

# ***Monthly Current Affairs***

**DECEMBER – 2022**



**Shankar  
School of  
Banking**

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## **DECEMBER 2022**

### **NATIONAL NEWS**

#### **Sustainable Agriculture Summit and Awards**

- ★ Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Sustainable Agriculture Summit and Awards.
- ★ It was organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) in New Delhi on 30 November 2022.
- ★ According to FICCI the objective of these awards is to recognize and showcase programs that promote sustainable agriculture development and those that focus on improving farmers' income.
- ★ The government is continuously encouraging through various schemes and programmes to join the agriculture sector.

#### **Intelligent Transport System in Maharashtra**

- ★ The South Korean government signed an agreement with the Government of India on 30 November 2022 to provide a loan of Korean Won 245.081 billion (₹1,495.68 crore) for Establishment of Intelligent Transport System on Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway Project.
- ★ This is the first project in India to be funded by an EDCF loan.
- ★ India was made an Official Development Assistance (ODA) partner for development cooperation in October 2016 by South Korea.
- ★ The objectives of the project are to enhance the efficiency in traffic management through establishment of the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) and traffic centre and to improve the efficiency in toll management through the establishment of the Toll Collection System (TCS).

#### **India Assumes the Presidency of the UNSC**

- ★ India has assumed the Presidency of the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) for the month of December 2022.
- ★ India will be the President of the UNSC for one month as the 2-year term of India as a non-permanent member of the UNSC ends on 31 December 2022.
- ★ According to the External Affairs Ministry, during India's Presidency two key events are scheduled in the UNSC.
- ★ Both the sessions will be chaired by the External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.
- ★ At present the United Nations has 193 member countries.

## First Coastal Security Conference

- ★ Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane inaugurated the first Coastal Security Conference at Chennai on 01 December 2022.
- ★ It was organised by the Indian Coast Guard under the aegis of Colombo Security Conclave (CSC).
- ★ Theme of the conference is 'Collaborative Efforts for Coastal Security'.
- ★ A range of issues including coastal security threat, collaborative response, international maritime law and role of empowered agencies, technological solutions for coastal security etc were discussed at the conference.
- ★ The CSC started as a trilateral maritime cooperation mechanism between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka in 2011. The membership of the Group was enlarged with the addition of Mauritius in March 2022.

## NADA India to host Inclusion Conclave

- ★ India will host an Inclusion Conclave for the first time which will focus on anti-doping education and process for athletes with disabilities.
- ★ The Conclave organised by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA India) with the help of WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) Asia-Oceania office, will be held on 02 December 2022 in New Delhi.
- ★ The conclave will focus on developing a policy and legal framework on anti-doping as well as on educating the disable athletes on the anti -doping process and controls.
- ★ The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) is the national organization responsible for promoting, coordinating, and monitoring the doping control program in sports in all its forms in the country.
- ★ It is the member of the World Anti-Doping Agency.

## G-20 Finance Ministers Meeting

- ★ The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced that Bengaluru, Karnataka will host a meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in February 2023.
- ★ India assumed the Presidency of the G-20 on 01 December 2022.
- ★ Mr Sitharaman has asked the Start-ups to utilise this event to showcase their profile to the visiting international guests.

## Hornbill Festival

- ★ 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Hornbill Festival of Nagaland started on 01 December 2022 at Naga Heritage Village, Kisama.
- ★ Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, the chief guest of the Hornbill festival, was present at the opening ceremony.
- ★ The opening ceremony was followed by a cultural performance titled 'This is Nagaland'.
- ★ Hornbill Festival is celebrated in Nagaland every year in the first week of December. It is also called "Festivals of Festivals".
- ★ It is one of the biggest indigenous festivals of the country.

- ★ It is organised by the State Tourism and Art and Culture Departments, supported by the Union Government.

### **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Drones**

- ★ The government has approved the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for drones and drone components for implementation during 2022-23 to 2024-25 with an outlay of 120 crore rupees on 02 December.
- ★ The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- ★ The objective of this scheme is to incentivize the manufacturing of drones and drone components in the country with a focus to make the indigenous' industries globally competitive.
- ★ As per the guidelines, the minimum annual sales turnover to claim the benefit of PLI should be ₹2 crore for drones and ₹50 lakh for single component segment for MSMEs and startups.
- ★ Non-MSMEs must have an annual sales turnover of ₹4 crore for drones and ₹1 crore for components segment.

### **Yak has been approved as a 'Food Animal'**

- ★ The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) has recognized the Himalayan Yak as a "food animal".
- ★ According to an official at the National Research Centre (NRC) on Yak in Dirang, West Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh, the move is likely to help stem the decrease of the high-altitude bovine animal population by merging it into the mainstream milk and meat businesses.
- ★ The 'food animal' tag will become official once approved by a competent authority and published in the gazette.
- ★ The FSSAI's designation of the Yak as a food-producing animal will assist farmers in reaping financial benefits from rearing the animal and will open up numerous avenues of economic benefit for both farmers and food processors.

### **First State to Establish a Separate Divyang Department**

- ★ Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has announced that the state government will establish a separate Divyang department for the welfare of differently-abled persons and the government has allocated ₹1,143 crores.
- ★ Maharashtra is the first state to have such a department.
- ★ It will formulate policies for the welfare of the disabled by taking into consideration the views of the stakeholders.
- ★ It will take all the steps for the welfare of Divyang people in the state.

### **Millets-Smart Nutritive Food Conclave**

- ★ The government has organised a day-long 'Millets-Smart Nutritive Food' Conclave in New Delhi on 05 December 2022, to promote the export of millets.

- ★ The conclave is a pre-launch event of the International Year of Millets – 2023 organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through its apex agricultural export promotion body, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).
- ★ India is one of the leading producers of millet in the world with an estimated share of around 41 percent in global production.
- ★ At the first-of-its-kind Millets Conclave, the government will release e-catalogue on 30 potential importing countries and 21 millet producing states of India.

### **Foundation Day Celebrations of DRI in New Delhi**

- ★ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will inaugurate the two-day long 65<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day celebrations of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in New Delhi on 05 December 2022.
- ★ She will also launch the current edition of Smuggling in India Report 2021-22 on the occasion.
- ★ As many as 22 Customs administrations covering the Asia-Pacific region along with international organisations are invited to the event.
- ★ The 8<sup>th</sup> Regional Customs Enforcement Meeting (RCEM) will also be held at the event.

### **‘One District One Sport’ Scheme**

- ★ Uttar Pradesh (UP), Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath has launched One District One Sport (ODOS), modeled after the government’s highly successful One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.
- ★ It is to promote sports and sportspersons of UP.
- ★ Currently, 57 districts have been taken up and divided across 13 sports and the sports department is working on appointing coaches.

### **National Conference on Soil Health Management for Sustainable Farming**

- ★ On the occasion of the World Soil Day, Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the National Conference on Soil Health Management for Sustainable Farming on 05 December 2022 in New Delhi.
- ★ The Conference was organized by the NITI Aayog in collaboration with GIZ affiliated to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany.
- ★ The Central government has launched the National Mission on Natural Farming as a separate scheme with an expenditure of ₹1,584 crore.
- ★ To promote soil management the government has issued more than 22 crore Soil Health Cards to the farmers.

### **India’s First Gold ATM**

- ★ Hyderabad-based Goldsikka Pvt Ltd has set up a gold ATM, which is claimed to be the country’s first real-time gold dispensing machine.
- ★ Gold ATMs allow customers easier access so that everyone can use their debit card for credit card for making transactions.

- ★ Through these Gold ATMs, buyers can instantaneously purchase actual gold using any credit or debit card.
- ★ The Gold ATM that dispenses Gold. The update in the price of gold is based on the live prices.
- ★ This Gold ATM supplies in denominations ranging from 0.5 gms to 100 gms.

### Anti-Misinformation Campaign in India

- ★ Social media giant Google's subsidiary Jigsaw launched a new anti-misinformation project in India.
- ★ The project aims to prevent the misleading information that has been blamed for inciting violence and deaths.
- ★ Google's initiative will use "prebunking" videos.
- ★ Prebunking videos are designed to counter false claims before they become widespread. It will be used on YouTube platforms and other social media sites.
- ★ The government of India has repeatedly called upon the social media giants like YouTube, Google, Meta (Facebook) and Twitter to take steps to counter the spread of fake news.

### India - France Partnership on Kaziranga Project

- ★ India and France are collaborating under the Kaziranga Project in the Kaziranga National Park in Assam.
- ★ With France and India technical and financial support, the Indo-Pacific Parks Partnership will facilitate partnership activities for natural parks of the Indo-Pacific region.
- ★ These activities include biodiversity conservation, wildlife management and engagement with local communities.
- ★ The Kaziranga project is a part of a larger Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation (APFBC) for which the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) has committed funding of €80.2 million for a 10-year period between 2014-2024.
- ★ The AFD program has been most effective in skill development in the area, especially in the forest dwelling communities.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of Sangam Exercise

- ★ The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Exercise Sangam, a joint Naval Special Forces exercise between Indian Navy MARCOs and US Navy SEALs commenced at Goa.
- ★ Exercise Sangam was first conducted in 1994 and is an important military and diplomatic initiative between the two nations, reflective of the trust and friendship between them.
- ★ The present edition will see personnel from SEAL Team Five based at San Diego, USA and Indian Navy MARCOs from INS Abhimanyu.
- ★ It aims to exchange ideas and experiences on various aspects of Maritime Special Operations.



## International Conference On 'J.C. Bose: A Satyagrahi Scientist'

- ★ The government of India's Ministry of Culture and Vijnana Bharati organized an 'International conference on the contributions of J.C. Bose: A Satyagrahi Scientist' at the Inter-University Accelerator Center in New Delhi.
- ★ It was hosted on the occasion of the 164<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of eminent Indian scientist Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava.
- ★ He developed the crescograph, a tool for gauging plant growth while working as a plant physiologist and physicist.
- ★ He presented evidence of plants' emotions for the first time.

## Asia's First Drone Delivery Hub

- ★ The Meghalaya government in partnership with Startup TechEagle has unveiled Asia's first drone delivery hub and network Meghalaya Drone Delivery Network (MDDN).
- ★ The Meghalaya Drone Delivery Network (MDDN) project is aimed at delivering vital supplies like drugs, diagnostic samples, vaccines, blood and blood components quickly and safely to different regions of the state using a dedicated drone delivery network.
- ★ It will be possible to overcome the problem of lack of visibility, high delivery costs, outdated technology and inaccessibility through roads and railway networks and deliver better healthcare facilities to people of Meghalaya.

## NSIC Signs MoU with Walmart

- ★ An MoU was signed between Walmart Global Sourcing India Private Limited and The National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) Limited.
- ★ The MoU was signed at the Walmart Vriddhi Seller Summit in New Delhi.
- ★ The MoU aims to jointly accelerate capacity building for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across India.
- ★ The partnership is also aimed at supporting MSMEs in their journey to become a part of retail supply chains, locally and globally.
- ★ The partnership with NSIC will enable a large number of small businesses and entrepreneurs in India to access the Vriddhi program.
- ★ The Vriddhi program provides training and an end-to-end learning platform, along with access to the support needed to grow and expand businesses.

## High-Frequency Radio System

- ★ Delhi Police is set to design, install and supply the 'Open Standard Digital Trunking Radio System' (OS-DTRS) and will phase out the current wireless network services.
- ★ It will be a more efficient internal communication system, aimed at a faster exchange of information and bigger networks.
- ★ This system provides multiple channels and common groups for policemen.

- ★ It will also have a voice logger system, which can be used to describe a crime scene, interrogation details and evidence.
- ★ The project's master site will be at the Delhi Police Head Quarters.

### Universal Health Coverage

- ★ Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is organising a two days conclave 'Universal Coverage Day (UHC) 202' on 10 December and 11 December 2022 at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ It was organized as the celebration of 'International Universal Health Coverage Day' which is observed on 12 December.
- ★ Universal Health Coverage (UHC) aims that 'all people have access to needed promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services of sufficient quality to be effective.
- ★ It will also ensure that people do not suffer financial hardship when paying for these services.

### World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo 2022

- ★ 9<sup>th</sup> edition of World Ayurveda Congress (WAC) was inaugurated on 08 December 2022 at Panaji, Goa.
- ★ It was inaugurated in the presence of Union Minister of State for Tourism and Shipping, Ports and Waterways Shripad Naik and the Chief Minister of Goa Pramod Sawant.
- ★ The main objective of the conference is to provide a global platform for all the stakeholders, including industry leaders, practitioners etc to strengthen the Ayurveda sector, envision its future and facilitate interaction between professionals and consumers to boost Ayurveda commerce.
- ★ A MoU was signed between All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and Rosenberg's European Academy of Ayurveda, Germany to facilitate advanced studies in traditional Indian medicine systems.

### 1000 Khelo India Centers to be opened

- ★ The Union Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Thakur on 09 December 2022 announced that one thousand Khelo India sports centers will be set up in the country by 15 August 2023.
- ★ The Khelo India Centers have been launched by the Union Sports Ministry in partnership with the state governments to ensure the availability of grassroots-level sports infrastructure across the country.
- ★ The center will focus on developing sports infrastructure and provide training to the sportsperson in one discipline.
- ★ The government has so far approved 773 centers.

### Government to Extend Rooftop Solar Scheme

- ★ The government on 08 December announced that rooftop solar programme has been extended till 31 March 2026 and therefore, subsidy under the programme will be available until the target for the scheme is achieved.

- ★ Consumers wishing to install solar panels on the roof of their houses can apply through the National Portal.
- ★ Under this program, the Central Government gives a subsidy of ₹14,588 per kilowatt to a person who installs solar panels on the roof of his house.
- ★ The objective of the programme is to promote the grid-connected SPV rooftop and small SPV power generating plants among the residential, community, institutional, industrial and commercial establishments.
- ★ The central government has set a target of 450 GW of renewable energy generation by 2030.

### **IIT Delhi organised 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of Industry Day**

- ★ IIT Delhi organised the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Industry Day.
- ★ The fourth edition of the daylong event gives an opportunity to the industry to witness how IIT Delhi is working to develop technologies that will benefit both the industry and society.
- ★ Industry Day 2022 was focused on four themes that have been built into India's commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- ★ These topics are healthcare, electric vehicles, communications technology and clean energy and the environment.
- ★ The event was attended by industry leaders, scientists, IIT Delhi faculty, research scholars and students.

### **India's First Carbon Neutral Farm**

- ★ Kerala Chief Minister Pinnari Vijayan on 10 December 2022 inaugurated Kerala's State Seed Farm located in Aluva, Ernakulam district.
- ★ It is the first farm in India which is Carbon Neutral.
- ★ The farm avoids using fossil fuels, energy-consuming equipment, and chemicals during cultivation by practicing mixed farming, keeping native breeds of goat, chicken, ducks and cows and producing vermicompost.
- ★ Mixed farming involves the cultivation of crops and raising of livestock.
- ★ The farm practices carbon-neutral farming which involves absorption of all the carbon that gets released during various agriculture practices in the soil itself.

### **Goa's 2<sup>nd</sup> Airport, Mopa International Airport**

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Goa's second international airport at Mopa on 11 December 2022.
- ★ Mopa International Airport will be the second Airport of Goa after the Dabolim airport which is a civil enclave in a military airbase named INS Hansa.
- ★ Mopa airport will be the first cargo carrying airport of Goa.
- ★ The Mopa airport will become fully operation from 05 January 2023.
- ★ The airport has been built on the theme of sustainable infrastructure and has a solar power plant, green buildings, LED lights on the runway, among other such facilities.

- ★ The Mopa International Airport has been developed at a cost of around ₹2,8700 crore by the GMR Infrastructure.

### **Climate Change Mission**

- ★ Tamil Nadu has become the first state in India to launch its own Climate Change Mission.
- ★ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that the state will achieve carbon neutrality much ahead of the national target of 2070 during the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit which was held in Chennai.
- ★ The state government announced the launch of the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission in the 2021-2022 budget with an outlay of ₹500 crore to undertake climate change management and mitigation activities.
- ★ The Tamil Nadu government has appointed former director of United Nations Environment Programme Erik Solheim as its advisor for the climate change mission.

### **Government Extended the PM Svanidhi Scheme**

- ★ The Government of India has extended the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme beyond March 2022.
- ★ The extension of the lending period will be till December 2024.
- ★ PM Svanidhi Yojana was launched on 01 June 2020.
- ★ This scheme was started with the aim of providing financial support to small shopkeepers and hawkers.
- ★ Under the PM Svanidhi Yojana, people who sell goods on the street tracks or do other small jobs can take a loan of up to ₹10,000 from the bank.
- ★ After repaying the loan taken in the first instance, the beneficiary can get a loan of up to ₹20,000 in the second time and up to ₹50,000 in the third time.
- ★ The tenure of the Svanidhi scheme was earlier till March 2022, but the government has extended the deadline of the Svanidhi scheme till December 2024.

### **Energy Conservation Day 2022**

- ★ Ministry of Power to celebrate "Energy Conservation Day 2022" on the occasion of the National Energy Conservation Day on 14 December 2022.
- ★ The purpose is to showcase the achievements of the nation in energy efficiency and conservation.
- ★ President of India will felicitate the winners of National Energy Conservation Awards, National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards, National Painting Competition Awards and also launch the EV Travel Portal on the occasion.
- ★ The Mobile application titled 'EV Yatra' has been designed and developed to facilitate in-vehicle navigation to the nearest public EV charger.

## Country's Largest Business Jet Terminal

- ★ At the Cochin International Airport, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan opened the country's first chartered gateway and a business jet terminal.
- ★ As a result, Cochin Airport has become the country's fourth airport to operate a private jet terminal.
- ★ Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) now has the country's largest Business Jet Terminal in addition to two magnificent domestic and international passenger terminals.
- ★ The newly launched business jet terminal was developed at a cost of 40 crore rupees by remodeling the former domestic terminal.
- ★ The building will also function as a hub for the hospitality and aviation industries.

## Meghalaya Awarded for TB Control Programme

- ★ The Meghalaya government, which has adopted a 'people's movement' against tuberculosis, has recently been awarded for best practices in controlling the disease that affects 2.6 million people in India every year.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi had set a national target to eliminate the disease, which affects more than 26 lakh Indians each year by 2025, five years ahead of the WHO's Sustainable Development Goals.
- ★ A National Strategic Plan for TB Elimination (2017-25) has also been launched which ensures greater community engagement.

## India Water Impact Summit 2022

- ★ The Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat will inaugurate the 7<sup>th</sup> India Water Impact Summit (IWIS 2022) on 15 December 2022 in New Delhi.
- ★ The summit is being organized from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga).
- ★ Its aims to impart impetus towards developing water and environmental infrastructure to protect rivers and water bodies in India.
- ★ The theme of the Summit (IWIS 2022) is 'Restoration and Conservation of Small Rivers in a Large Basin' with emphasis on the 'Mapping and Convergence of 5Ps' - People, Policy, Plan, Programme and Project.

## Kerala to Become 100% Renewable Energy-Based State

- ★ The Chief Minister of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the India Climate and Development Partners' Meet and announced that Kerala aspires to become a 100% renewable energy-based State by 2040 and net carbon neutral by 2050.
- ★ The event was hosted by the World Bank and Kerala Government where Kerala State Action Plan on Climate Change 2023-2030 (Kerala SAPCC 2.0) was released.
- ★ Kerala is the first State in India to include hydrogen-powered mobility in its zero-emissions mobility policy.

- ★ SAPCC is an ‘inclusive, sustainable’ plan with a focus on climate change adaptation in key sectors including agriculture, coastal fisheries, water resources, health, forests and biodiversity.

### **Assam CM Launches Projects worth ₹680 Crore**

- ★ Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma arrived at Nalbari on a day-long visit during which he launched as many as 12 projects with a cost of ₹680 crore.
- ★ It is to transform the district into one of the most progressive ones on all fronts in Assam.
- ★ The district Sports Stadium Complex at Sariahtoli is to be executed at the cost of ₹51 crore.
- ★ The integrated Deputy Commissioner’s Office Complex at an approximate cost of ₹50 crore.
- ★ To upgradation of Government Polytechnic Institute and Industrial Training Institute at the cost of ₹5 crore.

### **‘Gamocha’ Gets GI Tag**

- ★ ‘Gamocha’, a symbol of the culture and identity of Assam has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the central government.
- ★ The GI tag has been registered in favour of the Directorate of Handloom & Textiles of the Assam government under the Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- ★ The process was started in 2017 when an application for a GI tag was filed by the Institute of Handicraft Development of Golaghat district.
- ★ ‘Gamocha’ literally means towel and is commonly used on a day-to-day basis in Assamese households.

### **32<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Board of Directors of NHB**

- ★ The 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Horticulture Board (NHB) was held in New Delhi.
- ★ It was conducted under the chairmanship of the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Chairman of the Board, Narendra Singh Tomar.
- ★ It was decided in the meeting that the process of approval of horticulture projects would be simplified for the farmers.
- ★ This process will make the system more transparent and efficient, promote ease of doing business for the benefit of the farming community and generate more hi-tech commercial projects for NHB funding.
- ★ The meeting also discussed in detail the new initiative of NHB-Swachh Plant Programme.
- ★ Under the programme the problem of availability of planting material to the farmers will be solved by spending ₹2100 crore with the assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

### **Assam’s Unique Theatre Festival ‘Under the Sal Tree’**

- ★ The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the ‘Under the Sal Tree’ theatre festival will start on 15 December 2022, for 3 days at BadungduppaKalakendra at Rampur in lower Assam’s Goalpara district.
- ★ This unique theatre festival is held every year in the middle of the Sal tree plantation.



- ★ It is organized completely in natural settings, with no artificial devices, not even a microphone to enhance the voice of the actors.
- ★ In 2022, the festival got support from the Chief Minister of Assam, RabhaHasong Autonomous Council, Indian Oil Limited Corporation and Bongaigaon Refinery.
- ★ The organizers use only bamboo and straw to build the stage and the sitting arrangements for the spectators.

### **NIIFL Signs Agreement with Tamil Nadu**

- ★ The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL) announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Development Board (TNIDB).
- ★ The MoU to help attract commercial capital into infrastructure opportunities in the state, under the public-private project (PPP) model.
- ★ Work has been initiated on 7 projects across departments that have the potential to attract private investment of ₹5000 to ₹6000 crore.
- ★ The NIIFL's Strategic Initiatives and Policy Advisory (SIPA) team provide strategic advice to the Central and State Governments.
- ★ This includes asset recycling and the development of greenfield and brownfield infrastructure projects.
- ★ These projects include sectors such as renewable energy, roads, waste management and tourism.

### **Forest Department Launches 'Vanikaran' Project**

- ★ The Forest department in association with Noolpuzha grama panchayat has launched the 'Vanikaran' (afforestation) Project in Kerala.
- ★ The main objective is to root out invasive plants, especially Senna spectabilis, and restore natural forests.
- ★ The project was being executed on 30 hectares of forest land under the Sulthan Bathery forest range of the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ★ The sanctuary has various exotic invasive plants, including Senna spectabilis, Eupatorium, Mikania micrantha and Lantana Camara were posing a serious threat to the local species of trees.

### **Tobacco-Free Zone**

- ★ The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi has been declared a 'Tobacco-Free Zone'.
- ★ Strict action will be taken against doctors, permanent or contractual staff and security staff found smoking or chewing tobacco in the hospital premises.
- ★ Besides, smoking and spitting tobacco on the premises of the AIIMS will be a punishable offence for the patients, attendants and visitors and the erring persons will be fined ₹200.
- ★ All the heads of departments have been requested to ask the staff working under them to strictly follow the guidelines.



## Mou Signed Between CCI and TEXPROCIL

- ★ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) Limited and TEXPROCIL on Branding, Traceability and Certification of 'Kasturi Cotton India' in Varanasi.
- ★ This collaboration will benefit cotton farmers who will get the actual value of their produce due to brand building and quality assurance.
- ★ The MoU will encourage the industry to work on the principle of self-regulation by owning complete responsibility of Traceability, Certification and Branding of Indian cotton, Ministry of Textiles.
- ★ The Government of India will contribute an equal share of ₹15 crore over a period of three cotton seasons starting from 2022-23 to 2024-25.
- ★ India's premium Cotton is known as 'Kasturi Cotton' in the world cotton Trade.

## Airbnb Sign MOU with Goa Government

- ★ Airbnb has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa to jointly promote Goa as a high potential tourism destination in the world.
- ★ Airbnb, an American multinational company which stands for Air Bed and Breakfast.
- ★ It is an online marketplace that connects people who want to rent out their homes to tourists who intend to visit that locality.
- ★ The Airbnb will help the Goa Tourism Department in developing such homestay capacity across the state.
- ★ The local people will be trained to offer quality tourism experience to both domestic and international tourists. It will boost the income of the local population.

## PMKKK Renamed as PM Vikas Scheme

- ★ Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK) has been named as Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) Scheme.
- ★ This integrated scheme amalgamates the five earlier schemes of the Ministry – Seekho aur Kamao, Ustad, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil.
- ★ The scheme has been approved by the cabinet for the period of 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission.
- ★ PM VIKAS aims to improve the livelihood of minorities, especially artisan communities by using components of skill development, education, women leadership and entrepreneurship.
- ★ These components complement each other in the ultimate objective of the scheme to enhance the income of the beneficiaries and provide assistance by facilitating credit and market linkages.

## Youth Co:Lab for Young Entrepreneurs

- ★ The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of Youth Co:Lab, Asia Pacific's largest youth innovation initiative was jointly launched by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and UNDP India.
- ★ All young innovators and entrepreneurs are invited to participate in this incredible opportunity to unleash their creativity and build their solutions through Youth Co:Lab

- ★ It is an initiative launched in 2019 by UNDP India in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog.
- ★ Its aim is to establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

### **India Energy Week 2023**

- ★ India Energy Week 2023 (IEW 2023) being organised during India's G20 Presidency will be held in Bengaluru between 06 February and 08 February 2023.
- ★ Hardeep S Puri, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs, inaugurated the curtain raiser.
- ★ The Curtain Raiser marks the beginning of number of preparatory events being hosted in the run up to the India Energy Week 2023.
- ★ This will provide a unique opportunity to showcase India as an engine of global economic growth and a driver of global consumption.
- ★ It covers themes such as Energy Security, pathways for decarbonization, Resilient Energy Supply Chains, Emerging Fuels such as Biofuel and Hydrogen, Investments in Upstream and Midstream Sector etc.

### **National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research**

- ★ Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated ICMR's National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research (NARFBR) at Genome Valley in Hyderabad to address zoonotic threats.
- ★ It will provide the ethical care and use and welfare of laboratory animals used during research.
- ★ It will not only serve as a state-of-the-art facility for ethical animal studies but also apply to basic regulatory animal research.
- ★ It will help in capacity building of new researchers and quality assurance checks as well as create procedures for new drugs, vaccines and pre-clinical testing within the country.

### **Development under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme**

- ★ Gaya and Nalanda in Bihar has been included by the Government of India under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.
- ★ Punaura Dham in Sitamarhi District of Bihar has been selected for development under the PRASHAD Scheme of the Government of India.
- ★ Government of India launched Swadesh Darshan scheme in 2014-15 for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.
- ★ It was later revamped and re-launched as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 with the focus on developing sustainable and responsible tourism destinations.
- ★ The Central government provides assistance to the State /Union Territories government to develop the tourism Infrastructure.

- ★ The Government of India launched the PRASAD scheme in the year 2014-2015 under the Ministry of Tourism.
- ★ This scheme focuses on developing and identifying pilgrimage sites across India for enriching the religious tourism experience.

### **Geographical Indication Tagging for Raktsey Karpo Apricot**

- ★ Ladakh has got its first Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Raktsey Carpo apricots.
- ★ It is one of the nine items recently registered in the GI tag lists.
- ★ It is famous in Ladakh for its sweetness, white kernel and colour.
- ★ It is most preferred by the consumers for fresh consumption.

### **LPG Cylinder at ₹500 Per Cylinder**

- ★ The Rajasthan Government will provide 12 LPG cylinders per year to the poor families at ₹500 per cylinder from 01 April 2023.
- ★ This was announced by the Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot at the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Alwar on 19 December 2022.
- ★ 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana' (PMUY) was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 01 May 2016 in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ Under the scheme a poor household headed by a woman is provided with a free LPG gas stove and free first LPG Cylinder.
- ★ Under the scheme the beneficiaries have to buy the subsidized LPG cylinder.

### **IICA Launches ESG Impact Leaders Program**

- ★ Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India has launched a programme to create Impact Leaders in the areas of Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG).
- ★ Impact Leader programme is designed as a comprehensive course on ESG giving a holistic understanding of the philosophy of ESG, its principles, its relevance and its implication.
- ★ IICA has also created the 'National Association of Impact Leaders' which is a membership-based association exclusively for ESG professionals.
- ★ The association will provide a platform for professional advancement and engagement to its members.
- ★ In future this association may also act as a regulatory body to strengthen the ESG Profession in India.

### **Tamil Nadu Government Makes Aadhaar Mandatory**

- ★ The Tamil Nadu government has announced that all those who are eligible for benefits under various government schemes will have to submit proof of having an Aadhaar number or get an Aadhaar identification.

- ★ Aadhaar is mandatory for government employees, government pensioners and beneficiaries of various schemes implemented by the state government through various departments through their implementing agencies.
- ★ The Treasury and Accounts Department through its implementing agency will provide Aadhaar enrollment facilities for those beneficiaries who are not yet enrolled.

### **Wayanad Rice Festival Promotes Climate-Resilient Crops**

- ★ The Kerala-based Organisation named Thanal in an experiment has planted 300 climate-resilient varieties of traditional rice on 5 acres of land at its agroecology center in Panavally in the Wayanad district.
- ★ It is to sensitize people to the significance of conserving traditional crops that can withstand harsh climatic conditions.
- ★ The Thondy variety, a traditional and popular rice among the people in Wayanad a few decades ago could compete with any hybrid rice in terms of productivity.

### **Delhi International Arts Festival**

- ★ Delhi International Arts Festival was organized at Kartavya Path with the slogan 'Where Bharat Meets India', by the Ministry of Culture.
- ★ The event is to honor the great epics, the warriors who fought for our freedom and the numerous policies and programs established by our government in the interest of Women's Empowerment, Cleaning Our Holy Rivers and Maintaining a Country Free from Dirt and Disease.
- ★ In addition to theater, classical musical performances and other cultural acts, the festival will feature dance performances like Kathak and Odissi.

### **Uttar Pradesh Government Signs Agreements with Singapore**

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh Government has signed several agreements with investors in Singapore ahead of the UP Global Investors Summit (UPGIS) in February 2023.
- ★ The UP Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) to set the pace for Singapore investors to participate in the prosperity of UP.
- ★ The UP is set to become a USD 1 trillion economy with the central government's target to build a USD 5 trillion national economy in the coming years.
- ★ It is to achieve such targets, the UP government needs to have around USD 50 billion grounded as early as possible.

### **'Drink from Tap' Project**

- ★ The Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched a 24×7 piped drinking water project 'Drink from Tap' in 19 cities of the state on 21 December 2022.
- ★ About 5.5 lakh people in these cities will be benefited from the project.
- ★ The state government scheme is different from the central government scheme of Jal Jeevan Mission which was launched on 15 August 2019.

- ★ Within the Jal Jeevan Mission, Har Ghar Nal se Jal scheme aims to provide potable, quality drinking water to every rural household by 2024.

## **National Youth Conference**

- ★ Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has announced that the 26<sup>th</sup> National Youth festival 2023 will be held in the twin cities of Hubballi-Dharwad, Karnataka.
- ★ The National Youth Festival will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 12 January 2023.
- ★ The National Youth Festival is organised by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with one of the State Governments.
- ★ The National Youth Festival is organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand on 12 January.

## **The First Green Steel Brand in the Nation 'KALYANI FeRRESTA'**

- ★ The first green steel brand in India, KALYANI FeRRESTA was introduced in New Delhi by Union Steel Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.
- ★ The Kalyani Group, a steel manufacturer with headquarters in Pune created the steel with zero carbon footprints on the environment.
- ★ The Kalyani Group effort will assist in changing the steel industry's long-standing reputation as a 'hard to abate sector' with high carbon emissions into a low-emitting, environmentally friendly steel-producing sector.

## **Unique Musical Dance Event Held in New Delhi**

- ★ The Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas organized a unique one-day event on 23 December 2022, called 'Dance to Decarbonise'.
- ★ The renewable energy generated through dance was used to charge electric vehicles.
- ★ This unique event was held at the National Stadium, in New Delhi as a run up to the India Energy Week that will be held in Bangalore in February 2023.
- ★ The event is seen as a commitment by the Government to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070 and the implementation of responsible energy sources over transformational energy systems for the future.

## **Good Governance Week 2022**

- ★ Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of state for Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions has launched Good Governance Week from 19 December 19 to 25 December 2022 at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- ★ In all Indian districts, states and union territories, there will be a campaign to address public grievances and improve service delivery.
- ★ The Campaign will involve over 700 District Collectors and representatives will visit Tehsil and Panchayat Samiti headquarters.

## Uttar Pradesh Government Signs MoU with Austin University

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States (US)-based Austin University for the construction of a smart city of knowledge.
- ★ The Smart City of Knowledge will be built in the state at a total cost of USD 42 billion.
- ★ It is to be built on 5,000 acres. The Knowledge City will include the best universities in the world.
- ★ The MoU was signed during a state government delegation's visit to the United States as part of efforts to attract investment ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit-2023.

## 'Right To Repair' Portal

- ★ On the National Consumer Rights Day, the Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal launched a host of new initiatives including the 'Right to Repair' portal in New Delhi.
- ★ On the 'right to repair' portal, manufacturers will share the manual of product details with customers so that they can either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers.
- ★ The Department of Consumer Affairs had set up a committee headed by the Additional Secretary Nidhi Khare to develop a comprehensive framework on 'Right to Repair'.

## PAN Not Linked with Aadhaar to be 'Rendered Inoperative'

- ★ The Income Tax department on 24 December 2022 issued an advisory that those permanent account numbers (PAN) which are not linked with Aadhaar by the end of March 2022 will be rendered "inoperative".
- ★ According to the Income Tax department 'As per Income-tax Act, 1961 it is mandatory for all PAN holders to link their PAN with Aadhaar before 31 March 2023'.
- ★ From 01 April 2023, the unlinked PAN shall become inoperative.

## Free Foodgrains for One Year under NFSA

- ★ The government has decided to provide free foodgrains to 81.35 crore people for one year under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) at an estimated cost of ₹2 lakh crore.
- ★ As per the cabinet decision, beneficiaries under NFSA will get free food grains for one year till December 2023.
- ★ It is a part of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) to help the poor in the fight against COVID-19.
- ★ The program is run by the Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

## Ladakh Proposes State Tree and State Flower

- ★ The Ladakh administration has proposed Bhoti 'Shukpa' (*Juniperus polycarpus*) and Bhoti 'Tsernon' (*Meconopsis aculeata*) as the state tree and state flower respectively.



- ★ The proposed state tree and state flower for the union territory of Ladakh are placed in the public domain for suggestions and comments from experts and the general public by the committee constituted for the purpose.
- ★ State tree is locally known as ‘Shukpa’ by Buddhists and ‘Chilgi’ by the Brokpa tribes of Ladakh.

### **Kerala’s First Smart Mobile Composting Unit Inaugurated**

- ★ Minister for Local Self-Governments M.B. Rajesh inaugurated the first smart mobile composting unit in the State jointly launched by Suchitwa Mission and the Kerala Mission at Pallithottam, Kerala.
- ★ He stated that the waste management issues in Kerala will be eliminated by 2026 making the State completely garbage free.
- ★ The smart mobile composting unit is an innovative concept that scientifically treats waste from auditoriums and large catering centers and turns it into manure.
- ★ The unit can process up to 500 kg of waste per hour and convert it into manure.

### **Losar Festival Celebrated in Ladakh**

- ★ Losar Festival was celebrated in Ladakh to mark the Ladakhi New Year.
- ★ The Losar Festival or the Ladakhi New year is a major socio-religious festival of Ladakh celebrated during winter.
- ★ Prayer lamps are lit and buildings, homes, places of worship and business places are decorated during this festival which is held for 15 days from 24 December every year.
- ★ The festival marks the Ladakhi New Year and is an important time for Buddhists in Ladakh to come together and celebrate their culture and heritage.

### **First Complete Library Constituency in India**

- ★ The Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan’s constituency Dharmadam has become the first complete library constituency in India.
- ★ Kerala which was the first state to achieve 100% literacy status in India is also perhaps the only state in India that has a library in every village.
- ★ He started Granthashala Sangam with about 50 small libraries in 1945 in Kerala which grew into a large network of thousands of libraries.
- ★ The Chief Minister Vijayan announced that out of the total 138 wards in the constituency, there were no libraries in 63 wards.
- ★ However, with the help of a people’s organization, People’s Mission for Social Development, the task was completed.

### **Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s Grand Memorial in Gwalior**

- ★ The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced that the state government will build a huge statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and a research centre as part of his grand memorial in Gwalior.



- ★ The Madhya Pradesh government has allotted nearly 4,050 hectares of land in Sirol area of Gwalior to build a memorial of Vajpayee.
- ★ The 'Gwalior Gaurav Diwas' function was celebrated to mark the 98<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ★ The event was also attended by Union Ministers Jyotiraditya Scindia and Narendra Singh Tomar.

### **Peace Agreement with Central and Manipur Government**

- ★ The government of India and the Manipur government have signed an Operation Agreement with an insurgent group of Manipur, Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) in New Delhi on 27 December 2022.
- ★ The Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) was established in 2011.
- ★ The group claims its objective is to safeguard the interest of 'Zeliangrong Naga tribes in Manipur, Assam and Nagaland.
- ★ Under the agreement the ZUF has agreed to abjure violence and join the peaceful democratic process as established by law of the land.
- ★ The agreement provides for the rehabilitation and resettlement of the armed cadres of ZUF.

### **Power Ministry and DRDO**

- ★ Ministry of Power has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) for the implementation of an early warning system for vulnerable hydroelectric projects/power stations.
- ★ It aims to jointly work towards developing appropriate mitigation measures against avalanches, landslides, glaciers, glacial lakes and other land hazards.
- ★ DRDO's expertise will also be utilized in developing a comprehensive Early Warning System (EWS) for vulnerable hydroelectric power stations in hilly areas.
- ★ EWS is an adaptive measure to climate change, which uses integrated communication systems to help communities prepare for dangerous climate-related events.

### **TB Elimination Effort of Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh**

- ★ The government of India owned Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Central TB Division under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the states of Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- ★ This effort of the IOCL is part of its Corporate Social Responsibility.
- ★ The MoU was signed in presence of Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi.
- ★ Within India Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh share the highest burden of TB cases among large states in India.
- ★ The Indian Government has set a target to eliminate TB in India by 2025.

## First International Beach Festival

- ★ The ‘Spice Coast’ in the north of Kerala, popularly known as North Malabar is to celebrate the ‘Bekal International Beach Festival’.
- ★ Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the 10-day first International Beach Festival.
- ★ The festival reflects the essence of the cultural and artistic uniqueness of the state.
- ★ It is organised by Bekal Resorts Development Corporation (BRDC) in association with the District Tourism Promotion Council, Kudumbashree, Asmi Holidays and the local self-government bodies in the district.

## Online Request Transfer Portal for Gramin Dak Sevaks

- ★ The Department of Posts has launched an Online request Transfer Portal for Gramin Dak Sevaks.
- ★ The entire transfer process, from the stage of seeking applications, approval and issuing transfer orders, has now been made paperless and simple through this portal.
- ★ The launch of the online request transfer portal is a huge step in bringing transparency and accountability to the governance processes by leveraging technology.
- ★ The online process will also result in saving time and resources.

## ‘Prahari App’ of the Border Security Force

- ★ The Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah launched the Mobile App ‘Prahari’ of the Border Security Force (BSF) in New Delhi on 29 December 2022.
- ★ Amit Shah announced that the BSF ‘Prahari’ app is for Proactive Governance.
- ★ Through ‘Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System’ (CP-GRAMS) or information on various welfare schemes, they can get all this information through the app and this app will also connect them with the portal of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ★ The Border Security Force was raised on 01 December 1965 after the India-Pakistan war of 1965.
- ★ It is a border force which is deployed along the International border with Bangladesh and Pakistan.

## World-class Kayaking-Canoeing Academy

- ★ Union Minister for Power and New and Renewable Energy RK Singh announced to set up a world class Kayaking-Canoeing Academy in Tehri, Uttarakhand during inauguration of the National Championship “Tehri Water Sports Cup” at Tehri Lake.
- ★ In this academy, the youth of Uttarakhand will be prepared to play at the national and international level by providing all the facilities along with free training.
- ★ The new sports policy has been implemented in the state and the government has also announced re-implementation of sports quota in jobs.

## IT Minister Launches 'Stay Safe Online' Campaign

- ★ As part of India's G20 presidency, the Minister for Electronics & Information Technology, Communications and Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw has launched the 'Stay Safe Online' campaign and the 'G20 Digital Innovation Alliance' (G20-DIA) at Delhi.
- ★ It aims to raise awareness among citizens to stay safe in the online world due to the widespread use of social media platforms and rapid adoption of digital payments.
- ★ MeitY is the nodal ministry for the G20 Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG).
- ★ MeitY aims to advance the vision of digital transformation of the global digital economy for public service delivery through innovation in a secure cyber environment and a future-ready digitally skilled workforce.

## 'Friends of Library' Program to Promote Reading

- ★ The School Education Minister of Tamil Nadu (TN) Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, has launched the "Friends of Library" program, through which books would be directly supplied to those who are unable to access state-run libraries.
- ★ The project will be helpful to people with differently-abled persons, senior citizens, children and hospital in-patients among others who cannot come to a library will benefit from the initiative.
- ★ Volunteers will hand over the books to such people from the libraries.
- ★ The program will involve 2,500 libraries in its initial phase, including 31 district libraries.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### India Australia Trade Agreement

- ★ The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goel has announced on 30 November 2022 that India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA) will come into force from 29 December 2022.
- ★ The trade agreement was signed between the two countries on 02 April 2022 and it was ratified by the Australian Parliament on 22 November 2022.
- ★ Under the trade agreement both the countries will reduce tariffs on agreed goods and services.
- ★ The trade agreement will give a boost to the close economic ties between the two countries.
- ★ It is expected to boost bilateral trade from the present USD 31 billion to USD 45-50 billion in the next 5 years.

### India Provides Financial Assistance to Maldives

- ★ The Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar virtually handed over the assistance amount of \$100 million to Maldives.
- ★ The Indian government assistance is in the form of budgetary support to help Maldives deal with its economic problems.

- ★ Maldivian economy which is heavily dependent on tourism is facing severe economic crisis as covid related restriction has badly affected its economy.
- ★ The assistance being extended to Maldives is without any terms and conditions.
- ★ India has also provided \$ 500 million loan to Maldives for the Greater Male Connectivity Project.

### **Migration and Mobility Agreement**

- ★ India and Germany signed a Migration and Mobility Agreement on 05 December 2022.
- ★ It will facilitate easier access for people to study, research and work in both countries.
- ★ The agreement was signed in New Delhi in the presence of the German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and the Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.
- ★ During the meeting, both leaders reviewed bilateral relations and shared their views on a number of important regional and global issues.

### **India will Resume e-Visa Facility for UK Citizens**

- ★ The Indian High commissioner to the United Kingdom (UK) Vikram K Doraiswami has announced that India will shortly resume the e-Visa facility for UK citizens travelling to India.
- ★ The e visa facility was suspended in March 2020 due to the outbreak of covid.
- ★ e-Visa is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, attending a short-term yoga programme, medical treatment including treatment.

### **Ebola Vaccine to Uganda**

- ★ India's first vaccine for Ebola manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII) has been approved by the Drugs Controller General of India for export to Uganda, approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) for cooperation to fight Ebola.
- ★ The vaccine is developed by the Serum Institute of India (SII) in collaboration with Oxford University in the United Kingdom.
- ★ This vaccine has proven highly effective against the recent Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

### **Sixth Generation Fighter Jets**

- ★ Japan, Britain and Italy are merging their next-generation jet fighter projects to build an advanced front-line 6<sup>th</sup> generation fighter into operation by 2035.
- ★ It is for the first time that Japan is collaborating in a defence project without the participation of the United States of America since World War Two.
- ★ The project will merge the British-led Future Combat Air System project, also known as Tempest, with Japan's F-X programme in a venture called the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP).
- ★ The newly developed fighter plane will replace Britain's Typhoon fighters and Japan's F-22 fighter plane.

### **39<sup>th</sup> Edition of India-Indonesia Co-ordinated Patrol**

- ★ The 39<sup>th</sup> edition of India-Indonesia Co-ordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy is being conducted from 08 December to 19 December 2022.
- ★ The CORPAT will be executed along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) from 15 to 16 December 2022 and will conclude at Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar.
- ★ Along with INS Karmuk, L-58 (indigenously built Landing Craft Utility vessel) and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft will be participating in the CORPAT.
- ★ The main aim of conducting the coordinated patrol between two navies is to strengthen mutual understanding and enhanced interoperability between both the navies in countering transnational maritime threats at sea.

### **Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival**

- ★ The 20<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival commenced in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ★ Hindi film Ayena, directed and produced by Siddhant Sirin, showcased at the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival.
- ★ 55 films in Nepali, Korean, Hindi, Spanish, Russian, French, Dioula, Italian and Albanese language have been presented.
- ★ The theme of the film fest is 'Sustainable Summits' and it showcased documentaries, fiction, shorts, experimental and animated films.

### **19<sup>th</sup> Handicraft Trade Fair and 17<sup>th</sup> Craft Competition**

- ★ The Federation of Handicraft Associations of Nepal (FHAN) organised 19<sup>th</sup> Handicraft Trade Fair and 17<sup>th</sup> Craft Competition in Kathmandu from 09 December to 13 December 2022.
- ★ The objective of the trade fair is to promote the development and market of handicraft products.
- ★ The basic objective of the event is to emphasise the need to preserve and protect the traditional arts, which are in danger of disappearing with the advent of modern technology.

### **Military Exercise 'KAZIND – 2022'**

- ★ The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of Indo - Kazakhstan joint training exercise "KAZIND-22" is scheduled to be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from 15 December to 28 December 2022.
- ★ The objective of the exercise is to build positive military relations, each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together under a UN peace enforcement mandate.
- ★ The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the Battalion level and Company level Field Training Exercise (FTX) on sub-conventional operations.
- ★ During the exercise, participants will engage in a variety of missions ranging from joint planning, joint tactical drills, basics of special arms skills and riding a hostile target.

## Joint Training Exercise 'SURYA KIRAN-XVI'

- ★ The 16<sup>th</sup> Edition of Indo-Nepal joint training Exercise 'SURYA KIRAN-XVI' between India and Nepal will be conducted at Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi, Nepal from 16 December to 29 December 2022.
- ★ The two armies, through these contingents, shall be sharing the experiences gained during the conduct of various counter-insurgency operations over the years in their respective countries.
- ★ The joint exercise will focus on tactical operational planning and disaster response mechanisms in counter-terrorist operations and the role of the armed forces in disaster management.
- ★ The joint military exercise will boost defence cooperation and bilateral relations between the two countries.

## India Signs Agreement with Nepal Government

- ★ The Embassy of India and Nepal Government's Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration have signed 3 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) to collaborate on projects in the education sector.
- ★ The collaboration will also focus on the healthcare and drinking water sectors.
- ★ The projects shall be implemented at 101.79 million Nepalese rupees (NRs).
- ★ The three projects include:
  - The construction of the Shree Janata Belaka Secondary School building in the Udayapur district, Nepal.
  - The construction of Ngonga Thenchowk Chholing meditation centre in the Soulukhumbu district, Nepal.
  - The construction of Lisnekhola Tikasung Dangchet Jharlang water supply project in Dhading district, Nepal.

## Tokyo Makes Solar Panels Mandatory for New Homes

- ★ The Japanese capital's local assembly passed a new rule mandating that all new homes in Tokyo built by large-scale home builders after April 2025 must install solar power panels to cut household carbon emissions.
- ★ The Tokyo Metropolitan Government aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared with 2,000 levels.
- ★ This new rule for newly built homes mandates about 50 major builders to equip homes of up to 2,000 square metres with renewable energy sources, mainly solar panels.

## U.N. Commission on the Status of Women

- ★ Iran has been suspended from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).
- ★ The US proposal at the UN Economic and Social Council to remove Iran from the panel received 29 votes.
- ★ It is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the main organs within the United Nations.



- ★ It has been described as the UN organ promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- ★ The Economic and Social Council has expressed serious concern over the actions taken by the Government of Iran since September 2022 through the draft to remove Iran from the remaining 2022-2026 term of the 'Commission on the Status of Women'.

### **INSV Tarini to Participate in 50<sup>th</sup> Edition of Cape Town**

- ★ Indian Navy's sailboat INSV (Indian Naval Sailing Vessel) Tarini has set sail for an expedition to Cape Town, South Africa to participate in the 50<sup>th</sup> edition of Cape Town to Rio Race 2023.
- ★ The expedition is being undertaken by an Indian Navy crew of five officers including two women officers.
- ★ INSV Tarini is being skippered by Captain Atool Sinha.
- ★ The Cape Town - Rio de Janeiro is one of the most prestigious Trans-Atlantic Ocean races.
- ★ INSV Tarini is known for navigating the globe with an all-women officer crew in the historic expedition titled 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' in 2017.

### **Ferry Service between Kankesanthurai Port and Pondicherry**

- ★ According to the Sri Lankan Ports, Shipping and Civil Aviation Minister, a passenger ferry service between Kankesanthurai port in Jaffna district and Karaikal ports in Puducherry will start in January 2023.
- ★ The Minister announced that passenger transport services will also be started from Thoothukudi (Tamil Nadu) to Colombo in Sri Lanka.
- ★ The ferry services will make travel to Sri Lanka easier from south India, thus providing a boost to tourism in Sri Lanka, which is suffering from its worst-ever economic crisis.
- ★ They will also strengthen the cultural bonds between the two regions.

### **World Trade Organization**

- ★ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will host the next major meeting of the World Trade Organization set to take place by March 2024.
- ★ The UAE and Cameroon were both to host the event known as MC13 (Ministerial Conference 13), a high-level event scheduled every few years where Trade Ministers aim to fix new global trade rules.
- ★ The two countries reached an 'amicable agreement' for the UAE to host the next meeting, known as MC13 and for Cameroon to host the one after that, citing a letter from the head of the WTO's General Council sent to Geneva-based ambassadors.

### **Tentative List of UNESCO Heritage Sites**

- ★ The Union Ministry of Culture announced that Vadnagar town-Gujarat, Sun Temple Modhera-Gujarat and Rock Cut Sculptures and reliefs of the Unakoti-Tripura have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO's world heritage sites.



- ★ The submissions were made by Archaeological Survey of India, which is responsible for the conservation and preservation of Indian monuments.
- ★ With the addition of these three sites, UNESCO has 52 proposals in the tentative list of India.

### **First Bilateral Air Combat Exercise**

- ★ India and Japan will conduct their first Air exercise from 16 January to 26 January 2023 at the Hyakuri Air Base and at the Iruma Air Base in Sayama Japan.
- ★ The decision to conduct bilateral air exercise was taken during Defence Minister Rajnath Singh meeting with the Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada held in Tokyo, Japan.
- ★ The aim of the combat exercise is to strengthen defence cooperation between the forces, enhance tactical skills and promote mutual understanding.

### **NTPC Inks Pact with Italy**

- ★ India's largest power generation company 'National Thermal Power Corporation Limited' (NTPC) has signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Technimont Pvt Ltd, the Indian subsidiary of Italy-based Maire Tecnimont Group.
- ★ The objective of this MoU is to jointly evaluate and explore the possibility of developing a commercial scale green methanol production facility at NTPC's project in India.
- ★ This green methanol project involves capturing carbon from NTPC's power plants and converting it into green fuel.
- ★ This agreement will make a significant contribution to the energy transformation in India.

### **Serbia Bars Visa-Free Entry for Indians**

- ★ From 01 January 2023, Indian passport holders will no longer have the luxury of traveling to Serbia without a valid visa.
- ★ With an intention to control illegal immigration and follow the requirements of the European visa policy, the government of Serbia has decided to end visa-free travel for Indians.
- ★ Earlier, diplomatic and official Indian passport holders were allowed to visit the country for 90 days without any visa, while the duration was 30 days for ordinary passport holders.
- ★ The existing arrangement of visa-free entry into Serbia for all Indian passport holders for staying in Serbia up to 30 days has been withdrawn by the Government of Serbia.

### **Air Combat Exercise 'Veer Guardian 23'**

- ★ India and Japan will conduct their first bilateral combat air exercise 'Veer Guardian 23' for 10 days in Japan in January 2023.
- ★ The exercise will be conducted at Hyakuri Air Base north-west of Tokyo.
- ★ Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) will conduct bilateral combat training with the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- ★ The aim of the exercise is to promote mutual understanding and strengthen defence cooperation between the Air Forces.

- ★ The IAF will field its Russian-origin Sukhoi-30MKI aircraft from a squadron under the Western Air Command.

### **India-Australia Economic Co-operation and Trade Agreement**

- ★ India-Australia Economic Co-operation and Trade Agreement comes into force from 29 December 2022.
- ★ ECTA is the first trade agreement of India with a developed country after more than a decade.
- ★ Under this trade agreement, Indian exports will benefit from preferential zero-duty market access in Australia for 100 per cent of its tariff lines.
- ★ It will benefit India's labour-intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles, leather, furniture, food and agricultural products, engineering products, and medical devices.
- ★ The total bilateral trade is expected to cross 45 to 50 billion dollar in five years from the existing 31 billion US dollar.

### **India and Cyprus Signs Three Agreement**

- ★ External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is on a three-day visit to Cyprus.
- ★ During the visit, EAM signed a number of agreements with his Cypriot counterpart Ioannis Kasoulides in the capital Nicosia on 29 December 2022.
- ★ S. Jaishankar also released the commemorative stamp on the 75 years of Indian Independence and 60 years of establishing diplomatic ties with Cyprus.
- ★ This is the first visit of S. Jaishankar to Cyprus.
- ★ The Minister announced that India and Cyprus were collectively working on issues such as food and energy security, maritime security and sustainable environment.

### **Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina Inaugurates the First Metro Rail**

- ★ Bangladesh Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the country's first metro rail service in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ★ The PM opened the 73-km part of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line-6 of the metro rail project from Diabari to Agargaon.
- ★ The government-owned company Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) is implementing the metro rail project.
- ★ This is part of the ambitious Bangladesh project of Mass Rapid Transit to be completed by 2030.
- ★ She also released a commemorative banknote of Taka 50 to mark the metro's opening.

## **BANKING, FINANCE AND ECONOMICS**

### **Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Signs Bancassurance Pacts**

- ★ The old private sector bank Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB) has entered into bancassurance partnerships with Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Company Ltd and Max Life Insurance Company to provide general insurance products and life insurance schemes respectively to TMB's customers.
- ★ Under the agreement, Tuticorin-based TMB's 500-plus branches will start retailing the insurance products of both companies.
- ★ It is the selling of insurance products through banking channels.
- ★ In Bancassurance a bank enters into an agreement with an Insurance company.
- ★ If the bank customer buys the insurance products, then the bank will receive a commission from the Insurance companies.

### **Infrastructure Bonds in 2022-23**

- ★ India's largest commercial bank State Bank of India's board has approved a proposal to raise ₹10,000 crore through issuance of infrastructure bonds during 2022-23.
- ★ The bank announced that it will issue infrastructure bonds up to an amount of ₹10,000 crore (including a green shoe option of ₹5,000 crore) through a public issue or private placement, during 2022-23.
- ★ The capital raised through the infrastructure bonds will be used to provide loans to companies in the infrastructure sector.
- ★ Green shoe option means the company has the option to over allot the bonds or shares if there is demand in the market.
- ★ For example, SBI comes in the market and says that it will sell 10 bonds worth ₹100 each with a green shoe option of ₹200. The total issue of bonds here is ₹1000.

### **RBI to Launch a Pilot Project on Retail Digital Rupee**

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India has announced that it will launch a pilot project on retail digital rupee (e₹-R) on 01 December 2022.
- ★ The RBI had earlier launched the first pilot project of the Digital Rupee for the Wholesale segment (e₹-W) on 01 November 2022.
- ★ According to the RBI 8 banks have been identified for phase-wise participation in this pilot project.
- ★ In the first phase four banks, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank and IDFC will participate.
- ★ In the second phase four more banks Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank will join this pilot project.
- ★ It is a legal tender issued by a central bank in a digital form. It is similar to sovereign paper currency (Indian Rupee) but takes a different form. It will not be in paper form but in digital format.

## **IDFC AMC to be renamed as Bandhan Mutual Fund**

- ★ The name of the IDFC Asset Management Company Limited (AMC) which manages the Mutual Fund business of the IDFC will be changed to Bandhan Asset Management Company Limited.
- ★ The IDFC Mutual Fund (MF) is proposed to be renamed as Bandhan Mutual Fund with Bandhan Financial Holdings Limited (BFHL) becoming the Sponsor of the Mutual Fund.
- ★ Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved the change in ownership at the IDFC AMC. SEBI is the regulator of Mutual Funds in India.
- ★ The IDFC AMC was set up by IDFC financial company in 2010. It is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest Mutual fund in India.

## **RBI Partners with ICRIER**

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is working with the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) to develop a food inflation projection framework as the central bank looks to depend more on a consultative approach to collect first-hand data and improve policy responses.
- ★ Combining high-frequency information on prices with market intelligence on high-impact food items helps nowcast food inflation and generate near-term inflation forecasts.
- ★ Under the flexible inflation targeting (FIT) framework introduced in India in 2016, the inflation target is defined as 4% CPI headline inflation with a tolerance band of  $\pm 2\%$  around the target.

## **RBI Implements 4 Tiered Regulatory Norms**

- ★ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has notified a four-tier structure for Urban Co-Operative Banks (UCB) in India on 1 December 2022.
- ★ Earlier the UCB in India were divided into two categories by the RBI.
- ★ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) of India had set up an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri N.S. Vishwanathan.
- ★ It is to examine the issues in the urban co-operative banking sector and to suggest suitable changes to strengthen its regulation and supervision.
- ★ RBI has now categorized Urban Co-Operative Banks in India into four tier depending upon the deposit with the bank:
  - Tier 1: UCB are those banks having deposits up to ₹100 crore operating in a single district or having branches in contiguous districts.
  - Tier 2: UCBs with deposits more than ₹100 crore and up to ₹1000 crore.
  - Tier 3: UCBs with deposits more than ₹1,000 crore and up to ₹10,000 crore.
  - Tier 4: UCBs with deposits more than ₹10,000 crore.
- ★ The minimum net worth requirement for the Tier 1 UCBs operating in single districts shall be ₹2 crore.
- ★ For other UCB it shall be ₹5 crore.

## **YES Bank Partners with Turtlefin**

- ★ TurtleFin, India's leading insurtech platform has partnered with YES BANK to create a first-of-its-kind comprehensive technology platform named EasyNsure.
- ★ EasyNsure will bring multiple insurance partners onto a common platform, providing a host of benefits.
- ★ So far, the platform has created over 30,000 insurance quotes with more than 6,500 proposals and 5,200 policies being punched.
- ★ This has helped the platform record a total premium of INR 6,050 lakh.
- ★ The technology platform will also allow business tracking across the Bank hierarchy, simplifying revenue reconciliation.

## **World Bank to Finance Bangladesh**

- ★ The World Bank has approved \$250 million to Bangladesh.
- ★ It will strengthen environmental management and promote private sector participation in green investments.
- ★ The successful implementation of the Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation (BEST) project will help the country tackle pollution, benefiting more than 21 million people living in Greater Dhaka and beyond.
- ★ The project will help in the construction of four vehicle inspection centers using private-public partnership, which will enable inspection of approximately 46,000 vehicles annually.
- ★ The project will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 1 million metric tons from targeted sources.

## **ESIC Can Invest Surplus Funds in Equity through ETFs**

- ★ The Government of India has allowed Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) to invest up to 15 per cent of its surplus funds into equity through exchange-traded funds (ETFs).
- ★ The decision was taken at an ESIC meeting chaired by the Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav in New Delhi on 04 December 2022.
- ★ The initial investment shall start at 5% and increase up to 15% gradually, after review of two quarters. It will be managed by Fund Managers of AMCs.
- ★ The Employees State Insurance (ESI) Scheme is one of the largest social security schemes in the world which comes under the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) under the Union Labour and Employment Ministry.
- ★ The ESIC was set up in 1952 under the ESI Act 1948.
- ★ It provides medical benefits to the insured employees and their dependents under the scheme. There is no limit on the medical expense.

## **Personal Banking Loan Advances**

- ★ State Bank of India (SBI) on 05 December 2022 announced that its personal banking advances excluding high value home loans have crossed the ₹5 lakh-crore mark as on 30 November 2022.

- ★ SBI is the only bank in India which has crossed the milestone.
- ★ The Personal Banking advances mainly comprise personal loans, pension loans, auto loans, education loans, gold loans and other Personal loan products.
- ★ SBI is the largest home loan provider in India.

### **ICICI Bank Launches STACK**

- ★ ICICI Bank has launched a STACK for companies in the real estate sector to offer solutions to their banking requirements on one platform.
- ★ ICICI Bank is the first bank in the industry to offer real estate-specific STACK to provide unparalleled convenience to players in this sector.
- ★ The STACK, which is a combination of digital and physical solutions, enables participants of the real estate sector namely builders, Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs) to undertake banking transactions efficiently.
- ★ The STACK is a one-stop shop for mortgage loans to prospective home buyers.
- ★ The Bank extends customized home loan solutions to retail buyers at the project premises.

### **Nifty Bharat Bond Index**

- ★ NSE Indices, a division of the National Stock Exchange announced the introduction of a new index in the Nifty Bharat Bond Index series.
- ★ Each index in the Bharat Bond Index series evaluates the performance of a portfolio of “AAA” rated bonds issued by government-owned businesses and maturing in a certain year. The series has a target maturity date structure.
- ★ The sixth installment of the Bharat Bond ETF series will follow the recently created Nifty BHARAT Bond Index, which has a 2033 maturity date.
- ★ In December 2019, the first Bharat Bond ETFs were introduced, mirroring the Nifty Bharat Bond indices.

### **SEBI Reduces Time Period for Listing of Debt Securities**

- ★ Capital markets regulator Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has reduced the timeline for listing of debt securities issued on a private placement basis to three days (T+3).
- ★ Currently, the timeline is four days (T+4). T refers to issue closure date.
- ★ The new guidelines would come into effect from 01 January 2023.
- ★ In October SEBI reduced the face value of debt security and non-convertible redeemable preference shares issued on private placement basis to ₹1 lakh from the current ₹10 lakh.
- ★ It will also be applicable from 01 January 2023.

### **World Bank Increases India's GDP Growth Forecast**

- ★ The World Bank has forecasted growth rate for the Indian economy in 2022-23 to 6.9%.
- ★ India's gross domestic product (GDP) grew 8.7 percent in the previous 2021-22 financial year.



- ★ In the second quarter of 2022-23 fiscal year, it grew by 6.3%.
- ★ The Reserve Bank of India expects the Indian economy to grow by 7% in 2022-23.

## **RBI's Monetary Policy**

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised its Repo rate or the key lending rate by 35 basis points (bps) to 6.25%, to curb lingering inflation pressures.
- ★ This is the fifth time in a row that the RBI has increased the repo rate in 2022.
- ★ The RBI policy rate is now at its highest level since August 2018.
- ★ The RBI also cut the growth forecast for the current financial year to 6.8 per cent.
- ★ Standing deposit facility (SDF) rate stands adjusted to 6.00 per cent.
- ★ The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate have been kept at 6.50 per cent.
- ★ In FY23 Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimate at 6.7 per cent. It remains unchanged.

## **TN Government Signs MoU with a German Bank**

- ★ Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a loan with German bank KFW to implement phase two of the Green Energy Corridor (GEC) in Tamil Nadu.
- ★ The Centre has approved ₹719.79 crore for the project in Tamil Nadu, including the grant of 33% from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- ★ 47% cost of the project will be funded by the loan from KFW and the remaining 20% as equity from the Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation Limited.
- ★ The work has been scheduled to be completed by 2025-2026.

## **World Bank's Flagship Gender Toolkit Launched**

- ★ The World Bank launched the 'Toolkit on Enabling Gender-Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces in India'.
- ★ The toolkit was launched at a session organised by the World Bank and the Chennai Urban Metropolitan Transport Authority in Chennai.
- ★ The toolkit from World Bank contains practical tools that can inform a wide set of policymakers as well as private or community-based organisations to help ensure safe and inclusive public transport for women in India.
- ★ It aims to guide Indian cities on how to design public transport that is more inclusive of women's travel needs.
- ★ It aims to spotlight gender issues surrounding mobility and city design.

## **ADB Approves Loan to Strengthen Logistics Sector in India**

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 09 December 2022 has approved a USD 250 million loan to Indian Government.



- ★ It is to support India's wide-ranging reforms that aim to strengthen and modernize the country's logistics infrastructure, improve efficiency and lower costs.
- ★ The loan will finance the first sub-program of the strengthening multimodal and integrated logistics ecosystem program, which supports the government's efforts to create a comprehensive policy, planning, and institutional framework at the federal, state and city level.

### **ADB Approves Loan to the Chennai Metro Project**

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$780 million loan for the building of new lines for Chennai's metro rail and improving the network's connectivity with bus and feeder services.
- ★ ADB will provide an additional \$1 million technical assistance grant to help the Chennai Metro Rail with the planning and management of the metro system's multimodal integration.
- ★ Grant means that the \$1 million will not be returned to the ADB.
- ★ According to the ADB the project will expand Chennai's metro rail system to provide a safe and integrated transport solution essential in improving urban mobility and make the city more liveable.

### **IRDAI Allows Foreigners to Invest in the Insurance Company**

- ★ The insurance sector regulator Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has allowed foreign investors to invest in preference shares and subordinated debt issued by Indian insurance companies.
- ★ The regulator has also now allowed the subordinated debt issued by the Indian insurance companies to be listed in Indian stock exchanges.
- ★ The maturity period of the subordinated debt shall not be less than 10 years if it is issued by life insurance companies, general insurance companies or reinsurance insurance companies.
- ★ For health Insurance companies the maturity period should not be less than seven years.
- ★ Subordinated debt is an unsecured loan or bond that ranks below other loans or securities, also called as senior securities with respect to claims on assets or earnings.

### **Currency Swap Agreement with Maldives Monetary Authority**

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has signed a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework.
- ★ Maldives Monetary Authority is the central bank of Maldives.
- ★ This agreement will enable the Maldives authority to make drawals in multiple tranches up to a maximum of 200 million dollars from the RBI.
- ★ The agreement will provide swap support as a backstop line of funding for short-term foreign exchange liquidity requirements.
- ★ The SAARC Currency Swap Facility of the Reserve Bank of India came into operation on 15 November 2012.

- ★ The aim of the facility is to provide a short-term funding arrangement to deal with their short-term foreign exchange liquidity requirements or balance of payment crises till longer term arrangements are made.

### **BHARAT Bond ETF**

- ★ Edelweiss Mutual Fund has launched the fourth tranche of BHARAT Bond ETF – India’s first corporate bond ETF (exchange-traded fund).
- ★ Bharat Bond ETF is an initiative of the Government of India, from the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management.
- ★ It will provide retail investors with an option to explore the ‘safe’ debt mutual fund category which was earlier dominated by institutional investors.
- ★ It will also help deepen India’s debt market penetration.
- ★ Edelweiss proposes to raise an initial amount of 1,000 crores with a green shoe option of ₹4,000 crores.

### **Home Loan Scheme Roshni**

- ★ PNB Housing Finance (HFC) unveiled a low-cost home loan program Roshni which enables individuals to apply for loans under this scheme ranging from 5 lakh to ₹30 lakhs.
- ★ This launch is in line with PNB Housing Finance’s long-term goal of enabling and assisting an individual’s desire to purchase a home.
- ★ The program offers a variety of loans for self-building, home expansions and renovations, plot purchases combined with construction, loans against property and the purchase of property investment.
- ★ Loan applicants eligible for this are first-time credit borrowers, self-employed without a professional role, and salaried from a low-income group with a family income as low as ₹10,000 to the middle-income group category.

### **TMB Signs Pact with Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance**

- ★ Private sector lender Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB) has partnered with life insurance firm Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance to sell term, annuity and other value-packed products of the private life insurer across its over 500 branches.
- ★ The agreement to this effect was signed by the TMB’s MD and CEO S. Krishnan and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance MD & CEO Tarun Chugh.
- ★ Under this strategic partnership, New and existing customers of the bank would be able to avail of the services of Bajaj Allianz Life offerings including savings, retirement and investment products.

### **Non-Participating ‘Guaranteed Fortune Plan’**

- ★ Canara HSBC Life Insurance launched a new ‘Guaranteed Fortune Plan’ a non-linked, non-participating individual savings scheme offering life cover and a lump sum amount on outliving the policy term.

- ★ The product offers two plan options namely Guaranteed Savings Option and Guaranteed Cash Back Option.
- ★ According to the Canara HSBC Life Insurance, the Guaranteed Savings Option provides a lump sum on outliving the policy term.
- ★ The Guaranteed Cash Back Option offers customers guaranteed cash back at the end of every 5<sup>th</sup> policy year, with an opportunity to defer the amount till maturity or withdraw it earlier.
- ★ In addition to cashback, the 2<sup>nd</sup> option also gives policyholders a lump sum payment at the end of the policy term.
- ★ The plan also includes a unique feature called CARE (Claims Accelerated for Relief & Ease) Pay Benefit.

### **Trucknetic Partners with DBS Bank India**

- ★ India's Uber for Trucks, Trucknetic has partnered with DBS Bank as a logistics partner on their Business Class platform.
- ★ It is to offer comprehensive digital banking, logistics, value-added services and deals to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across the country.
- ★ Trucknetic's partnership with DBS Bank for its SME platform will help accelerate its mission to provide world-class, reliable and cost-effective logistical solutions to small businesses and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India.

### **Universal Sompo General Insurance Partners with Zopper**

- ★ Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Limited has partnered with an insurance infrastructure Application Programming Interface (API) platform, Zopper to roll out a special integrated offering for customers.
- ★ The aim is to cover 1 million assets by offering users personalized insurance solutions, as well as a hassle-free customer experience from policy generation to claims management.
- ★ Through this partnership, customers will have access to buy insurance seamlessly along with an option to purchase a protection plan.

### **IndusInd Bank Enters Co-Lending Pact with SV Credit Line**

- ★ The non-banking finance company SV CreditLine Limited (SVCL) and the private sector lender IndusInd Bank have signed a co-lending collaboration for a ₹500 crore loan targeted towards women borrowers.
- ★ The agreement will help rural women access affordable loans that they could use for a wide range of economic activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, trading and local manufacturing, among others.
- ★ SVCL provides a variety of small credit facilities to women in the low-income segment with an annual household income of ₹1,25,000 in rural areas and ₹2,00,000 in urban areas.

## ASK Capital Gets Central Bank of Ireland Approval

- ★ ASK Capital has received approval from the Central Bank of Ireland to launch an India-based fund ASK Indian Entrepreneur Fund through the UCITS route.
- ★ It is to raise USD 500 million from global investors to take high-return bets on enterprises promoted by Indian entrepreneurs over the next 3 years.
- ★ ASK is the fourth asset or wealth management firm in India to receive approval for a UCITS (Undertakings for Collective Investment in Transferable Securities) fund.
- ★ UCITS is a regulatory framework of the European Commission for the management and sale of mutual funds.

## PNB Housing Finance Opens 'Roshni'

- ★ PNB Housing Finance on 16 December 2022 announced that it has opened 'Roshni' branches in various locations, including tier II and III cities for deepening its customer base in the affordable housing segment.
- ★ Under the Roshini initiative, PNB Housing Finance will offer retail home loans to individuals in the range of ₹5 lakh to ₹30 lakh.
- ★ Under the Roshini scheme the borrowers can get loans for purchase of house property, self-construction, home extension/renovation, plot purchase plus construction, loan against property, among others.
- ★ PNB Housing Finance Limited is a subsidiary company of Punjab National Bank.
- ★ It is a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) which provides housing loans to individuals and corporations.

## AU Small Finance Bank and HDFC Life

- ★ AU Small Finance Bank, and HDFC Life company has entered into a bancassurance agreement under which the customers of the AU Bank can access the entire life insurance product the HDFC life company.
- ★ In Bancassurance a bank enters into an agreement with an insurance company. The Bank makes its customer database available to the Insurance companies.
- ★ Bancassurance sector is regulated by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

## India's First-Ever Surety Bond from Bajaj Allianz

- ★ Union Minister for Road, Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched India's first ever surety bond insurance product from the Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.
- ★ It is expected to reduce the need for bank guarantee for the infrastructure developers.
- ★ The Surety Bond Insurance is a risk transfer tool for the principal (authority which has awarded the contract) and shields the principal from the losses that may arise in case the contractor fails to perform their contractual obligation.

- ★ Unlike a bank guarantee, the Surety Bond Insurance does not require large collateral from the contractor thus freeing up significant funds for the contractor, which they can utilise for the growth of the business.
- ★ The product will facilitate the growth of upcoming infrastructure projects in the country.

### **RBI Imposes Penalty on Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait BSC**

- ★ The Banking sector regulator Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a penalty of ₹2.66 crore on Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait BSC, India operations for non-compliance with directions on 'Cyber Security Framework' in Banks.
- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that the bank failed to implement systems to detect unusual and unauthorized, internal or external activities in its database.
- ★ The fines were imposed on the bank by RBI under the Banking Regulation Act 1949.

### **Paytm Board Approves ₹850-Crore Share Buyback**

- ★ The board of One97 Communications Ltd, the listed entity that runs Paytm, approved a share buyback program worth ₹850 crores through an open market route through the stock exchanges method.
- ★ The company will undertake a buyback of up to ₹850 crores (excluding buyback taxes and other transaction costs) at a maximum price of ₹810 per share.
- ★ When a publicly listed company buys its shares from existing shareholders, it's known as a share buyback.

### **Bandhan Bank to be a Service Center for Defence Ministry**

- ★ The Defence Accounts Department of the Union Ministry of Defence signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bandhan Bank to onboard them as Service Centers under the System for Pension Administration Raksha (SPARSH) initiative.
- ★ The service to the defence personnel will be provided under the System for Pension Administration Raksha (SPARSH).
- ★ SPARSH is a web-based system for processing the pension claims and crediting the pension directly into the bank accounts of defence pensioners without any external intermediary.
- ★ This system is administered by the Defence Accounts Department through the Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (Pensions), Prayagraj and support all the three Services and allied organizations.
- ★ The Bandhan Bank started as an NGO and later it was converted into an NBFC -MFI (Micro Financial institution). It was converted into a private sector bank in 2015.

### **RGICL Launches 'Reliance Health Infinity Policy'**

- ★ Reliance General Insurance Company Limited (RGICL) has launched the first-of-its-kind premium health insurance product – 'Reliance Health Infinity Policy' that offers limitless benefits.
- ★ The policy is available in individual and family floater, covering up to 8 members and categories and offers sum-insured options starting from ₹5 lakh to ₹5 crores.

- ★ It also rewards customers for being fit both financially and physically by offering India's first credit score-based discount and Body Mass Index (BMI)-based discount on the premium
- ★ The Reliance Health Infinity policy can be bought for a 1-year, 2-year, or 3-year policy tenure.
- ★ Children above 90 days of age and adults between the age of 18 to 65 years are covered in this policy.

### **SIDBI Partners with M1xchange**

- ★ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), the principal financial institution engaged in the promotion, financing and development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has partnered with M1xchange as the financier.
- ★ This move is expected to bring liquidity to MSMEs at competitive interest rates.
- ★ This is a highly effective and efficient solution for addressing the issue of the delayed payment of MSMEs.
- ★ M1xchange offers early liquidity to MSMEs within 24 hours through its online bidding platform through the end-to-end digital process.

### **HDFC Securities Launches 'Roots'**

- ★ Leading Indian stock brokerage firm, HDFC Securities has launched Roots, a dedicated platform providing comprehensive investor education and market analysis.
- ★ The site offers multiple forms of valuable information, including articles, bite-sized tips, podcasts by experts, video tutorials and explainers and live social media feed on the Indian financial markets.
- ★ The biggest USP of the platform is that it produces content that is being searched on Google by current or prospective investors and traders.
- ★ The Blog section of Roots is updated with articles addressing all aspects of investing in the Indian financial markets, from intraday trading to ETFs, and more.
- ★ The portal also includes a UGC section (User Generated Content) where investors and traders can suggest topics, they want to learn more about.

### **Tata AIA Life Insurance Opens Emerging Opportunities Fund**

- ★ Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited (Tata AIA) has launched a new Emerging Opportunities Fund that will invest in companies and emerging market leaders.
- ★ It is to generate capital appreciation in the long term by investing in a portfolio of stocks that offer opportunities in emerging leaders in the new-age sectors.
- ★ The New Fund Offering (NFO) window will remain open from 15 December to 30 December 2022 at ₹10 per unit, which is applicable only during the NFO period.
- ★ The new offer will provide consumers with a unique opportunity to benefit from the long-term growth potential of equity while securing their loved ones with the protection of a life insurance cover.



## **BoB Proposes to Sell Its Majority Stake in Nainital Bank**

- ★ State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) plans to sell its majority stake in Nainital Bank.
- ★ The bank has authorized the issuance of an advertisement inviting expressions of interest (EOI) through a preliminary information memorandum (PIM) from interested parties (IPs).
- ★ BoB currently holds 98.57% of the total equity share capital of NBL.
- ★ It has decided to bring in a strategic partner in its subsidiary Nainital Bank Ltd (NBL).
- ★ The strategic partner will help the Bank of Baroda to reduce its stake in percentage terms.

## **IDFC FIRST Bank Announces Zero-Fee Banking**

- ★ On the occasion of its foundation day, IDFC FIRST Bank has announced zero-fee banking on savings accounts.
- ★ The bank mentioned that it had waived fees on 25 commonly used banking services related to savings accounts such as cash deposit and withdrawal at branches, etc.
- ★ Customers, who are maintaining at least ₹10,000 average monthly balance in their savings account will be offered these services free of cost.

## **Paytm and HDFC ERGO Launch 'Payment Protect'**

- ★ One97 Communications Limited (OCL), which owns the brand Paytm in association with HDFC ERGO General Insurance, a leading general insurance company in India launched a group insurance plan called 'Paytm Payment Protect'.
- ★ It is to insure transactions are made through the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) across all apps and wallets.
- ★ With the new insurance offering, which will come at ₹30 per annum users would be able to secure themselves against mobile fraudulent transactions up to ₹10,000
- ★ This product is aimed to enhance the digital payments experience and increase the adoption of the same in the country.
- ★ Higher cover options for cover up to ₹1 lakh per annum will soon be added to the product.

## **DBS Bank India Partners with Gofrugal Tech**

- ★ DBS Bank India Limited (DBIL) has partnered with GoFrugal Technologies Pvt Ltd, a seller-centric platform.
- ★ It is to empower micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) and retail merchants to adopt Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).
- ★ The partnership furthers DBS Bank India's commitment to reimagining SME banking through innovation and providing digital solutions beyond traditional banking.
- ★ Through this partnership, DBS Bank India is integrating its digital solutions with Gofrugal Technologies to help small businesses catalogue their products quickly and expand their sales channels via ONDC.



## **RBI Asks Razorpay and Cashfree to Hold Off Onboarding New Merchants**

- ★ Payment companies Razorpay and Cashfree Payments have received notices from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to withhold onboarding any new online merchants to their platforms, pending their audit for the payment aggregator/payment gateway licences (PA/PG).
- ★ Razorpay, Pine Labs and Stripe were among the first ones to get an in-principle nod to provide PA/PG services.
- ★ As part of the migration to a full PA licence, Razorpay will have to make some systematic upgrades and migrations to an escrow account from a nodal account, among a few other things.
- ★ Razorpay was granted the in-principle approval for a PA licence in July, 2022.

## **IFC Provides \$400 Million Loan to HDFC**

- ★ World Bank Group Member International Financial Corporation (IFC) will provide a \$400 million loan to India's largest housing finance company, Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC).
- ★ HDFC will use around 75% of the loan amount (\$300 million) to provide loans to the affordable green housing sectors in India.
- ★ Green Houses are built with sustainable, environmentally-friendly, energy-efficient and recyclable resources.
- ★ The loan will support the government effort to provide Housing for All.

## **Tata Power Gets ₹450 Crores Sustainable Trade Finance Facility**

- ★ Tata Power has received a ₹450 crore "sustainable trade finance facility" from MUFG (Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group) Bank of Japan to fund its solar projects.
- ★ This credit facility was extended for two solar projects under TP Kirnali Limited (TPKL).
- ★ TPKL is a 100% subsidiary of Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL).
- ★ UFG has extended the financing to fund TPKL's two solar power projects namely 100 MW renewable project in Parthur, Maharashtra and 120 MW green energy project in Mesanka, Gujarat.
- ★ It is the first sustainable trade finance facility offered by MUFG in India and TPKL will utilize the funds towards generating renewable energy capacity.
- ★ Tata Power aimed to become carbon net zero before 2045 and MUFG has announced its commitment to achieving net zero emissions in its finance portfolio by 2050 and its operations by 2030.

## **RuPay Based Credit Card on UPI Platform**

- ★ The leading credit card issuers in India State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and Axis Bank will issue RuPay credit cards on Unified Payment Interface (UPI) by March 2023.
- ★ At present three public sector banks Union Bank of India, Punjab National Bank and Indian Bank and private sector Bank HDFC bank have gone live on the RuPay credit card segment on the UPI platform.

- ★ Credit cards are a type of unsecured loan provided by the banks to its account holder as well as non-account holders for purchasing goods and services.
- ★ It provides a time period within which if the customer repays the amount, then the customer will not have to pay interest to the bank.
- ★ RuPay is a technology platform which provides end to end security solutions for online financial transactions.
- ★ The Reserve Bank of India allowed linking of credit cards to UPI, which was thus far being used as a “pay now” facility.
- ★ The move will provide additional convenience to users and enhance the scope of digital payments.

### **RBI Revised Bank Locker Rules**

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has amended the bank locker rules, which include providing customers with updated locker agreements. The rules will take effect from 01 January 2023.
- ★ As per the Reserve Bank of India notification, the agreements should follow the model prepared by the Indian Banks’ Association (IBA).
- ★ All existing locker depositors are required to submit proof of eligibility for new locker arrangement.
- ★ They need to sign a renewal agreement before the specified date.
- ★ RBI has advised banks to install CCTV cameras at entry and exit points of strong rooms and common areas of operations.

### **India to Become 3<sup>rd</sup> Largest Economy**

- ★ The United Kingdom based economics consultancy firm Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) has predicted that India will become the third-largest economy by 2037.
- ★ According to the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the report released on 26 December 2022, it announced that in the next five years India’s annual economic growth is expected to average 6.4%.
- ★ After that, the growth is expected to average 6.5% in the subsequent nine years.
- ★ It expects the Indian economy to grow by 6.8% in 2022-23.
- ★ According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), India is expected to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in the world by 2027-28.
- ★ According to the SBI EcoWrap report India is likely to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in 2029.

### **ADB to Provide \$125 Million Loan to Improve Urban Services**

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide USD 125 million loan to India to develop climate-resilient sewage collection and treatment, and drainage and water supply systems in three cities in the state of Tamil Nadu.
- ★ In 2018 ADB agreed to provide USD 500 million loan to build priority water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure in strategic industrial corridors across 10 cities in Tamilnadu.
- ★ The loan amount was to be provided in three tranches.

- ★ Under the third tranche \$125 million will be provided and the amount will be used to build priority water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure in Coimbatore, Madurai and Thoothukudi.

### **‘MSME Prerana’ in Rajasthan**

- ★ Government of India owned Public Sector Bank, Indian Bank has launched its flagship business mentoring program for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) entrepreneurs – ‘MSME Prerana’ in the state of Rajasthan.
- ★ “MSME Prerana”, is a first-of-its-kind initiative for the MSME sector in the country by any bank.
- ★ It aims at empowering MSME Entrepreneurs through skill development and capacity building training in their local languages, assisting them in acquiring necessary financial and managerial skills, capacity to handle crisis in business, understanding of dynamics of credit rating and risk management.

### **Committees on Cyber Security and Information Systems**

- ★ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has expanded two of its committees – the High-Powered Steering Committee on Cyber Security (HPSC-CS) and Information Systems Security Committee (ISSC).
- ★ It is to strengthen cyber security frameworks and cyber resilience requirements.
- ★ The panel approves Information Security Policies, suggests amendments to the existing ones, and provides inputs and suggestions to take urgent actions on cyber security incidents of SEBI-regulated entities.

## **SPORTS**

### **T-20 World Cup Cricket Tournament for Blind**

- ★ The third T-20 World Cup Cricket Tournament for the Blind will be held from 05 December to 17 November 2022 in India.
- ★ The tournament is being organised to mark the World Disability Day celebrations universally.
- ★ The inauguration of the World Cup on 05 December at Tau Devi Lal Indoor Stadium, Gurugram.
- ★ Former India batter Yuvraj Singh is the brand ambassador of the tournament.
- ★ Cricket World Cup for the Disabled is an initiative of the Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) in association with Samarthanam Trust.

### **ISSF President’s Cup**

- ★ The current world champion Rudrankksh Patil of India defeated Danilo Sollazzo of Italy in the men’s 10m air rifle final to win the gold medal at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) President’s Cup 2022 in Cairo, Egypt.
- ★ Rudrankksh Patil was awarded the Golden Target award in the category by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF).

- ★ India finished the ISSF President's Cup 2022 with two medals - one gold and one silver.

### **Weightlifting World Championship in Colombia**

- ★ Former world champion Mirabai Chanu won silver medal in the women's 49kg division at the World Weightlifting Championships 2022 being held in Bogota, Colombia.
- ★ The World Weightlifting Championships 2022 are the first in the series of qualifying events for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.
- ★ It is being held in Bogota, Colombia from 05 December to 15 December 2022.

### **24 Hour Ultra Marathon in Taiwan**

- ★ Amar Singh Devanda bagged sixth position by covering a distance of 204.47 Kms in 24 Hour Ultra Marathon.
- ★ It was organised by Chinese Taipei Association of Ultra runners for 2022 at Soochow University, Taiwan.
- ★ Air Warrior Corp Amar Singh Devanda represented India in the event.
- ★ Prior to this, during Asia-Oceania 24 Hrs Championship 2022 held at Bengaluru, Amar covered 257.618 Kms and created a new national record. The Indian team led by him stood first in the championship.

### **BWF World Tour Finals**

- ★ Men's badminton world number one Viktor Axelsen won the men's singles title after defeating Indonesian ace Anthony Ginting at the season-ending World Tour Finals in Bangkok.
- ★ Akane Yamaguchi of Japan won the women's singles title by defeating Tai Tzu Ying of Taiwan.
- ★ The BWF World Tour is a Grade 2 badminton tournament series, sanctioned by Badminton World Federation (BWF).

### **World Record of Fastest Double Century in ODI**

- ★ Ishan Kishan made a world record of making the fastest double century in a One Day International (ODI).
- ★ He scored his double century in just 126 balls against Bangladesh in the match played at Chattogram, Bangladesh.
- ★ The record was earlier held by Chris Gayle of West Indies who scored a 138 balls double century against Zimbabwe in the 2015 World Cup.
- ★ Ishan Kishan also became the youngest player to score a double hundred in men's ODI.

### **FINA World Swimming Championships 2022**

- ★ In Swimming, Indian swimmer Chahat Arora set a national record in the women's 100-metre breaststroke at the FINA World Swimming Championships 2022 in Melbourne, Australia.
- ★ Chahat Arora completed the 100-metre breaststroke race in 1 minute, 13.13 seconds.

- ★ Lithuania's Ruta Meilutyte, topped the overall heats in 1 minute, 3.81 seconds, which was 9.32 seconds quicker than Chahat Arora.
- ★ Chahat will participate in the women's 50m breaststroke event on 17 December. Siva Sridhar will compete in the 100-metre individual medley on 15 December.
- ★ The Federation Internationale de Natation (FINA) is the world governing body for aquatic sports such as swimming, diving, waterpolo, synchronised and open water swimming.

### **National Shooting Championship 2022**

- ★ Divya T.S of Karnataka won her maiden women's 10m air pistol national title in the 65<sup>th</sup> National Shooting Championship Competitions in Pistol events in Bhopal.
- ★ In the gold medal match, she defeated Sanskriti Bana of Uttar Pradesh 16-14 and Rhythm Sangwan of Haryana took the bronze.
- ★ Manu Bhaker, an Olympian won the junior women's air pistol after defeating Esha Singh (Telangana).

### **Most Written-About Athlete in 2022**

- ★ According to the World Athletics, Tokyo Olympics gold medalist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra of India was the most written about track and field athlete in 2022, displacing the Jamaican legend Usain Bolt from the top lists.
- ★ There were 812 articles written about Neeraj Chopra in 2022.
- ★ Neeraj Chopra was followed by Jamaican trio of Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah (751 articles), 100m world champion Shelley-Ann Fraser-Pryce (698 articles) and 200m world champion Shericka Jackson (679 articles).

### **Morocco to Host the Football Club World Cup**

- ★ World football governing body FIFA President Gianni Infantino announced on 16 December 2022 that Morocco will host the football Club World Cup in 2022.
- ★ The tournament will take place from 01 February to 11 February 2023.
- ★ It is an international club football championship where the continental club champions participate every year.
- ★ The most recent edition of the tournament was held in the United Arab Emirates in February 2022 which was won by the English football club Chelsea.

### **India wins Blind T-20 Cricket World Cup**

- ★ India defeated Bangladesh by 120 runs in the final to win the 3<sup>rd</sup> T-20 World Cup for Blind played at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, Karnataka on 17 December 2022.
- ★ It was the third title for India having won it in 2012 and 2017.
- ★ All the three T-20 World Cup for Blind has been hosted by India.
- ★ It was organised by the Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI).

- ★ CABI is the apex body for organising, developing cricket for blind in India. It is a member of the World Blind Cricket Council.
- ★ The 4<sup>th</sup> T-20 World Cup for Blind will be held in Pakistan in 2023.

### **FIFA World Cup Title**

- ★ Argentina won the FIFA World Cup 2022 title third time on 18 December after defeating defending champions France 4-2 on penalties.
- ★ The final match was played at Lusail Stadium in Lusail, Qatar.
- ★ Lionel Messi scored the first goal in the match on a penalty in the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute.
- ★ He became the first footballer in the world to score in all knockout matches of a World Cup.
- ★ Messi won the Golden Ball award for the best player in the FIFA World Cup 2022. Mbappe won the Golden Boot award for being the top goalscorer.
- ★ Emiliano Martinez of Argentina won the Golden Glove award for being the best goalkeeper.

### **Asian Wrestling Championships 2023**

- ★ The United World Wrestling (UWW) announced that the 36<sup>th</sup> Asian Wrestling Championships 2023 will be held in New Delhi, India from 28 March to 02 April 2023.
- ★ New Delhi will be hosting the event for the 7<sup>th</sup> time.
- ★ The Asian Wrestling Championship will offer ranking points to the wrestlers which will determine their seedings for the World Championships to be held in September 2023.
- ★ The World Wrestling Championships is scheduled to take place in Belgrade, Serbia from 16 September to 24 September 2023.

### **World Table Tennis (WTT) Series Event**

- ★ Panaji, capital of Goa will host India's first ever World Table Tennis (WTT) Star Contender series event from 27 February to 05 March 2023 at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Goa University campus.
- ★ The event will be hosted by Stupa Analytics Company, in association with the Goa government and the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI).
- ★ World Table Tennis (WTT) was created by the International Table Tennis Federation in 2019 to create and manage professional men's and women's Table Tennis events around the world.

### **Captain of Indian Team at the FIH Men's World Cup 2023**

- ★ Hockey India has announced Dragflicker Harmanpreet Singh as the captain of the Indian men's Hockey team for the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023.
- ★ Amit Rohidas has been named as the Vice-Captain of the squad.
- ★ The team coach is Graham Reid.
- ★ The FIH Men's Hockey World Cup is held every four years.



- ★ The 15<sup>th</sup> FIH men's world cup will be held at the Kalinga Stadium Bhubaneswar and at the newly built Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium, Rourkela from 13 January to 20 January 2023.

### **Indian Men's Cricket Team Beat Bangladesh**

- ★ The Indian cricket team led by K.L. Rahul won the cricket test series against the Shakib Al Hassan led Bangladesh team 2-0 to win the two match test series in Bangladesh.
- ★ India lost the ODI series against Bangladesh by 2-1.
- ★ Ishan Kishan made a world record by scoring fastest double century in ODI.
- ★ He made his double century against Bangladesh in just 126 balls.

### **Top Arena Junior International Badminton Championship**

- ★ Geto Sora from Arunachal Pradesh has won the Top Arena Junior International Badminton Championship title in the below 9 years category.
- ★ The Top Arena Junior International Badminton Championship was held in Kuala Lumpur from 19 December to 23 December 2022.
- ★ He won the Championship title after defeating Malaysian Jaryl Teh.

### **Elite National Women's Boxing Championships 2022**

- ★ World Champion Nikhat Zarin of Telangana and the Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain of Assam won gold medal at the 6<sup>th</sup> Elite National Women's Boxing Championships 2022 in Bhopal on 26 December 2022.
- ★ The 6<sup>th</sup> Elite National Women's Boxing Championship was held at the Taty Tope Stadium, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh from 20 December to 26 December 2022.
- ★ The Railways team topped the medals tally with 10 medals - five golds, three silvers and two bronze.
- ★ Madhya Pradesh team came second with one gold, two silver and five bronze and Haryana with two gold and two bronze claimed the third spot.

### **Australian Test Award Named After Shane Warne**

- ★ Australia's men's Test Player of the Year award will be named in honour of Shane Warne.
- ★ The Shane Warne Men's Test Player of the Year award will be presented annually at the Australian Cricket Awards.
- ★ It is the second most prestigious award for men behind the Allan Border Medal.
- ★ Warne himself won the award once, in 2006 after an incredible year that included a record 40 wickets in the famous 2005 Ashes series in England.

### **e-Sports as Part of Multisports Events**

- ★ The Government of India has officially recognised 'E-Sports' (Electronic Sports) as a part of multi-sports events.



- ★ E-sports will be handled by the Department of Sports under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- ★ This decision was taken by President Draupadi Murmu, using the powers given in provision 3 of Article 77 of the Constitution, after changing the rules related to e-sports.
- ★ The International Olympic Committee is also promoting e-sports and the first Olympic e-sports week will also be celebrated in Singapore in June 2023.
- ★ e-sports or “electronic sports”, transforms online gaming into a spectator sport.

### **ICC T-20 Cricketer of the Year Award Nominee List**

- ★ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the list of nominated players for its various categories of year end awards.
- ★ Indian opening batter Smriti Mandhana, Pakistan’s all-rounder Nida Dar, New Zealand’s all-rounder Sophie Devine and Australian all-rounder Tahlia McGrath have been nominated for the ICC Women’s T-20 cricketer of the year 2022.
- ★ Indian batter Suryakumar Yadav, Sikandar Raza of Zimbabwe, Sam Curran of England and Pakistan’s wicketkeeper batsman Mohammad Rizwan have been nominated for the ICC men’s T-20 cricketer of the year 2022.

### **South Africa’s Farhaan Behardien Announces Retirement**

- ★ South African batter Farhaan Behardien announced retirement from international cricketing career.
- ★ The 39-year-old has represented the Proteas in 59 ODIs and has 1074 runs and 14 wickets under his belt.
- ★ Behardien also has 38 T-20I caps for South Africa and has amassed 518 runs at an average of 32.37.
- ★ He also led the Proteas in the three-match T-20I series against Sri Lanka in January 2017.

## **RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS**

### **NITI Aayog Releases Study Report on ‘Carbon Capture’**

- ★ National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has released a report titled ‘Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage Policy Framework and its Deployment Mechanism in India’.
- ★ The report explores the importance of Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage as an emission reduction strategy to meet the Net Zero target of India by 2070.
- ★ The report outlines broad level policy interventions needed across various sectors for its application.
- ★ India has committed through its updated nationally determined contributions (NDC) to achieve 50% of its total installed capacity from non-fossil-based energy sources, 45% reduction in emission intensity by 2030 and taking steps towards achieving Net Zero by 2070.

## First Country in the World to Receive \$100 Billion in Remittances

- ★ According to the World Bank report “Migration and Development Brief”, India is to receive \$100 billion as remittance in 2022 an increase of 12% as compared to 2021.
- ★ In 2021 India had received \$89.4 billion in remittances.
- ★ India is the first country in the world to receive \$100 billion in remittances from migrant workers abroad.
- ★ According to the World Bank one of the main reasons for the increase in flow of remittance to India was the wage hike and a strong labour market in the United States of America.

## Global Aviation Safety Ranking

- ★ Global aviation safety ranking was released by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
- ★ India has jumped to the 48<sup>th</sup> position in the global aviation safety ranking.
- ★ India and Georgia also shared the 48<sup>th</sup> position in the ranking
- ★ In the ranking, Singapore is at the top, followed by the UAE and South Korea at the second and third positions, respectively.
- ★ ICAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- ★ It coordinates the principles and techniques of international air navigation.

## World Bank Report

- ★ According to a World Bank report released, air pollution is the second largest cause of death and disability in Bangladesh and costs about 3.9 to 4.00 percent of the country's GDP.
- ★ Bangladesh was ranked as the most polluted country in the world, and Dhaka as the second most polluted city each year between 2018 and 2021.
- ★ The report found that major construction sites and traffic in Dhaka have the highest levels of pollution.
- ★ Exposure to high levels of air pollution increases the risk of difficulties in breathing, cough, respiratory tract infections, depression and other health conditions.
- ★ The World Bank report announced that children under five, the elderly and people with diabetes, heart or respiratory disease are most vulnerable.

## Forbes Asia Heroes of Philanthropy List

- ★ Three Indian billionaires Gautam Adani, Shiv Nadar and Ashok Soota were named in the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of Forbes Asia's Heroes of Philanthropy list.
- ★ It also included Malaysian-Indian businessman Brahmaj Vasudevan and his lawyer wife Shanthi Kandiah.
- ★ Asia's richest man Gautam Adani has pledged ₹60,000 crore to charity. The money will be used in healthcare, education and skill development.

- ★ Co-founder of HCL Technologies, Shiv Nadar has donated ₹11,600 crore to the Shiv Nadar Foundation.
- ★ Ashok Soota, founder of Happiest Mind Software Company has pledged ₹600 crore to the medical research trust.

### **BBC Announces List of 100 Most Influential Women**

- ★ The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has issued a list of the world's 100 most influential women which includes women from politics, science, sports, entertainment and literature.
- ★ Four Indians are on the BBC's list of the 100 most influential women- actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, author Geetanjali Shree, Engineer and Astronaut Sirisha Bandla and social worker Sneha Jawale.
- ★ The yearly list recognizes women's achievements worldwide, from grassroots volunteers to global leaders and is used by the BBC to focus on women's experiences around the world through a dedicated series of interviews, documentaries and features.
- ★ For the first time this year, the BBC asked past '100 Women' to recommend women they believe should be included on the 2022 list.

### **2022 Hurun Global 500 List of Valuable Companies**

- ★ According to the recently released Hurun Global 500 list 2022, India has moved into the fifth position with 20 most valuable companies in the world.
- ★ The list, released by the Hurun Research Institute is a compilation of the 500 most valuable non-state-controlled companies in the world.
- ★ Companies were ranked according to their market capitalization (for listed companies) and valuations for non-listed companies.
- ★ The United States of America with 260 companies came at the top. It was followed by China with 35 companies,
- ★ India and Canada were at the 5<sup>th</sup> position with 20 companies each.

### **The World Strongest Passport List 2022**

- ★ India ranked 87 in the world's strongest passport list, while UAE ranked first in the rating of passports for 2022.
- ★ UAE was followed by Germany, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, Spain and France.
- ★ Afghanistan remained at the last position while Pakistan was ranked 94<sup>th</sup>.
- ★ The Passport Index is based on the 139 members of the United Nations.
- ★ Passport Index 2022 was published by Arton Capital.
- ★ The data for this list has been given by the governments of different countries.
- ★ To make this list, work is done on 3 steps which rates on the basis of Mobility Score (MS).
- ★ This also includes the VF portion of Visa-free (VF), Visa on Arrival (VOA), eTA and eVisa.

## Grievance Redressal Index

- ★ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has secured the first rank among all Group A Ministries, Departments and Autonomous Bodies for resolution of public grievances in the ranking report.
- ★ The report was published by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) for November 2022.
- ★ This is the fourth month in a row when UIDAI has topped the said rankings.
- ★ UIDAI's new open-source CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system is enhancing user experience and improving service delivery to residents.
- ★ This system has the capability to support multiple channels like phone call, e-mail, chatbot, web portal, social media, letter and walk-in through which the grievances can be registered, tracked and resolved effectively.
- ★ Through this new CRM system, UIDAI has moved towards a centralised complaint management system.

## 'Namami Gange' Project Among World's Top 10 Initiatives

- ★ According to a report released during the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), India's 'Namami Gange'- river Ganga rejuvenation project has been recognised as one among world's 10 most 'ground-breaking' initiatives for restoration of natural ecosystems.
- ★ National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has won the 'Public Water Agency of the Year' award at the Global Water Awards, 2019 by Global Water Intelligence.
- ★ Namami Gange was selected from over 150 such initiatives from 70 countries across the globe.
- ★ They were selected under the banner of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a global movement coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

## The Publication of Scientific Papers

- ★ According to a survey by America's National Science Foundation, India has risen from seventh to third in global scientific publications and academic output, according to Union Minister for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh.
- ★ India ranked third in the world in terms of the number of PhDs produced annually.
- ★ In a similar rising trend, the number of patents awarded by the India Patents Office to Indian scientists has more than doubled in just the last four years.
- ★ India's scholarly production climbed from 60,555 papers in 2010 to 1, 49,213 papers in 2020.
- ★ China tops the world in the publication of the highest number of scientific articles followed by The United States of America.

## University in India to get A Grade by NAAC

- ★ The Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab has become the first University in India to get A grade by scoring 3.85 in National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) grading.

- ★ The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC) with its Headquarter in Bengaluru.
- ★ The NAAC conducts assessment and accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions such as colleges, universities or other recognised institutions to derive an understanding of the ‘Quality Status’ of the institution.
- ★ The University has also been conferred with the status of “University with Potential for Excellence” by UGC.

### **Best Performing State and District in Social Progress Index**

- ★ The Prime Minister Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC) released the Social Progress Index (SPI) for States and Districts prepared by the Institute for Competitiveness and Social Progress Imperative.
- ★ The index assesses states and districts based on 12 components across three critical dimensions of social progress - Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing and Opportunity.
- ★ The index uses an extensive framework comprising 89 indicators at the state level and 49 at the district level.
- ★ Aizawl (Mizoram), Solan (Himachal Pradesh) and Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) are the top 3 best-performing districts.
- ★ Puducherry, Lakshadweep and Goa are the top three best-performing States/Union Territories.
- ★ Jharkhand was ranked at the bottom, 36<sup>th</sup> with SPI score of 43.95.

### **British Magazine’s List of 50 Greatest Actors**

- ★ Shah Rukh Khan is the only Indian actor who has been included in an international list of 50 greatest actors of all time by a prominent British Magazine Empire.
- ★ The 57-year-old Bollywood superstar has been included in the Empire magazine’s list.
- ★ The magazine highlighted Khan’s notable characters from four movies namely Sanjay Leela Bhansali-directed ‘Devdas’, Karan Johar’s ‘My Name Is Khan’ and ‘Kuch Kuch Hota Hai’ and ‘Swades’ directed by Ashutosh Gowarikar.

### **Highest-Paid Female Athletes in Forbes Annual List**

- ★ India’s badminton star PV Sindhu is the only Indian sportsperson to feature in the top 25 of Forbes’ annual list of the world’s highest-paid female athletes.
- ★ Sindhu, the 2016 Tokyo Olympics silver medalist, is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the list, which is topped by Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka.
- ★ Sindhu, who won the singles gold and doubles silver at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022 earned \$7 million out of her total earnings of \$7.1 million.

### **Best Cuisines of the World**

- ★ According to Taste Atlas, India ranks fifth in the global list of best cuisines for 2022.

- ★ The ranking is based on audience votes for ingredients, dishes and beverages.
- ★ Italy's cuisine topped the ranking, followed by Greece and Spain.
- ★ India received 4.54 points and the best rated foods of the country include 'garam masala, malai, ghee, butter garlic naan, keema'.

### **Top Consulting Firm by the Asian Development Bank**

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) released annual Procurement report 2022.
- ★ The report has ranked the Government of India owned Water and Power Consultancy Services India Limited (WAPCOS) Company as the top Consulting Services Firm in Water and other Infrastructure Sectors.
- ★ WAPCOS is the only Indian Public Sector to feature in the above categories.
- ★ WAPCOS was established by the government of India in 1969 under the aegis of the Ministry of Water Resources to utilize India's knowledge and expertise in the field of water resources by sharing and exporting technology to friendly developing nations.

## **AWARDS & PRIZES**

### **NSEIT Best Tech Initiative Award**

- ★ The Manthan platform conceptualized and implemented by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India has won the NSEIT Best Tech Initiative of the Year at the Dun and Bradstreet Business Excellence Awards 2022.
- ★ The award was conferred at a ceremony held on 29 November 2022 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ★ The award was presented for building the technology infrastructure to support Manthan, a platform that promotes collaboration at scale between industry and the scientific research and development ecosystem.
- ★ The Dun and Bradstreet SME and Mid-Corporate 'Business Excellence Awards 2022' covers 23 categories largely based on business performance parameters.
- ★ NSEIT is a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange of India.

### **Para Sports Person of the Year**

- ★ Avani Lekhara, who won two medals at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics, was named Para Sports Person of the Year.
- ★ Shrey Kadyan was named Special Sportsperson of the Year.
- ★ Sarkar Talwar, a former Ranji cricketer, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement of the Year award at the Turf 2022 and India Sports Awards of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- ★ R.B. Ramesh was named Best Male Coach and Nonita Lal Qureshi was named Best Female Coach.



## Miss Earth 2022

- ★ South Korea's Mina Sue Choi was named Miss Earth 2022 during the pageant's coronation at Cove Manila, Okada Hotel, Paraaue City.
- ★ Only three queens received the pageant's three element titles out of a total of 86 Eco-warriors.
- ★ Andrea Aguilera of Columbia is Miss Fire 2022, Nadeen Ayoub of Palestine is Miss Water 2022 and Sheridan Mortlock of Australia is Miss Air 2022.
- ★ Choi also won a few medals at the pre-pageant competitions.

## Banker's Bank of the Year Award 2022

- ★ Canara Bank received the 'Banker's Bank of the Year Award 2022' for the India segment at the Global Banking Summit held in London, United Kingdom (UK).
- ★ The public sector lender has been adjudged as the Best Bank in India.
- ★ The Canara bank's MD and CEO L.V. Prabhakar received the award from the organizers.
- ★ The Bankers' Bank of the year award is considered to be like Oscar award for the banking sector.
- ★ The winners are judged on their ability to deliver returns, strategy, innovation, technology and product and services in their respective geographies in the last 12 months.

## Time Magazine's 2022 Person of the Year

- ★ The American magazine 'Time' has named Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and 'the spirit of Ukraine' as its 2022 Person of the Year.
- ★ The Time person of the year award goes to an event or person deemed to have had the most influence on global events over the past 12 months.
- ★ The Time magazine editor Edward Felsenthal wrote that 'spirit of Ukraine' referred to Ukrainians around the world, including many who 'fought behind the scenes' against the Russian invasion.

## EAG Laureate Award on Financial Security

- ★ State-owned Bank of Baroda has announced it has bagged an EAG Laureate award in the International Olympiad of Financial Security held at Sochi, Russia.
- ★ The Eurasian group on combating money laundering and terrorism (EAG) is a FATF type regional which comprises of 9 members including India.
- ★ The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is the global anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing body.

## US Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award

- ★ The United States of America President Joe Biden has conferred the Presidential Lifetime Achievement (PLA) Award to the Indian American Krishna Vavilala.
- ★ The Presidential Lifetime Achievement is America's highest honour and is awarded to American citizens, who exhibit outstanding character and dedication to their communities.
- ★ Krishna Vavilala is from Andhra Pradesh and migrated to the United States.

- ★ He is a retired Electrical Engineer and is the founder and Chairman of the Foundation for India Studies (FIS).
- ★ It is a non-profit organisation, whose Indo-American Oral History Project” won the 2019 Mary Fay Barnes Award for Excellence.

### S & P Platts Global CEO of the Year Award

- ★ Gurdeep Singh has been named the S & P Platts Global CEO of the Year Award.
- ★ The 24<sup>th</sup> annual Platts Global Energy Awards which is also considered as the “Oscars of the energy industry” was held in New York, United States of America.
- ★ The S & P Platts Global CEO of the Year Award recognize corporate and individual innovation, leadership and exemplary performance across the entire energy and chemicals spectrum.

### Ayushman Bharat Health Account ID

- ★ Jammu & Kashmir won first place in the category for creating Ayushman Bharat Health Account IDs and second place in the category for conducting teleconsultations in honor of Universal Health Coverage Day in 2022.
- ★ Every year, a day called Universal Health Coverage Day is observed to honor the importance of this program, which strives to bring affordable, high-quality healthcare to all people.
- ★ The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) seeks to create the framework required to sustain the nation’s integrated digital health infrastructure.
- ★ Through digital highways, it would close the distance between the various healthcare ecosystem stakeholders.

### Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award

- ★ Former Vice President Venkaiah Naidu has been conferred with the 25<sup>th</sup> Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award (SIES).
- ★ Other awardees in various categories included the Governor of Kerala Arif Mohammed Khan, eminent industrialist Ratan Tata, renowned cardiologist and Padma Vibhushan awardee Marthanda Varma Sankaran Valianathan, Scientific Advisor to the Government of India Ajay Sood and famous Harikatha artiste Vishakha Hari.
- ★ The awards were instituted by the South Indian Education Society in 1998 in memory of the late Seer of Kanchi, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati.
- ★ Awards are given in the fields of public leadership, community leadership, science and technology and social thinkers to those who had made outstanding contributions in the above four fields.
- ★ Each award carries a cash prize of ₹2.5 lakh, a citation, an ornamental lamp and a scroll.

### SpiceJet - ‘Safety Performer of the Year’

- ★ SpiceJet was named ‘Safety Performer of the Year’ by GMR Delhi Airport Awards for being the top performer among self-handling airlines and for dramatically reducing ground safety infractions.
- ★ The SpiceJet ground handling team at Delhi Airport accomplished the result by focusing on continuous quality improvement, innovation and hard work.

- ★ The airline was the only scheduled Indian airline to be audited by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations' aviation agency.
- ★ SpiceJet's safety systems assessment aided India in achieving its highest-ever safety ranking in an ICAO audit.

### **NMDC Wins IEI Industry Excellence Award 2022**

- ★ National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) won the coveted IEI (Institution of Engineers, India) Industry Excellence Award 2022 in Chennai.
- ★ NMDC, the largest producer of iron ore in the country, was honoured at the 37<sup>th</sup> Indian Engineering Congress for its outstanding performance and high level of business excellence.
- ★ The Institution of Engineers (India) has given the Industry Excellence Award to NMDC, after reviewing the business operations, financial performance, environmental performance, research and development, CSR and corporate governance policies of a company.

### **Mrs World 2022 Title**

- ★ Sargam Kaushal has won the title of Mrs. World 2022, becoming the winner among contestants from 63 countries.
- ★ The title has returned to India after 21 years.
- ★ Mrs. Polynesia was named the first runner-up, followed by Mrs. Canada as the second runner-up.
- ★ Mrs World is the first beauty pageant for married women.
- ★ The pageant was conceived in 1984 and traces its roots to the Mrs. America pageant.

### **Digital India Awards 2022**

- ★ The Smart Cities Mission of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has won the Platinum Icon at the Digital India Awards 2022 for their initiative 'DataSmart Cities: Empowering Cities through Data'.
- ★ The award was announced under the 'Data Sharing and Use for Socio-Economic Development' category.
- ★ The DataSmart Cities Initiative is a key step in creating a strong data ecosystem that enables evidence-based decision-making in cities.
- ★ It is a National competition conducted by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- ★ It aims to harness the power of data for better governance in India's 100 Smart Cities.

### **Person of the Year by PETA India for 2022**

- ★ Sonakshi Sinha, a Bollywood actress, has been named PETA India's Person of the Year for 2022.
- ★ Sonakshi's activities helped save many animals that would have been slaughtered for fashion, but she was given the title because of her ardent support for dog and cat rights.

- ★ She actively participates in animal welfare initiatives and frequently advocates for stricter animal protection regulations.

### **Green Building Award**

- ★ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) headquarter in New Delhi has won the prestigious GRIHA Exemplary Performance Award 2022, a top national level Green Building Award.
- ★ GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) is a national rating system for green buildings in India.
- ★ UIDAI HQ has been declared a winner among the existing highest rated building category.
- ★ UIDAI believes and promotes the idea of recycle and reuse to reduce carbon footprint.

### **First Indian Song to be Shortlisted for Oscar Award**

- ★ The song 'Natu-Natu' from S.S. Rajamouli's film 'RRR' has been shortlisted for Oscars 2023.
- ★ This song has been shortlisted in the Best Song category, which is one of the 15 songs shortlisted for Oscars 2023.
- ★ This is India's first song to be shortlisted for Oscars.
- ★ Song 'Naatu-Naatu' is composed by MM Keeravani and written by Chandrabose, voiced by Rahul Sipligunj and Kaal Bhairav.
- ★ This song was also nominated for Best Original Song at the 80<sup>th</sup> Golden Globe Awards.
- ★ The award ceremony will be held on 12 March 2023, at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles, California.

### **ASEAN India Grassroots Innovation Forum**

- ★ Ms Shalini Kumari from India received first prize in the Grassroots Innovation Competition at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN India Grassroots Innovation forum for her innovation 'Modified walker with adjustable legs'.
- ★ She was first recognized by the National Innovation Foundation (NIF) – India.
- ★ The technology was transferred to the industry, Vissco Rehabilitation Aids, a leading manufacturer of orthopaedic products in the country.
- ★ It is available for purchase through Brick-and-Mortar stores and also through marketplaces like Amazon India for purchase by common people of the country.

### **15<sup>th</sup> Enertia Awards 2022**

- ★ The government of India owned company NHPC Limited has been awarded as Winner of 'Best Globally Competitive Power Company of India – Hydropower and Renewable Energy Sector' at PRAKASHmay '15<sup>th</sup> Enertia Awards 2022'.
- ★ This award is organized by ENERTIA Foundation and supported by the Renewable Energy Promotion Association and the New Delhi Institute of Management.

- ★ U.S. Sahi, Executive Director, NHPC received the award on behalf of NHPC at New Delhi Institute of Management, New Delhi.

### **DSCI Best Security Practices Award**

- ★ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has won the Data Security Council of India's (DSCI) Best Security Practices in Government Sector award.
- ★ The award was given to UIDAI during DSCI's three-day Annual Information Security Summit (AISS) in Gurugram
- ★ The award was given for its significant role in securing national critical Aadhaar infrastructure that provides digital identity-based welfare services to residents.
- ★ Data Security Council of India is a premier industry body on data protection in India. It was set up by the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM).

### **VinFuture Special Prize 2022**

- ★ Renowned researcher and Madras IIT Professor Pradeep Thalappil has bagged the VinFuture Prize 2022 instituted by the VinFuture Prize Council to honour breakthrough research projects.
- ★ Thalappil has been awarded the 'Special Prize dedicated to Innovators from Developing Countries' for his development of a low-cost filtration system to remove arsenic and other heavy metals from groundwater.
- ★ The award was presented by Prize Council Chairman Richard Friend at a ceremony in Vietnam's capital Hanoi.
- ★ The Winfuture Prize is awarded every year by the Winfuture Fund to recognize breakthrough scientific and technological inventions that have the potential to make a meaningful difference to people's lives.

### **Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for 2021–2022**

- ★ The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize has been shared by Shobhana Kumar and Sudeep Sen for their collections of haibun, A Sky Full of Bucket Lists and Anthropocene: Climate Change, Contagion and Consolation, respectively.
- ★ The winners, who each received \$10,000 and a Rabindranath Tagore figurine, were chosen from a shortlist of 11 at the India International Centre.
- ★ Sanjoy K. Roy, the director of the Jaipur Literature Festival received the Tagore Prize for social achievement.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Jail in UP to be Rated Five Star by FSSAI**

- ★ The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) has awarded the food provided by the Bulandshahr prison of Uttar Pradesh a five-star rating and the tag 'Eat Right Campus'.
- ★ Bulandshahr Jail is the second prison after Farrukhabad jail to get this tag from Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ The kitchen's food quality, storage and hygiene on stringent measures, based on which the Bulandshahr prison was given a five-star rating, the 'Eat Right Campus' tag in addition to the remark of 'Excellent' by the FSSAI.

## Cyclist Swasti Singh was Awarded Ekalabya Puraskar

- ★ The 'Ekalabya Puraskar' for the year 2022 was presented to cyclist Swasti Singh. This award is given every year to encourage young sporting talents.
- ★ She was honoured for her performance from 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2022 at both national and international levels.
- ★ Singh was presented with a citation, trophy and ₹5 lakh cash.
- ★ It was organised by Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPACT), the charitable wing of IMFA.
- ★ Billiards and snooker world champion Pankaj Advani attended the ceremony as the chief guest.
- ★ Eklavya Puraskar has come a long way since 1993 to be recognized as the most prestigious sports award of Odisha and is at par with many national awards.
- ★ This award is given every year to the young sportspersons of Odisha for their outstanding performance in the last two years.

## Wharton-QS Reimagine Education Awards 2022

- ★ Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) won Wharton-QS Reimagine Education Awards 2022.
- ★ The best programme awards went to the IIT Madras courses, BS Data Science and NPTEL in partnership with IISc Bangalore.
- ★ The institute has been awarded and its BS in Data Science and Applications is awarded the silver in the best online programme category.
- ★ The National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), a joint initiative of IITs and IISc, run by IIT Madras, won the gold in the lifelong learning category.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### First Woman Referee at Men's World Cup

- ★ FIFA has announced that Stephanie Frappart of France will be the first woman to referee a men's World Cup match.
- ★ She will officiate the match to be played between Germany and Costa Rica in Group E on 02 December 2022.
- ★ France's Stephanie Frappart is one of three women referees among the 36 selected for the tournament in Qatar, alongside Rwandan Salima Mukansanga and Japan's Yoshimi Yamashita.
- ★ She was the first woman to referee in France's domestic Ligue 1 in 2019, the same year she took charge of the women's World Cup final in her home country.
- ★ The FIFA World Cup 2022 is being held in Qatar from 20 November to 18 December 2022.



## President of AAI

- ★ Prasanth Kumar has been elected as the President of the Advertising Agencies Association of India (AAAI) for fiscal 2022-23.
- ★ Prasant Kumar is presently CEO, South Asia of GroupM Media (India) Pvt Ltd.
- ★ Kumar has an experience of over 25 years in the industry.
- ★ Before joining GroupM, he held positions at Pepsi, The Hindu, The Media Edge, and McCann Erickson.
- ★ He has served as AAI's Vice President from 2020 to 2022.
- ★ The 'Advertising Agencies Association of India' (AAAI) was formed in the year 1945 to further the interests of the advertising industry.

## MD and CEO of BSE

- ★ BSE Ltd has received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for Sundararaman Ramamurthy as the managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of the Bombay Stock Exchange.
- ★ He has worked as a senior Vice President at National Stock Exchange (NSE).
- ★ He introduced mobile stock trading to India and diversified in new areas including currency, commodities and equity derivatives, SMEs, startups, mutual funds, insurance distribution, spot markets and power trading.
- ★ At present, he is the chief operating officer of the India arm of Bank of America Corp.

## Chairperson of National Commission for Backward Classes

- ★ Hansraj Gangaram Ahir assumed charge as Chairperson, National Commission for Backward Classes on 02 December 2022.
- ★ He is from Maharashtra and is an Agriculturist by profession.
- ★ Hansraj Gangaram Ahir has been elected four times Member of Parliament and also has been the member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council.
- ★ He has also been the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- ★ The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was set up by the Government of India in 1993 under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.
- ★ It investigates and monitors all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the socially and educationally backward classes under the Constitution or under any other law.

## Secretary of Revenue Department

- ★ Senior bureaucrat Sanjay Malhotra assumed the charge as the secretary in the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- ★ Sanjay Malhotra replaced Tarun Bajaj, who retired on 30 November 2022.

- ★ A 1990-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, Malhotra was working as an officer on special duty (OSD) in the revenue department since October 2022.
- ★ Malhotra takes over as the top bureaucrat in the revenue department at a time when the government is preparing for the Union Budget 2023-24 to be tabled in Parliament on 01 February 2023.

### **Former Health Secretary Appointed as UPSC Member**

- ★ Andhra Pradesh cadre Indian Administrative (IAS) Officer and Former Health Secretary Mrs. Preeti Sudan took the oath of office and secrecy as a member of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- ★ UPSC Chairman Dr. Manoj Soni administered the oath to Preeti Sudan at Central Hall, UPSC Main Building.
- ★ Sudan has been a consultant to the World Bank.
- ★ She served as Secretary of the Department of Food and Public Distribution and in the Women and Child Development and Defence Ministries.
- ★ Her notable contributions include starting two of the country's flagship programs namely 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' and 'Ayushman Bharat'.

### **Chairman of the Digital Entertainment Committee**

- ★ The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has appointed Rohit Jain, as the new chairman of their digital entertainment committee for the period of 2 years from 2022 to 2024.
- ★ Rohit Jain has succeeded Amit Goenka, head of ZEE5 Global.
- ★ Amit Doshi, head of IVM Podcasts has also been appointed Co-Chairman.
- ★ Jain will play a key role in working with various stakeholders of the digital entertainment ecosystem, such as OTT players, regulatory bodies and other industry associations to focus on creating a rewarding vision and guiding the digital ecosystem to a more evolved space.

### **Batting Coach of Indian Women Cricket Team by BCCI**

- ★ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) appointed Hrishikesh Kanitkar as the Batting Coach of the Senior Women's cricket team.
- ★ Kanitkar will take charge of the team from the upcoming five-match T-20I series against Australia starting 09 December in Mumbai.
- ★ Hrishikesh Kanitkar was the head coach of the under -19 men's cricket team which won the world cup held in West Indies in 2022.

### **Chairperson of NSCI**

- ★ Rajeeva Laxman Karandikar, retired professor at Chennai Mathematical Institute (CMI), has been appointed as part-time chairperson of National Statistical Commission of India (NSCI) for three years.
- ★ He has designed, supervised and analysed nationwide opinion polls for Indian parliamentary elections as well as state legislatures since 1998.

- ★ He was a member of the committee constituted by the Election Commission (EC) of India.

### Chairman of ONGC

- ★ The Government of India has appointed former chairman of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) Arun Kumar Singh, as the new Chairman of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).
- ★ He has been appointed for a term of three years.
- ★ Vetsa Rama Krishna Gupta has taken over the additional charge of Chairman and Managing Director of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL).
- ★ It is a public sector company owned by the government of India.

### Chancellor of Kerala Kalamandalam Deemed University

- ★ The Kerala Government appointed classical dancer Mallika Sarabhai as the chancellor of the Kerala Kalamandalam deemed university.
- ★ Mallika Sarabhai is a world-renowned Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi performer.
- ★ Apart from being a dancer, she has also proved her mettle in the fields of theatre, film and television and has also established herself as a writer, publisher and director.

### Chairman of NABARD

- ★ K.V. Shaji has been named Chairman of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
- ★ He formerly served as NABARD's Deputy Managing Director (DMD) till May 2020.
- ★ He is a post graduate in Agriculture and holds a PGDM degree in Public Policy from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad.
- ★ Prior to this, he worked in Canara Bank in various capacities for 26 years.

### First Female President of Peru

- ★ Vice President Dina Boluarte has been sworn in as President on 07 December.
- ★ Dina is the first female President of the country. She will hold the post till 2026.
- ★ Francisco Morales, head of Peru's constitutional court, ordered Vice President Dina Boluarte to assume the presidency in a speech before parliament voted on an impeachment motion.
- ★ She will replace Pedro Castillo.

### Managing Director of NDDB

- ★ The government of India on 09 December 2022 has appointed Meenesh C Shah as the Managing Director of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- ★ Presently Meenesh Shah was also holding the additional charge of the Chairman NDDB.
- ★ NDDB was set up in 1966 as a society under the Societies Act 1860.
- ★ It comes under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

## First Female President of TTFI

- ★ Meghna Ahlawat was elected the first-ever woman President of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI), while former veteran Kamlesh Mehta was elected as the General Secretary.
- ★ Ahlawat, who is the wife of Haryana deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala contested against Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghvi.
- ★ The Delhi High Court had suspended TTFI in February and appointed a Committee of Administrators (CoA) to take over its functioning.
- ★ Dushyant Chautala was the previous TTFI President.

## CM of Gujarat

- ★ BJP leader Bhupendra Patel took oath as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for a second straight term in Gandhinagar in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
- ★ Governor Acharya Devvrat administered the oath as the 18<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of the state.
- ★ The BJP won 156 seats in the 182-member assembly.

## MD & CEO of Ashok Leyland

- ★ Hinduja group flagship Ashok Leyland has appointed Shenu Agarwal as the company's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with immediate effect.
- ★ Shenu Agarwal succeeds Vipin Sondhi, who served as MD & CEO of the company between December 2019 and December 2021.
- ★ Agarwal is expected to drive the technology development, growth and future strategy for Ashok Leyland towards achieving its vision to be among the top 10 commercial vehicles (CV) players globally.
- ★ Agarwal is the former President of Farm Equipment Manufacturer Escorts Kubota Ltd (EKL).

## Chief Scientist of WHO

- ★ Wellcome Trust director Dr. Jeremy Farrar will become the World Health Organization's (WHO) Chief Scientist in the second quarter of 2023.
- ★ He will succeed Soumya Swaminathan.
- ★ Dr. Farrar will oversee the Science Division, bringing together the best brains in science and innovation from around the world to develop and deliver high-quality health services to the people who need them most, no matter who they are and where they live.
- ★ Farrar is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences UK, the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO), the National Academies USA and a Fellow of The Royal Society.

## CEO of 2032 Olympic Organising Committee

- ★ American executive Cindy Hook has been appointed as CEO of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

- ★ She is currently a member of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and the Singapore Economic Development Board.
- ★ Prior to this, Hook worked for the international professional services network in the U.S. and in Australia.

### **Prime Minister of Ireland**

- ★ Indian origin Leo Varadkar was elected as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland for the second time on 17 December 2022.
- ★ Michael Martin has become the deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.
- ★ Leo Varadkar was earlier Prime Minister of Ireland from 2017 to 2020.
- ★ After the 2020 general election Martin's Fianna Fail party and Varadkar's Fine Gael party entered into a coalition deal under which powers were to be shared between the two parties.

### **CMD of NHPC Limited**

- ★ Rajeev Kumar Vishnoi has assumed the additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).
- ★ Before his appointment, Yamuna Kumar Chaubey NHPC's Director (Technical) was holding the additional charge of the CMD of the company.
- ★ Currently, he is also the CMD of Rishikesh-based Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited (THDCIL).

### **First Chancellor of Gati Shakti University**

- ★ Ashwini Vaishnaw has been appointed as the Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara, Gujarat by President Draupadi Murmu.
- ★ The President has appointed Dr. Manoj Chaudhary as the first Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University, Vadodara, Gujarat.
- ★ Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw will be the first Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya.
- ★ As per the Central University Act, 2009, Dr. Manoj Chaudhary will hold the position of Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University for 5 years from the date he assumes office.
- ★ Gati Shakti University was granted central status by the Union Cabinet in July 2022.

### **India's New Ambassador to Saudi Arabia**

- ★ The Government of India has appointed senior diplomat Suhel Ajaz Khan as India's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia.
- ★ Suhel Ajaz Khan is a 1997-batch Indian Foreign Service Officer and is presently serving as Indian ambassador to Lebanon.
- ★ Khan worked at the Indian Embassy in Riyadh between September 2017 and June 2019 as Deputy Chief of Mission.
- ★ Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner after the United States of America, China and the United Arab Emirates.

## Head of Air India's Low-Cost Airline Business

- ★ Tata Group has appointed Alope Singh as the Chief of its low-cost airline business from 01 January 2023.
- ★ The Low-Cost Carrier business will comprise AirAsia India and Air India Express.
- ★ Currently the Tata group operates four air lines. They are Air India, Air India Express, AirAsia India and Vistara. Vistara is a joint venture of Tata with Singapore Airlines.
- ★ Low-cost airlines or budget airlines or no-frill airlines do not provide traditional services like food, drinks or other premium services and their fares are also usually low.

## Vice-Chairman of Rajya Sabha

- ★ Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has nominated legendary former athlete and MP P T Usha to the panel of Vice chairpersons in Rajya Sabha.
- ★ This is the first time that a nominated member has been appointed to the panel of Vice Chairman of Rajya Sabha.
- ★ PT Usha was also elected as the President of the Indian Olympic Association recently.

## Prime Minister of Nepal

- ★ President Bidya Devi Bhandari of Nepal has appointed Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' as the new Prime Minister of Nepal on 25 December 2022.
- ★ Prachand will become the Prime Minister for the third time.
- ★ Prachand's Maoist Center Party won 32 seats in Nepal's 275-member House of Representatives.
- ★ Pushpa Kamal Dahal will replace Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress party as the Prime Minister.

## Advisor to the Gujarat Chief Minister

- ★ Former finance secretary, Government of India Hasmukh Adhia and former retired bureaucrat SS Rathore has been appointed as the Chief advisor and advisor respectively to the Chief Minister of Gujarat Bhupendra Patel.
- ★ SS Rathore is a former secretary of the roads and buildings department of the Gujarat government.
- ★ Hasmukh Adia is a former Gujarat-cadre IAS officer. He was made the secretary in the Department of Financial Services, Union Ministry of Finance when Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India in 2014.

## Chairman Of NHAI

- ★ Government of India has appointed senior IAS officer Santosh Kumar Yadav as the chairman of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
- ★ A 1995-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, Santosh Yadav is currently additional secretary in the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education.



- ★ Government has also appointed Ganji Kamala V Rao as the Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ★ The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) was constituted by the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988. It is responsible for the development, maintenance and management of National Highways.

### Chief of Suryoday Bank

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India has approved the re-appointment of Baskar Babu Ramachandran as MD and CEO of Suryoday Small Finance Bank for three years with effect from 23 January 2023.
- ★ Prior to co-founding Suryoday Micro Finance Pvt Ltd, he held various positions with various companies including GE Capital Transportation Financial Services Ltd, HDFC Bank Ltd.
- ★ Suryoday Small Finance Bank (Suryoday SFB) is a scheduled commercial bank.
- ★ The Bank was originally incorporated as Suryoday Micro Finance Pvt Ltd at Chennai in 2008 and subsequently got converted into a public limited company as Suryoday Micro Finance Ltd in 2015.

### Rajeev Badyal to the National Space Council Advisory Group

- ★ The American Vice President Kamala Harris has named Indian American Rajeev Badyal to the National Space Council's Users Advisory Group (UAG).
- ★ The UAG is tasked to maintain a robust and responsible US space enterprise and preserve space for current and future generations.
- ★ The UAG is headed by US Air Force Rtd General Lester Lyles.
- ★ Rajeev Badyal is currently the Vice-President of Project Kuiper of Amazon.
- ★ The UAG will provide the National Space Council advice and recommendations on matters related to space policy and strategy.

### Prime Minister of Israel

- ★ Benjamin Netanyahu was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Israel for the sixth time on 29 December 2022.
- ★ He replaced Yair Lapid whose party failed to win a majority in the Israeli Parliamentary election held on 01 November 2022.
- ★ This was the 5<sup>th</sup> general election in Israel in the past four years.
- ★ The longest serving Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu heads a coalition government which is considered to be one of the most right-wing governments in the history of the country.

### Interim Central Vigilance Commissioner

- ★ The government of India has appointed the vigilance commissioner Praveen Kumar Srivastava as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).
- ★ Srivastava is a 1988-batch (retired) Indian Administrative Service officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre.

- ★ The Vigilance Commission is headed by a CVC and can have a maximum of two other Vigilance Commissioners.
- ★ Besides Srivastava, former Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Arvind Kumar is the other Vigilance Commissioner.
- ★ The tenure of a CVC and vigilance commissioner is of four years or till the incumbent attains the age of 65 years.

## DEFENCE

### 2022 Navy Day

- ★ The Indian Navy will hold its annual Navy Day celebration 2022 at Visakhapatnam on 04 December 2022, as per the Prime Minister's vision to move significant events and festivities out of the national capital.
- ★ The Indian Army has also announced that the Next Army Day parade 2023 will be held outside New Delhi in the Army's Southern Command area on 15 January 2023.
- ★ In 2022, the Indian Navy is all set to demonstrate India's combat prowess and capability through an 'Operational Demonstration' at Visakhapatnam on 04 December 2022.
- ★ Navy Day is observed on 4 December to commemorate Operation Trident of the Indian Navy launched on 4 December 1971 to block the Karachi port of Pakistan.

### New Design of The President's Standard and Colour

- ★ The President of India has approved the introduction of a new design for the President's Standard and Colour and Indian Navy Crest for the Indian Navy, which was unveiled at Visakhapatnam on Navy Day.
- ★ The President's Colour is given to the 'operational formation of the force' while the President's Standard is meant for the 'static formation'.
- ★ They are given to the best-performing units of the force.

### Scorpene Submarine 'Vagir' Delivered to Indian Navy

- ★ The fifth submarine of the Project-75, Kalvari Class submarines, Yard 11879 (Vagir) was delivered to the Indian Navy on 20 December 2022.
- ★ Project-75 includes indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design.
- ★ These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with Naval Group, France.
- ★ The construction of these submarines in an Indian yard is another step towards 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

## Air version of BrahMos Missile

- ★ The Indian Air Force successfully tested the extended range version of the Brahmos Air Launched missile against a ship target in Bay of Bengal from Su-30 MKI fighter jet on 29 December 2022.
- ★ Brahmos supersonic missile has been developed by the Brahmos Aerospace Ltd.
- ★ The company is a joint venture of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India and Russia's NPOM.
- ★ The extended range of the Brahmos missile have the ability to take out targets in sea 400 km away.
- ★ The successful test firing was a joint effort by the Indian Air Force, Indian Navy, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the BrahMos Aerospace (BAPL).

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### India's First Private Space Vehicle

- ★ Chennai-based space tech startup Agnikul Cosmos launched India's first private launchpad and mission control centre at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota.
- ★ The facility was inaugurated by ISRO chairman S. Somanath.
- ★ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has supported the private Company AgniKul Cosmos for setting up the launchpad.
- ★ This facility has two parts which includes the Agnikul launchpad and the Agnikul mission control centre—which are four kilometres apart.
- ★ The launchpad is designed to accommodate and support liquid stage-controlled launches.
- ★ The Chennai-based startup Agnikul Cosmos plans to launch its Agnibaan rocket from this launchpad.

### Technology to Generate Electricity from Sea Waves

- ★ Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras Researchers have developed an 'Ocean Wave Energy Converter' that can generate electricity from sea waves.
- ★ The system, named 'Sindhuja-I', was deployed by the researchers about six kilometres off the coast of Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu, where the sea depth is about 20 metres.
- ★ Sindhuja-I can currently produce 100 watts of power. It will generate one megawatt of power in the next three years.
- ★ The research team plans to deploy a remote water desalination system and a surveillance camera at the location by December 2023.
- ★ The system has been named 'Sindhuja-1', which means 'originating from the ocean'.

## ISRO and Social Alpha

- ★ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Social Alpha signed a MoU to launch SpaceTech Innovation Network (SpIN).
- ★ It is a one-of-its-kind public-private collaboration for start-ups and SMEs in the space industry.
- ★ This is an important step towards providing further impetus to India's recent space reform policies.
- ★ It will work towards identifying and unleashing the market potential of promising space technology innovators.
- ★ SpIN has launched its first innovation challenge for developing solutions in areas of maritime and land transportation, urbanisation, mapping and surveying.

## ISRO will Develop Spatial Data Infrastructure Geoportal

- ★ Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS), a unit of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) developed Spatial Data Infrastructure geoportal 'Geo-Ladakh' for UT-Ladakh.
- ★ The project encompasses spatial database generation (water resources, vegetation and energy potential) using remote sensing, geospatial techniques and the development of a Geo-portal for hosting this database.
- ★ The project also aims towards training of UT-Ladakh officials on Geospatial techniques and applications.
- ★ Portal provides geospatial data visualization and analytics for UT-Ladakh, consisting of Spatial viewer, Carbon Neutrality, Geospatial utility mapping and Geo-Tourism.

## Arab-Built Lunar Spacecraft

- ★ A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carried into space the first ever Arab-built lunar spacecraft.
- ★ It was launched from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.
- ★ Rashid Rover was built by Dubai's Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC), in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and is being delivered by the HAKUTO-R lander, engineered by Japanese lunar exploration company ispace.
- ★ HAKUTO-R will also become the first commercial spacecraft ever to make a controlled landing on the moon.
- ★ Rashid rover will provide 'novel and highly valued data, images, and insights', as well as 'collect scientific data on matters relating to the origin of the solar system, our planet and life'.

## International Junior Science Olympiad

- ★ India secured the top rank at the 19<sup>th</sup> International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) 2022 held in Bogota, Colombia by winning 6 gold medals.
- ★ A total of six students from India participated in the competition and each earned one gold.
- ★ The Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE) is the nodal centre of the country for the Olympiad programme.

- ★ India won the best team award, being the only country to win six gold medals. Three members of the Indian contingent also jointly won bronze medals in the experimental category.

### **NASA Launches International Mission ‘SWOT’**

- ★ The US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the French space agency Centre National d’Etudes Spatiales (CNES) have launched the Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) mission.
- ★ The objective is to track nearly all the water on Earth’s surface. The mission has a lifespan of three years.
- ★ The SWOT mission was launched through a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from the Space Launch Complex at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, United States of America.
- ★ SWOT will cover the entire Earth’s surface between 78 degrees south and 78 degrees north latitude at least once every 21 days.
- ★ The satellite will measure the height of water in freshwater bodies and the ocean on more than 90 per cent of Earth’s surface.
- ★ This information will provide insights into how the ocean influences climate change, how a warming world affects lakes, rivers and reservoirs and how communities can better prepare for disasters, such as floods.

### **India’s Manned Space Flight Gaganyaan**

- ★ India’s maiden human space flight mission Gaganyaan is targeted to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2024.
- ★ Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching a crew of 3 members to an orbit of 400 km for a 3 days mission and bring them back safely to earth, by landing in Indian sea waters.
- ★ Four Indian Air Force pilots have been identified as crew for the mission who are undergoing training in Russia.
- ★ According to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) LMV3 rocket will be used as a launch vehicle for the Gaganyaan mission.
- ★ It will take the crew 16 minutes to reach space, where they will spend three days conducting scientific experiments.

### **US Air Force Launches 1<sup>st</sup> Operational Hypersonic Missile**

- ★ The United States Air Force (USAF) has successfully tested its first prototype hypersonic missile AGM-183A Air-launched Rapid Response Weapon (ARRW) from a B-52H bomber off California’s coast.
- ★ This test was the first launch of a full prototype operational missile.
- ★ Hypersonic missiles are capable of being steered to deliver nuclear weapons
- ★ ARRW is designed to enable the U.S. to hold fixed, high-value, time-sensitive targets at risk in contested environments.

- ★ Lockheed Martin-designed the weapon based on previous test vehicles built by DARPA (opens in new tab) that have an alleged maximum speed of 15,000 mph (24,000 kph).

### **IIT Kanpur Develops Artificial Heart**

- ★ Researchers at IIT Kanpur have developed an artificial heart, which will prove to be helpful for people suffering from cardiac problems.
- ★ He announced that heart transplants will now be simple. In critical patients, artificial hearts can be placed.
- ★ This artificial heart was made by cardiologists from across the country and IIT Kanpur.

### **Jio Launches 5G services in Andhra Pradesh**

- ★ Reliance Jio has launched 5G services in Andhra Pradesh with an investment of ₹6,500 crore starting with the cities of Tirumala, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Guntur.
- ★ Jio 5G services will be available throughout the state by the end of next year 2023.
- ★ Andhra Pradesh Information and Technology Minister Gudivada Amarnath and Chief Secretary KS Jawahar Reddy launched the Jio True 5G and Jio True 5G Powered wi-fi services on 26<sup>th</sup> December.
- ★ In addition to its existing investment of ₹26,000 crore, Jio has invested over ₹6,500 crore for the deployment of 5G network in Andhra Pradesh, towards the development of the state.

### **G20 Science Working Group's Secretariat**

- ★ The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru will function as the secretariat for Science 20 (S20).
- ★ It is a working group set up as part of the G20 which will be presided over by India in 2023.
- ★ The theme of the S20 in 2023 is 'Disruptive Science for Innovative and Sustainable Development'.
- ★ This broad issue will be discussed throughout the year in different regions of India.
- ★ Apart from the discussions, there will be an inaugural conference in Puducherry and a summit in Coimbatore.
- ★ The main objective of the S20 group is to present consensus-based recommendations for selected topics of interest to policy makers.

## **IMPORTANT DAYS**

### **World AIDS Day**

- ★ World AIDS Day is observed every year on 01 December.
- ★ It is an opportunity for people around the world to unite in the fight against HIV, support people living with HIV and remember those who have died from AIDS-related illness.



- ★ AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is caused by the human immuno deficiency virus (HIV).
- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'Equalize'.
- ★ The day was first observed in 1988 by WHO.

### National Pollution Control Day

- ★ National Pollution Control Day is observed every year on 02 December.
- ★ The main purpose of organising this day is to spread awareness about the management and control of industrial disasters and to promote efforts towards preventing pollution arising due to industrial or human activities.
- ★ The day is dedicated to encourage the adoption of pollution control acts to prevent environmental pollution caused by human negligence and industrial emissions.
- ★ The day is observed in the memory of those who died in the Bhopal gas disaster in 1984.

### World Computer Literacy Day

- ★ World Computer Literacy Day 2022 is observed every year on the 02 December.
- ★ World Computer Literacy Day was launched in 2001 by an Indian company called N.I.I.T. to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- ★ The Company was founded in 1981 by Rajendra Singh Pawar and Vijay K. Thadani. N.I.I.T stands for National Institute of Information Technology, is a skills and talent development company.
- ★ A study revealed that men formed the majority of computer users in the world.

### International Day of Persons with Disabilities

- ★ International Day of Persons with disabilities 2022 is observed every year on 03 December.
- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'Transformative solutions for inclusive development: The role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world'.
- ★ In 1976, UN General Assembly decided that from 1981 International Day of Persons with Disabilities will be celebrated globally.
- ★ UN announced December as the official date for celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- ★ The First paralympic games were hosted in 1960.
- ★ In 1992 The International Day of People with Disability was proclaimed by the United Nations.

### World Soil Day

- ★ World Soil Day is observed every year on 05 December.
- ★ It is to raise awareness about the importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems by addressing the challenges posed by soil management.
- ★ The day aims to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being.

- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'Soils: Where food begins'.
- ★ International Soil Day was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences in 2002.

### **National Microwave Oven Day**

- ★ National Microwave Oven Day 2022 is observed every year on 06 December.
- ★ Percy Spencer, a self-taught American engineer developed a way to safely prepare food with microwaves.
- ★ In 1955 the first domestic microwave was introduced.

### **International Civil Aviation Day**

- ★ International Civil Aviation Day is observed every year on 07 December.
- ★ This day is observed to raise awareness about the importance of civil aviation and its contribution in the world.
- ★ The day honours civil aviation workers, air traffic controllers and everyone who works towards keeping flights and flying safe for passengers.
- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development'.
- ★ The first Civil Aviation Day was observed on 07 December 1994 to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chicago convention.

### **Armed Forces Flag Day**

- ★ The Armed Forces Flag Day is observed every year on 07 December.
- ★ It is to honour the martyrs and the Armed Forces personnel who safeguard the motherland.
- ★ The day is dedicated towards collection of funds from people for the welfare of the Armed Forces personnel.
- ★ The fund collected on this day is also used for the welfare of the serving personnel and ex-servicemen.
- ★ The day also pays tribute to the thousands of men who have died defending the country.
- ★ This day is observed to honour Indian soldiers, sailors and pilots.

### **International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide**

- ★ International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide is celebrated every year on 09 December.
- ★ The day is celebrated for the victims of the crime of genocide and for the prevention of this crime and to honor and remember the victims of this crime.
- ★ Each year on this day, the UN hosts a special commemoration event.
- ★ On this day, special recognition is given to those who have taken initiatives that have contributed to the prevention of genocide and related crimes.

## International Anti-Corruption Day

- ★ International Anti-Corruption Day 2022 is observed every year on 09 December.
- ★ The theme set by the UN for the year 2022 is 'Recover with Integrity'.
- ★ Transparency International has organized, easy-to-read data on corruption levels around the world starting from 1995.
- ★ The U.N. has launched a special campaign on corruption in the last two years.

## Human Rights Day

- ★ Human Rights Day is celebrated every year on 10 December.
- ★ It aims to promote equality, peace, justice, freedom and protection of human dignity.
- ★ This day is widely recognised to raise awareness about people's social, cultural, political and religious rights.
- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All'.
- ★ The day has been observed every year since 1950 in commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

## National Energy Conservation Day

- ★ National Energy Conservation Day is observed every year on 14 December.
- ★ The objective of the day is to create awareness among the people on saving energy by reducing the use of energy and using it efficiently.
- ★ National Energy Conservation Day 2022 was first observed on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1991 by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Union Ministry of Power which falls under the government of India.
- ★ The Bureau of Energy Efficiency assists in the development and implementation of strategies and policies to reduce excessive consumption of energy.
- ★ The committee also executed 'The Energy Conservation Act' in 2001.

## Vijay Diwas

- ★ Vijay Diwas 2022 is observed every year on 16 December.
- ★ This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> edition.
- ★ Vijay Diwas is celebrated for the remembrance of the victory of the Indian Armed Forces in 'Operation: Vijay' against the infiltrating Pakistani troops.
- ★ Pakistani troops attacked 11 Indian airfields that proved the war on 03 December 1971.
- ★ The war ended in just 13 days which is considered one of the shortest wars in history.

## International Migrants Day

- ★ International Migrants Day is observed every year on 18 December.

- ★ It is to recognize the important contribution of migrants and also to highlight the challenges they face.
- ★ The UN Migration Agency defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence.
- ★ The United Nations General Assembly on 04 December 2000 passed a resolution to observe 18 December as the International Migrants Day.

## World Minority Rights Day

- ★ International Minority Rights Day is celebrated every year on 18 December.
- ★ The purpose of this day is to maintain the right to freedom and equality for minorities and to create awareness about the respect of minorities.
- ★ The day focuses on the challenges and issues faced by minority communities of different ethnic origins.
- ★ The theme for the year 2022 is 'All in 4 Minority Rights'.
- ★ The National Commission for Minorities was established in the year 1992 by the Central Government under the National Commission for Minorities Act.

## International Human Solidarity Day

- ★ International Human Solidarity Day 2022 is observed every year on 20 December.
- ★ IHSD highlights the goal of the United Nations and its member states to create awareness about poverty and the need to reduce poverty in independent nations.
- ★ The day serves to remind governments, civil society members and other institutions that poverty can be tackled and eradicated only through a united effort.

## National Mathematics Day

- ★ National Mathematics Day is observed every year on 22 December.
- ★ The renowned mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, whose works had a widespread impact both in India and around the world is the driving force behind the establishment of Mathematics Day.
- ★ Ramanujan was born in 1887 to an Iyengar Brahmin family in Erode, Tamil Nadu.
- ★ In 1918, he also became a Fellow of the Royal Society, one of the youngest individuals to hold this prestigious status.

## National Farmers Day

- ★ National Farmers Day or Kisan Diwas in India is observed every year on 23 December.
- ★ The day is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of the 5<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of India Chaudhary Charan Singh.
- ★ The day is observed to recognise and honour the contribution farmers make to our economy and society.

- ★ He was made the deputy Prime Minister of India in 1979 when Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister of India.
- ★ He was the Prime Minister of India for 170 days. He is the only Prime Minister who never faced parliament while being the Prime Minister.

### Good Governance Day

- ★ Good Governance Day is observed every year on 25 December.
- ★ The day is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of the 10<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ★ The day is celebrated so as to ensure that the citizens of the country are treated fairly by the government.
- ★ The purpose of Good Governance Day is to increase public access to various government programmes and services through good governance.
- ★ It was established with the slogan 'Good Governance through e-Governance'.

### National Consumer Day

- ★ National Consumer Day is observed every year on 24 December.
- ★ The objective of the day is to make the consumers aware of their rights and prevent them from the prevalent malpractices.
- ★ The day was established in 1986 as part of the Consumer Protection Act.
- ★ This day was celebrated for the first time in the year 2000.
- ★ The main objective of the Consumer Protection Act is to provide protection to the consumers against various forms of exploitation such as defective goods, unsatisfactory services and unfair trade practices.

### International Day of Epidemic Preparedness

- ★ International Day of Epidemic Preparedness is observed every year on 27 December.
- ★ The purpose of this day is to create awareness about the pandemic.
- ★ The day aims to facilitate exchange of information, dissemination of scientific knowledge and ensure exchange of best practices at the international level.
- ★ The day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly to emphasize pandemic prevention, preparedness and cooperation.

## **OBITUARY NEWS**

### **Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin**

- ★ Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin died on 30 November 2022 in Shanghai. He was at the age of 96.
- ★ He was the first Chinese President to visit India in 1996 when India and China moved towards normalising the bilateral ties.
- ★ Jiang was China's President from 1993-2003.
- ★ Under his leadership, Hong Kong was peacefully handed over to China in 1997 and China joined the World Trade Organization, which laid the groundwork for China to become the world's second largest economy with high-speed development.

### **Legendary Odia Actress Jharana Das**

- ★ Legendary Odia actress Jharana Das passed away. He was at the age 77.
- ★ Das, a winner of the state government's prestigious 'Jaydev Puraskar' for her lifetime contribution to Odia film industry.
- ★ Jharana Das started her acting career in the 60s and had won several accolades for her brilliant performance in landmark films like 'Shree Jagannath', 'Nari', etc.
- ★ Das had also worked as a child artist and announcer with the All India Radio (AIR), Cuttack.

### **City of Joy' Author Dominique Lapierre**

- ★ The Author of the bestselling books on India like "Freedom at Midnight" and "City of Joy" Dominique Lapierre passed away. He was at the age of 91.
- ★ The French author Dominique Lapierre in partnership with the American writer Larry Collins wrote six books which have sold more than 50 million copies worldwide.
- ★ City of joy was about the hardships of a rickshaw puller in Kolkata.
- ★ The book Freedom at Midnight was on the Independence movement in India.

### **Noted Economist, Former Union Minister Yoginder Alagh**

- ★ Noted economist and former Union Minister Yoginder K Alagh passed away. He was at the age of 83.
- ★ Alagh was an emeritus professor at the Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research Ahmedabad.
- ★ He had a doctorate degree in economics from the University of Pennsylvania.
- ★ He was also a former vice-chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi.
- ★ He was Union Minister of state for Planning and Programme Implementation, Science and Technology and Power during 1996-98.
- ★ He was also a member of the Planning Commission.



### **Veteran US Sports Journalist Grant Wahl**

- ★ Grant Wahl, one of the most well-known soccer writers of the United States passed away.
- ★ He passed away while covering the World Cup match between Argentina and the Netherlands in Qatar.
- ★ This was the 8<sup>th</sup> World Cup for Wahl, who has been covering football continuously since 1996.

### **Veteran Marathi Lavani Singer Sulochana Chavan**

- ★ Legendary Marathi Lavani singer Sulochana Chavan passed away in Mumbai. She was at the age of 92.
- ★ She was awarded Padma Shri in 2022.
- ★ Sulochana Chavan was one of the most well-known singers in this traditional Maharashtrian musical genre closely associated with the folk theatre form Tamasha.

### **Artist, Writer and Padma Shri Awardee Manohar Devadoss**

- ★ Renowned Indian artist, writer and Shri Awardee Manohar Devadoss passed away in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). He was at the age of 86.
- ★ He was well-known for his paintings of traditional buildings.
- ★ He authored many books such as A poem to courage, Multiple facets of my Madurai, Mahe, and Mano: Challenges, Green Well Years, etc.
- ★ He was awarded the Padma Shri (2020), India's fourth-highest civilian award, for his inspirational work in Art and Charity.

### **Noted Telugu Actor, Producer and Director Kaikala Satyanarayana**

- ★ Veteran Telugu actor, producer and director Kaikala Satyanarayana passed away in Hyderabad. He was at the age of 87.
- ★ Kaikala Satyanarayana, also known as Navarasa Natana Sarvabhuma, was born on July 1935 in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh
- ★ He acted in around 750 movies.
- ★ He received several awards including the Raghupati Venkaiah Award (2011), Filmfare Lifetime Achievement award for Telugu cinema (2017) and the Andhra Pradesh government's Nandi film awards.

### **England 1966 World Cup Winner George Cohen**

- ★ England's 1966 World Cup-winning right back George Cohen passed away. He was at the age of 83.
- ★ George Cohen played for Fulham throughout his soccer career.
- ★ He scored six league goals in his 459 appearances between 1956 and 1969.
- ★ His greatest achievement was recorded as winning the 1966 World Cup when England defeated West Germany in the final at Wembley Stadium.

- ★ Cohen helped England emerge victorious and claim their first World Cup title with a 4–2 victory over the opposition.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Merriam-Webster Announces Word of the Year for 2022

- ★ The world’s renowned publisher ‘Merriam Webster’ has declared the word ‘Gaslighting’ as the Word of the Year for 2022.
- ★ The dictionary defines the term as: “The act or practice of grossly misleading someone especially for one’s own advantage”.
- ★ Gaslighting refers to playing with someone on a psychological level for a long period of time, so that the victim begins to doubt the validity of their own thoughts and true sense of self.
- ★ Gaslighting can also be a corporate ploy to mislead the public.

### IUCN Red List

- ★ Three medicinal plant species found in the Himalayas have recently been placed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- ★ IUCN is an international organisation (NGO) working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- ★ These three species are namely Meizotropis Pellita, Fritillaria Cirrhosa and Dactylorhiza Hatagirea.
- ★ These species are found in the Himalayan region spread across Nepal, India, China, Sikkim, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

### ‘Bomb Cyclone’ Hits US

- ★ ‘Bomb Cyclone’ has hit the United States, affecting at least 200 million people.
- ★ Temperatures dropped across the United States and heavy snow caused power outages in cities, thousands of flights were cancelled and people were stuck in their homes without food.
- ★ New York’s Erie County, which includes Buffalo is one of the areas most affected by the winter storm, which stretches from the Canadian to the Mexican border.
- ★ Bomb cyclone is used by meteorologists to denote a mid-latitude cyclone that rapidly intensifies.
- ★ It is a giant winter storm that hits the coast and brings strong winds, flooding, snow and ice.

