that the fertility of the earth doubles with the first shower of monsoon.

First Railway Station in North-East to Get FSSAI's 'Eat Right Station'

- ★ The **Guwahati Railway Station** located in Assam under the **North East Frontier Railway** recently received the prestigious '**Eat Right Station**' certification from the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**.
- ★ FSSAI has acknowledged Guwahati Railway Station for its commitment to providing high-quality and nutritious food options to passengers.
- ★ As the first railway station within the North East Frontier Railway to receive this certification, Guwahati Railway Station has successfully met the stringent guidelines laid down by FSSAI.
- ★ The 'Eat Right Station' certification is a testament to the station's compliance with FSSAI's established standards for food storage and hygiene practices.
- ★ This certification is an acknowledgment of the station's efforts in maintaining the benchmark in serving safe and wholesome food to the passengers.

Janaushadhi Scheme

- ★ According to Ravi Dadhich, CEO of the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India, the Jan Aushadhi scheme has helped citizens save around ₹20,000 crore on their medicine bills in the last 9 years.
- ★ Over the past nine years, the number of Janaushadhi Kendras has increased significantly, growing by 100 times.

- ★ The sales of Janaushadhi Kendras have also experienced a remarkable increase, surpassing 150 times.
- ★ The government has set a target to further expand the number of Janaushadhi Kendras to 10,000 by the end 2023.
- ★ Currently, there are over 9,400 functional Janaushadhi Kendras across the country, where medications are sold at discounted rates ranging from 50 to 90 percent compared to branded medicines.

Dugdh Sankalan Sathi Mobile App

- ★ Union Minister of Heavy Industries Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey unveiled the 'Dugdh Sanakalan Sathi Mobile App' at Mussorie, Uttarakhand.
- ★ This innovative application has been developed by Rajasthan Electronics & Instruments Limited (REIL), located in Jaipur.
- ★ REIL is a Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Heavy Industries and holds the prestigious "Mini Ratna" status.
- ★ Its primary objective is to enhance milk quality, promote transparency among stakeholders, and streamline operations at the village level, particularly within Milk Cooperative Societies.
- ★ The app is poised to make a significant impact on the Indian dairy industry by addressing critical challenges in the milk collection process.
- ★ The 'Dudgh Sankalp Sathi' mobile app will provide transparency, efficiency and empowerment to all the participants involved in the milk collection process.
- ★ This will benefit the milk producers and contribute to the development of the dairy sector.

Centre to Spend ₹15,000 Crores During 3 Years

- ★ Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda, the government is taking several steps for the welfare of the tribal people in the country.
- ★ He said the focus has been laid on improving the socio-economic conditions of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups, providing quality education and affordable health facilities to the tribal in the last nine years.
- ★ 15,000 crore rupees will be spent under the Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission in three years.
- ★ He said this will improve basic facilities in the far-flung villages by focussing on clean drinking water, sanitation, improved access to education, health, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- ★ He said, there are one lakh 12 thousand tribal-dominated villages in the country and the government has set a target to develop 36,000 villages as a model village.
- ★ He said considerable progress has been made on this front.
- ★ The Minister said an announcement has been made to appoint more than 38,000 teachers to provide quality education to the tribal population.

Centre Discontinues Sale of Rice, Wheat under OMSS Scheme

- ★ The central government has discontinued the sale of rice and wheat from the central pool under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) to state governments.
- ★ This decision will affect some states, including Karnataka, that provide free grains to the poor through their own schemes.
- ★ The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has issued an order stating that the sale of wheat and rice under the OMSS for state governments is discontinued.
- ★ However, the sale of rice under the OMSS will continue for north-eastern states, hilly states, and states facing law and order situations or natural calamities at the existing rate of ₹3,400 per quintal.
- ★ FCI may sell rice under the OMSS to private parties from the central pool stock to moderate market prices.
- ★ The central government had previously allowed states to buy rice and wheat from the FCI for their own schemes without participating in e-auctions as part of the OMSS policy for 2023.

First Solar Rooftop Project at IIT Jodhpur

- ★ NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd (NVVN) commissioned its first rooftop solar PV project at IIT Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- ★ The 1 MW grid-connected solar project has been implemented by NVVN under the RESCO (Renewable Energy Service Company) model.
- ★ The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) duration for the project is 25 years.
- ★ NVVN, an arm of state-run power producer NTPC, is responsible for the project implementation.
- ★ The rooftop solar project is installed on the roofs of 14 buildings within the IIT Jodhpur campus.
- ★ The project is expected to generate around 14.9 lakh units of electricity annually, meeting 15% of IIT Jodhpur's electricity requirement.
- ★ The rooftop project will contribute to a reduction of 1,060 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year.

App Called 'Arunpol App' of Arunachal Pradesh Police

- ★ Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the 'Arunpol App' of Arunachal Pradesh Police.
- ★ This app allows common people to register complaints without visiting the police station.
- ★ The app also enables people to apply for clearance from the police.
- ★ An APP Awareness Generation Vehicle named Arunpol Sewa Van was flagged off during the event.
- ★ The vehicle will travel to various places, engage with the public and create awareness about the Arunpol App.
- ★ The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh also launched the e-vigilance app for the state government employees.
- ★ The e-Vigilance app ensures timely vigilance clearance for government employees.

Karnataka's Anna Bhagya Scheme

- ★ The Karnataka government is facing challenges in implementing the Anna Bhagya scheme starting from 01 July due to the unavailability of the required amount of rice.
- ★ The state government intends to increase the allocation of free rice from 5 kg to 10 kg per person on Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards under the Anna Bhagya scheme.
- ★ This discontinuation of rice supply has created difficulties for the implementation of the Anna Bhagya scheme.
- ★ However, Punjab has in principle agreed to supply rice to Karnataka in the required quantity.
- ★ The aim of this increase in free rice allocation is to provide more support and food security to the persons belonging to BPL category.
- ★ The implementation of this revised allocation is scheduled to begin from July 1.
- ★ The increased allocation of free rice will cost the state government an estimated ₹840 crore per month.
- ★ Annually, the scheme is expected to cost ₹10,092 crore to the state exchequer.

Chief Guest at International Day of Yoga, 2023

- ★ The **Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar** has been invited as the **Chief Guest** for the **International Day of Yoga (IDY 2023)** celebrations in **Jabalpur**.
- ★ He will address the gathering and lead a mass yoga performance at the event.
- ★ The motto of IDY 2023 is **“Yoga for ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’**”, which emphasizes on treating the world as one family.
- ★ The United Nations recognized **June 21** as **International Yoga Day** in 2014, and this year marks the ninth anniversary of the global celebration.
- ★ The global celebration of IDY 2023 will be led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States.
- ★ The celebration of IDY aims to promote yoga worldwide, highlighting its many benefits for physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

North India's First Skin Bank Inaugurated

- ★ North India's first Skin Bank was inaugurated at New Delhi's **Safdarjung Hospital**.
- ★ This facility serves as a repository where deceased donors can donate their skin, which can be utilized in the treatment of burns.
- ★ Deceased donors can donate their skin within six hours of death. Once donated, the skin undergoes a processing procedure and can then be used for treating burns and trauma patients.
- ★ Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted that the Skin Bank facility will be a significant benefit for patients.
- ★ It will contribute to providing a better quality of life for individuals suffering from severe burns and injuries.

UNDP Partners with DAY-NULM

- ★ The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)** recently have joined forces in a collaborative partnership.
- ★ The objective of this partnership is to empower women to make career choices in the field of entrepreneurship.
- ★ The partnership aims to provide support to women who are interested in starting or expanding their own enterprises.
- ★ It focuses on sectors such as the care economy, digital economy, electric mobility, waste management, food packaging, and more.
- ★ The project, which spans three years and is extendable beyond 2025, is centered around fostering entrepreneurship development and accelerating enterprise growth.
- ★ In the initial phase, it will cover eight cities.

BIS Makes License Mandatory for 24 Footwear Products

- ★ The **Bureau of Indian Standards**, BIS license will be mandatory for **24 footwear products** from 01 July 2023.
- ★ Addressing media in New Delhi, Director General, BIS, Pramod Kumar Tiwari highlighted the importance of the Quality Control Orders issued recently by the Government for footwear and other products.
- ★ BIS Licence will be mandatory for **the manufacturing, importing or selling of products under these Quality Control Orders.**
- ★ Tiwari said the standards for footwear products are developed in consultation with trade and industry bodies, consumer organizations and representatives of various stakeholder groups to ensure quality and authenticity.
- ★ In order to make compliance convenient for small-scale and micro-scale industries, the implementation date will be the 1st of January next year.
- ★ The government recently announced an 80 percent cut on testing charges for footwear products under the Quality Control Orders for the certified start-ups and micro industrial units.

Uttar Pradesh Government to Launch 'Didi Cafe'

- ★ Uttar Pradesh government to launch 'Didi Cafe' to uplift women.
- ★ 'Didi Café' in Uttar Pradesh (UP), which will provide cheap food.
- ★ A strategy has been made to start 'Didi Cafe' in 17 municipal corporation cities including Mathura, Firozabad and Vrindavan in Agra division.
- ★ This Didi Cafe will only be maintained by women's self-help groups, which will provide access to low-cost meals, snacks, and other facilities in areas where women are employed through these canteens.
- ★ The effort is part of the Centre's goal of empowering women associated with self-help groups set up through the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM).

- ★ In the first phase, 'Didi Cafe' will be run in the municipal corporations of Agra division, as a result of which the authorities will be able to chalk out future strategies.

New Scheme for Women Traveling Alone at Night

- ★ The Tamil Nadu police have introduced a new scheme called 'Pungal Pathukaaptu Thittam' (Women Safety Scheme) in Chennai city.
- ★ The scheme aims to provide safe transportation for women who return from work between 10 pm and 7 am.
- ★ It is operational every day of the week.
- ★ Women who feel unsafe while traveling alone at night can dial helpline numbers such as 1091, 112, 044-23452365, and 044-28447701.
- ★ Upon receiving a call, the police will dispatch a patrol vehicle to accompany the women and ensure their safe transportation to their residences.
- ★ The scheme has been implemented in response to the increasing number of women working in various shifts.

G-20 Labor Engagement Group Meeting

- ★ The two-day meeting of the G-20 Labor Engagement Group began in Patna, Bihar.
- ★ Around 150 delegates from the G-20 member states and eight guest countries participated.
- ★ The ceremony was inaugurated by Bihar Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar at the Ashoka Convention Center in Patna.
- ★ This meeting includes universalizing social security and increasing women's participation in the workforce (around 32% globally).
- ★ The meeting also focused on the plight of migrant workers and the issue of knowledge and skill gaps among workers.
- ★ The delegates will explore new employment opportunities and challenges in G20 countries.

Union Minister Inaugurates 11 Flyovers from Delhi to Panipat

- ★ Union Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated 11 flyovers from Delhi to Panipat on the eight-lane National Highway-44 at Sonipat.
- ★ The project also includes a six-lane service road on both sides.
- ★ The project is 24 km long and completed with an estimated cost of 890 crore rupees.
- ★ Mr Nitin Gadkari at the spot approved the demand of constructing ROBs and RUBs at a cost of 300 crore rupees under Setu Bharatam Yojana and also approved bypass from Narwana road to Rohtak road in Jind and ring road from Jind to Ikas.
- ★ Accompanied by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal, Union Minister also addressed Gauravshali Bharat Rally on this occasion.
- ★ Out of which 51 projects of 2200 kilometer length costing 47000 crore rupees have been completed and 30 projects of 830-kilometer length costing 35000 crore rupees are in progress.

- ★ There are 19 projects of 756-kilometer length costing 20000 crore rupees out of which detailed project reports of 14 projects are being prepared and some projects in the tender process.

Global Pharmaceutical Quality Summit 2023

- ★ The **Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA)** concluded the **8th edition** of the **Global Pharmaceutical Quality Summit** at **Mumbai**.
- ★ The theme for the Summit was, '**Patient Centricity: New Paradigm of Manufacturing and Quality**'.
- ★ The two-day Summit brought together industry leaders, global regulators, quality experts, and stakeholders to foster knowledge exchange and deliberate on areas of importance in shaping the pharmaceutical landscape in India.
- ★ India played a vital role as the 'Pharmacy to the World' during the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring a steady supply of quality medicines and vaccines across the globe.
- ★ The Indian pharmaceutical industry has demonstrated its potential both in terms of quality and quantity.

Karnataka Government Launched 'Brand Bengaluru' Portal

- ★ The Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister (CM) and Bengaluru Development Minister Shri DK Shivakumar launched a portal for people to share suggestions regarding the development of the city, under the title 'Brand Bengaluru'.
- ★ The public can visit <https://brandbengaluru.karnataka.gov.in/> or contact the WhatsApp number 9480685700 to provide their suggestions until June 30, 2023.
- ★ Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar, who recently met industry leaders, announced plans to create a master plan for Bengaluru within 6 months.
- ★ During the meeting, several suggestions were made, including expediting Metro and suburban rail projects, accelerating the Peripheral Ring Road construction, converting NICE Road into a ring road, building tunnel roads, satellite cities, to reduce traffic congestion.

Parshottam Rupala Launched NANDI Portal

- ★ Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Parshottam Rupala on 26th June at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi launched NANDI (NOC Approvals for New Drugs and Inoculation System).
- ★ The NANDI portal has been developed to digitize and streamline the regulatory approval process in India's Animal Health Sector.
- ★ The development of the NANDI portal was carried out in collaboration with the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC).
- ★ The portal aligns with the vision of Digital India and embodies the principles of Minimum Government and Maximum Governance by leveraging IT systems.
- ★ The primary objective of the portal is to expedite the assessment and examination of veterinary product proposals, ensuring their safety, efficacy, and essentiality.

- ★ The Minister emphasized the transformative impact of the portal and the government's decision to launch Mobile Veterinary Units, which will contribute to vaccinating all livestock in the country.
- ★ The NANDI portal is expected to support the development of India as a global manufacturing hub for veterinary products and encourage research and development efforts to enhance animal health.

UP to Launch 'Legal Aid Defense Counseling System (LADCS)'

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh government launched the 'Legal Aid Defense Counseling System (LADCS)'.
- ★ LADCS is implemented under Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority.
- ★ This program will be effective for two years.
- ★ LADCS aims to provide free legal aid to the needy, especially in criminal matters.
- ★ This program operates in districts or headquarters under Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ LADCS offers representation, trial and appeal in all Sessions, Special, Magistrate and Executive Courts.
- ★ The primary focus is on providing legal aid services in criminal matters.

Odisha Gunvatta Sankalp in Bhubaneswar

- ★ The Government of Odisha, in collaboration with the Quality Council of India (QCI) and industry associations such as ASSOCHAM, FICCI, EEPC, OASME, PHDCCI, CIPET, and FHRAI, launched the Odisha Gunvatta Sankalp (Odisha Quality Mission) in Bhubaneswar.
- ★ The objective of the mission is to promote and prioritize quality across various sectors in the state of Odisha, creating an ecosystem of quality that contributes to the progress and empowerment of Odisha.
- ★ The launch of Odisha Gunvatta Sankalp aims to foster collaboration between policymakers, industry leaders, practitioners, and academia to drive the culture of quality in Odisha.
- ★ The mission aspires to create a progressive and empowered Odisha by emphasizing the importance of quality in various sectors.
- ★ The collaboration between the Government of Odisha, QCI, and industry associations demonstrates a collective effort to prioritize and promote quality for the overall development of the state.

Financial Assistance to Farmers under Rythu Bandhu Scheme

- ★ The Telangana Government has initiated the distribution of financial assistance to farmers for the Kharif season under the Rythu Bandhu Scheme.
- ★ On the first day of distribution, an amount exceeding 640 crore rupees was directly deposited into the bank accounts of more than 22 lakh 55 thousand farmers who own less than one acre of land.
- ★ According to official data, the 11th edition of the scheme will provide financial assistance totaling over 7720 crore rupees to around 70 lakh farmers for their Kharif crop.

- ★ The Rythu Bandhu Scheme has contributed a cumulative amount of 72,910 crore rupees to farmers' accounts.
- ★ Approximately five lakh new beneficiaries, including 1.5 lakh Podu farmers who own 4 lakh acres of Podu lands, will receive 10 thousand rupees per acre per year under the scheme.
- ★ This additional support for Podu farmers will amount to around 300 crore rupees, which will be borne by the government exchequer.

World's Largest Ramayan Temple in Bihar

- ★ The construction work of the '**world's largest Ramayan temple**' started in the **East Champaran district of Bihar**.
- ★ The Viraat Ramayan temple will be a three-storeyed structure completed by the end of 2025.
- ★ The 'Ramayan temple' in Bihar will be taller than the 12th-century Angkor Wat temple complex in Cambodia.
- ★ The estimated cost of the temple's construction is ₹500 crore.
- ★ The design of the temple draws inspiration from the Angkor Wat complex, as well as temples in Ramanathaswami temple in Rameshwaram and the Meenakshi Sundareshwarar temple in Madurai.
- ★ The Ramayan temple will consist of 12 domes with the tallest reaching a height of 270 ft, and 22 sanctums for various deities, the temple will span 2,800 ft in length, 1,400 ft in width, and 405 ft in height.

Union Cabinet Approved PM-PRANAM Scheme

- ★ The **Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** approved the **PM-PRANAM Scheme**.
- ★ The scheme is aimed at **incentivising states to use alternative, non-chemical fertilisers**.
- ★ The cabinet also decided to continue the current urea subsidy for **three years starting FY23**, with an outlay of **₹3.68 trillion**.
- ★ The full name of PM PRANAM is Promotion of Alternative Nutrients for Agriculture Management Scheme.
- ★ Reducing the subsidy burden on chemical fertilisers, which is projected to reach ₹2.25 lakh crore in 2022-23 – 39 per cent more than last year's figure of ₹1.62 lakh crore.
- ★ 70 percent of the grant provided under the scheme can be used for asset creation related to technology adoption of alternative fertilizers and alternative fertilizer production units at village, block and district level.

DoT Announces '5G & Beyond Hackathon 2023'

- ★ The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has been actively organizing **Hackathons** to foster **the development of 5G products and solutions**.
- ★ These initiatives have led to the creation of innovative 5G products and solutions across various technological verticals.

- ★ In continuation of these efforts, the DoT has announced the commencement of applications for the **'5G & Beyond Hackathon 2023'** from **June 28, 2023**.
- ★ The primary objective of this hackathon is to identify cutting-edge ideas with a focus on India, which can be transformed into practical and effective 5G and beyond products and solutions.
- ★ A total prize pool of ₹one crore will be distributed among one hundred winners of the hackathon.

Gujarat Government Signs MoU with Micron Technology

- ★ **Gujarat government** signs **MoU** with **US chip maker firm Micron Technology** for **semiconductor assembly** and testing facility in **Ahmedabad**.
- ★ The MoU was signed in the presence of **Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel** and **Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav**.
- ★ The semiconductor assembly and testing facility will be located at Sanand in Ahmedabad district.
- ★ The Central Government will provide 50 per cent financial assistance towards the total project cost.
- ★ The State Government of Gujarat will provide an incentive of 20 per cent of the total project cost.
- ★ The Semiconductor Assembly and Test Plant will generate 5,000 direct employment opportunities.

17th Indian Cooperative Congress

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 17th Indian Cooperative Congress (ICC) on the 01 July at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
- ★ The National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) is organizing the two-day event with the theme "Amrit Kaal: Prosperity through Cooperation for a Vibrant India".
- ★ The Indian Cooperative Congress aims to discuss various trends in the cooperative movement, showcase best practices adopted by successful cooperatives, and deliberate on the challenges faced by the cooperative world.
- ★ An exhibition will also be held during the congress, showcasing various products of Self-Help Groups and NCUI Cooperative Education Field Projects under the banner of NCUI HAAT.
- ★ The event is expected to connect approximately five crore members live during the congress.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Sri Lanka's National Poson Week Begins

- ★ In Sri Lanka, the National Poson Week began on 31 May.
- ★ Posan, also known as Poson Poya, is an annual festival held by Sri Lankan Buddhists celebrating the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century BCE.
- ★ The Posan festival will be held till June 6 and will be centered around the holy city of Mihinthale, Thanthirimale and Anuradhapura.

- ★ The festival celebrates the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka in 236 BCE by Arhat Mahinda, the son of Emperor Ashoka.
- ★ A large number of devotees are expected to visit Anuradhapura for the festival and steps have been taken to provide all facilities to the devotees.

Maritime Security Dialogue

- ★ **India and Vietnamese** officials held the **third Maritime Security Dialogue in New Delhi**.
- ★ Both sides discussed ways to better maintain the marine environment which is helpful for the inclusive development of both the countries.
- ★ Senior officials from ministries and services dealing with maritime affairs participated in the dialogue.
- ★ The two sides also reviewed initiatives for maritime cooperation and ways to strengthen international and regional mechanisms for comprehensive maritime security.
- ★ The second India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue was to be held in virtual format in April 2021 after the first round was held in Hanoi in March 2019.

Edinburgh University Launches Hindi Course

- ★ The University of Edinburgh and the Indian Consulate in the UK collaborated to create the first open access course in the Hindi language.
- ★ The course, entitled 'Climate Solutions', was developed with the help of translators and in partnership with the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute and the Government of India.
- ★ Professor Dave Ray, Executive Director of the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, and other climate change experts collaborated to design and deliver the course.
- ★ The Climate Solutions Course syllabus is available in Hindi, English and Arabic.
- ★ It focuses on the causes, implications and solutions related to climate change in India.

BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Cape Town

- ★ **BRICS** countries kicked off its **foreign ministers meeting in Cape Town**, the legislative capital of South Africa.
- ★ External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar participated in the meeting of foreign ministers of BRICS countries.
- ★ South Africa, which currently holds the chair of the bloc, hosted the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Cape Town.
- ★ The foreign ministers' meeting will finalise the agenda for the 15th BRICS summit scheduled to be held in South Africa in August.
- ★ It is believed that 19 countries are in line to join BRICS.
- ★ The BRICS foreign ministers agreed BRICS cooperation should be strengthened to promote unity among developing countries.

NATO Launches Arctic exercise

- ★ **NATO countries** have started **military exercises** in the **Arctic region**.
- ★ The exercise involves approximately 1,000 allied forces from Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, along with NATO applicant Sweden.
- ★ Finland, NATO's newest member, is hosting its first joint training in the Arctic region since joining the Western alliance in April.
- ★ The exercise took place at **Rovajärvi in northern Finland**, near the Russian border, at one of Europe's largest artillery training grounds.
- ★ NATO is a military alliance between North American and European countries formed in 1949 and headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025

- ★ The next **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress** will be held from **09 October to 15 October 2025 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**.
- ★ The United Arab Emirates was selected as the host country based on a rigorous evaluation process of its candidature.
- ★ The United Arab Emirates has a long-standing collaboration with IUCN, with seven IUCN Member organizations and the National Committee based there.
- ★ The country is home to 50 scientific and policy experts who are members of IUCN Commissions.
- ★ The selection of the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC) as the venue was supported by a broad range of governmental authorities and civil society organizations.
- ★ Its purpose is to determine the world's most pressing environmental and development challenges and develop actions to address them.

1st India-Namibia Joint Commission of Cooperation

- ★ **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** recently co-chaired the first **India-Namibia Joint Commission with Namibian Foreign Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah** in **Windhoek**.
- ★ The Joint Commission will assess the progress of India-Namibia relations. In addition, high-level visits and ongoing interactions will strengthen the India-Namibia partnership in the future.
- ★ During his visit, the External Affairs Minister inaugurated the **India-Namibia Center of Excellence in Information Technology** in **Windhoek**.
- ★ The center will contribute to research, cyber security and good governance.

Non-Permanent Members of the UN Security Council

- ★ **Algeria, Guyana, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone and Slovenia** were elected non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two-year term.
- ★ The newly elected members will take up their new responsibilities on 01 January 2024 and serve till 31 December 2025.

- ★ Slovenia defeated Belarus by a vote of 153 to 38, while Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone and the Republic of Korea were elected unopposed.
- ★ These new members will replace Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates at present when their two-year term ends on 31 December 2023.
- ★ It was established in 1945 by the United Nations Charter.

UN's Accelerator Programme

- ★ **Farmers Fresh Zone (FarmersFZ)**, a Kerala-based startup, has achieved recognition by being chosen for the **United Nations' 'Accelerator Programme'**.
- ★ This program, organized by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN**, aims to **support and develop agri-food startups worldwide**.
- ★ FarmersFZ has been included in a select list of 12 agri-food startups worldwide, curated by the UN body.
- ★ The Kochi-based multichannel marketplace platform, operating under the **Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM)**, aims to contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- ★ FarmersFZ operates under the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), which serves as the nodal agency for entrepreneurship development and incubation activities in the **state of Kerala, India**.
- ★ KSUM promotes and supports startup initiatives across various sectors, including agriculture and food technology.

UAE Wins Presidency of World Meteorological Organization

- ★ The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has won the **Presidency of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**.
- ★ A meteorologist of the UAE, **Dr Abdulla Al Mandous**, has been elected as the new President of the WMO.
- ★ Dr Abdulla Al Mandous has been elected for a **four-year term from 2023 to 2027**.
- ★ Dr Abdulla Al Mandous received 95 votes out of the representatives from 193 member states and territories of WMO.
- ★ The election was held during the 19th session of the World Meteorological Congress organised in Geneva, Switzerland from 22nd May to 2nd June, 2023.
- ★ As President, Dr. Al Mandous aims to enhance the resilience of nations to weather and climate-related hazards, promote knowledge-sharing and capacity building, and strengthen service delivery.
- ★ He will also prioritise the development of comprehensive early warning systems and scientific research to address the challenges posed by a changing climate.
- ★ UAE will chair WMO's upcoming 77th Executive Council Session (EC-77) in Geneva, Switzerland from 5th to 6th June, 2023.

U.S. will Rejoin UNESCO

- ★ The **United States will rejoin UNESCO**, the United Nations cultural organization, in **July 2023**.
- ★ The move ends Washington's more than ten-year dispute with the UN cultural agency after the US left UNESCO in 2018.
- ★ US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Verma submitted a letter to UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay last week to formalize plans to rejoin.
- ★ In addition, the US will also pay an outstanding balance of over \$600 million.
- ★ By rejoining, the US is seeking to regain its role in shaping and influencing UNESCO's policies.

India and Nepal Signed Seven Agreements in Various Fields

- ★ India and Nepal signed seven agreements in various fields on June 2023.
- ★ These fields include **trade and commerce, cross-border petroleum pipelines, development of Integrated Check Posts and hydroelectric projects and payment mechanisms**.
- ★ The agreements were signed after **delegation-level talks** between **the Prime Ministers of both countries**.
- ★ Delegation-level talks were held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in New Delhi.
- ★ The Indian Railway cargo train from Bathnaha to Nepal Customs yard was jointly flagged off by both Prime Ministers.
- ★ An integrated Check Post between Rupaidiha-Nepalgunj and Sunauli-Bhairahawa was also inaugurated by them.
- ★ The foundation stone of the Motihari-Amlekhgaj Oil Pipeline – Phase 2 project was laid.
- ★ The construction work of the Gorakhpur-New Butwal sub-station 400 kv cross-border transmission line was initiated by them.

New Landmark Trading Scheme for Developing Countries

- ★ The **UK** launched the Developing Countries Trade Scheme (DCTS).
- ★ This trade scheme provides a significant opportunity for India and 65 other poor and developing countries.
- ★ The scheme simplifies trading rules and cuts tariffs on products entering the UK from 65 developing countries, including Bangladesh.
- ★ This is a preferential trading program that has been introduced by the United Kingdom.
- ★ The DCTS replaces similar arrangements that were previously in place during the UK's membership in the European Union.
- ★ The primary objective of the scheme is to support trade and promote economic growth for 65 poor and developing countries.
- ★ Through the DCTS, these countries are granted preferential treatment in terms of trade, with reduced or eliminated tariffs on certain products imported into the United Kingdom.

- ★ By providing favourable trading conditions, the DCTS aims to enhance market access for these countries, stimulate economic activity, and foster mutually beneficial trade relationships.
- ★ It plays a role in diversifying local and international supply chains, which contributes to job creation and economic growth in these countries.

China Inks Deal with Pakistan

- ★ **China and Pakistan** signed an agreement to set up **nuclear power plants** worth **\$4.8 billion** in **Punjab province**.
- ★ The nuclear power plant deal is a symbol of growing economic cooperation between China and Pakistan.
- ★ The agreement covers the construction of the 1,200 MW Chashma-5 nuclear plant in Punjab's Mianwali district.
- ★ Pakistan is receiving a significant investment of \$4.8 billion from China for this project.
- ★ Pakistan actively engaged with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to meet the conditions required for the 9th review, and Prime Minister Sharif of Pakistan acknowledged the support of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

1st Global Summit on Artificial Intelligence

- ★ **United Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister Mr Rishi Sunak** has announced that **Britain**, UK will host the **first major global summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI) safety**.
- ★ The summit will bring together key countries, leading tech companies and researchers to agree on safety measures to evaluate and monitor the most significant risks from AI.
- ★ The summit will consider the risks of AI, including frontier systems, and discuss how they can be mitigated through internationally coordinated action.
- ★ The date of the summit is not announced yet.
- ★ Recognising the strength of the UK's AI expertise, US tech giant Palantir has also announced it will make the UK its new European Headquarters (HQ) for AI development.
- ★ The UK and US are two of the only three countries in the world to have a tech industry valued at more than \$1 trillion.

India and US Sign Artemis Accord

- ★ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** signed the **Artemis agreement** with the **US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**.
- ★ It is to highlight the **growing importance of India's role as a global space power**.
- ★ The agreement establishes the foundation for cooperation in space exploration and underlines India's commitment to peaceful space activities.
- ★ The Artemis Agreement outlines principles **for international cooperation in space exploration**, particularly relating to the **use of the Moon, Mars, comets and asteroids for peaceful purposes**.

- ★ NASA's Artemis program aims to advance scientific discoveries and expand human exploration of the lunar surface.
- ★ By studying the Moon, researchers hope to make breakthroughs that could lead to advances in various fields such as technology, medicine and our understanding of the universe.

India and UAE Signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement

- ★ India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Authorized Economic Operators.
- ★ The agreement was formally signed during the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Customs Co-operation Council meeting held in Brussels.
- ★ The Mutual Recognition Arrangement aims to promote trade facilitation and ease of doing business between the two countries.
- ★ It establishes a framework for recognizing Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) from both India and the UAE.
- ★ This agreement signifies an important milestone in the economic cooperation between India and the UAE and is expected to strengthen bilateral trade ties.

Pakistan and China Sign \$4.8 Billion Nuclear Power Plant Deal

- ★ Pakistan and China recently have signed a \$4.8 billion deal to construct a 1,200-megawatt nuclear power plant.
- ★ The investment by China, which Pakistan considers its most dependable ally, is viewed as a significant achievement.
- ★ The project, known as Chashma 5, will be located in the central province of Punjab.
- ★ The memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between China National Nuclear Cooperation and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, marking the beginning of the project.
- ★ The Chashma 5 project will aid Pakistan in transitioning away from reliance on fossil fuels and contribute to its nuclear energy production capacity.

Canada Launches 'Digital Nomad Strategy'

- ★ Canada launched the "Digital Nomad Strategy" to address its skilled labour shortage, particularly in the tech industry.
- ★ The strategy aims to attract talented individuals from around the world.
- ★ The shortage of skilled workers, particularly in the tech industry, has prompted Canada to take proactive measures.
- ★ The announcement was made during Collision's technical conference in Toronto.
- ★ The strategy focuses primarily on the technology industry, recognizing its importance in driving innovation and economic growth.
- ★ Foreign workers are allowed to stay in Canada for up to six months under the Digital Nomad Strategy.

- ★ If digital nomads receive job offers during their stay, they have the option of extending their time in the country.
- ★ The strategy aims to address the shortage of skilled professionals in Canada's tech sector.

BANKING, FINANCE & ECONOMICS

Axis Bank Launches 'Sarathi'

- ★ **Axis Bank**, one of the largest private sector banks in India, has launched '**Sarathi**', a first-of-its-kind **digital onboarding journey** to enable **Electronic Data Capture (EDC) or Point of Sale (POS)** for merchants.
- ★ Unlike the time-consuming traditional onboarding process, which can take several days, Sarathi offers merchants a streamlined and hassle-free experience.
- ★ The solution enables merchants to complete the onboarding process in just four simple steps which includes:
 - Realtime database checks for faster application processing
 - Live video verification to authenticate merchant information at his/her convenience
 - It eliminates the field verification process which helps in instant decision-making
 - Instant installation of POS
- ★ The paperless onboarding process eliminates the need for merchants to fill out cumbersome forms or wait for extended periods to have their POS terminals installed.
- ★ Sarathi's features include immediate status updates, eliminating the need for follow-up visits, and the ability to transact on the same day their application is processed.

ADB and India Signs to Loan Andhra Pradesh

- ★ **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and **the Government of India (GoI)** signed a USD 141.12-million loan to support the development of high-quality internal infrastructure in Andhra Pradesh (AP).
- ★ It is to support the development of essential infrastructure, such as roads, water supply systems and power distribution networks, in three industrial clusters located in Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ This financing is the second tranche of the USD 500 million multi-tranche financing facility (MFF) for the programme approved by ADB in 2016.
- ★ It is to build infrastructure in three industrial clusters in the Visakhapatnam and Srikalahasthi-Chittoor nodes in AP.
- ★ ADB also approved a \$250 million loan as part of the MFF to support the government's National Industrial Corridor Development Program (NICDP) through October 2021.

YES Bank Unveils New Brand Identity With Renewed Logo

- ★ YES Bank unveiled its new logo as part of its "refreshed brand identity", and expects to roll it out across its branch network over the next three months.

- ★ The new brand campaign launched by **MD and CEO Prashant Kumar** with the slogan **Life Ko Banao Rich**.
- ★ The new identity will be extended to all customer touchpoints of the bank such as headquarters, branches, products, digital platforms and communication materials.
- ★ McCann Worldgroup was the creative agency and Conversation Films was the production house involved in creating the new logo.
- ★ The design language of the logo is digitally friendly and reflects fluidity and progressive spirit while staying true to core values.
- ★ The tick has been transformed into a soaring bird, smoothed out corners and fluid shapes have replaced the angular edges of the older identity, and the typography is more emphatic, adding that the blue and red colours have an electric tone, representing high energy.

Razorpay Launches India's Fastest One-Step Payments Solution

- ★ **Razorpay** has launched India's fastest one-step UPI (unified payments interface) payment solution, '**Turbo UPI**' that **allows customers of online merchants to make UPI payments directly without getting redirected to a third-party UPI app during checkout**.
- ★ Razorpay Turbo UPI aims to deliver a **5X faster payment experience**.
- ★ This solution was developed in partnership with **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Axis Bank**.
- ★ It streamlines the payment process and eliminates any redirection to external apps.
- ★ This helps businesses achieve a significant **increase in the success rate of UPI payments by 10%**.
- ★ Turbo UPI also offers insights into the end-users' drop-off pattern and enables merchants to control the entire payment experience of their customers, end-to-end.
- ★ Through this app, the payment steps are reduced from 5 to 1.
- ★ UPI has become the common and preferred mode of payment for end users.

Yubi Collaborates with Indian Bank

- ★ **Yubi**, an online debt marketplace that connects borrowers and lenders for various credit products, announced its **partnership with Indian Bank** to extend digital supply chain financing solutions to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).
- ★ Indian Bank will leverage Yubi's technology and platform to digitally enable and scale its supply chain financing book through vendor and dealer financing, targeting large corporations and their SME counterparties.
- ★ The partnership is expected to disburse ₹1,500 crore within the first year.
- ★ Yubi, formerly known as CredAvenue, is an Indian fintech company that connects businesses with financial institutions, banks and other lenders through its digital platform.

UPI Hits Record 9 billion Transactions

- ★ The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) registered more than **nine billion transactions** in May 2023 amounting to over **14 lakh crore rupees**.
- ★ According to the National Payments Corporation of India NPCI, UPI recorded a total **9.41 billion** transactions in May 2023.
- ★ UPI had recorded 8 billion transactions in January this year, followed by 7.5 billion in February, 8.7 billion in March, and 8.89 billion in April.
- ★ In Financial Year 2022-23, the payment system processed a total of 83 billion transactions, amounting to a value of 139 lakh crore rupees.
- ★ India's homegrown payments system UPI is one of the globally accepted payment systems and has emerged as a trusted payment mode ever since its launch in 2016.
- ★ The report titled "The Indian Payments Handbook – 2022-27" said that the share of UPI in the total transaction volume in the retail segment during 2022-23 was around 75 per cent.
- ★ The Indian digital payments market is expected to reach 411 billion transactions in FY 2026-27 from 103 billion in FY 2022-23.

Credit Card Platform Kiwi Launches 'Credit on UPI' Service

- ★ **Kiwi**, a ground-breaking credit card platform, has launched its all-inclusive "**Credit on Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**" customer solution.
- ★ The solution has been certified by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), making Kiwi the first app in India to provide "Credit on UPI" by issuing **Rupay Cards in collaboration with banks**.
- ★ The launch of this solution is a significant move by Kiwi towards creating one of the most **comprehensive direct-to-consumer (D2C) models in the credit market**.
- ★ The company's mobile application will allow users to make payments securely using either a credit card or bank account, directly from their phones.
- ★ Kiwi has successfully raised \$6 million in pre-seed funding from a group of renowned investors, including Nexus Venture Partners, Stellaris Venture Partners, and several angel investors.

Equitas Small Finance Bank Collaborates with IBM

- ★ **Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited (SFB)** has signed an agreement with **IBM Consulting** to design and build a **digital banking platform** that delivers a modern and highly secure experience to the bank's customers and partners.
- ★ It is to boost Equitas' digital products and services offerings as it evolves its business for a digital-first generation.
- ★ Equitas is working together with IBM Consulting to adopt a cloud native architecture so that digital channels and applications can securely run across any technology environment.
- ★ This will help boost operational efficiency for the bank and enhance adherence to industry regulatory compliance requirements, while enforcing higher levels of security.

- ★ IBM Consulting will develop and deploy modern web and admin portals for Retail Banking and Corporate Banking as well as multi-device banking apps for Retail Banking.

IRDAI Issues Draft Bima Vahaks Guidelines

- ★ IRDAI recently came out with draft guidelines for '**Bima Vahaks (BV)**'.
- ★ It seeks to establish a dedicated distribution channel at the level of Gram Panchayats.
- ★ The guidelines propose Corporate Bima Vahaks and Individual Bima Vahaks for the distribution channel.
- ★ Corporate Bima Vahak would be legal persons registered in accordance with the respective laws and engaged by an insurer.
- ★ Individual Bima Vahak could be any individual appointed by an insurer or appointed by a Corporate Bima Vahak.
- ★ The BVs, both corporate and individual, would be authorised to undertake activities like the collection of proposal information, and KYC documents and coordinate claims-related services.
- ★ As per the draft, every insurer will have to provide alternative mode for payment of premium by prospects or policyholders.
- ★ This initiative aims to improve accessibility and availability of insurance in every nook and corner of the country.

SBI Launches Project Kuber in Bengaluru

- ★ **State Bank of India (SBI)**, Bengaluru Circle, recently launched '**Project Kuber**' to meet the banking needs of its customers.
- ★ Project Kuber' aims to facilitate, and cater to various banking requirements of customers in Bengaluru Circle.
- ★ The project includes the establishment of four Transaction Banking Hubs and one Corporate Salary Package Hub.
- ★ These hubs will focus on increasing SBI's market share in liability products.
- ★ The Transaction Banking Hubs will provide a range of services to both corporate and non-corporate clients.
- ★ These services include account opening, onboarding on SBI's digital platforms, and catering to payment and collection-related requirements.
- ★ The hubs will serve as a one-stop destination for digital banking services such as Yono Business, e-Payments, Cash Management Products, and more.

1st Indian Private Dairy to Launch Heat Index Insurance Plan to Farmers

- ★ Dairy technology provider Stellapps' fintech arm mooPay Private Limited, in partnership with IBISA Network, HDFC ERGO and Gramcover, has launched a unique heat Index-based insurance plan for farmers.
- ★ The cover provides financial compensation to farmers of mooMark, the dairy supply chain arm of Stellapps, to offset income loss due to a fall in milk productivity during heat waves in summer.

- ★ The cover guarantees insurance benefits for farmers if, over 60 days starting from May 1, 2023 temperatures exceed the specified limits for a predetermined number of days, with region-specific parameters.
- ★ The claim settlement process is simple and hassle-free.
- ★ The insurer takes the data of temperature trends for the insured period from a pre-agreed public database and compensates the claimant as per the prescribed benefits slab.
- ★ Each insured cattle is eligible for a cover of a maximum of ₹2,000.

Financial Inclusion Dashboard Antardrishti

- ★ Reserve **Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das** launched a financial inclusion dashboard named '**Antardrishti**'.
- ★ The dashboard will provide necessary insights to assess and monitor the progress of financial inclusion by capturing relevant parameters.
- ★ The progress of financial inclusion will be assessed against set parameters through an Antardrishti dashboard. Along with this, it will also help in monitoring.
- ★ With the help of the dashboard, the areas of lack of financial services on a large scale in the country can be detected and then work will be done on the basis of this.
- ★ Currently, the Antardrishti Dashboard will be used internally by RBI.
- ★ Multi stakeholder approach will be adopted for the Antardrishti Dashboard to enhance financial inclusion in future.

India's 1st Mobile-Based Expense Management Card

- ★ **Karbon Card, a B2B (Business to Business) payment** solution provider, has launched India's 1st mobile-based expense management card called Card++.
- ★ It is to help thousands of startups and small businesses that are constantly facing challenges in finding a reliable and accessible expense solution, causing disruptions in their day-to-day operations and forced to use multiple payment instruments.
- ★ **Card++** is free to use and comes with uncapped cash-back offers.
- ★ It is currently live and already gaining mass traction amongst both startups and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- ★ Its features include allowing payments on platforms like Google, Amazon, Swiggy, Ola,
- ★ It offers a comprehensive and user-friendly expense management experience with its 2-click sign-up process, intuitive Android app for on-the-go access, seamless top-up options, and exciting uncapped cashback offers for spends.
- ★ Karbon Card aims to onboard approximately 5000 new customers on Card++ by the end of 2023.

Myntra Partnered with Kotak Mahindra Bank

- ★ **Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMBL)** in partnership with **Myntra** has launched its first-of-its-kind co-branded digital fashion and lifestyle credit card namely the **Kotak Myntra credit card**.
- ★ It is to provide trendy and new-age consumers an apt choice for their fashion needs.

- ★ The card will be available on MasterCard and RuPay networks.
- ★ The card will be available across Myntra as well as Kotak mobile applications.
- ★ The card will be dedicated to fashion shoppers across metros, tier 1, tier 2 and 3 cities.
- ★ The joining fee and annual fee for this credit card is ₹500 only.
- ★ 7.5% instant discount on unlimited transactions on Myntra, up to ₹750 per transaction.

Manappuram Finance Unveiled a Digital Lending App Ma-Money

- ★ Kerala-based Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), Manappuram Finance Ltd has launched a new digital lending platform named Ma-Money.
- ★ It is to provide customers all the financial products offered by Manappuram Finance under one umbrella.
- ★ Ma-Money is a key component of Manappuram Finance's overall goal to grow its digital presence and provide clients with innovative and user-friendly financial products.
- ★ The app is primarily targeted at customers in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.
- ★ It offers a wide range of loans, including personal loans, business loans, consumer durables loans, loans for the healthcare industry, food industry, small-scale industries, school finance to improve infrastructure, car loans, home repair loans, and farm equipment loans, among others.

RBI Monetary Policy

- ★ **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das** announced the **second monetary policy** of this financial year.
- ★ There has been no change in the repo rate for the second time in a row.
- ★ Policy **repo rate** remains unchanged at **6.5%**.
- ★ **Standing Deposit Facility** (SDF rate) remains at **6.25%**.
- ★ **Marginal Standing Facility** and **bank rates** stand at **6.75%**.
- ★ The **current account deficit** is expected to **narrow further** in the **fourth quarter**.
- ★ Net inflows into non-resident deposits increased to US\$ 8 billion in FY23 from US\$ 3.2 billion in the previous year.

Gupshup Launches GSPay to Enable UPI Payments

- ★ Conversational engagement platform **Gupshup** has introduced UPI payments for people using **feature phones** via a native app called **GSPay**.
- ★ The app, developed along with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), will use SMS or even IVR based payments system, and do away with the need of data or internet connectivity.
- ★ For developing this facility, in 2022, Gupshup.io is leveraging UPI 123 Pay launched by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and NPCI to enable payments for feature phone users.
- ★ In addition, feature phone users will also be able to scan QR codes to make payments.
- ★ So far, solutions built on UPI 123 Pay have deployed either missed calls or an IVR-based system for making payments.

- ★ Now with GSPay, even new users can register for UPI, link bank accounts and set UPI PIN, all within the embedded app in the phone.
- ★ The app gives an option to make payments either through mobile number or UPI ID, completing the transaction in a simple 2-step process.
- ★ To make a payment, the user needs to enter the mobile number or UPI ID of the payee, the amount and UPI PIN.

Federal Bank Launches 'I Am Adyar, Adyar Is Me' Campaign

- ★ The campaign 'I am Adyar, Adyar is me' was launched by the Federal Bank in Chennai.
- ★ The campaign aims to honour and celebrate the local community of Adyar.
- ★ The Adyar branch of Federal Bank has been converted into a living museum for the campaign.
- ★ Vibrant paintings depicting the vibrant spirit of Adyar now adorn the walls of the branch.
- ★ The campaign features a special exhibition showcasing 40 compelling stories of the individuals who made Adyar special.
- ★ The campaign aims to capture the essence of Adyar and promote its rich culture and heritage.
- ★ It fosters a sense of pride and belonging among local residents.
- ★ The 'I am Adyar, Adyar is me' campaign is an innovative initiative by Federal Bank to honour and recognize the Adyar community.

Wipro Partnered with Microsoft for Financial Services

- ★ Wipro Limited, a leading technology services and consulting company, has collaborated with Microsoft and announced the launch of the Wipro Industry Innovation Experience for Financial Services, featuring a new suite of banking and financial services solutions built on Microsoft Cloud.
- ★ It is to help financial services clients accelerate growth and deepen client relationships.
- ★ The Innovation Experience will bring together Microsoft Cloud capabilities with Wipro Full Stride Cloud, as well as leverage Wipro's and Capco's deep domain expertise in financial services.
- ★ The Innovation Experience will allow financial services firms to explore new solutions in an immersive 3D environment.

SIDBI Signs Pact with HDFC Bank

- ★ State-owned **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has entered into a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **HDFC Bank** for providing financial solutions to **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**.
- ★ The MoU will facilitate providing complete financial solutions to MSMEs in a seamless manner.
- ★ This arrangement will enable MSMEs to avail financial products and services of both the banks.
- ★ Both banks will endeavour to bring more MSMEs in financial ecosystems through the arrangement.

HDFC Bank Introduces Millennia Credit Card

- ★ HDFC Bank has introduced a new credit card – Millennia offering cashback.
- ★ The card comes with contactless technology allowing customers to ‘tap and pay’ via a Point of Sale (POS) machine.
- ★ The card offers cashback and reward points on Amazon, Flipkart, and other e-commerce platforms.
- ★ The card also offers 1% cashback on offline purchases, smart Equated monthly instalments (EMI), and lounge access for free, among others.
- ★ In every billing, a maximum reward of ₹1000 would be offered.
- ★ The cardholder receives a ₹1000 gift card after spending ₹1 lakh in a calendar quarter.
- ★ The Millennia card is applicable to both self-employed and salaried persons.
- ★ The minimum age limit is 21 and the maximum age is 40.
- ★ People earning a maximum of ₹35,000 gross salary can apply for the card.
- ★ Self-employed people with an annual income of ₹6 lakhs or above are also eligible.

SAMCO Active Momentum Fund

- ★ The SAMCO Asset Management Private Limited has launched India’s first actively managed momentum fund – SAMCO Active Momentum Fund.
- ★ The SAMCO Active Momentum Fund’s new fund offer (NFO) runs from June 15-29, 2023.
- ★ Investors seeking to employ a momentum investing strategy to achieve long-term capital appreciation can consider the SAMCO Active Momentum Fund.
- ★ SAMCO Active Momentum Fund is an open-ended equity scheme following momentum theme with Benchmark Nifty 500 Index TRI.
- ★ The Fund meticulously selects stocks with momentum characteristics such as breakouts, price leadership, and more, deploying a proprietary momentum-seeking algorithm.
- ★ In Momentum investing, active management offers several unique advantages such as a wider investible universe, quicker rebalancing and hedging flexibility during periods of anti-momentum.
- ★ The face value of each unit during the New Fund Offer (NFO) is 10, with a minimum application amount of ₹5,000 and multiples of ₹1 thereafter.

ADB Gives 130 Million Dollars to Himachal Pradesh

- ★ The Government of India signed a \$130 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to enhance the income of Himachal Pradesh farmers.
- ★ This \$130 million loan will be used to increase agricultural productivity, improve irrigation facilities and promote horticulture agribusinesses in Himachal Pradesh.
- ★ Supporting horticulture value chains will also encourage the contribution of this sub-sector to the development and food security of the country.

- ★ The implementation of this project will help at least 15,000 agricultural families in 7 districts of the state – Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Mandi, Sirmaur, Solan and Una – to increase their income and combat the effects of climate change.
- ★ The project will also help create an ecosystem to improve farmers’ access to markets for subtropical horticulture.

SIDBI Launched Mission EVOLVE

- ★ The principal financial institution for Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India, the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched mission EVOLVE (Electric Vehicle Operations and Lending for Vibrant Ecosystem) in association with National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog, World Bank, Korean-World Bank and Korean Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) to finance MSMEs in the Electric Vehicles (EV) space.
- ★ Under the initiative, SIDBI will give MSMEs access to affordable commercial financing for EV loans including hosting of telematics that could help reduce financing costs and provide data for other financial services.
- ★ The programme comes in the backdrop of SIDBI’s aim to support India’s target for 30% EV penetration by 2030 or EV30@30.
- ★ Significantly, SIDBI had announced a pilot scheme Mission 50,000-EV4ECO in April, 2023 under guidance from NITI Aayog to fund MSMEs finding it difficult to access loans to purchase EVs for their day-to-day operations and commercial use.
- ★ The mission aims to finance 50,000 EVs.
- ★ According to the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV), EV sales had surpassed the 1 million mark in India in the financial year 2022-23 with 11,52,021 units sold, up 58% from 7,26,861 units sold in FY22.
- ★ Two-wheelers had the highest share of 62% with 7,26,976 units sold in FY23.

ESAF Small Finance Bank Adopts Paperless Initiative

- ★ ESAF Small Finance Bank, a leading small finance bank in India, has adopted e-signature for micro-loan disbursals.
- ★ As on March 31, 2023 ESAF Bank has disbursed over 5.27 lakh loans through e-signatures, showcasing its commitment to digital transformation.
- ★ Through the adoption of e-signatures, ESAF Bank has effectively saved reams of paper, which would have been utilised for the purpose of loan disbursement, documentation involving handwritten signatures, thereby reducing deforestation.
- ★ The Small Finance Bank has also implemented an office automation tool.
- ★ This tool automates and digitises all internal office notes sent for approval.
- ★ The branch operations department of the bank has devised a process to discontinue the printing of 8 mandatory reports at branch locations.
- ★ In May 2023, ESAF Small Finance Bank recorded a 452% increase in net profit to ₹302.33 crore in FY23.

Moody's Projects India's GDP Growth at 6-6.3% in Q1FY24

- ★ The global credit ratings major Moody projected that the Indian economy is expected to clock a 6-6.3% growth in June quarter, and flagged risks of fiscal slippage arising from weaker than expected government revenues in the current fiscal.
- ★ Moody's growth estimate is lower than the 8% projection for the first quarter made by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last week.
- ★ India has a relatively high level of general government debt at around 81.8% of GDP for 2022-23, and low debt affordability.
- ★ Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) is an indicator of investment in the economy.
- ★ The fiscal deficit, which is the difference between government expenditure and revenue, narrowed to 6.4% of GDP in 2022-23 from 6.7% in 2021-22.
- ★ In the current fiscal, the deficit is budgeted to come in lower at 5.9% of GDP.
- ★ For the full 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscals, Moody's projects economic growth at 6.1% and 6.3%, respectively.
- ★ On a calendar year basis, Moody's expects growth to be 5.5% in 2023, which could improve to 6.5% in 2024.

NSE Shifts Bank Nifty Settlement from Thursday to Friday

- ★ The settlement of derivative contracts on Bank Nifty has been shifted by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) from Thursday to Friday.
- ★ The change will be effective from July 14, 2023.
- ★ As per the NSE circular, the first Friday expiry will be on July 14, 2023.
- ★ All existing contracts with Thursday expiry will be revised to Friday on July 6, 2023.
- ★ In Earlier 2023, BSE changed the lot size and expiry day of monthly, weekly, and long-dated futures and options contracts on Bankex and Sensex indices & the changes became effective from May 15.
- ★ The lot size for futures and options contracts of Sensex has been reduced from 15 to 10.
- ★ The lot size for futures and options contracts of the Bankex index has been changed from 20 to 15.
- ★ Futures and options on Nifty 50, Nifty IT, Nifty Midcap 50, Nifty Infrastructure, Nifty CPSE, Nifty PSE, and individual stocks will expire on the last Thursday of the expiry month.
- ★ Contracts on the Nifty Financial Services index will expire on last Tuesday.
- ★ Contracts on the Nifty Midcap Select Index will expire on the last Wednesday.
- ★ BSE Bankex index consists of 10 stocks and NSE's Bank Nifty consists of 12 stocks – 9 constituting bank stocks are common between them.

World Bank Launches Its First Road Safety Project

- ★ The World Bank (WB) launched its first dedicated road safety project in South Asia with a USD 358 million financing agreement signed in Dhaka with the government of Bangladesh.

- ★ The project seeks to improve road safety and reduce fatalities and injuries from road crashes in selected cities, high-risk highways, and district roads.
- ★ The project will focus on two national highways in Bangladesh: Gazipur-Elenga (N4) and Natore-Nawabganj (N6).
- ★ These highways will serve as the primary sites for implementing various road safety measures.
- ★ The aim is to achieve a substantial reduction of over 30 percent in road traffic deaths on these two highways.
- ★ These improvements will encompass the installation of road signs, dividers, footpaths, zebra crossings, speed breakers, and bus bays.

India's First Spending Account

- ★ Mumbai-based Fino Payments Bank has entered into a tie-up with Sequoia Capital-backed fintech Hubble to introduce India's and world's first spending account.
- ★ The tie up, under Fino 2.0 initiative on building digital assets, strengthens the digital offerings of India's only listed payments bank to enhance customer experience.
- ★ The first of its kind spending account offering from a fintech in India and across the world is specifically designed for GenZ and millennial customers' growing aspirations and lifestyle changes.
- ★ Customers can park their funds, spend (on categories such as food ordering, shopping, travel, entertainment etc.) and save up to 10% on all purchases made from the account.
- ★ Further, users can track spends across categories of over 50 brands that Hubble has partnered with and save up to ₹20,000 a year.
- ★ The spending account is integrated with the bank's digital savings account operated through its mobile app FinoPay users earn an interest rate of 2.75% per annum on the funds parked in the account.

NPCI Partners with RING Digital Credit Platform

- ★ RING, India's leading digital credit platform has partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to add its newly launched UPI Plug-in functionality to RING's pre-existing suite of digital services.
- ★ This partnership will help RING offer 'Scan & Pay' options to its existing customers and acquire new customers who use UPI as a preferred mode of payment.
- ★ With this collaboration, the RING app will become a one-stop integrated payment and credit solution where a customer can avail credit and pay merchants across the country.
- ★ UPI Plug-in offers a much swifter approach to provide inline consumer experience to Merchants and Fintechs.
- ★ The UPI payment experience will allow RING users to create a UPI ID and link it to their existing bank accounts.
- ★ Users can make UPI payments from their bank accounts linked to the RING app, by scanning any merchant's QR code, increasing flexibility and enhancing user experience.

- ★ Through this partnership, RING aims to strengthen its offerings and create a stronger customer value proposition.

SBI Mutual Fund to Acquire Up to 10% Stake in ICICI Lombard

- ★ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) gave its approval to SBI Mutual Fund (SBI MF), along with its group entities, to acquire up to 10% stake in ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited (ICICI Lombard).
- ★ Currently, SBI Mutual Fund, through various schemes, already holds a 4.62% stake in ICICI Lombard General Insurance.
- ★ The IRDAI had advised SBI Mutual Funds to ensure that the total shareholding of SBI Mutual funds along with its group entities or body corporate under the same management shall not exceed 10% of the total paid-up equity share capital of the company.
- ★ The approval of the IRDAI is valid for a period of 1 year from the date of the approval letter.

India's First-Ever Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund

- ★ Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company (MOAMC) has launched Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund, India's only passive fund offering exposure to microcap stocks.
- ★ It is to provide investors an opportunity to participate in the growth potential of microcap stocks.
- ★ The New Fund Offer (NFO) period commences on 15th June and closes on 29th June 2023.
- ★ Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund is an open-ended fund replicating/tracking the total returns of the Nifty Microcap 250 Index.
- ★ The minimum application amount for Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund is ₹500 and in multiples of ₹1.
- ★ The scheme's investment objective is to provide returns that, before expenses, correspond to the total returns of the securities as represented by the Nifty Microcap 250 Index, subject to tracking error.
- ★ However, there is no guarantee or assurance that the AMC will achieve the scheme's investment objective.
- ★ The Nifty Microcap 250 Index is designed to measure the performance of the top 250 companies excluding those already present in the Nifty 500 constituents.
- ★ The index is well-diversified, with its top 10 holdings accounting for only 11% as against 59% in the Nifty 50 Index.
- ★ Further, it provides diversified exposure to sectors like Industrials, Consumer Discretionary, Commodities, and Healthcare that are usually underweight in broad-based market indices.

Phonepe Launches Payment Gateway

- ★ Indian digital payments and financial services company, PhonePe officially launched the PhonePe Payment Gateway with a special limited-period offer for new Micro Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) merchants.
- ★ This is in contrast to most payment gateways that charge a standard transaction fee of 2%.

- ★ PhonePe Payment Gateway has given the fintech unicorn startup, PhonePe an entry to the club of other payment gateways in India such as Paytm, Cashfree, Instamojo, CC Avenue, Bill Desk, Razorpay, etc.
- ★ The free services could help merchants who have a monthly sales volume of ₹1 crore – save up to ₹8 lakhs and potentially around ₹2 lakh per month with zero onboarding costs.
- ★ It offers a no-code setup for integration across all platforms and helps merchants accept online payments across Android, iOS, mobile web, and desktop.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Launched “Activmoney”

- ★ Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL) announced the launch of its ActivMoney feature which gives customers the benefit of fixed deposit (FD)-like interest rates of up to 7% per annum with no charges on premature withdrawal.
- ★ Once a customer avails the ActivMoney feature in the savings account, it automatically transfers the balance above the threshold (defined as per account variant) in multiples of ₹10,000 to a Fixed Deposit (FD) of 180 days currently at an interest rate of 7% per annum.
- ★ In case a customer wishes to use the funds, the entire balance in savings and FD is instantly available.
- ★ Through ActivMoney, excess funds in the account, beyond a defined threshold, are automatically transferred to an FD, thereby offering you the chance to earn a higher interest on your savings.
- ★ Default minimum threshold over which the surplus funds earn FD like higher interest rate is ₹25,000 for savings/salary/811 accounts and ₹50,000 for current accounts.

SEBI Issues Guidelines on Product Offerings

- ★ The Capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) restricted online bond platform providers (OBPPs) from offering products other than listed debt securities on their Online Bond Platform (OBP).
- ★ The online bond platform provider means any person operating or providing such a platform.
- ★ ‘Online bond platform’ means any electronic system, other than a recognised stock exchange or an electronic book provider platform, on which the debt securities which are listed or proposed to be listed, are offered and transacted.
- ★ The holding company, subsidiary, or associate of an online bond platform provider will not utilise the name, brand name, or any name resembling that of the online bond platform provider for offering products and services that are not regulated by a financial sector regulator.

Fitch Raises India’s GDP Forecast

- ★ Fitch Ratings has revised its forecast for Indian economic growth in the fiscal year 2023-24, increasing it from 6% to 6.3%.
- ★ The revision is based on a stronger first-quarter performance and positive momentum in the near term.
- ★ Fitch Ratings attributes the revised forecast to the overall strength of India’s economy.

- ★ Fitch Ratings considers the stronger first-quarter performance and positive momentum as reasons to upgrade the growth forecast to 6.3%, which it states is one of the highest growth rates globally.

Asian Development Bank to Provide Loans to Bangladesh

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a loan agreement with the government of Bangladesh to provide \$400 million for the construction of a dual gauge railway between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar.
- ★ The purpose of the railway project is to promote trade, investment, and tourism in Bangladesh.
- ★ The new rail link is expected to open in 2023 and aims to transport approximately 2.9 million passengers annually between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar by 2024.
- ★ The ADB is supporting the government's shift from road to rail transport, as rail is considered a climate-friendly, safe, affordable, and efficient mode of transportation.
- ★ The Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway is part of the Trans-Asia Railway (TAR) network, which is an initiative led by the United Nations.
- ★ The TAR network aims to establish seamless rail links between Asia and Europe to enhance connectivity between people and markets.
- ★ The assistance provided by ADB for the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway Project is the third part of a \$1.5 billion loan package for the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) initiative.

Apple to Launch its Credit Card in India

- ★ Apple Inc is planning to introduce its credit card, known as Apple Card, in India to take advantage of the growing opportunities in the country's financial sector.
- ★ Apple intends to collaborate with HDFC Bank to offer Apple Card to Indian customers.
- ★ Apple CEO Tim Cook met HDFC Bank CEO and MD Shashidhar Jagadishan during the launch of the Apple Store in India in April.
- ★ RBI has directed Apple to follow the standard procedures set up for other co-branded credit cards.
- ★ Physical Apple Card users can earn up to 1% cashback for regular purchases, which increases to 2% when paying with Apple Pay.
- ★ The cashback percentage has increased to 3% for payments made at Apple Stores and select partners.
- ★ Apple does not charge Apple Card holders late fees, foreign transaction fees, returned payment fees, or annual credit card fees.
- ★ Apple Card owners have the option of opening a savings account with an interest rate of 4.15%, with no minimum balance requirement, to deposit their daily cash.

Axis Bank Launches One-View Feature on its Mobile App

- ★ One of the largest private sector banks, Axis Bank, launched its latest feature, 'One-View', on Axis Mobile Application.

- ★ Axis Bank is the first private sector Bank to introduce this new-age banking feature leveraging the Account Aggregator (AA) ecosystem to create a seamless banking experience for its customers.
- ★ This feature simplifies the process of managing finances for customers, by providing them access to multiple bank accounts on one single platform, enabling them to track their balances and spends on a real-time basis.
- ★ Account Aggregator is a type of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulated framework that helps an individual securely and digitally access.
- ★ It is to share information from one financial institution they have an account with to any other regulated financial institution in the AA network.

LIC Launches Close-Ended Dhan Vriddhi Plan

- ★ The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched Dhan Vriddhi, a single-premium, non-participating endowment plan.
- ★ It is a limited-time guaranteed returns policy that will be available for purchase up to September 30, 2023.
- ★ This plan provides financial support to the family in case of unfortunate death of the life assured during the policy term.
- ★ It also provides a guaranteed lump sum amount on the date of maturity to the assured.
- ★ Dhan Vriddhi is a non-linked, non-participating, individual, savings, single premium life plan, offering a combination of protection.
- ★ The plan's entry age ranges from 90 days to 8 years, depending on the insurance term selected.
- ★ The maximum admission age varies from 32 to 60 years old, depending on the term and policy choice chosen.
- ★ The minimum basic sum assured is ₹1.25 lakh, with the opportunity to enhance it in multiples of ₹5,000.

ADB Approves Loan to Improve Transport Connectivity in Bihar

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$295 million loan to widen and upgrade around 265 kilometres of state highways, improving transport connectivity and safety in the state of Bihar in India.
- ★ The highways will be upgraded with climate- and disaster-resilient design, road safety elements, and other features that will respond to the needs of the elderly, women, children, and people with disabilities.
- ★ The project will also encourage women's participation by providing employment to female workers in construction works.
- ★ Training in livelihood as well as awareness on road safety, health and hygiene, and abuse and harassment will be offered to women from communities in the project areas.
- ★ The government is contributing \$156.6 million to the project.

Indian Bank Partners with Manipal Technologies

- ★ Manipal Technologies Limited (MTL) has partnered with state-owned Indian Bank to drive financial inclusion by offering customised banking products.
- ★ It is to build a sustainable network of corporate business correspondents (CBCs) that will enhance the availability, affordability, and accessibility of financial services, particularly in underserved markets and rural areas.
- ★ As part of this association, MTL will work closely with Indian Bank to offer tailor-made banking products in rural locations.
- ★ The initial focus will be serving more than 600 locations and gradually expanding the presence in newer regions in states such as Tamil Nadu (TN), Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Kerala, Maharashtra, Haryana.
- ★ The Indian Bank aims to empower individuals with seamless access to financial services, ranging from account opening, withdrawals, deposits, lead generation, opening FDs (fixed deposits), and applying for loans.

Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Launches New Guaranteed Pension Plan

- ★ Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Company Limited (ABSLI), the life insurance arm of Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL), has launched a new retirement solution called ABSLI Nishchit Pension Plan.
- ★ The ABSLI Nishchit Pension Plan is a non-linked, non-participating individual pension plan.
- ★ It allows policyholders to plan for their retirement by accumulating a 100% guaranteed corpus, which may be used to assure an uninterrupted income throughout the golden years.
- ★ The Pension Plan offers customization options to policyholders based on their retirement goals.
- ★ It provides flexible Premium Payment Term (PPT) and Policy Term (PT) options.
- ★ It allows individuals to choose from various premium payment term durations, including 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 years, or regular pay options.
- ★ The plan sets a maximum entry age of 65 years and a minimum entry age of 30 years.
- ★ The minimum annualised premium required is 20,000.

Canara Bank to Launch UPI Payments Via Credit Card

- ★ Canara Bank has become the first Public Sector Bank (PSB) in India to introduce the facility of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments to merchants through RuPay Credit Card in association with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- ★ This facility is made available in the popular 'Canara ai1' Banking Super App of the Bank.
- ★ Customers of the Canara Bank will now be able to make UPI payments to merchants from their RuPay Credit Cards also in addition to their bank accounts.
- ★ Customers can link their Canara Bank RuPay Credit Cards to their UPI IDs.
- ★ The transaction limits applicable for UPI transactions shall continue for UPI payments using RuPay Credit Card.

- ★ This facility will further enhance digital payments and extend the UPI ecosystem.

SPORTS

Khelo India University Games

- ★ Khelo India University Games: Savitribai Phule Pune University won the first gold medal by defeating Osmania University in the women's tennis event.
- ★ They won 2-0 over defending champions Osmania University in the final match.
- ★ The tournament took place at the Ekana International Tennis Stadium in Lucknow.
- ★ The Jain University women's tennis team won the bronze medal by defeating Madras University by a score of 2-0.
- ★ Gujarat University won the bronze medal in a closely fought match against Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) with a score of 2-1.

Mission Olympic Cell Approved Neeraj Chopra's Proposal

- ★ The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) on 28th May approved Olympic Gold Medallist Neeraj Chopra's proposal to train in Kuortane, Finland.
- ★ Neeraj will train at the Kurtane Olympic Training Center in Finland.
- ★ He is scheduled to compete in several World Athletics events next month.
- ★ The MOC members also approved paddler Payas Jain's proposal for an advanced training camp in Taiwan.
- ★ Proposals to get Indian table tennis stars Manika Batra and Sathiyan Gnanasekaran's personal trainers Aman Balgu and Raman Subramaniam for a number of events were also approved by the MOC.

Men's Junior Asia Cup 2023

- ★ India won the Men's Junior Asia Cup 2023 title in Hockey by defeating Pakistan 2-1 in the final held in Salalah, Oman.
- ★ The win marked India's fourth title in the men's Junior Asia Cup, having previously won in 2004, 2008 and 2015.
- ★ Angad Bir Singh and Arjit Hundal Singh scored for India, while Pakistan managed to score a goal through Basharat Ali.
- ★ It is an international under-21 field hockey tournament organized by the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF).

Thailand Open Badminton Title

- ★ Ann Se-young of South Korea claimed her fourth title in 2023 by defeating China's He Bingjiao in the women's singles final of the Thailand Open badminton tournament on 04 June.

- ★ Thailand Open Badminton was played in Bangkok.
- ★ The South Korean player has been able to make the finals of every tournament he has played this year, winning titles at the All England Open, India and Indonesia.
- ★ She will be eyeing his fifth title at the Singapore Badminton Open, which begins at the Indoor Stadium.
- ★ In the men's final, Thailand's Kunlavut Witidson won the first gold medal by defeating Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu 21-12, 21-10. He became the fourth Thai man to win the tournament.

Bishkek Ranking Series 2023

- ★ Manisha, an Asian championships bronze medallist in women's 65 kg, won India's first gold medal at the Bishkek Ranking Series 2023 in Kyrgyzstan.
- ★ Reetika, who also won a bronze at the Asian championships, settled for silver in the women's 72 kg event.
- ★ Sarita Mor, a former Asian champion and 2021 world championships bronze medallist, clinched a bronze in women's 59 kg.
- ★ With the three medals from Indian women wrestlers, India's tally at the ongoing Ranking Series reached four.
- ★ Manisha competed in the nordic round system and remained unbeaten in her four matches, defeating opponents from Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Ukraine to secure gold.

Flanders Cup 2023 Athletics

- ★ Indian athlete Amlan Borgohain won two gold medals at the Flanders Cup 2023 Athletics Meet in Merksem, Belgium.
- ★ Amlan Borgohain secured gold medals in both the men's 100m and 200m races at the Flanders Cup 2023 athletics meet.
- ★ In the men's 100m event, Borgohain emerged as the fastest man with a time of 10.70s.
- ★ Jamaican athlete Aubrey Allen secured the silver medal in the men's 100m event with a timing of 10.80s. Victor Hofmans from Belgium finished third, clinching the bronze with a time of 11.01s.
- ★ The Flanders Cup, also known as the Internationaal Antwerps Athletics Gala, is significant athletics meet that is categorized as a Category F event in the World Athletics calendar.

Tamil Nadu to Host Khelo India Games 2023

- ★ Tamil Nadu will be hosting Khelo India Games
- ★ Chief Minister MK Stalin, announced that the Union Government has approved the state government's request to allow Tamil Nadu to host the games and added that the event will showcase.
- ★ Description Khelo India Youth Games, formerly Khelo India School Games, are the annual national-level multidisciplinary grassroot games in India.

- ★ On the completion of five years of Khelo India, the Prime Minister recognizes the significant contribution of the initiative in fostering and nurturing sporting talent, aiming to create an optimal environment for the growth of sports in India.

U-20 Asian Athletics Championships

- ★ Siddharth Chowdhary, representing India, won the gold medal in the men's shot-put event at the Under-20 Asian Athletics Championships held in Yecheon, South Korea.
- ★ He achieved this feat by recording a personal best throw of 19.52 metres.
- ★ Indian athletes Sharuk Khan earned a silver medal in the 3000 meters steeplechase event, Shivam Lohakare a silver medal in the javelin throws and Sushmitaa silver medal in the long jump event.
- ★ Apart from this, Shakeel finished third in the 800-meter race by securing a bronze medal.
- ★ The Indian mixed relay team also put up a commendable performance, bagging another bronze medal.
- ★ India's total medal tally has gone up to nine at the Under-20 Asian Athletics Championships in South Korea.

Decathlon Gold at Asian U20 Athletics Championships

- ★ Sunil Kumar, representing India, won the gold medal with a score of 7003 points in the men's decathlon event at the Asian U20 Athletics Championships in Yecheon, South Korea.
- ★ In the women's high jump event, Pooja won the silver medal with a jump of 1.82 metres.
- ★ Bushra Khan earned a silver medal in the women's 3000m race.
- ★ The Indian women's 4 × 100m relay team won the bronze medal with a timing of 45.36 seconds.
- ★ In the javelin throw event, Shivam Lohakare won the silver medal with a throw of 72.34 metres.
- ★ India has earned a total of 12 medals.
- ★ Japan topped the rankings with 10 gold medals and 17 medals in total.
- ★ China is second in the rankings with a total of 14 medals.

World Test Championship Title

- ★ Australia beat India by 209 runs to win its maiden ICC World Test Championship title at the Kennington Oval in London.
- ★ Australia became the first team to win all ICC titles.
- ★ Australia batting first scored 469 runs in the first innings.
- ★ In response, Team India was reduced to 296 runs and Australia got a lead of 173 runs in the first innings.
- ★ Australia declared the second innings by scoring 270 runs and set a target of 444 runs in front of India.
- ★ In response, the Indian team was reduced to 234 runs and lost the match by 209 runs.

French Open 2023 Men's Singles Final

- ★ In Tennis, Serbian Novak Djokovic won the French Open 2023 men's singles final, clinching his 23rd Grand Slam title.
- ★ Novak Djokovic has become the first man to reach the 23rd Grand Slam title.
- ★ He won the title by defeating Casper Rudd in straight sets.
- ★ The win gives Djokovic his third French Open title and surpasses Rafael Nadal's record for most title wins.
- ★ He also became the first person to win all four Grand Slam events at least three times.
- ★ In French Open tennis, World No 1 and top seed Iga Swiatek of Poland has won the Women's Singles crown.
- ★ She defended her title against unseeded Czech Republic's Karolina Muchova 6-2, 5-7, 6-4. This is her third French title in just 5 years.

FIH Pro League 2023

- ★ The Indian hockey team beat Argentina 2-1 in its final FIH Pro League 2022-23 match in Eindhoven, the Netherlands.
- ★ Akashdeep Singh and Sukhjeet Singh scored goals for India while Lucas Toscani netted the only goal for Argentina.
- ★ With the win in this tie, India have further consolidated their top spot in the FIH Pro League 2022-23 points table with 30 points from 16 matches while Argentina is fifth in the table with 13 points from 14 matches.
- ★ India now led second-placed Great Britain by four points in the FIH Pro League 2022-23 standings but the European team still has four games to play.

India won Women's Junior Hockey Asia Cup 2023

- ★ India defeated four-time champions South Korea 2-1 to win their first Women's Junior Hockey Asia Cup in Kakamigahara, Japan.
- ★ After a scoreless first quarter, India got things moving with Annu's penalty corner goal in the 22nd minute.
- ★ South Korea equalised three minutes later, with Park Seo Yeon scoring.
- ★ In the 41st minute, however, Neelum shot strongly to the bottom right of the South Korean custodian to make it 2-1.
- ★ To secure the deal, the Indian defence held on to a slim lead in the third quarter.

Asian Wrestling Championships

- ★ Ankush won the only gold medal for India by defeating Iran's Amirreza Ali Taimoorizad in the freestyle 55 kg category.
- ★ Dhanraj Bharat Shirke who represented India lost to Ahora Farhad Khateri of Iran and earned a silver medal.

- ★ Competing in the freestyle 48 kg category, Rupesh won the silver medal after losing to Iran's Sam Reza Sayar in the final.
- ★ India finished second behind Iran in the freestyle team rankings.
- ★ India won a total of seven medals with one gold, three silver and three bronze medals on the final day of the tournament in the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

World Squash Championship

- ★ Egypt emerged victorious in the World Squash Championship, defeating Malaysia 2-1 in the final held in Chennai.
- ★ Malaysia secured the silver medal in the championship.
- ★ The third place in the championship was shared between the host country, India, and Japan.
- ★ Malaysia defeated India with a score of 3-0 in the semi-final held the previous day.
- ★ The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, awarded the winning team with the golden cup, while the Sports Minister, Udhayanidhi Stalin, presented medals to the victorious players.

Senior Football Championship

- ★ The Indian men's senior football team emerged victorious in the Intercontinental Cup by defeating Lebanon 2-0 in the final held at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.
- ★ The first half of the match ended without any goals being scored.
- ★ In the second half, the Indian team took the lead with a goal from their captain, Sunil Chhetri, in the 46th minute, making it 1-0.
- ★ Lallianzuala Chhangte extended the lead with a goal in the 65th minute, resulting in a final score of 2-0 in favor of India.
- ★ This victory marks India's second title in the Intercontinental Cup, with their first win occurring during the inaugural edition in 2018.

Mascot for Upcoming 37th National Games

- ★ Chief Minister of Goa Dr Pramod Sawant launched the mascot for the upcoming 37th National Games.
- ★ The ceremony took place at the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Taleigao and was organized by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Sports Authority of Goa.
- ★ The launch event coincided with the celebration of Goa Revolution Day.
- ★ The objective of the National Games is to identify sporting talents who are capable of representing the country at the Olympics.

Asian Shot-Put Record at Inter-State Championships

- ★ India's top shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor created a new Asian shot-put record at the Inter-State Championships in Bhubaneswar.

- ★ Tajinderpal Singh Toor broke his previous Asian record with a throw of 21.77m, surpassing his earlier record of 21.49m in 2021.
- ★ His remarkable throw placed him ninth in the global rankings for longest shot-put distance recorded this season.
- ★ Toor cleared the qualifying mark of 21.40m to secure his place in the upcoming World Championships.
- ★ Toor also qualified for the Asian Games by clearing the required distance of 19 metres.

India's First Medal in Asian Fencing Championships

- ★ Bhavani Devi won the bronze medal in the women's sabre event at the Asian Fencing Championships held in Wuxi, China.
- ★ Bhavani lost her semi-final match against Uzbekistan's Zainab Daybekova with a score of 14-15.
- ★ In the quarterfinals, Bhavani defeated defending world champion Misaki Emura of Japan by a score of 15-10.
- ★ Bhavani's next challenge will be the World Championships to be held in Milan from July 22 to 30.

Indonesia Open 2023

- ★ Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty became the first Indian pair to win the doubles title at a BWF Super 1000 event at the Indonesia Open 2023.
- ★ They defeated the Malaysian world champion pair of Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in the final.
- ★ The win made them the first doubles team from India to win the Indonesia Open.
- ★ They also became the first pair from India to win a Badminton World Federation (BWF) Super 1000 title.
- ★ Indonesia Open 2023 took place at Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Guinness World Record for 200 International Caps

- ★ Cristiano Ronaldo set a Guinness World Record by achieving 200 international caps for Portugal.
- ★ He reached the milestone during Portugal's Euro 2024 qualifier against Iceland.
- ★ Ronaldo is now the most capped player in international football.
- ★ The Guinness Book of Records recognized his achievement and presented him with a certificate.
- ★ Ronaldo is also the all-time top goal scorer in international football, with 122 goals in 200 games.
- ★ A cap is awarded to players who make official appearances for their national team in international football.
- ★ Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo holds the current record with 200 international caps.

Anurag Thakur Flagged Off 'Bharat in Paris' Campaign

- ★ Union Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur flagged off the campaign with a short marathon at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.
- ★ The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has launched the 'Bharat in Paris' campaign to create awareness and promote sports across India ahead of the Paris Olympics games.
- ★ The 2024 Olympics will be held in Paris, France, from July 26 to August 11.
- ★ The idea of the scheme is to look to the future and fund a developmental group of athletes who have the potential to bring medals to the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024 and Los Angeles in 2028.

Ladies European Tour Title

- ★ 2-year-old left-handed golfer Diksha Dagar from Jhajjar, Haryana claimed her second Ladies European Tour (LET) title at the Czech Ladies Open at the Royal Beroun Golf Club.
- ★ She became the second Indian woman to win a Ladies European Tour event
- ★ Diksha had earlier won her maiden LET title at the Investec South African Women's Open in 2019 and was also part of the winning team at the Aramco Team Series in London in 2021.
- ★ The Czech Ladies Open is a professional golf tournament on the Ladies European Tour, first played in 2019.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

PSU Lenders Chart in Profit and Loan Growth in FY23

- ★ State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among public sector lenders in terms of loan and deposit growth in percentage terms during 2022-23.
- ★ BoM also recorded highest growth in profitability with bottom line growing almost 126% to ₹2,602 crore during the year.
- ★ However, all the 12 public sector banks together recorded a 57% jump in net profit at ₹1,04,649 crore in FY23, according to published yearly numbers of public sector banks (PSBs).
- ★ In terms of percentage increase in gross advances, BoM recorded 29.4% jump in loans at ₹1,75,120 crore as of March 2023.
- ★ It was followed by Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) and UCO Bank with 21.2% and 20.6% growth, respectively.
- ★ With regard to deposit growth, BoM witnessed 15.7% rise and mobilised ₹2,34,083 crore at the end of March 2023.
- ★ According to the data, Bank of Baroda (BoB) was second with 13% growth in deposits (₹10,47,375 crore) while Punjab National Bank (PNB) recorded 11.26% increase at ₹12,51,708 crore.
- ★ BoM retained the top position in terms of garnering low-cost Current Account and Savings Account (CASA) deposits with 53.38% followed by Central Bank of India (50.18%).

NIRF Ranking for 2023

- ★ The Ministry of Education today announced the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking for the year 2023.
- ★ The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has been declared the best educational institute under the overall category.
- ★ Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore got second position and Indian Institute of Technology, IIT-Delhi, awarded third position in the same category.
- ★ All India Institute of Medical Science, 5th position and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi got the 10th position in the overall category.
- ★ In the category of top ten Universities in the country, IISc, Bangalore is in First position and JNU in second position.
- ★ Jamia Millia Islamia got 3rd position, Banaras Hindu University 5th position and Aligarh Muslim University bagged 9th position in this category.
- ★ The University of Hyderabad is also in 10th position in the same category.
- ★ The Ministry announced ranking for several categories including Overall, Top ten Universities, Engineering, Pharmacy and Management.

World's Second Largest Producer of Crude Steel

- ★ According to the Union Minister of Steel and Civil Aviation, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, India has moved from the fourth largest producer of crude steel to the second largest producer.
- ★ From 2014-15 to 2022-23, India sees a 42% increase in crude steel production, from 88.98 MT to 126.26 MT.
- ★ China remains the largest exporter of crude steel globally and India has emerged as the second largest producer.
- ★ In the financial year 2022-23, India is expected to produce 122.28 MT of finished steel, showing a growth of 49% as compared to 81.86 MT in 2014-15.

Global Slavery Index 2023

- ★ The Walk Free Foundation recently released the Global Slavery Index 2023, an assessment of modern slavery conditions in 160 countries.
- ★ Global Slavery Index 2023 is the fifth edition and is based on the estimates from 2022.
- ★ The global slavery index provides an overview of modern slavery.
- ★ According to the report approximately 50 million individuals were living in 'modern slavery' on any given day in 2021.
- ★ Of the 50 million affected people, 28 million suffer from forced labour, while 22 million face forced marriage. Remarkably, 12 million of those affected are children.
- ★ The Global Slavery Index is a comprehensive report developed by Walk Free, a respected human rights organization.

- ★ The index draws upon data provided by the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, a collaborative effort by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Forbes' Global 2000 List

- ★ Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd climbed eight spots to the 45th rank, the highest for an Indian company on Forbes' latest Global 2000 list of public companies worldwide.
- ★ The Global 2000 ranks public companies worldwide based on sales, profits, assets, and market value.
- ★ JP Morgan, America's largest bank with \$3.7 trillion in assets, has secured the top spot on the Global 2000 list.
- ★ This marks its first time at the top since 2011.
- ★ Saudi Arabia's oil giant, Aramco, holds the second position on the list.

CBIC Releases National Time Release Study 2023 Report

- ★ Vivek Johri, Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) recently released the National Time Release Study (NTRS) 2023 report.
- ★ According to the report the average import release time by customs authorities has decreased in 2023 compared to 2022.
- ★ The report states that the import release time has declined by 20% for inland container depots (ICDs), 11% for air cargo complexes (ACCs), and 9% for seaports.
- ★ The CBIC has been actively working towards reducing release time by customs for both imports and exports in order to promote ease of doing business and enhance tax collections.
- ★ The National Time Release Study (NTRS) is a performance measurement tool released by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

Reuters Institute's Digital News Report 2023

- ★ According to Reuters Institute's Digital News Report 2023, DD India and All India Radio have been recognized as the most trusted electronic media organizations in the country.
- ★ The report highlights that although overall trust in news has decreased marginally by 3 percentage points, public broadcasters and print brands have managed to maintain a relatively high level of trust among the public.
- ★ DD India and All India Radio have been specifically described as electronic media organizations with the highest degree of trust.
- ★ This recognition reflects the credibility that these public broadcasters have established among their audiences.
- ★ Their longstanding presence in the media landscape as well as their commitment to providing accurate and unbiased news coverage has contributed to their strong reputation as reliable sources of information.

- ★ Being recognized as the most trusted electronic media organizations reflects the belief that the public space in DD India and All India Radio highlights their importance in the media ecosystem and the role they play in shaping public opinion.

Global Gender Gap Index 2023

- ★ India ranks 127 out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023.
- ★ The Global Gender Gap Index was established in 2006 and this is its 17th edition.
- ★ It is published annually by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- ★ It measures gender equality in 146 countries and enables cross-country analysis.
- ★ The global gender gap score for 2023 is 68.4%, showing an improvement of 0.3 percentage points from 2022.
- ★ Iceland has been ranked first as the most gender-equal country in the world for the 14th consecutive year with a score of 91.2%.
- ★ Iceland is the only country that has reduced the gender gap by more than 90%.

Tata Power Becomes the Most Attractive Employer Brand

- ★ Tata Power Company has emerged as India's most 'attractive employer brand', followed by Amazon and Tata Steel, reveals the findings of Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2023.
- ★ Tata Power was at the ninth spot in 2022.
- ★ IT major Tata Consultancy Services secured the 4th position in the top 10 most 'attractive employer brand', followed by Microsoft, Samsung India, Infosys, Tata Motors, IBM and Reliance Industries.
- ★ According to the report, employees rated automotive (77 per cent) as the most attractive sector followed by IT, ITeS and Telecom (76 per cent) and FMCG, Retail and e-commerce (75 per cent).
- ★ Big Basket, the online megastore emerged as the most attractive start-up employer brand in the country.
- ★ The report reveals that work-life balance, good reputation and attractive salary and benefits are the three most important drivers for the Indian workforce when choosing an employer.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Environmental Airline of the Year 2023

- ★ Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, has been named the Environmental Airline of the Year 2023 for the second year in a row at the Airline Rating Awards.
- ★ The prestigious award acknowledges the airline's commitment to sustainable aviation through innovation and collaboration.
- ★ Etihad is ranked third in the 'Top 10 Airlines' category, which evaluates comfort, innovation, value and safety in economy, business and first class.

- ★ Etihad's sustainability strategy focuses on emissions reduction, industry alignment, collaboration with the UAE ecosystem and proactive transparency.
- ★ Key initiatives of the airline include the Greenliner program using Boeing 787 Dreamliners and the deployment of Sustainable50 A350-1000 aircraft.

Greentech Safety Award 2023

- ★ RINL received the "GreenTech Safety Award 2023" under the safety Excellence Category.
- ★ It has received the award for improving safety at the workplace in 2022-23.
- ★ The award was presented at the 21st Annual Greentech Awards function in New Delhi.
- ★ The 21st GreenTech Safety Award has been organized by the Greentech Foundation.
- ★ It honours the outstanding organizations that are defining the commercial futures by adding value through excellence in fire, safety, health and security management for corporate citizenship, life cycle stewardship, etc.
- ★ The jury of the award praised RINL's initiatives of using Drone technology for the inspection of high-rise structures, chimneys etc. and the development of Software Application for tracking the use of Safety Harnesses.
- ★ Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd, also known as Vizag Steel, is a central public sector undertaking under the ownership of Ministry of Steel, Government of India based in Visakhapatnam, India

Highest Civilian Honour of Suriname

- ★ Suriname awarded President Draupadi Murmu its highest civilian honour, the Grand Order of the Chain of Yellow Star on 05 June, making her the first Indian to receive the award.
- ★ President Murmu was presented with the award by Chandrikaprasad Santokhi, President of the Republic of Suriname.
- ★ He dedicated the award to successive generations of the Indian-Surinamese community, in recognition of the important role of the Indian diaspora in strengthening the fraternal ties between the two countries.
- ★ In addition, India and Suriname signed four important Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) in the fields of health, agriculture and capacity building.

WHO Award for 'When Climate Change Turns Violent'

- ★ The documentary titled 'When Climate Change Turns Violent' has bagged the special award in the 'Health for All' category at the 4th annual Health for All Film Festival held at the World Health Organization Headquarters in Geneva.
- ★ This documentary has been directed by Vandita Saharia from Rajasthan.
- ★ She was the only Indian in the list of winners.
- ★ The 4.32-minute documentary 'When Climate Change Turns Violent' focuses on the relationship between domestic violence, climate change and human trafficking.
- ★ The ceremony announced the winning films for seven different categories, while four films received special mentions by the jury.

America's Iqbal Masih Award

- ★ Chennai-based advocate and activist Lalitha Natarajan won the 2023 Iqbal Masih Award for the Eradication of Child Labor presented by the US Department of Labor.
- ★ Lalitha Natarajan is known for her leadership in combating exploitative child labor in southern India.
- ★ As a member of the Child Welfare Committee (North Zone) under the Department of Social Defence, Tamil Nadu, Natarajan ensures that child labor victims receive compensation as per the Child Labor Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.
- ★ It is an annual non-monetary award established by the US Congress in 2008.
- ★ It is administered by the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) of the US Department of Labor.
- ★ The award recognizes individuals or organizations making an extraordinary contribution to combating child labour.
- ★ It is named after Iqbal Masih, a Pakistani child who was sold into slavery and forced to work in a carpet factory.

RSL Christopher Bland Award 2023

- ★ Paterson Joseph has been awarded the prestigious RSL Christopher Bland Prize 2023 for his debut novel 'The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho'.
- ★ The RSL Christopher Bland Prize is a renowned literary prize and it is the fifth edition.
- ★ 'The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho' is the title of Patterson Joseph's first novel, which has garnered critical acclaim and recognition within the literary community.
- ★ It is a prestigious annual award that recognizes the achievements of first-time authors in the genre of fiction or nonfiction.
- ★ It is specifically awarded to individuals who have published their first work at the age of 50 or more.
- ★ The RSL Christopher Bland Award was instituted in 2018 to pay tribute to the memory of the famous British politician Sir Christopher Bland.

International Green Apple Awards

- ★ Five buildings and structures from Telangana have been selected to receive the 'International Green Apple Awards for Beautiful Buildings' in the Urban and Real Estate Sector category.
- ★ These awards are presented by 'The Green Organisation', an independent non-profit organization based in London.
- ★ This is the first time any building or structure in India has received these prestigious awards and all five nominated structures from Telangana have been recognised.
- ★ Selected buildings and constructions from Telangana:
 - Mozzam-Jahi Market (Heritage category)
 - Durgam Cheruvu Cable Bridge (Bridge category)

- B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat Building (Aesthetically designed office and workspace building category)
- Integrated Command Control Centre of Telangana Police (Unique office category)
- Yadadri Temple (Excellent religious structures category)
- ★ The Green Organization, founded in 1994 in London, is an independent non-profit organization that focuses on acknowledging, rewarding, and promoting environmental best practices globally.
- ★ Since 2016, they have been organizing the annual 'Green Apple Awards' in London, UK.
- ★ These awards aim to recognize and appreciate businesses, local authorities, and communities that demonstrate outstanding efforts in environmental sustainability.

'Governor of the Year' at Central Banking Awards

- ★ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das was named 'Governor of the Year' at the Central Banking Awards in London.
- ★ The award is presented by Central Banking, a leading organisation that covers matters related to central banks and financial regulators globally.
- ★ The Central Banking Awards 2023 announced the winners at the end of March, the National Bank of Ukraine received the title of Central Bank of the Year.
- ★ Shaktikanta Das, representing the Reserve Bank of India, was honoured with the Governor of the Year award at the event.

Award For Atal Pension Yojana Enrollment

- ★ Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) has bagged the national award for significant enrolment under Atal Pension Yojana (APY) from the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), New Delhi.
- ★ Shreekant M Bhandiwad, Chairman of KVGB, received the award from Vivek Joshi, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Government of India, and Deepak Mohanty, Chairman of PFRDA, in New Delhi.
- ★ Bhandiwad took charge as the Chairman in April 2023.
- ★ Bhandiwad said APY is a safety net for workers in the informal sector for getting pre-defined pension after 60 years.
- ★ The bank has enrolled 3,42,852 (cumulative) accounts under APY.
- ★ During 2022-23, the bank enrolled 76,569 accounts against the target of 50,320 and achieved the target well before the time frame.

Fourth National Water Awards in New Delhi

- ★ Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will confer the fourth National Water Awards in New Delhi.
- ★ The Jal Shakti Ministry has announced a total of 41 winners, covering 11 categories, including joint winners, for the 4th National Water Awards, 2022.
- ★ Each award winner will be conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prizes in certain categories.

- ★ As part of the ongoing nationwide drive to realize the Government's vision of a 'Water Prosperous India', the award focus on encouraging the good work and efforts made by various individuals and organizations.
- ★ It seeks to create awareness among people about the importance of water and motivate them to adopt best water use practices.

4th National Water Awards

- ★ NTPC Barauni has achieved a significant milestone by securing the first rank in the Best Industry Category at the 4th National Water Awards.
- ★ Madhya Pradesh received the first prize in the best State category, while the best district award went to Ganjam District in Odisha.
- ★ The Jagannadhapuram Village Panchayat in Bhadradri Kothagudem district of Telangana was honored with the best Village Panchayat award.
- ★ Each winner was presented with a citation, a trophy, and cash prizes.
- ★ The National Water Awards aim to acknowledge and encourage the efforts made by individuals and organizations in realizing the government's vision of a water-prosperous India.
- ★ They also seek to create awareness about the importance of water and promote the adoption of best practices for its sustainable use.

Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021

- ★ Gita Press, Gorakhpur, will be awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021 in recognition of its exceptional contribution to social, economic, and political transformation through non-violent and Gandhian methods.
- ★ PM Modi highlighted Gita Press's efforts in promoting Gandhian ideals of peace and social harmony, emphasizing that the award signifies recognition of their community service after a century of establishment.
- ★ The Gandhi Peace Prize, instituted in 1995 on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 125th birth anniversary, is an annual award that pays tribute to Gandhi's ideals.
- ★ The award is open to individuals irrespective of nationality, race, language, caste, creed, or gender.
- ★ The prize includes a monetary amount of ₹1 crore, a citation, a plaque, and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.

European Essay Prize

- ★ Arundhati Roy received the 45th European Essay Prize for Lifetime Achievement and the award is presented by the Charles Whelan Foundation.
- ★ Arundhati Roy's book of essays, 'Azadi' (2021), especially the French translation, received acclaim.
- ★ 'Azadi' explores the concept of freedom in an increasingly totalitarian world, with an emphasis on fiction and alternative imaginations.

- ★ Roy is known for his notable works, including the Booker Prize-winning novel *The God of Small Things*.
- ★ The award ceremony will be held on September in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- ★ It is the first literary award dedicated solely to the genre of the essay.
- ★ The award recognizes outstanding essays that criticise current societies, their practices and ideologies.

German Book Trade 2023 Peace Prize

- ★ The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for 2023 has been awarded to British-American author Salman Rushdie.
- ★ It was established in 1950 and the award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the promotion of international understanding between nations and cultures through their literary works.
- ★ The prize is endowed with €25,000 (\$27,300).
- ★ The purpose of the award is to encourage efforts to promote peace, dialogue and cooperation.

Professor Jayashankar Award

- ★ Acharya N. Gopi, a renowned poet and literary critic, has been selected as the recipient of the prestigious Prof. Kothapalli Jayashankar Award.
- ★ This award is instituted by Bharat Jagruthi, a cultural organization affiliated with Bharat Rashtra Samithi, and aims to honor accomplished literary figures.
- ★ Acharya Gopi's felicitation ceremony was held on 21 June at the Telangana Saraswat Parishad in Abids to remember his contribution to literature.
- ★ Acharya Gopi has an impressive literary career with a total of 56 books to his name.
- ★ Acharya Gopi's literary works have garnered widespread acclaim, leading to translations into several Indian languages, as well as foreign languages such as German, Persian, and Russian.
- ★ This showcases the global recognition of his writings.

Surat Sets Guinness World Record

- ★ A new Guinness World Record was created with the participation of 1.53 lakh people in the Yoga Day event in Surat, Gujarat.
- ★ Largest gathering for a yoga session at one place, with 1.53 lakh people participating.
- ★ Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi announced the new record.
- ★ Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel attended the state level 'International Yoga Day' celebrations in Surat.
- ★ The representatives of Guinness World Records presented the certificate to Chief Minister Patel.
- ★ The participants were given wristbands with QR codes for accurate counting.
- ★ The QR code data confirmed the participation of 1.53 lakh people surpassing the previous record.

Tedros Ghebreyesus Awarded Olympic Order by IOC

- ★ The International Olympic Committee (IOC) awarded the Olympic Order to Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ★ The award was given to Dr. Tedros for his efforts in holding the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ★ The Olympic Order was presented by IOC President Thomas Bach at the Olympic House.
- ★ Dr. Tedros has been invited by President Bach to be the Guest of Honor at the Olympic Games Paris 2024.
- ★ The award recognizes Dr. Tedros' support in promoting cooperation between the IOC and WHO, in particular the Cooperation Agreement signed in 2020.
- ★ The IOC and WHO have collaborated on various initiatives, including the Let's Move campaign for Olympic Day.

Shankar Mahadevan Receives Honorary Doctorate in UK

- ★ Singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan received an honorary doctorate from Birmingham City University (BCU) in England.
- ★ Shankar Mahadevan's honorary doctorate is in recognition of his significant contribution to the field of music and the arts.
- ★ Shankar Mahadevan is 56 years old and a prominent member of the music composition trio Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy.
- ★ He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Professor Philip Plowden, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham City University.
- ★ The ceremony took place in Birmingham.

'Order of the Nile', Egypt's Highest Honor

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the 'Order of the Nile', Egypt's highest honor, by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during a ceremony at the Presidential palace in Cairo.
- ★ The 'Order of the Nile' was established in 1915 and is bestowed upon heads of states, Crown Princes, and Vice Presidents who have rendered invaluable services to Egypt or humanity.
- ★ This is the 13th highest state honor conferred upon Prime Minister Modi.
- ★ During the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in 26 years, India and Egypt elevated their relationship to a 'Strategic Partnership' following extensive discussions between Modi and El-Sisi.
- ★ The two countries signed three more pacts covering agriculture and allied sectors, protection and preservation of monuments and archaeological sites, and competition law.

Alappuzha Doctor K Venugopal Selected for IMA Award

- ★ Dr K Venugopal, a doctor at Alappuzha's General Hospital, has been honored by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) for his contribution to the medical field.

- ★ The award was instituted by the IMA on the occasion of National Doctor's Day.
- ★ Dr K Venugopal has been selected for the award in the category of community service.
- ★ He is Chief Consultant in Respiratory Medicine at General Hospital, Alappuzha (city in Kerala).
- ★ The award ceremony will be held on July 1, 2023 at the IMA Headquarters in New Delhi.

Sahitya Akademi Children's Literature Award 2023

- ★ Priya A.S. Received the Sahitya Akademi Children's Literature Award 2023 in the Malayalam language for his novel "Perumazhayathe Kunjithalukal" (The Children Who Were Never Withered).
- ★ This prestigious award recognizes the talent and creativity of Priya A.S. in the field of children's literature.
- ★ In 2020, Priya A.S. also won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Children's Literature for the same novel, "Perumazhayathe Kunjithalukal".
- ★ The Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2023 reaffirms Priya A.S's ability to connect with young readers and inspire a love of reading and storytelling.
- ★ The novel takes inspiration from the devastating floods in Kerala in 2018.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

President of Türkiye

- ★ Justice and Development Party (AK Party) leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the President of Turkey.
- ★ In the parliamentary elections, the AK Party and its allies won 323 out of 600 seats.
- ★ Erdogan has been in power for two decades after becoming Prime Minister in March 2003.
- ★ Erdogan won the Presidential election, defeating Kemal Kilikdaroglu, the opposition leader of the Republican People's Party (CHP).
- ★ Erdogan's government aims to prioritise fighting inflation and dealing with the aftermath of the devastating February 6 earthquake.

MD and CEO of UCO Bank

- ★ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Ashwani Kumar, Executive Director, Indian Bank, as the Managing Director and CEO of UCO Bank.
- ★ Ashwini Kumar will replace Soma Shankar Prasad, who retired on May 31.
- ★ The Center had appointed Prasad as the MD and CEO of UCO Bank in December 2021.
- ★ Ashwani Kumar will head the public sector bank for a period of three years from June 1.
- ★ According to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training, Kumar will also be eligible for extension of office for two years or until further orders, whichever is earlier, after review of his performance.

Director General of Naval Armament

- ★ P Upadhyay, INAS has taken over as Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA) from KSC Iyer.
- ★ P Upadhyay is an Officer of the 1987 batch of Indian Naval Armament Service.
- ★ He joined the Naval Armament Organization of the Indian Navy on 12 July 1989.
- ★ An Electrical Engineering Graduate from SGSITS Indore, he earned his Post Graduate degrees from Devi Ahilya University in Electrical Engineering with specialization in 'Digital Techniques and Instrumentation' in 1988.
- ★ He is postgraduate in Mechanical Engineering from University of Pune with specialisation in 'Guided Missiles', in 1995.

First Woman Head of Power Finance Corporation

- ★ Parminder Chopra was appointed as the next Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Power Finance Corporation (PFC).
- ★ Parminder Chopra is the first woman appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of a Maharatna company.
- ★ She joined PFC in 2005 and currently serves as Director (Finance) & CFO.
- ★ It was incorporated in 1986, and Largest infrastructure finance company for power sector.
- ★ Ministry of Power, under the administrative control of the Department of Public Enterprises.

First Female Secretary-General of WMO

- ★ Celeste Saulo of Argentina has been appointed as the first female Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ★ Saulo won a landslide victory at the Congress of the United Nations Climate and Weather Agency in Geneva.
- ★ She will take over from the outgoing Secretary-General Petteri Taalas of Finland.
- ★ Saulo has served as Director of Argentina's National Meteorological Service since 2014.
- ★ The leader of the World Meteorological Congress is elected every four years.
- ★ The agency plays an important role in coordinating international meteorological operations.
- ★ It relies on satellites and thousands of weather stations to measure key parameters of the atmosphere, land and sea.

Chairman of SAIL

- ★ Amarendu Prakash took charge as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) with effect from 31 May.
- ★ He was earlier Director (In-Charge) of SAIL's Bokaro Steel Plant.
- ★ Prakash is heading the Bokaro Steel Plant as Director-in-Charge from September 2020.

- ★ Under Prakash's leadership, Bokaro Steel Plant achieved remarkable production records in FY22 and FY23.
- ★ SAIL is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Steel, Government of India.

President of Turkey for 3rd Time

- ★ Recep Tayyip Erdogan was re-elected as the President of Turkey for the third consecutive time.
- ★ Erdogan received 14% of votes in the second round beating his challenger, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who won 47.86%.
- ★ Ambassador Virander Paul will be representing India at the ceremony
- ★ In 2014 he became the country's first popularly-elected President and was elected again in 2018 after securing new executive powers for the presidency in a 2017 referendum.
- ★ Previously, he served as Prime Minister of Turkey from 2003 to 2014 and as mayor of Istanbul from 1994 to 1998.

'Smile Ambassador' for Oral Hygiene Campaign in Maharashtra

- ★ Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has been appointed as the 'Smile Ambassador' for the Maharashtra government's oral hygiene campaign titled 'Swachh Mukh Abhiyaan.
- ★ Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Shri Devendra Fadnavis signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 5 years with Tendulkar for the major state-wide initiative.
- ★ The Swachh Mukh Abhiyaan is a national campaign undertaken by the Indian Dental Association to improve oral health and hygiene and educate people about its importance.
- ★ The campaign will lead the country to optimal healthcare and pave the way for a new model of oral hygiene.
- ★ In March 2023, Savlon Swasth India Mission enlisted Sachin Tendulkar as the world's first 'Hand Ambassador' to promote handwashing as a routine for better overall hygiene.

Wrangler Signs Smriti Mandhana as Brand Ambassador

- ★ Ace Turtle Omni Pvt Ltd., a retail company, has selected Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana as the brand ambassador for its Wrangler brand.
- ★ Ace Turtle is the licensee of Wrangler in India.
- ★ The company aims for significant expansion in the fiscal year 2024.
- ★ Mandhana embodies the company's values and is expected to inspire customers to embrace their uniqueness and pursue their dreams.
- ★ Mandhana has established herself in international women's cricket and gained a global fan base through her exceptional talent and fearless approach.

New Chairman of The Hindu Group

- ★ Nirmala Laxman has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of The Hindu Group Publishing Private Limited (THGPPL) for a period of three years.
- ★ He succeeds Malini Parthasarathy, who stepped down after completing her three-year term at the board meeting on June 5, 2023.
- ★ Nirmala Laxman During her time as joint editor of The Hindu, she was instrumental in re-launching and setting up new features sections, including 'The Hindu Literary Review', 'Young World' and 'The Hindu in School', played an important role.
- ★ Nirmala Laxman is the founder and curator of Lit for Life, a literary festival organized by The Hindu.

New Director General of GSI

- ★ Janardan Prasad has been appointed as the new Director General of the Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- ★ Janardhana Prasad takes over from Dr. S. Raju, who has served as the Director General since 2020.
- ★ The GSI conducts scientific studies on the Earth's geology, mineral resources, and natural hazards.
- ★ It contributes to areas such as mining, infrastructure development, disaster management and environmental planning.
- ★ GSI collaborates with national and international institutions, carries out geological mapping and assessment of mineral resources.

Chairman-Elect of Board of Governors of IATA

- ★ IndiGo CEO, Peter Albers has been appointed as the Chairman-elect of the Board of Governors of the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- ★ Peter Albers will replace Yvonne Manzi Makolo, CEO of Rwandair.
- ★ IATA is a trade association of the world's airlines and has 300 member airlines, which account for 83% of total air traffic.
- ★ It is headquartered in Montreal, Canada and works to promote the safe and sustainable development of the air transportation industry.
- ★ It launched the "Fly Net Zero" initiative to achieve net zero carbon emissions from aviation by 2050.

Chairman of TransUnion CIBIL

- ★ TransUnion CIBIL, India's leading insights and information company, has announced the appointment of V Anantharaman as Non-Executive Chairman.
- ★ Anantharaman takes over from M.V. Nair, who steps down after more than 11 years as the Chairman.

- ★ Anantharaman is an industry veteran who brings over three decades of experience in the financial services sector having led corporate and investment banking teams.
- ★ He has also served as a senior advisor to the UK's development finance institution British International Investment (formerly CDC).

Brand Ambassador for Epson India

- ★ Printer company Epson India has signed popular actress Rashmika Mandanna as its brand ambassador.
- ★ Mandanna will collaborate with the company in a multi-media campaign to promote its 'EcoTank' printers.
- ★ Epson India aims to leverage Rashmika Mandanna's popularity and diverse fan base across Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, and Tamil cinema to reach a wider audience, particularly the younger generation, through the campaign.
- ★ The company believes her association will help spread awareness about their products and the benefits they offer.

Director (Personnel) of NHPC

- ★ Uttam Lal has been appointed as Director (Personnel) in National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Ltd.
- ★ NHPC Limited is India's leading hydropower company.
- ★ Uttam Lal earlier served as Chief General Manager (HR-CSR/R&R/LA) in NTPC Limited.
- ★ Uttam Lal is known for his expertise and experience in the power sector.
- ★ NHPC is a Government of India Hydropower Board and operated under the ownership of the Ministry of Power, Government of India.

New Chief of Research and Analysis Wing

- ★ Ravi Sinha, a 1988 batch IPS Officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre, has been selected as the next Chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
- ★ Sinha will take over from current Chief Samant Kumar Goel, whose term ends on June 30, 2023.
- ★ Presently, Ravi Sinha is holding the post of Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat.
- ★ It is the foreign intelligence agency of India.
- ★ RAW's primary function is to gather foreign intelligence.
- ★ It is responsible for counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation efforts.

CEO of UIDAI

- ★ Amit Agarwal has assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
- ★ Amit Agarwal is a senior IAS Officer of 1993 batch of Chhattisgarh cadre.

- ★ He has held important positions at the Center and in the states of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.
- ★ Before becoming the CEO of UIDAI, he served as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- ★ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is a government department established on 12 July 2016.
- ★ It works under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- ★ UIDAI is a statutory authority created under the Aadhaar Act 2016.

New Prime Minister of the Country by the Parliament of Finland

- ★ In Finland, the leader of the Conservative Party, Petteri Orpo, was elected Prime Minister of the country by the parliament.
- ★ Orpo's election was supported by 107 members of parliament, while 81 opposed and 11 abstained.
- ★ President Sauli Niinisto is set to formally appoint Petteri Orpo as the new Prime Minister.
- ★ Orpo will replace Sanna Marin of the Social Democrats, who finished third in the polls.

Prime Minister of Greece

- ★ Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the leader of Greece's centre-right New Democracy party, was sworn in as Prime Minister for a second term on 26th June.
- ★ The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Presidential palace in the presence of the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church, following the country's tradition.
- ★ Mitsotakis expressed his gratitude for the strong mandate given to him by the voters and pledged to accelerate institutional and economic reforms.
- ★ He emphasized that major reforms would be implemented rapidly, and he had ambitious targets for his next four years in power that could bring transformative changes to Greece.

US ISPF Board of Directors

- ★ Mastercard CEO Michael Meibach joined the board of Directors of the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum (US ISPF).
- ★ US ISPF serves as an important forum for business and government leaders to advance the next phase of growth in the US-India partnership.
- ★ The strategic alliance aims to promote cooperation in various fields and the growth and development of the economies.
- ★ The partnership between the United States and India aims to foster innovation, drive digital transformation, and address global challenges.
- ★ US ISPF focuses on key sectors such as technology, energy, healthcare, manufacturing and agriculture.

Managing Director of DBS Bank India

- ★ DBS Bank India appointed Rajat Verma as the Managing Director and Head of Institutional Banking in India.
- ★ Rajat Verma joins DBS Bank India from HSBC India, where he held the position of Managing Director and Country Head of Commercial Banking in India.
- ★ It is a Singaporean multinational banking and financial services corporation.
- ★ The bank was formerly known as The Development Bank of Singapore Limited.
- ★ Neeraj Mittal, the previous Head of Institutional Banking at DBS Bank India, has moved to a new role as Country Head of DBS Bank in Australia.

Deputy Head of UNDP

- ★ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has announced the appointment of Xu Haoliang from China as the new Under Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- ★ Xu Haoliang will succeed Usha Rao-Monari from India in this role.
- ★ Xu has been serving as the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support at the UNDP since 2019.
- ★ Prior to that, from 2013 to 2019, he held the position of UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.
- ★ He has worked in various capacities within the United Nations, undertaking assignments both in the field and at headquarters in regions such as Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Central Asia.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Shashi Tharoor Releases Vijay Darda's Book Ringside

- ★ Renowned author and Congress MP Dr. Shashi Tharoor released the book “Ringside” written by Lokmat Media Group Editorial Board Chairman and former MP Dr. Vijay Darda.
- ★ “Ringside” is a compilation of Dr Darda’s weekly articles published between 2011 and 2016 in Lokmat Media Group newspapers and other leading national and regional dailies.
- ★ The book serves as a follow-up to Dr. Darda’s previous work, “Straight Thoughts” and provides readers with a wide range of topics covering a variety of topics such as science, environment, economy, security, social development, sports, arts, culture, foreign policy Provides an intellectual journey. , and national and international affairs.
- ★ “Ringside” provides readers with insight into contemporary political, social, cultural and important events and developments.
- ★ The book aims to engage readers and provide a deeper understanding of the current political and social landscape.

A political Biography of NTR by K Ramachandra Murty

- ★ Justice Sudarshan Reddy released a book titled 'A Political Biography NTR'.
- ★ 'A Political Biography NTR' has been written by senior Editor K. Ramachandra Murthy.
- ★ HarperCollins India published the book.
- ★ Justice B Sudarshan Reddy said that Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao was a rare leader who fulfilled promises made to people and loved people abundantly.
- ★ NTR had no political knowledge but he has a strong will power to do welfare of the people.
- ★ Supreme Court retired Judge Justice Chalameshwar released the Telugu version of the book 'NTR- Rajakiya Jeevitha Charitra- Asalu Kadha'.
- ★ Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao served as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh for seven years over three terms. He also acted in more than 300 films.

A Book Titled 'Amrutkaal Ki Ore'

- ★ BJP President Jagat Prakash Nadda released a book titled 'Amrutkaal ki Ore' in New Delhi based on nine Years' Achievements of the Narendra Modi Government.
- ★ Nadda said the nine years of the Modi government have transformed the country and its progress is being recognised by the world today.
- ★ He said, there has been a big difference since 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office.
- ★ The BJP President said, from policy paralysis to a bold decision-making government, the political culture has changed drastically.
- ★ He said, earlier there used to be vote bank politics and now it is report card politics.

New Graphic Novel 'Ajay to Yogi Adityanath'

- ★ Author Shantanu Gupta launched a new graphic novel titled "Ajay to Yogi Adityanath" for young readers.
- ★ Shantanu Gupta has earlier written two bestseller titles on Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- ★ The graphic novel was launched in 51+ schools across Uttar Pradesh on 5th June, on the occasion of Yogi Adityanath's 51st birthday.
- ★ More than 5000 children from different districts of Uttar Pradesh participated in the book release.
- ★ The simultaneous launch at multiple locations with multiple participants has earned this event a place in the Asia Book of Records.

Ashwinder R Singh Launched the Book

- ★ Real estate expert, Ashwinder Singh launched a book titled 'Master Residential Real Estate'.
- ★ The book, 'Master Residential Real Estate', serves as a comprehensive guide to the real estate industry.

- ★ The book covers a wide range of topics related to residential real estate.
- ★ Ashvinder Singh provides valuable insight into the current state of the real estate market.
- ★ ‘Master Residential Real Estate’ aims to empower readers with practical knowledge and advice.

New Book Titled ‘Finance Minister of India’

- ★ Journalist A.K. Bhattacharya wrote a new book titled ‘Finance Ministers of India: From Independence to the Emergency (1947-1977)’.
- ★ The book throws light on the role of India’s finance ministers who shaped the country’s economy in the first 30 years after independence.
- ★ It covers the period from 1947 to 1977.
- ★ The book is published by Penguin Business, an imprint of Penguin Random House.
- ★ Bhattacharya is the Editorial Director of Business Standard and has wide experience in analyzing economic affairs.

Indian Author Rupa Pai Authored a New Book

- ★ A new book titled “The Yoga Sutras for Children” by Indian author Roopa Pai was published by Hachette India.
- ★ Roopa Pai’s book, “The Gita for Children” was an award-winning bestseller.
- ★ “Yoga Sutras for Children” focuses on uncovering the secrets of Patanjali’s 2,000-year-old treatise on yoga.
- ★ It aims to bring out the best in children by connecting yoga to their everyday experiences.
- ★ This book explores Maharishi Patanjali’s techniques for nurturing energy and attitude.
- ★ The book includes black-and-white artwork by painter Sayan Mukherjee.

DEFENCE

South Korea Offers KSS-III Batch-II Submarine

- ★ Recently South Korea has made an exclusive offer to provide its advanced KSS-III Batch-II submarines to India.
- ★ The proposal comes at a time when Germany is about to complete India’s submarine acquisition programme, Project 75I.
- ★ The KSS-III is the largest submarine to ever be built by South Korea, is being developed in two phases, Batch-I and Batch-II.
- ★ It is part of the Korean Attack Submarine program and represents a significant advancement in the country’s naval capabilities.
- ★ The KSS-III Batch-II submarine is an advanced version of its predecessor submarine in terms of combat management system, firepower and sonar capabilities.

- ★ It is jointly developed by Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering (DSME) and Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI).
- ★ The KSS-III submarine is a series of diesel-electric attack submarines.

Indian Navy and the Indian Maritime University

- ★ The Indian Navy and Indian Maritime University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for technical collaboration.
- ★ The agreement aims to enhance cooperation between the Indian Navy and Indian Maritime University in areas related to maritime education, research, and resolving practical challenges faced in the field.
- ★ The MoU outlines the procedure for collaboration in various areas, including training, joint research and development, collaborative courses, and resolution of field level issues.
- ★ The collaboration will involve teams from the Centre of Excellence (Marine Engineering) at INS Shivaji, Lonavala, and the Indian Maritime University.
- ★ The technical collaboration between the Indian Navy and Indian Maritime University is expected to contribute to the overall growth and development of maritime education, training, and research in India.

Air Force Exercise, 'Air Defender 23'

- ★ NATO is set to commence its largest air force deployment exercise in Europe, known as 'Air Defender 23', according to German and US officials.
- ★ The exercise will span approximately 10 days, starting from 12 June, and will involve the participation of around 220 military aircraft from 25 NATO and partner countries.
- ★ The exercise will be conducted across Germany, with some of the training taking place at Ramstein Air Base, one of NATO's largest air bases.
- ★ The exercise is purely defensive in nature.
- ★ Its primary objective is to enhance the defense capabilities of participating nations and ensure preparedness to respond to potential security challenges.
- ★ The exercise also intends to send a message to other countries including Russia.

6th Edition of India Maldives Exercise 'Ezkatha'

- ★ The sixth (6th) edition of annual exercise 'Ekatha' between India and Maldives scheduled to run from 04 June to 03 July 2023.
- ★ It is to enhance interoperability in diving and special operations.
- ★ The Indian Navy's Marine Commandos (MARCOS) and divers went to participate in the 6th edition of Exercise with the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).
- ★ The High Commissioner of India to the Maldives, Munu Mahawar and the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Naval Command, Indian Navy, Vice Admiral M.A. Hampiholi handed over certificates to the Marines of Special Operations Group (SOG) of the MNDF Marine Corps.

- ★ Chief of Defence Force Major General Abdullah Shamaal as well as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Naval Command, Indian Navy, Vice Admiral A. Hampiholi addressed the attendees at the ceremony.

Bangladesh-US Joint Naval Exercise ‘Tiger Shark 40’

- ★ The Joint Bangladesh-United States (US) Naval drill Exercise ‘Tiger Shark 40’ started at BNS Nirvik in Chattogram.
- ★ Special Forces of Bangladesh Army & Navy and US Special Forces participated in this training exercise held under the management of Commodore Swords Command.
- ★ It is to increase strategic capabilities of both the countries and to acquire mutual technical and procedural knowledge.
- ★ Chattogram Naval Area Commander Rear Admiral Abdullah AL Mamun Chowdhury attended the event as the Chief Guest.
- ★ The Special Warfare Diving and Salvage is an elite special operational unit of the Bangladesh Navy.

Fourth Warship of Indian Navy ‘Sanshodhak’ Launched

- ★ The fourth Survey Vessel Large (SVL) of the Indian Navy, named ‘Sanshodhak’, was launched at Kattupalli, Chennai.
- ★ Tanvi Arora launched the ship while an invocation from the Atharva Veda was chanted, following naval maritime traditions.
- ★ The ship’s name, meaning ‘Researcher’, reflects its primary role as a Survey Vessel.
- ★ The Ministry of Defence (MoD) highlighted the launch of the fourth SVL as a testament to India’s commitment to indigenous shipbuilding, aligning with the government’s ‘Make in India’ and Aatma Nirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) vision.
- ★ The project, undertaken by L&T/GRSE for the Indian Navy, demonstrates the nation’s resolve in promoting self-sufficiency in defense manufacturing.

Defence Ministry Signs ₹500 Crore Contract

- ★ In a significant move to promote indigenous manufacturing and support the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Ministry of Defence has signed a contract with ICOMM Tele Limited, Hyderabad in New Delhi.
- ★ The contract is for the procurement of 1,035 units of 5/7.5 Ton Radio Relay Communication equipment containers, with a contract value of approximately ₹500 crore.
- ★ The delivery of these containers is scheduled to commence in the current financial year 2023-24.
- ★ The acquisition of these Radio Relay Containers fulfills a long-pending requirement for mobile communication detachments of the Indian Army.
- ★ These containers will play a crucial role in providing a protected environment for communication equipment, ensuring its efficient and reliable functioning.

- ★ To support the indigenous manufacturing of defence equipment, the company, ICOMM Tele Limited, will produce these containers using equipment and systems sourced entirely from indigenous manufacturers.

Third ASW SWC Class Ship 'Anjadeep' Launched

- ★ The third ship of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) project 'Anjadeep' was launched at M/s L&T, Kattupalli.
- ★ The ship has been named 'Anjadeep' to reflect the strategic maritime importance of Anjadeep Island.
- ★ The ASW SWC ships are being built by M/s GRSE for the Indian Navy.
- ★ The contract for construction of eight ASW SWC ships was signed between MoD and GRSE on April 29, 2019.
- ★ Four ships are being built at GRSE, Kolkata, while the remaining four ships are being built by M/s L&T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli.
- ★ The ASW SWC ships are designed to replace the in-service Abhay class ASW corvettes and are meant for anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low intensity maritime operations (LIMO), mine laying operations and subsurface surveillance in coastal waters.
- ★ The ASW SWC ships have a length of 77 metres, a displacement of 900 tonnes, a maximum speed of 25 knots and an endurance of 1800 nautical miles.
- ★ The launch of the three ships within six months reflects India's commitment towards indigenous shipbuilding and the government's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

UAV MQ-9 Predator Drones from US

- ★ India's defence ministry approved the acquisition of 31 MQ-9B armed drones from the US.
- ★ The Defense Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved the purchase of armed Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) at a cost of over \$3 billion.
- ★ The UAVs will be procured from General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI), a United States-based aeronautical company.
- ★ The Predator UAV, produced by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc. (GA-ASI), is commonly referred to as the MQ-9.
- ★ The MQ-9 has an impressive endurance, capable of flying for over 27 hours without refueling.
- ★ It can reach speeds of up to 240 KTAS (Knots True Airspeed).
- ★ The UAV is designed to operate at high altitudes, with a maximum operating ceiling of 50,000 feet.
- ★ It possesses a substantial payload capacity, allowing it to carry up to 3,850 pounds (1,746 kilograms) of equipment, sensors, or other mission-specific payloads.

Joint Exercise 'Khaan Quest' 2023'

- ★ With the participation of military contingents and observers from more than 20 countries, the multinational peacekeeping joint exercise "Ex Khan Quest 2023" began in Mongolia.

- ★ The ceremony was inaugurated by Mongolian President Ukhmagin Khurelsukh at the exercise site.
- ★ The exercise is jointly sponsored by the Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) and the United States Army Pacific Command (USARPAC).
- ★ The Indian Army is being represented by a contingent of the Garhwal Rifles.
- ★ The 14-day exercise aims to improve interoperability among the participating countries, facilitate exchange of experiences and provide training to uniformed personnel for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO).
- ★ The exercise will help prepare participants for future UN peacekeeping operations, enhance peacekeeping capabilities and improve military preparedness.

India Gifts Missile Corvette INS Kirpan to Vietnam

- ★ Defense Minister Rajnath Singh announced the gift of an indigenous in-service missile corvette, INS Kirpan, to the Vietnam People's Navy.
- ★ The announcement is expected to significantly enhance the capabilities of the Vietnamese Navy.
- ★ The announcement was made during talks between Defense Minister Singh and Defense Minister of Vietnam General Phan Van Giang in Delhi.
- ★ During the meeting, bilateral defense cooperation initiatives between India and Vietnam were reviewed and both sides expressed satisfaction at the progress of the ongoing engagements.
- ★ The Ministers identified opportunities to further enhance cooperation, particularly in areas such as defense industry cooperation, maritime security and multinational cooperation.
- ★ The strengthening of defense ties between India and Vietnam underscores the strategic partnership between the two countries and their shared commitment to regional security and cooperation.
- ★ INS Kirpan is a missile corvette belonging to the Khukri class with a displacement of about 1,350 tonnes.
- ★ It was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 12 January 1991.

Command and Control of Tapas Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

- ★ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy successfully showcased the transfer of command-and-control capabilities of the Tapas Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).
- ★ The Tapas UAV took off from the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) in Chitradurga and covered a distance of 285 kilometres to reach the Karwar naval base.
- ★ The demonstration involved commanding the UAV from a distant ground station to the onboard Indian Naval Ship (INS) Subhadra, a warship situated 148 kilometres away from the Karwar naval base.
- ★ During the demonstration, the Tapas UAV operated flawlessly at an altitude of 20,000 feet above sea level (AMSL).

- ★ It completed a 3-hour and 30-minute flight, with the INS Subhadra assuming control of the UAV's operations for a duration of 40 minutes.
- ★ To facilitate the seamless control of the UAV, one Ground Control Station and two Ship Data Terminals were installed on board the INS Subhadra.
- ★ Following the successful trial, the Tapas UAV safely landed back at the ATR.
- ★ The Tapas UAV, developed by DRDO, is a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAV capable of operating at altitudes of up to 28,000 feet with an endurance of over 18 hours.

India-United States Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS X)

- ★ The U.S. Department of Defense and the Indian Ministry of Defense launched the India-U S Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) at an event hosted by the U S-India Business Council.
- ★ The launch of INDUS-X is a major milestone in promoting US-India defense cooperation, innovation, and job creation.
- ★ The initiative seeks to enhance defense capabilities and contribute to global peace, security and prosperity while reaffirming commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
- ★ INDUS-X aims to revitalize defense industrial cooperation between the United States and India, promoting the development of new technologies and fostering collaboration in manufacturing.
- ★ It represents a strategic effort to strengthen bilateral ties and unlock the potential for advancements in the defense sector.
- ★ INDUS-X holds the potential to create job opportunities for working families in both countries.
- ★ By fostering collaboration between U S and Indian start-ups, the initiative aims to generate employment and drive economic growth, contributing to global peace, security, and prosperity.

Russian Navy Hypersonic Zircon Missiles

- ★ The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy has recently made an announcement stating that all new frigate and corvette class vessels of the Russian Navy will be equipped with hypersonic Zircon missiles.
- ★ The Zircon Missile, also known as the 3M22 Zircon or SS-N-33, is a hypersonic cruise missile developed in Russia.
- ★ It is designed as an anti-ship missile with advanced capabilities.
- ★ The Zircon Missile can achieve speeds of over 9,500 kilometers per hour (6,000 miles per hour), which is approximately nine times the speed of sound.
- ★ It is a two-stage missile, utilizing solid fuel in the first stage and a scramjet motor in the second stage.
- ★ The missile has a range of more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) and is capable of accurately pinpointing targets within that range.

IAF Conducts Rannvijay Exercise

- ★ The Indian Air Force recently conducted Exercise Rannvijay, a series of integrated wargames aimed at enhancing the skills of fighter pilots through day and night operations involving combat aircraft like Su-30s.
- ★ The exercise took place in the UB Hills and Central Air Command Area of Responsibility from June 16 to June 23.
- ★ It involved the execution of full spectrum operations by all combat assets, with a particular emphasis on integrated operations and the optimal utilization of the Indian Air Force's electronic warfare capabilities.
- ★ The exercise was carried out from various air bases under the Central Air Command, which is headquartered in Prayagraj.
- ★ Different commands within the Indian Air Force, along with the Army and Navy, have been conducting wargames to enhance coordination and strengthen integration among the forces.
- ★ After addressing various concerns, the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force have reached a consensus to proceed with the plan for establishing theatre commands, which will further enhance coordination and synergy among the three services.

Indian Navy Organises Special Event 'Ocean Ring of Yoga'

- ★ To commemorate International Day of Yoga (IDY) 23, the Ministry of AYUSH has planned an event 'Ocean Ring of Yoga' (symbolising unity and solidarity) in coordination with the Ministry of Defence and other ministries.
- ★ In support of the IDY-23 initiative, Indian Navy ships deployed in the Indian Ocean Region are visiting various ports of friendly foreign countries and spreading the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' which is also the theme for IDY 23.
- ★ It is an event symbolising unity and solidarity.
- ★ Under IDY 23 Ocean Ring of Yoga, about 3500 naval personnel have travelled over 35,000 Km as ambassadors of Yoga in both national and international waters.
- ★ The activities of the Indian Navy ships at the foreign ports are planned to involve the ship's crew and personnel from the host country and would be focussed on the 'Common Yoga Protocol' (CYP).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Toonz Animation Ties Up with FTII Pune for Animation

- ★ Toonz Animation Studios through its education services arm Vizdem has announced that it is collaborating with the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Pune to offer animation and visual effects courses.
- ★ Toonz and FTII signed a MoU to this effect, which aims to bridge the gap between industry requirements and academia by developing relevant skill-based courses in the media and entertainment industry.

- ★ Apart from this, both Toonz and FTII have plans to develop various animation and visual effects courses and to set up an incubation center on the FTII campus.
- ★ This will help the students to develop their own IP and reach out to broadcasters across the globe.
- ★ As per the MoU, Toonz will collaborate with FTII to offer animation and visual effects programs under FTII's Centre for Open Learning (CFOL).

SpaceX Launched 52 Starlink Satellites

- ★ SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corporation) has launched Falcon 9 rocket topped with the 52 Starlink spacecraft lifted off from California's Vandenberg Space Force Base, United States of America (USA).
- ★ It was the 14th launch and landing for this particular booster.
- ★ According to astrophysicist and satellite tracker Jonathan McDowell, SpaceX has now launched more than 4,500 Starlink satellites, more than 4,100 of which are currently active.
- ★ SpaceX already has permission to send 12,000 Starlink satellites to orbit, and it has applied for approval to launch another 30,000 on top of that.

'Agni Prime' Ballistic Missile Successfully Flight-Tested by DRDO

- ★ New Generation Ballistic Missile 'Agni Prime' was successfully flight-tested by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- ★ This was the first pre-induction night launch by the users after three successful developmental trials of the missile, validating the accuracy and reliability of the system.
- ★ Range instrumentation such as radar, telemetry and electro optical tracking systems were deployed at various locations.
- ★ The missile is a two-stage canisterised missile.
- ★ It is the latest and sixth variant of the Agni series missiles, developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).
- ★ It has a range of 1,000 - 2,000 km.
- ★ The missile has a diameter of 1.2 m and a height of 10.5 m.
- ★ It has a payload capacity of up to 1.5 tonnes for carrying warheads.

World's 1st Multi-Sensor Earth Observation Satellite – Drishti

- ★ An Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Madras, Tamil Nadu (TN)-incubated space-tech startup, GalaxEye, is building the world's first multi-sensor earth observation satellite named Drishti.
- ★ It will launch its first satellite 'Drishti Mission' in 2024.
- ★ It is being built with the help of a visible spectrum camera providing synchronised imaging that can take multiple images at the same time.
- ★ 'Drishti' becomes India's first and the world's highest resolution multi-sensor imaging satellite.
- ★ GalaxEye is working on deploying a satellite constellation with a first-of-its-kind sensor based on data fusion to provide the most comprehensive imagery dataset from space.

IIT Kanpur Successfully Conducts Test Flight for Cloud Seeding

- ★ The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur has successfully conducted a test flight for cloud seeding.
- ★ The project was initiated at IIT Kanpur a few years ago and is headed by Manindra Agrawal from the Computer Science and Engineering Department.
- ★ The experiment was conducted with due approval from the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation).
- ★ The test flight went up to an approximate height of 5000 feet.
- ★ The short flight took off and came back to the IIT Kanpur Flight Lab airstrip, after successfully completing the test ride.
- ★ In the experiment undertaken by IIT Kanpur, a Cessna aircraft was flown from the Flight Laboratory of IIT Kanpur with cloud seeding attachments.
- ★ These attachments were procured from a manufacturer in the United States (US) and the modifications in the aircraft were approved both by the manufacturers of Cessna and DGCA.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World No Tobacco Day

- ★ World No Tobacco Day is celebrated every year on 31 May.
- ★ It is celebrated with the aim of making people aware about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption.
- ★ The theme for World No Tobacco Day 2023 is 'We need food, not tobacco'.
- ★ The World Health Organisation honours governments, organisations and individuals every year for their efforts and contributions to prevent tobacco use.
- ★ The World No Tobacco Day initiative was adopted by WHO in 1987.

World Milk Day

- ★ World Milk Day is observed every year on 01 June.
- ★ The day was created by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) in 2001.
- ★ World Milk Day aims to promote the consumption and benefits of milk around the world.
- ★ The day aims to raise awareness and support initiatives related to the dairy industry.
- ★ The theme for World Milk Day 2023 is 'Showcasing how dairy is reducing its environmental footprint, while also providing nutritious foods and livelihoods'.
- ★ The theme highlights the dairy industry's efforts to reduce environmental impact and its contribution to nutrition and livelihoods.
- ★ Dairy products are consumed by more than six billion people worldwide.

World Bicycle Day

- ★ World Bicycle Day is an annual event celebrated on 03 June.
- ★ The day recognizes the bicycle as a simple, affordable, reliable, clean and environmentally sustainable means of transportation.
- ★ The theme for World Bicycle Day 2023 is 'Riding together for a sustainable future'.
- ★ The theme emphasises the collective efforts needed to promote a sustainable future through the use of bicycles.
- ★ The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the invention of the bicycle by Karl von Drais on 03 June 1817.
- ★ World Bicycle Day was established on 03 June 2018, following the adoption of a resolution during the 72nd regular session of the United Nations General Assembly in April.

Industrialist and Philanthropist Karumuttu T Kannan

- ★ The renowned industrialist and philanthropist Karumuttu T Kannan has passed away. He was at the age of 70.
- ★ Kannan is the son of the late industrialist and philanthropist Karumuttu Thiagarajan Chettiar, who founded the Thiagarajar Mills in 1936.
- ★ He held the positions as Chairman of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Southern Region, Textiles Committee, Mumbai, The Cotton Textile Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, and The South India Mills' Association.
- ★ He was presented with the Perunthalivar Kamarajar award instituted by the Tamil Nadu government for promoting education and social service.

World Environment Day

- ★ World Environment Day is celebrated every year on 05 June.
- ★ It is to raise global awareness about environmental issues and encourage positive actions to protect the planet.
- ★ World Environment Day 2023 is hosted by Côte d'Ivoire and supported by the Netherlands.
- ★ Theme of World Environment Day 2023 is 'Solutions to plastic pollution'.
- ★ The theme is chosen by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and serves as a guiding principle for activities and discussions worldwide.
- ★ World Environment Day is observed by individuals, communities, organizations, and governments in over 100 countries.
- ★ It serves as an opportunity to engage people from all walks of life and inspire them to take action for a sustainable future.
- ★ The day is dedicated to increasing awareness about environmental challenges such as climate change, deforestation, pollution and loss of biodiversity.

World Food Safety Day

- ★ World Food Safety Day is observed every year on 07 June.
- ★ It is celebrated to highlight the importance of maintaining food standards and protecting consumers from foodborne illnesses.
- ★ The theme of World Food Safety Day 2023 is 'Food Standards Save Lives'.
- ★ The theme emphasises the important role of food safety standards in ensuring the well-being of individuals.
- ★ World Food Safety Day encourages cooperation among nations and raises awareness of the importance of food safety standards in protecting public health.
- ★ The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) proposed the observance of World Food Safety Day in 2016.

World Oceans Day

- ★ World Oceans Day is celebrated annually on 08 June.
- ★ It serves as a global reminder of the important role the oceans play in sustaining life on Earth.
- ★ Recognized by the United Nations, it promotes ocean awareness and encourages action to protect the marine environment.
- ★ The theme for World Oceans Day 2023 is 'Planet Ocean: The Tides Are Changing'.
- ★ The theme highlights the dynamic nature of the oceans and the need to adapt to the challenges they face.
- ★ It was officially recognized by the United Nations in 2008.

World Accreditation Day

- ★ World Accreditation Day is a day celebrated annually on 09 June.
- ★ It is a global initiative established by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).
- ★ Theme for the year 2023 is 'Accreditation: Supporting the Future of Global Business'.
- ★ The objective of the day is to raise awareness of the value and importance of recognition.
- ★ It promotes the quality, safety and reliability of products, services and systems.
- ★ It also lowers trade barriers and promotes innovation.
- ★ World Accreditation Day (WAD) was established in 2008 by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).

World Day against Child Labour

- ★ World Day against Child Labour is celebrated every year on 12 June.
- ★ The day aims to inspire a global movement against child labour.
- ★ The theme for World Day against Child Labour 2023 is 'Social Justice for All. End Child Labour!'

- ★ The International Labour Organization launched this program in 2002 to address the issue of child labour at the international level.
- ★ The day aims to inspire individuals, organizations and governments to combat child labour and work towards its permanent elimination.

International Albinism Awareness Day

- ★ International Color Blindness (Albinism) Awareness Day is observed every year on 13 June.
- ★ The day aims to create awareness about albinism, a genetic skin condition.
- ★ It seeks to promote the rights and regulation of persons with albinism globally.
- ★ The theme for the International Albinism Awareness Day 2023 is 'Inclusion is Power'.
- ★ In 2013, the United Nations Human Rights Council recognized albinism as a human rights issue.
- ★ On 18 December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly designated 13 June as the International Color Blindness Awareness Day.

World Blood Donor Day

- ★ World Blood Donor Day is celebrated every year on 14 June.
- ★ The day aims to express gratitude to the selfless voluntary blood donors and celebrate the essence of life and humanity.
- ★ The program emphasises the importance of ensuring universal access to safe blood transfusions.
- ★ The theme for World Blood Donor Day 2023 is "Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often".
- ★ The theme highlights the importance of regular blood and plasma donations to create a safe and sustainable supply of blood and blood products around the world.
- ★ The host country of World Blood Donor Day 2023 is Algeria.
- ★ The World Health Organization (WHO) established World Blood Donor Day in 2004.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

- ★ World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is observed annually on 15 June.
- ★ The day aims to raise awareness about the abuse, discrimination and neglect experienced by older persons.
- ★ It serves as a platform to emphasise the importance of upholding the rights of older adults and promoting their dignity.
- ★ The theme for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2023 is 'Closing the Circle: Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Older Age Policy, Law and Evidence-Based Responses'.
- ★ The theme focuses on highlighting the issue of gender-based violence among older persons.
- ★ The United Nations officially established World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in 2011.

World Father's Day

- ★ Father's Day is a special occasion celebrated in many countries around the world to honor and appreciate fathers.
- ★ It is celebrated on the third Sunday of June. This year Father's Day 2023 is being celebrated on 18 June.
- ★ It is a day to express love, gratitude, and respect towards fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and other father figures who have played important roles in people's lives.
- ★ People celebrate Father's Day by giving cards, gifts, or spending quality time with their fathers.
- ★ The significance of Father's Day goes beyond material gifts, as it serves as a reminder to acknowledge the love, support, and guidance provided by fathers.
- ★ The theme for 2023 is 'Celebrating the Greatest Heroes of Our Lives'.

Global Wind Day

- ★ World Wind Day is celebrated every year on 15 June.
- ★ This is a significant event that highlights the immense potential and importance of wind energy in addressing climate change and promoting sustainable energy solutions.
- ★ In India, these celebrations were initiated by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.
- ★ Theme for the year 2023 is 'Pawan – Urja: Powering the Future of India'.
- ★ MNRE has set a target of 500 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- ★ World Wind Day was first established in 2007 by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), which later became WindEurope.

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

- ★ World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed every year on 19 June.
- ★ The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the impact of sickle cell disease (SCD) on individuals, families and communities around the world.
- ★ It aims to raise awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD).
- ★ Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder and is characterised by abnormal red blood cells that take on a crescent or sickle shape.
- ★ Irregularly shaped cells can cause blockage in the blood vessels and this leads to various health complications.
- ★ This disease affects individuals, families and communities around the world.
- ★ This can result in organ damage, anaemia and increased susceptibility to infection.
- ★ It originated from a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 December 2008.

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

- ★ The International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is observed every year on 19 June.
- ★ Its main goal is to raise awareness and end sexual violence in conflict situations.
- ★ The theme for 2023 is 'Bridging the gender digital divide to prevent, address and respond to conflict-related sexual violence'.
- ★ The day focuses on the prevalence and consequences of sexual violence in conflict zones.
- ★ The primary goal of the United Nations is to adapt to an ever-changing world and to promote international cooperation among nations.

World Refugee Day

- ★ World Refugee Day is observed every year on 20 June.
- ★ World Refugee Day is an internationally recognized day established by the United Nations.
- ★ Its purpose is to pay tribute to refugees around the world.
- ★ The day serves as a platform to acknowledge the bravery and determination of individuals who have been forced to flee their homeland due to conflict or persecution.
- ★ The theme for World Refugee Day 2023 is 'Hope away from home'.
- ★ The theme emphasizes the importance of mental well-being for refugees in rebuilding their lives and striving for a brighter future.

International Yoga Day

- ★ International Yoga Day is celebrated every year on 21 June.
- ★ The day aims to promote the many benefits of practicing yoga.
- ★ International Yoga Day encourages physical, mental and spiritual harmony.
- ★ The theme chosen for International Day of Yoga 2023 is 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'.
- ★ The theme represents the shared desire of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.
- ★ Yoga promotes meditation, stress reduction, and overall health and vitality.
- ★ In 2023, the International Day of Yoga took place on June 21 at the United Nations Headquarters under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

United Nations Public Service Day

- ★ United Nations Public Service Day is celebrated every year on 23 June.
- ★ The day is dedicated to appreciating the importance of public services and the people who work in them.
- ★ The United Nations established the United Nations Public Service Awards to recognize and reward exceptional public service projects.
- ★ The award program was updated in 2016 to align with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- ★ United Nations Public Service Day reminds us of the value of public service and encourages young people to consider careers in this field.
- ★ On 20 December 2002, the General Assembly designated 23 June as United Nations Public Service Day.
- ★ It aims to recognize the important role of public service in development.

International Day of Women in Diplomacy

- ★ International Women's Day in Diplomacy (IDWID) is observed annually on 24 June.
- ★ It is a day to honor and recognize notable women in the field of diplomacy and decision-making globally.
- ★ Armenian Ambassador Diana Abgar is credited with being the first female diplomat of the 20th century.
- ★ Prominent women such as Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher and Sushma Swaraj have contributed significantly in representing their nations at the international level.
- ★ The theme for the year 2023 is 'Breaking Barriers, Shaping the Future: Women in Diplomacy for Sustainable Development'.
- ★ The theme emphasizes the importance of increasing the participation of women in decision-making and diplomatic roles.

International Olympic Day

- ★ International Olympic Day is celebrated every year on 23 June.
- ★ Olympic Day is an annual celebration that promotes sport, health, and unity worldwide.
- ★ Olympic Day symbolizes the commitment to making the world a better place through the power of sport.
- ★ The theme for this year's Olympic Day is 'Let's Move', which aims to inspire individuals worldwide to prioritize regular physical activity in their daily lives.
- ★ The International Olympic Committee was established in Paris on 23 June 1894.
- ★ International Olympic Day was first celebrated in 1948.

World Drug Day

- ★ The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, also known as World Drug Day, is observed every year on 26 June.
- ★ World Drug Day aims to promote global efforts to eliminate drug abuse and illegal drug trafficking.
- ★ This year's campaign focuses on treating individuals involved in drug use with empathy and respect.
- ★ The campaign aims to combat the stigma and discrimination faced by drug users through respectful and non-judgmental language and approach.

- ★ The theme for World Drug Day 2023 is ‘People First: Stop Stigma and Discrimination, Strengthen Prevention’.
- ★ The theme emphasizes a people-centred approach to drug policies with a focus on human rights, compassion and evidence-based practices.

World MSME Day

- ★ International Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Day or World MSME Day is observed across the world on 27 June every year.
- ★ The day highlights the importance of MSMEs and their role as the backbone of the country’s economy.
- ★ The theme of MSME Day 2023 in India is ‘Future-Ready MSMEs for India@100’.
- ★ The Global Council for the Promotion of International Trade celebrates the day with the theme “Building a Stronger Future Together”.
- ★ The Council is launching the #Brand10000MSMEs network, a platform for MSMEs across the globe to connect, learn and grow together.
- ★ The United Nations (UN) designated June 27 as Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Day.

National Statistics Day

- ★ National Statistics Day is observed annually on 29 June.
- ★ It is to honour the contribution of Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in statistics and economic planning.
- ★ Professor Mahalanobis, known as the ‘Father of Indian Statistics’, developed the Mahalanobis distance, a statistical measure to assess the difference between a point and a distribution.
- ★ The program of National Statistics Day 2023 will be organised at SCOPE Convention Centre, SCOPE Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.
- ★ The theme is “Aligning the State Indicator Framework with the National Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals”.
- ★ The theme highlights the importance of synchronising the indicator framework used by states with the national framework to monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

OBITUTARY NEWS

Padma Shri Awardee and Writer Vellayani Arjunan

- ★ Eminent scholar, linguist, academician and writer Vellayani Arjunan passed away in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He was at the age of 90.
- ★ Vellayani Arjunan began his illustrious career as a research assistant in the Kerala Lexicon Department and later became a Malayalam faculty at Sree Narayana (SN) College in Kollam, Kerala.

- ★ He rose to the position of the head of the Department of Modern Indian Languages at Aligarh Muslim University years later.
- ★ He also served as the Director of the state Institute of Encyclopaedic Publications.
- ★ He is an author of over 40 books of different genres, including poetry, short stories, children's fiction, essays, literary criticism, research articles, etc.
- ★ In 2008, Arjunan was awarded the Padma Shri for his overall achievements in numerous sectors.

Sanskrit Scholar Ved Kumari Ghai

- ★ Sanskrit scholar Ved Kumari Ghai passed away in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).
- ★ She started her career as a Professor of Sanskrit at Government College for Women, Parade, Jammu.
- ★ She was a head of post graduate level Sanskrit Department, Jammu University until her retirement on 31 December 1991.
- ★ She was a member of the Amarnath shrine board.
- ★ For her significant contribution to the field of literature and education, she was awarded the country's fourth highest civilian award, the Padma Shri Award on 31 March 2014.

Noted Theater Actor and Director Aamir Raza Hussain

- ★ A noted theatre actor and director, Amir Raza Hussain has passed away. He was at the age of 66.
- ★ He was known for his large outdoor stage productions like The Fifty Day War (2000), based on the Kargil War and The Legend of Ram (2004), based on the epic Ramayana.
- ★ He was also the Creative Director of the Stagedoor Theatre company, established in 1974, which has presented over 91 productions and more than 1,100 performances.
- ★ He has acted in super hit movies 'Baahubali' and 'RRR'.
- ★ He will also be seen in the movie 'Adipurush' which will be released on 16 June 2023.
- ★ Husain was honoured with the fourth-highest civilian award of the Republic of India, Padma Shri in 2001 by the Government of India (GoI) for his outstanding contributions.

Veteran Hindi and Marathi film Actress Sulochana Latkar

- ★ Renowned Hindi and Marathi film Actress Sulochana Latkar passed away at the age of 94 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ★ She was a well-known actress of Marathi and Hindi cinema and acted in 50 films in Marathi and around 250 films in Hindi.
- ★ Sulochana Latkar made her debut in films in 1946.
- ★ She was most known for her performances in Marathi films such as Sasurvas (1946) and Meeth Bhakar (1949).
- ★ Latkar was a recipient of the civilian honour of Padma Shri in 1999 for her contribution to cinema.

- ★ In 2003, she was awarded the Chitrabhushan Award instituted by the Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Chitrapat Mahamandal.
- ★ She was awarded the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004.

Doordarshan Anchor Gitanjali Aiyar

- ★ Four times Best Anchor Award winner DD anchor Gitanjali Aiyar passed away.
- ★ She was India's first English woman news presenter on Doordarshan.
- ★ She was suffering from Parkinson's disease.
- ★ She joined Doordarshan in 1971 and won the Best Anchor award four times.
- ★ In 1989, she received the Indira Gandhi Priyadarshini Award for Outstanding Women.
- ★ Iyer was also known for his appearance in print advertisements and his role in the TV drama "Khandaan" directed by Shridhar Kshirsagar.

Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi

- ★ Former Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi passed away. He was at the age of 86.
- ★ Berlusconi previously served as Prime Minister of Italy four times, from 1994 to 1995, 2001 to 2006, and 2008 to 2011.
- ★ Berlusconi was Italy's longest-serving Prime Minister despite allegations of corruption.
- ★ Berlusconi was admitted to the hospital on 9 June for treatment of chronic leukemia. He was also suffering from heart disease, prostate cancer for a long time and was hospitalized in 2020 after getting infected with Covid-19.

Renowned Novelist Cormac McCarthy

- ★ Renowned Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Cormac McCarthy passed away. He was at the age of 89.
- ★ McCarthy, best known for such acclaimed novels as 'The Road' and 'No Country for Old Men', was born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1933.
- ★ He began his fiction writing journey in the early 1960s and published his first novel 'The Orchard Keeper' in 1965.
- ★ Throughout his career, McCarthy wrote more than 20 novels, including such notable works as 'Blood'.
- ★ In recognition of her literary achievements, McCarthy was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2007 for her novel 'The Road'.
- ★ Additionally, his novel 'No Country for Old Men' was adapted into an Academy Award-winning film in 2007.

Daniel Ellsberg, Renowned Whistleblower of the Pentagon Papers

- ★ Daniel Ellsberg, a prominent whistleblower who leaked the Pentagon Papers, passed away. He was at the age of 92.

- ★ Ellsberg's actions, which exposed the government's deception and doubts regarding the Vietnam War, had far-reaching consequences and played a role in President Richard Nixon's resignation.
- ★ Ellsberg revealed his terminal illness with pancreatic cancer in February.
- ★ Until the early 1970s, Ellsberg was an influential member of the government and military establishment.
- ★ As a Harvard graduate and self-described 'cold warrior', he served as a consultant on Vietnam, risking his life and holding the highest security clearances.

Legendary Malayalam Actor Poojappura Ravi

- ★ A renowned Malayalam actor, primarily performing comedy roles in Malayalam films, Poojappura Ravi passed away at the age of 82, in Idukki, Kerala.
- ★ He acted in over 800 movies and 4,000 plays.
- ★ He made his acting debut with 'Veluthampi Dalawa' in 1962.
- ★ He was also a part of several prominent movies including 'Poochakkoru Mookuthi', 'Odaruthammava Aalariyam', etc.

Former JNU Professor and Sociologist Imtiaz Ahmad

- ★ Renowned Sociologist, Author and Former Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in India Imtiaz Ahmad passed away. He was at the age of 83.
- ★ Ahmad's book, Caste and Social Stratification Among Muslims in India, is celebrated as pioneering work in the field.
- ★ He worked with keen interest in social anthropology and taught Sociology, Political Science and Islamic Studies in various universities in India and abroad.
- ★ He worked as a Senior Research Analyst with the UNESCO Research Centre.
- ★ Ahmad joined JNU as Associate Professor in Political Sociology in 1972.
- ★ He became a Professor in the Department in 1983 and taught there for three decades.
- ★ Among his numerous publications are those which throw light on Muslim empowerment, minority rights, the role of education among Muslims, how Islamic ideologies mesh with social realities, how Muslim women are studied in India and communalism.

MISCELLANEOUS

First Woman NCC Cadet to Complete Mountaineering Course

- ★ 20-year-old Shalini Singh from Lucknow has become the first woman NCC cadet in India to complete a mountaineering course in the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand.
- ★ Shalini Singh scaled the 15,400 ft peak in Dring Valley in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand as part of the course.
- ★ The training course took place at Tekla, Uttarkashi from 26 April to 6 May.

- ★ The training was conducted under tough conditions, with subzero (−14°C) temperatures.
- ★ Shalini was the only woman cadet in the team of 45 NCC cadets.
- ★ This included training in rock climbing, rappelling, snow and ice climbing and camping.
- ★ Shalini Singh was admitted as Senior Wing NCC Cadet in 67 UP Battalion.

First Woman from Tamil Nadu to Scale Mount Everest

- ★ Muthamizh Selvi, 36, a resident of Johilpatti, Virudhunagar, became the first woman from Tamil Nadu to scale Mount Everest.
- ★ Tamil Nadu Sports Development and Youth Welfare Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin felicitated Muthamizh Selvi for his remarkable achievement.
- ★ Mount Everest is the highest peak of the Greater Himalayan Mountain range located on the border of Nepal and China (Tibet) in Asia.
- ★ Bachendri Pal is the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest in 1984. Santosh Yadav is the first Indian woman to climb Everest twice in a row.

Hemis Monastery Festival

- ★ In Ladakh, two -day long annual Hemis Monastery Festival, known as Hemis Tseschu is being celebrated with great religious fervor and gaiety.
- ★ It is a significant annual event celebrated in Ladakh, India.
- ★ The festival spans over two days and is observed with immense religious fervor and joyous celebrations.
- ★ The festival commemorates the birth anniversary of Guru Padma Sambhava, a revered figure in Tibetan Buddhism.
- ★ Grand prayers, sacred mask dances and thanks for mural paintings are performed on the occasion.

