

February 2023

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Banking & Finance

1. RBI's Digital Payments Index jumps to 377.46 in Sept from 349.30 in March

- Reserve Bank of India's Digital Payments Index, a measure of the extent of digitisation of payments across the country, rose to 377.46 in September 2022 from 349.30 in March. RBI introduced the composite Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) on January 1, 2021 with March 2018 as the base, to capture digitisation of payments.
- India has the highest fintech adoption rate of 87 per cent among the public compared to the global average of 64 per cent. Further, India has gained the third place in digital payments, coming only after US and China.
- The RBI-DPI comprises of 5 broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods. These parameters are (i) Payment Enablers (weight 25%), (ii) Payment Infrastructure Demand-side factors (10%), (iii) Payment Infrastructure Supply-side factors (15%), (iv) Payment Performance (45%) and (v) Consumer Centricity (5%).

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been publishing a composite Reserve Bank of India Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) since January 1, 2021 with March 2018 as base to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

2. IDFC Ltd to invest Rs 2,200 crore in IDFC First Bank, up its stake to 40%

- IDFC Ltd said that it is investing Rs 2,200 crore in IDFC First Bank to increase its stake in the bank to 40 per cent from 36.38 per cent currently.
- The IDFC board also declared a special interim dividend of Rs 11 per share to the stakeholders, due to which the Government of India, the largest shareholder in IDFC, would receive a payout of Rs 287 crore.

3. Mobicule launches Industry First, Asset Repossession Module for Banks and NBFCs

- Mobicule, a niche player and expert in debt collection has announced the launch of mCollect Repossession module, an industry first for banks and NBFCs.
- The revolutionary Asset Repossession Solution is a comprehensive solution that maps all the complex processes in repossession of an asset, as a part of its debt collection and recovery product.
- Mobicule is a pioneer in offering solutions that digitize processes and improves efficiency using mobile technology.
- mCollect has proven capability to operate in rural markets handling cash collection and receipting with relevant fraud - handling being an inherent part of the platform.
- mCollect aims to be the end-to-end one-stop platform for debt monitoring, debt collection and debt recovery. Mobicule vast domain knowledge, on-ground experience, and technologically advanced product have helped banks / NBFC integrate their digital, call centre, and field collection strategies.
- mCollect industry-trained machine learning models enable banks and NBFCs to classify customers and predict their payment behaviour. These measures have improved recovery efficiency and significantly reduced recovery costs.

4. Reliance Retail to accept digital currency

- Reliance Retail has become the first Indian retailer to introduce Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), also known as digital rupee.
- The company has piloted the use of Digital Rupee in one store in Mumbai, and plans to make this facility available in all its stores in Mumbai within the next three to four months, in accordance with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) norms.
- Reliance Retail has collaborated with ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and fintech Innoviti Technologies to launch the in-store support for the digital rupee. The RBI kicked off the first phase of a retail CBDC pilot in four cities and involving four key banks late last year. Use of e-rupee is expected to make the inter-bank market more efficient.

5. SEBI proposes measures to curb mis-selling in alternate investment funds

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has proposed measures to curb mis-selling in Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs) including mandatory offering of direct plans and introduction of trail model for distribution commission.
- Under the proposed norms, all investors for categories of AIFs will be charged distribution fee on trail basis but for Category I and II AIFs, certain higher amounts may be charged. Though, this amount could be one-third of the present value of total fee paid upfront in the first year.
- At present, investors were being charged upfront commission fee by distributors on the total committed amount. The market watchdog has already done away with upfront commissions from mutual funds and portfolio management services (PMS). Once these proposals are approved, the arbitrage in treatment will be removed.

6. DSP Investment Managers receives RBI approval to invest in DCB Bank through schemes of DSP MF

- DCB Bank has received an intimation from RBI on 03 February 2023, that it has granted its approval to DSP Investment Managers (DSPIM) to acquire up to 9.99% of the paid-up equity capital of the Bank through the schemes of DSP Mutual Fund.
- The approval is valid for a period of one year i.e. upto 02 February 2024.

7. RBI imposes monetary penalty on The Utkal Cooperative Bank Ltd., Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- The RBI has imposed a monetary penalty of '15.00 lakh (Rupees Fifteen lakh only) on The Utkal Cooperative Bank Ltd. (the bank) for contravention of/ non-compliance with the directions issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on (i) Exposure Norms and Statutory/Other Restrictions-UCBs and (ii) specific directions issued under Supervisory Action Framework (SAF).

This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of Section 47 A (1) (c) read with Section 46 (4) (i) and Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, taking into account the failure of the bank to adhere to the aforesaid directions issued by RBI.

8. India's new infrastructure lender plans debut \$610 million bond

- India's newly created infrastructure-financing institution is planning a maiden bond issue of \$610 million in the next quarter, according to a senior official at the company. NaBFID, as the infrastructure-focused lender is called, plans to leverage the Government's equity capital to the extent of '3-4 lakh crore through the issuance of Tier-1 and Tier-2 bonds.
- India creating infrastructure requires nearly **\$1 trillion** in financing by 2025 and is a keystone of Prime Minister Narendra Modi agenda to accelerate economic growth. In the latest budget, the Government proposed raising capital spending by a third to **10 lakh crore**, which will boost NaBFID agenda.
- NaBFID plans to disburse between '1-1.5 lakh crore of loans from a pipeline of '50,000 crore worth of projects in the next quarter.
- The lender was created with an initial capital of '20,000 crore and a grant of '5,000 crore through the Indian government 2021 budget to finance and crowd in capital into the country infrastructure projects.

9. Airtel Payments Bank launches BizKhata for Small Businesses and Merchants

- Airtel Payments Bank has launched its current account - BizKhata, which comes with unlimited transactions and instant activation for small merchants and business partners across the country.
- It brings all business transactions to one platform and allows them to maintain clear records while enjoying multiple banking benefits.

10. Sebi notifies stronger framework for green bonds

- Markets regulator Sebi strengthened the framework for green bonds by introducing the concept of 'blue' and 'yellow' bonds as new modes of sustainable finance.
- Blue bonds relate to water management and marine sector, while yellow bonds pertain to solar energy. These are sub-categories of green debt securities.
- As per the notification, the watchdog has strengthened the framework for green bonds by enhancing the scope of definition of green debt security by including new modes of sustainable finance in relation to pollution prevention and control and eco-efficient products.
- These measures have been taken in the backdrop of increasing interest in sustainable finance in India as well as around the globe, and with a view to align the extant framework for green debt securities with the updated Green Bond Principles (GBP) recognised by IOSCO.
- The regulatory framework defines Green Debt Securities as debt securities issued for raising funds that are to be utilised for projects or assets falling under certain categories.
- Most of the green bonds issued by Indian issuers are listed on offshore exchanges as issuers are finding it more attractive to list on bourses falling outside Sebi's framework.

11. South Indian Bank introduces wealth management platform, SIB Wealth

- South Indian Bank, in collaboration with Geojit Financial Services, announces the launch of a wealth management platform.
- SIB Wealth is a unique value-added service that will assist the bank's high net worth (HNI) customers in investing their money in the greatest financial instruments on the market.

SIB became a scheduled bank in 1946 under the RBI Act.
SIB HQ: Thrissur

12. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launches Digital Payments Utsav in New Delhi for promotion of Digital Payments

- Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has launched the Digital Payments Utsav in New Delhi for the promotion of Digital Payments across the country.
- The Utsav which began on 9th Feb will continue till 9th of October this year, with a particular focus on G-20 Digital Economy Working Group event in cities like Lucknow, Hyderabad, Pune and Bengaluru.

13. NRI deposits grow 38% to \$3.6 billion during April-November 2022 period

- Net inflows under non-resident deposits increased to \$3.6 billion during April-November 2022 from \$2.6 billion a year ago, boosted by the Reserve Bank's July 6th measures, according to RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.
- The rise in deposits has been attributed to exemptions announced by RBI.
- As part of measures to attract NRI deposits, RBI had announced that **incremental FCNR (B) deposits and NRE Term deposits** mobilised by banks (with reference to base date of July 1, 2022) will be exempt from maintenance of reservesCash Reserve Ratioand Statutory Liquidity Ratio.
- The aforementionedexemptions came into effect from the reporting fortnight beginning July 30, 2022. These are valid for deposits raised till November 04, 2022.
- FCNR account stands for Foreign Currency Non-Resident Bank (B) account. AnFCNR accountallows NRIs to invest foreign currency in term deposits in India and earn tax-free interest.

Features of FCNR accounts

- **Foreign currency denomination:** It is a foreign currency-denominated account. The money will continue to be maintained in the NRI preferred choice of currency amongst those approved by RBI.
- **Term Deposit Account:** FCNR is not a Savings but a Term Deposit Account. It has a minimum tenure of one year and a maximum tenure of five years.
- **Non-taxable:** Interest income on these accounts is not subject to taxation as per Indian laws.
- **Free repatriation:** You can freely repatriate both the interest and the principal income abroad.
- **Eligibility for loans:** FCNR deposits make you eligible for loans in INR. These loans can be repaid from the maturity proceeds.
- **Account-holders:** You can open an FCNR account with two or more joint NRI account holders.

Currencies permitted under the FCNR scheme

- RBI permits the following currencies for FCNR accounts
- USD
- Pound Sterling
- Euro
- Japanese Yen
- Canadian Dollar
- Australian Dollar
- Swiss Franc
- Singapore Dollar
- Danish Krone
- Hong Kong Dollar and others

14. RBI cancels registration of two entities for regulatory lapses

- The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the registration of two non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) - Pune-based Kudos Finance and Investments and Mumbai-based Credit Gate - for regulatory lapses in lending practices.
- With cancels Certificate of Registration (CoR), the two NBFC should not transact the business of a Non-Banking Financial Institution (NBFI).

15. RBI imposes monetary penalty on The Vaidyanath Urban Co-operative Bank Limited, Parli Vaijnath, Beed (Maharashtra)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of '1.50 lakh on The Vaidyanath Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., Beed (Maharashtra) (the bank) for non-adherence/violation of specific directions issued to the bank by the RBI under Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) section 36 (1) read with section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (the Act).

16. Biggest corporate bond deal: HDFC raises Rs 25,000 crore via NCDs

- Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) has concluded a sale of 10-year non-convertible debentures (NCDs) worth Rs 25,000 crore, marking the largest domestic rupee bond issuance by a corporate in India.
- The housing financier's bonds carry an annualized coupon or the rate of interest periodically paid out to investors of 7.97 per cent.

Mr. V. Srinivasa Rangan, Executive Director, HDFC

17. HDFC Bank goes live on 'RuPay Credit on UPI' feature for customers

- HDFC Bank and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has announced that HDFC Bank customers can now use their RuPay Credit Card on UPI with BHIM App and other UPI-enabled apps.
- With this linkage, HDFC bank has become the first private sector bank in the country to go live on UPI with its RuPay Credit Card.

Punjab National Bank, Union Bank of India, and Indian Bank, which are all state owned, use the UPI feature. HDFC Bank, India largest credit card issuer, is the

fourth to come on board.

18. Indian Overseas Bank launches electronic bank guarantee scheme

- Public sector Indian Overseas Bank has launched the facility of issuance of e-BG (Electronic Bank Guarantee) scheme in association with the National e-Governance Services Ltd.
- The e-BG is an instrument issued by the city-headquartered bank in which the bank undertakes to guarantee a specific amount against the non-fulfilment of some action/performance of applicant.
- The main features of the e-BG are completely paperless mode with digital stamping and digital signature. Real time issuance of e-BG would make it available for the beneficiary instantly leading to time saving which in turn would fast track all the business purpose for which it is issued.

19. ICICI Bank Board Approves Proposal To Take Over I-Process Services As A Subsidiary

- The board of directors at ICICI Bank Ltd. approved the proposal for making I-Process Services (India) Pvt., a completely owned subsidiary of the company.
- Total cost of the proposed acquisition is estimated at approximately Rs 15.40 crore.
- The company informed the exchanges in a filing that it currently holds a 19% stake in I-Process Services.

20. RBI releases Draft Reserve Bank of India (Government Securities Lending) Directions, 2023

In pursuance of the announcement made in the Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies issued as a part of the Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement for 2022-23 dated February 08, 2023, the Reserve Bank of India placed on its website Draft Reserve Bank of India (Government Securities Lending) Directions, 2023.

21. RBI cancels licence of MP-based Garha Co-operative Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cancelled licence of Garha Co-operative Bank, Guna in Madhya Pradesh as the lender does not have adequate capital and earning prospects. About 98.4 per cent of the depositors of the co-operative bank are entitled to receive full amount of their deposits from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).
- On liquidation, every depositor would be entitled to receive deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of **Rs 5,00,000** from DICGC.

22. Kotak Mahindra Bank takes corporate digital banking portal 'Kotak fyn' live

- Private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank went live with 'Kotak fyn', an integrated portal developed to offer comprehensive digital banking and value-added services to its business banking and corporate clients.
- The portal will offer services across all products, including trade & services, account services, payments, and collections and make banking seamless for the banks

23. HDFC Bank, Lulu Exchange ink deal to enhance cross-border payments between India-Gulf region

- In the first phase of the partnership, Lulu Exchange's expertise and regulatory framework would be utilized to launch a digital inward remittance service titled 'RemitNow2India'.
- That will allow resident individuals of UAE to send money to any bank account in India via IMPS and NEFT through HDFC's digital banking channels.

Adeeb Ahamed, MD, LuLu Financial Group.

24. NSE Indices launches India's first Municipal Bond Index

- The NSE's index services subsidiary, NSE Indices Limited has launched India's first ever Municipal Bond Index at a SEBI workshop on Municipal Debt Securities at Bengaluru.
- The Nifty India Municipal Bond Index tracks the performance of municipal bonds issued by Indian municipal corporations across maturities and having investment grade credit rating.

Mr. Girish Chandra Chaturvedi Chairman & Public Interest Director, NSE

25. HDFC Bank Raises \$750 Million In Dollar Bond Sale

- The country's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank Ltd. announced that it has raised \$750 million, or Rs 6205.283 crore, through a dollar bond sale.
- The USD denominated senior unsecured instruments will be redeemed on maturity in March of 2026.
- The bank said it will pay a coupon of 5.686% for the three year bonds, according to an exchange filing.

26. India's forex reserves drop by USD 5.68 bn to USD 561.27 bn as on Feb 17

- Data released in the previous week showed that India's foreign exchange reserves dropped by \$8.31 billion to \$566.94 billion as of February 10.
- India's reserves fell 8.3%, logging the biggest decline in more than 11 months in the previous week.
- In October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion.
- The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.

27. RBI imposes restrictions on 5 co-operative banks

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed several restrictions on five cooperative banks, including on withdrawals, in the wake of the deteriorating financial condition of the lenders.
- The restrictions will remain in place for six months.
- With restrictions in place, the banks, without prior approval of RBI, cannot grant loans, make any investment, incur any liability.
- These cooperative banks includes HCBL Co-operative Bank, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh); Adarsh Mahila Nagari Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Aurangabad (Maharashtra); and Shimsha Sahakara Bank Niyamitha, Maddur, Mandya District in

Karnataka, Uravakonda Co-operative Town Bank, Uravakonda, (Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh) and Shankarrao Mohite Patil Sahakari Bank, Akulj (Maharashtra).

28. Bank credit growth slowed to 16.8% in third quarter: RBI

- Indian banks' credit growth doubled to 16.8% in the October-December quarter from a year earlier, data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed.
- Bank credit had expanded by 8.4% in the quarter ended December 2021 and 17.2% in the quarter ended September 2022, as per the data.
- Banks' aggregate deposits increased by 10.3% year-on-year in the December quarter.

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Economy

1. Genus Power Bags Orders Worth Over Rs 2,850 Crore For Advance Metering Infrastructure

- The Jaipur-based company and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Hi-Print Metering Solutions Pvt. Ltd., have received letters of award (LoA) worth Rs 2,855.96 crore for the appointment of an advanced metering infrastructure service provider (AMISP) including the design of AMI system with supply, installation, and commissioning of 29.49 lakh smart pre-paid meters, among others.

2. GST collection at Rs 1.55 lakh crore in January, second highest-ever

- The second-highest Gross GST collection has been made in the month of January this year, breaching earlier second-highest record in October last year. Over one lakh 55 thousand crore rupees gross GST revenue has been collected in the last month. It is the second highest collection ever, after one lakh 68 thousand crore gross collection in April last year.
- January collection includes CGST of 28 thousand 963 crores, SGST of 36 thousand 730 crores, and IGST of 79 thousand 599 crores.
- GST collection has crossed one lakh 50 thousand crore mark for the third time in 2022-23. Revenues in the current financial year up to January this year are 24 per cent higher than the GST revenues during the same period last year.

3. IMF says, India to remain fastest-growing major economy in the world with 6.1 per cent growth in 2023

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said that India to remain the fastest-growing major economy in the world despite global headwinds. The IMF released its January update on World Economic Outlook today. It said that India will grow at 6.1 per cent in 2023 before picking up to 6.8 per cent in 2024 fuelled by resilient domestic demand.
- IMF also pointed out that the growth in emerging and developing Asia is expected to rise at 5.3 per cent in 2023 and 5.2 per cent in 2024.
- On a positive note, IMF said that negative growth in global GDP or global GDP per capita is not expected despite the fear of recession.
- The IMF stated that the growth in China is projected to rise to 5.2 per cent in 2023 pointing to rapidly improving mobility.

4. UPI transactions rise 1.3% in Jan to start 2023 with a record high

- Payments transactions via the UPI (Unified Payments Interface) network rose 1.3 per cent on-month to a high of nearly '13-lakh crore in January.
- However, the rise was substantially lower than the 7.7 per cent increase seen in the previous month.
- The volume of transactions rose by 2.6 per cent to 803 crore transactions during the month, according to data by NPCI.

5. India's Unemployment Rate Falls To Four-Month Low Of 7.14% In January

- India's unemployment rate declined to a four-month low of 7.14 per cent in January, according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy. The unemployment rate during December 2022 was 8.30 per cent, while in November,

it was at 8% and 6.43 per cent in September. While urban unemployment was at 8.55 per cent during January, rural joblessness stood at 6.48%.

- Among the states, unemployment was the highest in **Jammu and Kashmir** at 21.8 per cent closely followed by **Haryana** at 21.7 per cent and **Rajasthan** at 21.1 per cent.
- Joblessness in **Delhi** in January was at 16.7 per cent, **Goa** at 16.2 per cent, **Assam** at 16.1 per cent and **Tripura** at 16 per cent, the data added.
- It further revealed that unemployment was the lowest in states like **Chhattisgarh** at 0.5 per cent followed by **Odisha** at 1.5 per cent, **Tamil Nadu** at 1.8 per cent and **Madhya Pradesh** at 1.9 per cent.

6. India's agricultural & processed food products exports up by 13% to USD 19.69 billion in nine months of current fiscal (2022-23)

- India's agricultural and processed food products exports rose to \$19.69 billion in April-December 2022 from \$17.5 billion over the same period of the last fiscal, as per the provisional data released by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S).
- The overall export of APEDA products increased to USD 19.7 billion in April-December 2022.

7. US, UAE, UK, And Singapore Account For Over 50 Per Cent Of Foreign Inward Remittances To India

- Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary informed that \$69.129 billion of foreign inward remittances were received in 2017-18, \$76.396 billion in 2018-19, \$83.195 billion in 2019-20, \$80.185 billion in 2020-21 and \$89.127 billion in 2021-22.
- The minister also shared the data on the share of major countries in inward remittances to India.
- The data, based on survey conducted by the RBI for 2020-21 through Authorised Dealers (ADs) banks, reveals that four top countries contributed over 50 per cent of inward remittances to India in 2020-21.
- These include the **United States (23.4 per cent)** **United Arab Emirates (18 per cent)**, **United Kingdom (6.8 per cent)**, and **Singapore (5.7 per cent)**.
- Other countries that are among the top ten contributors included Saudi Arabia (5.1 per cent), Kuwait (2.4 per cent), Oman (1.6 per cent), Qatar (1.5 per cent), Hong Kong (1.1 per cent), and Australia (0.7 per cent).

8. Namami Gange Mission-II approved with budgetary outlay of '22,500 cr till 2026

- The government has approved Namami Gange Mission-II with a budgetary outlay of Rs.22,500 crore till 2026, including projects for existing liabilities of Rs.11,225 crore and new projects/interventions of '11,275 crore, minister of state for Jal Shakti, Bishweswar Tudu said.
- A total of 409 projects are taken up at an estimated cost of '32,912.40 crore till 31 December, 2022.
- Namami Gange Programme was launched in **June 2014 for a period up to 31 March, 2021** to rejuvenate River Ganga and its tributaries with a budgetary outlay of **Rs.20,000 crore**.
- Sh. Tudu added that a total of Rs.14,084.72 crore is released by the Centre to the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), from FY 2014-15 till 31 January 2023.

G Asok Kumar: Director General for the National Mission for Clean Ganga.

9. Gross Direct Tax Mop-Up Grows 24% To Rs 15.67 Lakh Crore So Far In FY23

- Gross direct tax collections grew 24% to Rs 15.67 lakh crore so far this fiscal, the finance ministry said.
- After adjusting for refunds, the net direct tax collection stood at Rs 12.98 lakh crore, a growth of 18.40%.
- The net collections are about 79% of revised estimates of direct tax collection for current fiscal, the CBDT said.
- The revised estimates for the current fiscal pegged direct tax revenues at Rs 16.50 lakh crore, higher than the budget estimates of Rs 14.20 lakh crore.
- In the current fiscal (2022-23), the revenues from direct tax (which includes income and corporate taxes) are projected to grow by over 17% compared to 2021-22 fiscal when the collection was Rs 14.08 lakh crore.

10. Retail inflation rises to 3-month high of 6.52% in January

- India's retail inflation shot back up to 6.52% in January after a two-month streak below the 6% mark, with consumer food prices hardening again to 5.94% from 4.2% in December 2022 amid a broad-based pick-up in price trends across goods and services.
- Rural inflation, which has outstripped urban inflation in recent months, firmed up from 6.05% in December to 6.85% in January.

11. GST council accepts GoM recommendation for setting up Appellate Tribunal for dispute redressal

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 18, said the GST Council adopted the report of the Group of Ministers on GST Appellate Tribunal with certain modifications, and the final draft amendments will be circulated in the next 5 to 6 days to State Finance Ministers for their comments.
- The GoM on Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunals (GSTATs) was set up in July last year under the chairmanship of Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala.
- The panel has suggested that the tribunals should consist of two judicial members, and one technical member each from the Centre and States, besides a retired Supreme Court Judge as president.

12. FDI equity inflows decline by 15% to \$36.75 bn in Apr-Dec FY23: DPIIT data

- Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India declined by 15 per cent to USD 36.75 billion during the April-December this fiscal, according to the latest Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade data. The FDI inflows stood at USD 43.17 billion during the corresponding period of the previous year.
- The total FDI inflows, which includes equity inflows, re-invested earnings and other capital, declined to USD 55.27 billion during the nine months of the current fiscal year as against USD 60.4 billion in the year-ago period.
- During April-December 2022-23, Singapore emerged as the top investor with USD 13 billion FDI.
- It was followed by Mauritius (USD 4.7 billion), the US (about USD 5 billion), the UAE (USD 3.1 billion), the Netherlands (USD 2.15 billion), Japan (USD 1.4 billion), and Cyprus (USD 1.15 billion), the data showed.

- The **computer software and hardware** sector attracted the highest inflows of USD 8 billion during the nine-month period of this fiscal.
- It was followed by services (USD 6.6 billion), trading (USD 4.14 billion), chemicals (USD 1.5 billion), automobile industry (USD 1.27 billion) and construction (infrastructure) activities (USD 1.22 billion).



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National

1. Azad Engineering is India's first supplier of parts for nuclear turbines

- Azad Engineering Private Limited, a Hyderabad-based market leader in precision engineering, has been approved as the first Indian company to supply critical rotating parts for nuclear turbines. The company has delivered its first set of critical parts. These will now be assembled on nuclear turbines manufactured in Belfort, France.
- Azad Engineering has signed a long-term supply agreement with General Electric (GE) Steam Power for the supply of nuclear turbine parts.

2. IIT Madras to get Rs 242 cr for research on lab grown diamonds

- In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister said that the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) will be provided a grant of Rs 242 crore over a period of five years to undertake research on Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD). This research will be focused on driving indigenization of the LGD manufacturing process.
- The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) will be provided a grant of Rs 242 crore over a period of five years to undertake research on Lab Grown Diamonds (LGD). This research will be focused on driving indigenization of the LGD manufacturing process.

3. India to be 2025 Madrid International Book Fair's theme country

- India will be invited as the focal country at the Madrid International Book Fair in 2025, the Ambassador of Spain to the country Jose Maria Ridao said.
- Spain is the theme country at the 46th International Kolkata Book Fair.
- The envoy also said editions of the prestigious Jaipur Literary Festival will be held in Madrid and another Spanish town later this year.

4. Sh. Amit Shah lays foundation stone for India's fifth Nano urea plant in Deoghar

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of a '450-crore nano urea plant and township of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) in Jharkhand's Deoghar.
- **This will be India's fifth nano urea plant.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's first nano urea plant in Gujarat last year, according to IFFCO.
- Nano urea will benefit farmers and it is already being exported to five countries. Nano urea improves crop productivity, soil health, and nutritional quality of produce and aims to address the imbalanced and excessive use of conventional urea.

5. Broadband definition of minimum download speed raised to 2 Mbps

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has raised by around four times the minimum download speed under broadband services to **2 Mbps** (mega bits per second).
- The revision in the definition comes after nine years. In 2013, the central government had defined broadband services to have a minimum download speed of 512 Kbps.
- While broadband services typically means internet services delivered through wireline or optic fiber, Trai also includes faster mobile internet connections in the

category, defined as wireless broadband. This too will be subjected to the 2 Mbps minimum speed.

- According to Trai data, there are 825.38 million broadband users in India. The regulatory body had formally recommended raising the minimum download speed to 2 Mbps to the DoT in September 2021.

6. EC's song 'Main Bharat Hoon' to nudge voters for upcoming polls

- As one of the initiatives, the Election Commission, in collaboration with Subhash Ghai Foundation, produced a song 'Main Bharat Hoon, Hum Bharat ke Matdata Hain', featuring celebrities from different walks of life, appealing to the people to cast their vote.
- The song was screened in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu on the 13th National Voters Day.

Rajiv Kumar, Chief Election Commissioner.

7. Vice President inaugurates the 36th Surajkund International Crafts Mela

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated the 36th Surajkund International Crafts Mela in Faridabad. The Surajkund Mela is unique as it showcases the richness and diversity of the handicrafts, handlooms and cultural fabric of India, & is the largest crafts fair in the world.
- The Mela is organized by the Surajkund Mela Authority & Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs.
- For the 36th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2022, Haryana has been chosen to be the Theme State. At least 20 countries & all the states of India will be participating in the Mela.

8. PM unveils India's biggest helicopter manufacturing facility in Tumakuru

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's helicopter factory 'the country's largest chopper manufacturing facility' in Tumakuru district of Karnataka. Bengaluru-headquartered HAL plans to produce more than 1,000 helicopters in the range of 3-15 tonne with a total business of more than '4 lakh crore over a period of 20 years.

- In August 1963, Aeronautics India Limited (AIL) was incorporated as a Company wholly owned by the Government of India, to undertake manufacture of & MiG-21 aircraft under licence. Factories were setup at Nasik (Maharashtra) & Koraput (Odisha).
- In June 1964, the Aircraft Manufacturing Depot which was set up in 1960 at Kanpur as an Air Force unit to produce the Airframe for the HS-748 transport aircraft was transferred to AIL.
- Amalgamation of the two companies i.e. Hindustan Aircraft Limited and Aeronautics India Limited was brought about on 1st Oct 1964 by an Amalgamation Order issued by the Government of India and the Company after the amalgamation was named as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with its principal business being design, development, manufacture, repair and overhaul of aircraft, helicopters, engines and related systems like avionics, instruments and accessories.

9. Total forest and tree cover reached over 8.9 lakh sq. Kilometres: Govt in Lok Sabha

- As per India's State of the Forest Report 2021, the total forest and tree cover has reached over **eight lakh nine thousand sq. Kilometres**, which is 24 per cent of its total geographical area. This denotes an increase of 2261 sq km, compared to the previous assessment made in 2019.
- The government also said the country's non-fossil fuel-based cumulative electric power installed capacity stood at **174 Giga Watts** as of December last year.
- Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change **Ashwini Kumar Choubey** said as per the updated Nationally Determined Contribution submitted under the Paris Agreement, the targets include reducing the emissions intensity of its **GDP by 45 per cent from the 2005 levels** and achieving about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- Stating that the Centre is implementing the National Action Plan on Climate Change, the Minister said 34 states and UTs have prepared State Action Plans on Climate Change, consistent with the objectives of the National Action Plan.

10. Digital lending apps LazyPay, Kissht blocked after MeitY order

- Non-Chinese lending services LazyPay and Kissht have become unavailable to users after the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's order which blocked 232 apps involved in unauthorised loan services, betting and gambling. These apps were being operated from offshore entities, including Chinese and were posing a threat to the economic stability of the country.

11. Railway Protection Force (RPF) conducted a month long nationwide Drive under Operation 'Narcos' and Operation AAHT in Jan 2023

- To focus upon Transnational Organised Crime, Railway Protection Force (RPF) conducted a month long nationwide Pan India Drive with an objective to make a dent upon the syndicate involved in smuggling of Narcotic Products through the railway network under Operation 'Narcos' and Human Trafficking under Operation AAHT.
- Human Trafficking, especially of Women and Children, for sexual exploitation, prostitution, forced labour, forced marriage, domestic servitude, adoption, begging, organ transplant, drug peddling etc is an organised crime and the most abominable violation of human rights. Perhaps not many crimes are as ghastly as trading in human misery.
- RPF has been working closely with other law enforcement agencies and other stake holders to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking under Operation AAHT.

In May 2011, Govt. of India ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and one of its three protocols includes the protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in person, especially women and children.

12. Meta launches #DigitalSuraksha campaign in partnership with MeitY for the G20 campaign

- Meta announced its partnership with the ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) for the G20 stay safe online campaign.
- Meta will create and share helpful resources in multiple Indian languages through various channels, to spread awareness on how to stay safe online, as part of the partnership with MeitY.

Akash Tripathi, CEO, MyGov

13. PM Modi flags off 2 Vande Bharat Express trains from Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off **Mumbai-Solapur and Mumbai-Sainagar Vande Bharat Express from Mumbai.**
- With the two trains becoming operational, the number of Vande Bharat Express trains running from Mumbai will increase to three and the count will go up to 10 for the country. The first Vande Bharat train in Maharashtra connected Mumbai with Gujarat's Gandhinagar.

14. PM Modi inaugurates new campus of Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah Arabic Academy in Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new campus of Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah Arabic Academy at Marol in Mumbai.
- Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah is the principal educational institute of the Dawoodi Bohra Community.
- He was accompanied by the head of the Dawoodi Bohra community, His Holiness Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin.

15. Nissan, Renault to invest \$600 million to make new models in India

- Nissan Motor Co and Renault SA said on Monday they would invest \$600 million to make six new models in India.
- The Japanese and French automakers will work on the projects from their base in Chennai, turning it into an export hub.
- The six models, with each automaker making three, will be built on joint platforms and will also be exported.

16. Prime Minister Modi Inaugurates Aero India 2023 In Bengaluru

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 14th edition of Aero India 2023 at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru.
- **The theme of Aero India 2023 is "The Runway to a Billion Opportunities".**
- Aero India 2023 exhibition will witness participation of more than 800 defence companies including around 100 foreign and 700 Indian companies.
- Major exhibitors in Aero India 2023 include Airbus, Boeing, Dassault Aviation, Lockheed Martin, Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos Aerospace, Army Aviation, HC Robotics, SAAB, Safran, Rolls Royce, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Forge Limited, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) and BEML Limited.

17. DGCA Imposes Rs 20 Lakh Penalty On AirAsia India

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), imposed a penalty of Rs 20 lakh on Tata Group-owned budget carrier AirAsia India for violation of certain norms relating to pilots' training.
- DGCA also ordered to remove the airline's head of training from his position for a period of three months besides imposing a fine of Rs 3 lakh each on eight Designated Examiners.

Vikram Dev Dutt – DGCA director general.

- Headquartered in Bengaluru, India, AirAsia India Limited is a joint venture between Tata Sons Private Limited and AirAsia Aviation Group Limited.
- AirAsia India commenced operations on 12th June 2014.
- AirAsia is a Malaysian multinational low-cost airline.

18. Indian PSU refiners to set up 137,000 tpa green hydrogen facility by 2030

- The public sector oil refineries in India are estimated to build green hydrogen capacity of 1.37 lakh tonnes per annum (TPA) by 2030.
- Indian Oil would first put up a seven thousand TPA electrolysis plant at its Panipat refinery.
- Hydrogen has the highest energy content of any common fuel by weight (about three times more than gasoline). Hydrogen has the lowest energy content by volume (about four times less than gasoline).

19. PM Modi inaugurates tribal festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' in Delhi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today inaugurated tribal festival Aadi Mahotsav" at Major Dhyani Chand National Stadium in New Delhi.
- The Aadi Mahotsav, which celebrates the spirit of tribal culture, is an annual initiative of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Limited (TRIFED) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. Tribal Affairs Minister- Shri Arjun Munda Ji
- The festival, which is to celebrate the tribal spirit including its culture, crafts, cuisine, commerce and traditional art, will continue till 27th of this month. In line with the International Year of Millets celebration, a special focus in the Mahotsav is on showcasing Shree Anna grown by the tribals.

20. Railways launches Rail Post Gati Shakti Express Cargo

- Indian Railways has launched Rail Post Gati Shakti Express Cargo Service to provide seamless logistics for the services sector in the country.
- The cargo Service is an initiative of partnership between Indian Railways and India Posts.
- The Railways Ministry said, it has been started, on the four sectors -Delhi to Kolkata, Bangalore to Guwahati, Surat to Muzaffarpur and Hyderabad to Hazrat Nizamuddin.

21. Minister of Power RK Singh inaugurates 15th edition of ELECRAMA 2023

- The Ministry of Power, Government of India participated in the ELECRAMA ' 2023, the largest standalone electrical exhibition in the world at the India Expo Mart, Greater Noida, showcasing various innovations in the Energy Sector.

- The Power Pavilion was inaugurated by the R K Singh in the presence of Vivek Kumar Dewangan, Chairman & Managing Director, REC Limited.
- **The Power Pavilion has centered around the theme Re-imagining the Future: Metamorphosis of the Power Sector in India**

22. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launches Learning-Teaching Material 'Jaadui Pitara' for Foundational Stages

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched a Learning-Teaching Material called 'Jaadui Pitara' for Foundational Stages in New Delhi.
- Under the National Curriculum Framework for foundational stage - 2022, this unique initiative of the government will help students of foundational stages learn in a play-way method with ease.
- The Jaadui Pitara comprises of playbooks, activity books, flash cards, posters depicting various stories, games, puzzles, puppets and many more items. On the occasion, Mr Pradhan also called upon NCERT to publish all its books for primary to secondary level in other Indian languages along with Hindi, English and Urdu

23. Govt announces release of 20 lakh tonnes of wheat from FCI for sale in open market to ease price of grain

- The Centre has announced the release of 20 lakh tonnes of wheat from the Food Corporation of India in the open market for sale through E-auction.
- The reduction in reserve price along with the additional offloading of 20 lakh tonnes of wheat will collectively help in reducing the market price of wheat and wheat products for consumers.

25. MEA's flagship geo-economics event 'Asia Economic Dialogue' to be held from Feb 23-25

- Ministry of External Affairs' flagship event on geo-economics -- Asia Economic Dialogue -- will be held from February 23-25 in Pune where themes such as global growth prospects and meeting climate targets will be discussed.
- The Asia Economic Dialogue (AED) is the ministry's annual event and is hosted in collaboration with the Pune International Centre.
- The principal theme for the Dialogue seventh edition is Asia and the Emerging World Order.

26. IIT Madras to receive '242 cr grant for research on Lab Grown Diamonds

- The Centre has awarded five-year research grant of '242 crores to the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT), Madras for research on lab-grown diamonds, which are manufactured using technology that replicates the natural diamond growing process.
- It was announced in the Union Budget to encourage the indigenous production of lab-grown diamonds (LGD) machinery.

27. PM to inaugurate 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' cultural festival on 25th February

- PM Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' cultural festival at Talkatora Stadium, Delhi on 25th February.
- In line with the Prime Minister's vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat', 'Barisu Kannada Dim Dimava' cultural festival is being organized to celebrate Karnataka's culture, traditions and history.

- The festival, being held under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, will provide an opportunity to hundreds of artists to showcase Karnataka cultural heritage through dance, music, drama, poetry etc

28. Unemployment rate at 5-year low of 4.1% in 2021-22, shows PLFS data

- India's unemployment rate dropped to a five-year low in July-June 2021-22 to 4.1 per cent, according to the latest annual Periodic Labour Force Survey, released by the National Statistical Office.
- The unemployment rate under the so-called 'usual status' during the one-year period declined for the fourth consecutive year since it was launched in April 2017.
- In usual status, employment is determined on the basis of the reference period of 365 days preceding the date of the survey, as distinct from employment status determined on the basis of a reference period of seven days, which is known as the current weekly status (CWS) of the person.

29. Amazon to join India's ONDC network

- Amazon announced will join the Indian government's ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) platform and as part of its initial collaboration will integrate its Smart Commerce and logistics services with the ONDC network.
- ONDC network is currently in the beta phase and has conducted pilots in select cities.
- Amazon logistics services include pickup and delivery, while Smart Commerce is a suite of SaaS products hosted on AWS that can assist MSMEs build and scale their business and integrate it with the ONDC network.
- ONDC is a non-profit organisation set up by the **Commerce Ministry's Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** to democratise e-commerce services and provide small e-commerce stores and online sellers with a level playing field.

T Koshy, MD & CEO of ONDC

30. World's longest river cruise 'MV Ganga Vilas' to culminate its journey on 28th February in Dibrugarh

- Flagged off from Varanasi on January 13th by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the world's longest river cruise 'MV Ganga Vilas' will culminate its journey on 28th February in Dibrugarh.
- 'MV Ganga Vilas' a cruise vessel made in India, began its journey from Varanasi on 13th January after being flagged off by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- The Cruise will cover a distance of 3,200 km in over 50 days before reaching Dibrugarh on the 28th February via Patna Sahib, Bodh Gaya, Vikramshila, Dhaka, the Sunderbans and the Kaziranga national park. Built with a unique design and a futuristic vision, the cruise has three decks and 18 suites on board with a capacity of 36 tourists

31. Minister of State of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Rao Inderjit Singh released the Revised Guidelines

- The Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) Rao Inderjit Singh released the Revised Guidelines on Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)-2023 on 22nd February 2023. **The new MPLADs guidelines and the web portal will come into effect from 1-4-2023.**
- The objective of MPLAD Scheme is to enable the Honourable Members of Parliament (MPs) to recommend works of developmental nature with emphasis on the creation of durable community assets based on the locally felt needs. The revised set of guidelines aims to broaden the scope of the Scheme so as to enable the Honourable MPs to recommend the developmental works as per the changing needs of the community; with an emphasis on improving the functioning, implementation and monitoring of the MPLAD scheme.
- The entire process of fund flow under the revised guidelines will operate through the web portal, which will facilitate real-time monitoring, greater transparency and accountability in the system, and improved efficiency and effectiveness of the MPLAD Scheme.
- The MPLADS scheme had been discontinued after Covid-19 started spreading in the country. It was restored on November 10, 2021.

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| Under the scheme, each MP is entitled to a fund of Rs 5 crore annually, which is released in two instalments of Rs 2.5 crore each. |
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32. Govt plans 10 'Clean Plant Centres' to boost fruit crop production

- With the demand for foreign planting materials of fruits like apple, avocado and blueberry rising over the years, the Centre plans to set up 10 'Clean Plant Centres', on the lines of those in developed countries such as the US, Netherlands and Israel, to boost domestic production of the selected crops.
- These centers will be set up under the Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program which was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2023-24.
- The Clean Plant Centres will provide services of disease diagnostic, therapeutics, multiplying of plants and generation of mother plants.
- The centres will be fully funded by the Centre. It will be implemented in a PPP mode in partnership with research organisations, agriculture universities and private sector partners, the source said, adding that the National Horticulture Board (NHB) will anchor the clean plant programme.

International

1. SpaceX awarded shared NASA contract worth up to \$100 million

- Space Exploration Technologies Corp. is part of a payload contract NASA has awarded for as much as \$100 million over a decade. The deal is for payload processing, involving spacecraft to be flown on top of a rocket ahead of a flight to space.
- The missions that SpaceX and Astrotech will work on involve launching satellites to observe the Earth or spacecraft for solar system

2. Close on heels of India, US switches to T+1 trade settlement cycle

- The US has announced a transition to a shorter T+1 (trade plus one day) settlement cycle. The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) decided to shorten its settlement cycle to one day by May 28, 2024.

The T+1 settlement cycle means that trade-related settlements must be done within a day, or 24 hours, of the completion of a transaction.

3. Bhutanese Prince Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck becomes country's first digital citizen

- Bhutan's Royal Highness The Gyalsey (Prince) Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck, became the country's first digital citizen by onboarding with the Bhutan National Digital Identity (NDI) mobile wallet.
- Bhutan NDI uses cutting-edge technology to provide citizens with secure and verifiable identity credentials, ensuring the privacy and protection of their personal information.
- The system uses the self-sovereign identity model based on Decentralised Identity (DID) technology, which gives people more control over their personal information and who can access it.

4. Meta to introduce AI large language model called 'Llama'

- Meta Platforms Inc is releasing a new large language model based on artificial intelligence (AI) aimed at the research community, said Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg, as Meta becoming the latest company to join the AI race. Meta will make its model available to the AI research community.
- Google is also set to launch "Bard" a new conversational AI chatbot, aimed at challenging OpenAIChatGPT, backed by Microsoft.

5. Financial crime watchdog FATF suspends Russia over Ukraine war

- Global financial crime watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) suspended Russia's membership, saying Moscow's war in Ukraine violated the organisation's principles. FATF is an inter-governmental organisation set up to combat money laundering and terrorism financing by setting global standards and checking if countries respect them.

FATF members include 39 countries, including the United States, India, China and Saudi Arabia, as well as European countries such as Britain, Germany and France and the EU as such. Ukraine is not a member.

Sports

1. Saudi Arabia to host football's 2027 Asian Cup

- The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) announced that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) won the hosting of the 2027 Asian Nations Cup, for the first time in its history, since its inception in 1956.
- The Kingdom was the only bid presented at the Congress in Manama after India's withdrawal in December 2022.

Qatar will host the next edition of the Asian Cup, from June 26 to July 16, 2023.

2. Australia's Aaron Finch announces retirement from International Cricket

- Australia's T20 World Cup-winning captain Aaron Finch has announced his retirement from the T20Is, this brings an end to his international cricket career for Australia spanning 12 years. Earlier, the opening batsman had announced retirement from the 50-over format in September last year. Finch also played five Test matches for Australia.

3. Pakistan Wicketkeeper-Batter Kamran Akmal Retires From All Forms Of Cricket

- Pakistan wicketkeeper-batter Kamran Akmal has announced his retirement from all forms of professional cricket. He also made it clear that he intends to venture into other roles such as coaching.
- Akmal last donned the Pakistan jersey in April 2017. He hangs up his boots having represented the Men in Green in 53 Tests, 153 ODIs and 58 T20Is.

4. Evergreen LeBron James becomes NBA's all-time leading scorer

- LeBron James became the all-time leading scorer in the National Basketball Association, surpassing a record held by the great Kareem Abdul Jabbar since 1984. Considered to be one of the greatest players to ever pick up a basketball, LeBron James has won four NBA titles, competing in a total of 10 NBA finals.

5. Khelo India Winter Games to begin in Gulmarg

- The third edition of Khelo India Winter Games will begin at Gulmarg in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir. The sports event is being organised after the successful conduct of first two editions.
- Jammu and Kashmir holds the distinction to have topped in both the previous editions of the Khelo India Winter Games held so far.

The 1st edition of Khelo India Winter Games took place in 2020 Leh, Ladakh, J&K

6. Rohit Sharma Becomes 1st Indian Captain to Record Hundreds in All Three Formats

- With his hundred on Day 2 of the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, Rohit Sharma became the first Indian captain to hit a hundred across all three formats in international cricket.
- Rohit is the fourth overall to have scored centuries in all three formats as captain after Sri Lanka's Tillakaratne Dilshan, South Africa's Faf du Plessis and Pakistan's Babar Azam.
- Rohit had scored his maiden ODI century as Indian captain against Sri Lanka on December 13, 2017, in Mohali, unbeaten on 208. In T20Is, his first and only century as Indian skipper also came against Sri Lanka on December 22, 2017, in Indore, as

he smashed 118. Rohit Sharma has scored 30 hundreds overall in one-day internationals.

- Rohit had scored his maiden century in Test cricket way back more than nine years back in November 2013 against the West Indies at the Eden Garden, a majestic 177.
- He had scored his first double-century against South Africa in October 2019, a superb 212 at the JSCA International Stadium in Ranchi.

7. Ravichandran Ashwin becomes the fastest Indian to complete 450 Test wickets, breaks Anil Kumble's record

- Ravichandran Ashwin scripted history on day 1 of the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy as the 36-year-old completed his 450 Test wickets and became the fastest Indian to do so.
- Ashwin, playing his 89th Test match, clean-bowled Alex Carey to get to the milestone.
- Ashwin is also the fastest Indian to have 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350 and 400 wickets. Ashwin is the only Asian cricketer to have 3000+ runs and 450 wickets.
- Ashwin, who is the fastest Indian to have 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, and 450 wickets, broke Anil Kumble's record of fastest Indian to 450 wickets.
- The 36-year-old achieved the feat in four fewer matches than Kumble. Further, Ashwin is the only Asian cricketer to have 3000+ runs and 450 wickets.
- Ashwin is only the second Indian to have 450 wickets and is behind Anil Kumble's tally of 619.
- Overall, Ashwin is the 2nd fastest cricketer to reach 450 wickets, only behind Sri Lanka legend Muttiah Muralitharan, who completed the feat in 80 matches.

8. FIFA Confirms USA, Mexico, Canada Automatically Qualify for 2026 World Cup

- The FIFA Council confirmed that, in line with the long standing tradition of having all hosts competing at the FIFA World Cup, as well as sporting and operational considerations, the hosts of the FIFA World Cup 2026, namely Canada, Mexico and the USA, will qualify automatically for the final round of the competition.
- The upcoming World Cup will be the first that features **three nations as co-hosts**, while the 2002 event was the only one in men's history with matches taking place in more than one country.
- Both Japan and South Korea qualified as co-hosts in 2002.

9. Saudi Arabia Unanimously Chosen To Host December's FIFA Club World Cup

- Saudi Arabia will host its first major FIFA event this year, after being selected to put on the 2023 Club World Cup in December.
- The Middle East state - who are preparing a bid to co-host the 2030 World Cup alongside Egypt and Greece - was unanimously selected by the FIFA Council.
- The seven-team event will run from December 12.

10. Real Madrid beats Al-Hilal 5-3 to win 8th Club World Cup

- Vini Jr scored twice and assisted Karim Benzema to lead Real Madrid to its record-extending eighth Club World Cup title by beating Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal 5-3.
- Madrid last won the Club World Cup in 2018. It has succeeded in five different decades.
- The competition was first contested in 2000 as the FIFA Club World Championship.

- The **2022 FIFA Club World Cup** was the 19th edition of the FIFA Club World Cup, a FIFA-organised international club football tournament between the winners of the six continental confederations, as well as the host nation's league champions.
- The tournament was held from 1 to 11 February 2023 in **Morocco**.

- FIFA President: Gianni Infantino
- Headquarters: Zrich, Switzerland.

11. Tata Group bags Women's Premier League title sponsorship rights till 2027

- The Tata Group has bagged the title sponsorship rights for the Women's Premier League (WPL) for five seasons.
- The Tata Group is also the title sponsor of the Indian Premier League (IPL). It had replaced handset maker Vivo as the title sponsor for 2 years.
- It will have the title sponsorship rights from February 15, 2023 to July 31, 2027.

12. ISSF WC: Tilottama Sen wins bronze in women's air rifle

- Indian teen Tilottama Sen has won bronze medal in the women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup at Cairo in Egypt.
- The 14-year-old Sen won second bronze for India, fifth overall after ending the top eight ranking round with a score of 262.
- Great Britain's Seonaid McIntosh won gold and Switzerland's Olympic Champion Nina Christen came second to win silver

13. ISSF World Cup 2023 Cairo: Rudranksh Patil wins 10m air rifle gold medal

- Young Indian shooter Rudranksh Balasaheb Patil won the gold medal in the 10m Air Rifle individual event at the ongoing ISSF Shooting World Cup at Cairo in Egypt on Tuesday.
- The 19-year-old Rudranksh defeated Maximilian Ulbrich from Germany with a score of 16-8 in the final.
- Croatia's Miran Maricic took the bronze medal

14. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar wins gold medal in men's individual 50m rifle 3 positions competition at ISSF World Cup

- In shooting, Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar claimed the gold medal in the men's individual 50m rifle 3 positions competition at the ISSF World Cup in Cairo, Egypt as India continued their dominance in the tournament.
- This was India's sixth medal, including four gold, in the tournament as the country strengthened its position at the top of the medals tally.

15. Ravindra Jadeja storms into top ten of ICC test bowler rankings

- India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja stormed into the top ten of the ICC test bowler rankings after his brilliant performance in the first two tests against Australia.
- Jadeja is the third Indian in the top 10 with Ravichandran Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah being the other two.
- Right-arm off-spinner Ashwin climbed to the second spot with 40-year-old James Anderson occupying the pole position. India all-rounder Axar Patel - who is the second leading run-scorer in the series against Australia has moved two places to fifth overall in the latest Test all-rounder rankings.

16. Indian Greco Roman wrestler Ankit Gulia bags Bronze medal in Ibrahim Moustafa ranking series in Egypt

- Indian Greco-Roman wrestler Ankit Gulia has won a bronze medal in the Ibrahim Moustafa ranking-series in Alexandria, Egypt yesterday.
- The 19-year-old Ankit, who lost 9-0 to Georgian Otar Abuladze, got the better of Nurzhigit Keneshbek Uulu of Kyrgyzstan 9-0 in the repechage round.

17. Australia lift ICC Women's T20 World Cup Trophy beating South Africa by 19 runs in Cape Town

- In Women's Cricket, Australia have lifted the ICC T20 World Cup Trophy for the sixth time. In the Final match yesterday, they defeated South Africa by 19 runs at Newlands, Cricket Ground in Cape Town. Player of The Tournament is Ashleigh Gardner. Earlier, Australia defeats India in semi-final

18. Daniil Medvedev beats Andy Murray, wins Qatar Open title

- Daniil Medvedev maintained his winning run to beat Andy Murray in the Qatar Open final and claim his second title in successive weeks. Murray, bidding for his 47th career title but first since 2019, pushed the Russian hard but succumbed 6-4, 6-4 in a battle of former world No 1s. Medvedev also triumphed in Rotterdam last week and now has won 18 Tour-level titles.



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Agreements & MoUs

1. Reliance Consumer Products Limited announces strategic partnership with Sri Lanka's Maliban Biscuit Manufactories

- Reliance Consumer Products Limited, the FMCG arm of Reliance Retail Ventures Limited, has announced a strategic partnership with the Sri Lanka's Maliban Biscuit Manufactories.
- Maliban, a heritage brand and a household name in Sri Lanka, is a pioneering biscuit manufacturer well-known for the last 70 years for its range of quality products.

2. Adani takes over Haifa Port for \$1.2 bn, promises to invest more in Israel

- The Adani Group acquired the strategic Israeli port of Haifa for USD 1.2 billion and vowed to transform the skyline of this Mediterranean city as part of its decision to invest including opening an artificial intelligence lab in Tel Aviv.
- Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd in partnership with local chemicals and logistics group Gadot in July last year won an Israel government's tender to buy the Haifa Port, a major trade hub on Israel's Mediterranean coast, for about USD 1.2 billion.

The Port of Haifa is the second largest port in Israel in terms of shipping containers and the biggest in shipping tourism.

3. Cooperation ministry signs MoU to enable primary agricultural credit societies

- The Ministry of Cooperation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, NABARD and CSC e-Governance Services India Limited to enable Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) to provide services offered by Common Service Centers.
- As per the MoU, which was signed in presence of Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah here in the national capital, PACS will now be able to function as Common Service Centres, along with this, more than 300 services will be made available to the rural population including 13 crore farmer members of PACS.

4. EIL to develop solid waste processing facilities in million plus cities

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has signed a memorandum of agreement with Engineers India Limited to develop Waste to Energy & bio-methanation projects in cities with a population of million plus. The thrust on sustainable solid waste management is strengthened under the ambit of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0, with the overall vision to create garbage free city.
- MoHUA has decided to set up large-scale solid waste processing facilities in million-plus cities. There are 59 million plus cities in India like Lucknow, Kanpur, Bareilly, Nasik, Thane, Nagpur, Gwalior, Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore to name a few. For management of organic/wet fraction of municipal solid waste, bio-methanation plants have been proposed in these million-plus cities.
- Waste to Energy plants use dry waste fraction of municipal solid waste and produce renewable power with maximum reduction of waste volume utilizing the least space in execution in compliance with SWM Rules 2016 and fulfilling all the statutory norms of environment protection.

- Waste to Energy and bio-methanation projects will integrate the concept of circularity in waste management by producing green energy from the dry and wet waste components of municipal solid waste. The by-product such as electricity and Bio-CNG will also help in achieving sustainability of waste management operations.

5. Austrade signs MoU with CII on technical vocational education, training programmes

- The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade ' Australian Government agency) has signed an MoU with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to collaborate on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes.
- The MoU will focus on Australian training standards and delivery in sectors ranging across automotive, allied health, mining, IT etc.

The Australia-India Future Skills Initiative (the Initiative) is the Australian Government's flagship program to support India's workforce and skills development through partnerships with Australian vocational education, training and skills providers.

6. RailTel Bags Rs 253.35 Crore SBI Project To Provide 4G LTE Connectivity For 15,000 Offsite ATMs

- RailTel Corporation announced that the State Bank of India (SBI) has awarded them a work order to connect 15,000 off-site ATMs around the country to 4G LTE. For a period of five years, this mini-ratna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Railways will be in charge of operating and maintaining the whole network.
- This SBI project is one of the largest projects in providing last-mile connectivity on 4G LTE technology in India. The project's anticipated total cost is 253.35 Crores, and RailTel was chosen after a competitive bidding process (excluding taxes).

Sanjai Kumar, Chairman and Managing Director of RailTel.

7. Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare signs MoU with DIL at the University of Chicago

- Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, has signed MoU with The Development Innovation Lab (DIL) at the University of Chicago, in New Delhi, to explore the opportunities to harness innovation to improve food security, address climate change, and allow farmers to increase their income.

The DIL was founded by Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Kremer, University Professor in Economics at the University of Chicago, and 2019 co-recipient of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in memory of Alfred Nobel.

8. India, France, UAE agree for trilateral cooperation initiative, in fields including energy, defence, economy

- India, France & the UAE have agreed to establish a formal trilateral cooperation initiative with the aim of expanding cooperation in various fields of mutual interest. In this context, a phone call between the External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar,

his French counterpart Catherine Colonna and UAE's Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan adopted a roadmap for implementation

- In a joint statement, the three countries said that they will explore the possibility of working with the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** to pursue concrete, actionable projects on clean energy, environment and biodiversity.
- It was also noted that the initiative will serve as a platform to expand cooperation between the development agencies of three countries on sustainable projects.
- The three countries will also seek to ensure greater alignment of their respective economic, technological and social policies with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.
- The three sides also underlined their keen desire to cooperate in the field of the circular economy under the aegis of **IndiaMission LiFE**.

9. IBM and NASA Collaborate to Research Impact of Climate Change with AI

- IBM and NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center announced a collaboration to use IBM's artificial intelligence (AI) technology to discover new insights in NASA's massive trove of Earth and geospatial science data.
- The joint work will apply AI foundation model technology to NASA's Earth-observing satellite data for the first time.

10. MeitY, Meta Shortlist 120 Startups Under XR Startup Program

- MeitY Startup Hub (MSH), an initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Meta have announced the list of 120 startups and innovators for the XR Startup Program.
- As announced in September 2022, XR Startup Program is a collaboration between MSH and Meta to discover, nurture, and accelerate Extended Reality (XR) technology startup across India.
- The **Accelerator Program** is supporting 40 early-stage start-ups working in XR technologies with a grant of Rs. 20 lakhs each.
- **MeitY Startup Hub (MSH)**, is an initiative of MeitY has been focused on building and strengthening the startup ecosystem across India via the launch of new funding schemes, corporate startup programs, and international expansion programs for startups among other activities. We host 4000+ startups, 51 supported and 476 registered Incubators, 26 Centres of Entrepreneurship (CoEs), 22 Accelerators and 400+ Mentors in our network.

11. Agriculture Ministry signs MoU to develop national level digital extension platform

- The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare signed an MoU with Digital Green under a public-private partnership framework to build a national-level digital extension platform. The platform will host a digital library of curated multi-format multi-lingual content, helping extension workers access. Ministry said that there are over two lakh extension workers in the country.
- The platform will be launched within six months and will have the portal and capabilities to serve the entire farming community in India and catalyze Ag-tech and other market actors with newer and higher value proposition.

12. PPAC signs Sol with IEA to strengthen cooperation in field of data and research in energy sector

- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry signed a Statement of Intent with International Energy Agency to strengthen cooperation in the field of data and research in the energy sector to enhance global energy security.
- According to the statement the Sol will initiate cooperation in the energy sector between Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell PPAC and IEA.

13. India signs MoU with Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Joint Business Council to promote adoption of energy efficiency

- India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Joint Business Council, Malaysia to further promote the adoption of energy efficiency and sustainable practices in the region.
- Energy Efficiency Services Limited, a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Power, signed the (MoU) with the IMT-GT JCB Malaysia. Working group meeting of G20 on energy transition took place in Bengaluru

14. Uniper signs pact with Greenko to source green ammonia from India

- Germany-based Uniper has signed an agreement with Greenko ZeroC to source green ammonia from the latter's Kakinada facility in Andhra Pradesh. The two companies intend to negotiate pricing, supply and tenure structure for a supply and purchase agreement for 2,50,000 tonnes per annum of green ammonia (GASPA) based on the heads of terms.
- **Greenko's Kakinada project** is a multi-phase green ammonia production and export facility which is in the process of adding up to 1 MTPA of green ammonia production capacity by 2027.
- At present, Kakinada unit produces green ammonia based on an electrolyser powered by round-the-clock electricity produced by 2.5 GW of renewable assets.

15. CAG signs two MoUs with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on sidelines of SCO Supreme Audit Institutions Leaders meeting

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Supreme Audit Institutions (SCO SAI) Leaders' meeting in Lucknow.
- The agreements are aimed at strengthening cooperation and facilitating the exchange of expertise in the field of auditing. Comptroller and Audit General of India- Girish Chandra Murmu

16. Reliance Jio, GSMA launch initiative to train rural women in digital skills

- Reliance Jio and global mobile network operators' organisation GSMA announced the roll-out of their digital skills programme to train rural women in India. The programme aims to provide need-based training to rural women and individuals from marginalised/low-income groups to help them make meaningful use of digital access.
- As per the **GSMA's Mobile Gender Gap Report 2022**, women in India are 41 per cent less likely than men to use mobile internet.
- The GSMA is a global organisation unifying the mobile ecosystem to discover, develop and deliver innovation foundational to positive business environments and societal change.

17. EU sets up Trade & Technology Council with India after similar partnership with U.S.

- India and the European Union announced setting up of a new Trade and Technology Council that is expected to facilitate exchange of critical technologies relating to an array of domains, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors and cybersecurity.
- The TTC with India is the European Union's second such technology partnership after US in 2021. The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 countries.

18. DGGI, NFSU sign MoU for setting up digital forensic laboratories

- The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) and the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for setting up digital forensic laboratories along with exchange of information and knowledge, technological advancement and skill development in the field of digital forensics. DGGI is an intelligence organisation, under Central Board of Indirect Taxes and customs.
- NFSU is an institution of national importance established to promote studies and research in forensic sciences and related fields.
- It is the first and only institute in the field of forensic sciences.

19. TCS Bags Over \$700 Million Deal From UK's Phoenix Group

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced that it has bagged a 600 million British pounds (or \$723 million) deal from its United Kingdom-based client Phoenix Group.
- Phoenix Group is UK's largest long-term savings and retirements provider.
- Under the deal, TCS will transform Phoenix's ReAssure business using its BaNCS based platform.
- Phoenix Group acquired ReAssure, a UK-based life insurance provider, in 2020, and has now engaged with TCS to drive synergies and enhance customer experience for ReAssure policyholders.

20. ONDC: Delhivery and eSamudaay collaborate to enable rural businesses to take flight

- Delhivery, India's largest integrated logistics provider, has joined forces with Bengaluru-based software solution provider eSamudaay to enable rural businesses to scale by serving customers across India.
- Bengaluru-based firm has launched a tech-enabled platform called TyohaarForever Platform to curate India's vast range of hyperlocal products produced by local artisans.

21. Cabinet approves MoU between India, Chile in Agricultural Sector

- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between India and Chile for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors.
- The MoU shall enter into force upon its signature and shall remain in force for a period of five years from the date of execution after which it shall be automatically renewed for a further period.
- The main areas of cooperation envisaged are Agricultural policies for development of modern agriculture, Organic agriculture to facilitate the bilateral trade of organic products, as well as promote the exchange of policies aimed to develop organic production in both countries, Science and innovation to explore partnerships to promote innovation in the agricultural sector among Indian

Institutes and Chilean institutes as well as collaborate to confront common challenges.

- The meetings of the Agricultural Working Group will be held once a year alternatively in Chile and India.

22. India, Fiji sign MoU on visa exemption for diplomatic, official passport holders

- India and Fiji have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports.
- Under this agreement, diplomatic and official passport holders will be able to enter, transit, and stay in each other territories without a visa for a period not exceeding 90 days. Fiji, country and archipelago in the South Pacific Ocean.

23. Bharat Electronics Ltd To Manufacture Israel's LORA Ballistic Missile For Indian Tri-Services

- Navratna Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has signed an MoU with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) for domestic manufacture and supply of its Long Range Artillery Weapon System (LORA) for the Indian Tri-services.
- The state-of-the-art strategic weapon system will be manufactured by BEL, as the prime contractor, based on the workshare arrangement with IAI.

24. Central Water Commission, IIT Roorkee to develop international centre of excellence for dams

- To empower 'Make in India' in dam safety, IIT Roorkee in collaboration with the Central Water Commission (CWC) will develop International Centre of Excellence for Dams (ICED) under externally funded Dam Rehabilitation & Improvement Project Phase II and Phase III.
- The ICED is being set up at a cost of Rs. 109 Crore, being borne by the DoWR, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti. Sh Kushvinder Vohra, Chairman Central Water Commission.
- The ICED is being set up at a cost of Rs. 109 Crore, being borne by the Department of Water Resources, Ganga Rejuvenation & River Development (DoWR, RD & GR), Ministry of Jal Shakti as non-recurring grant in six tranches towards procurement of goods, machineries for establishment of new laboratories as well as strengthening of existing laboratories, initiation of research activities, construction/ modernization of infrastructure for setting up of ICED by IIT Roorkee.
- Officials said that this memorandum of Agreement (MoA) will remain valid for ten years or till the duration of the DRIP Phase-II and Phase-II Scheme, whichever is earlier, from the date of signing.

25. Borzo, Symbo tie up to provide insurance to over 50,000 delivery partners

- Borzo (erstwhile WeFast), a global intra-city courier delivery service, has partnered with Symbo India Insurance Broking to provide medical insurance benefits to all its 50,000 delivery partners. Borzo delivery partners will have easy access to Symbo's comprehensive health insurance plans that address wellness and finances.
- The partnership will allow Symbo to grow its B2B footprint, reaching a network of gig delivery workers pegged at about 7.7 million and expected to grow to 23.5 million by 2029-30. Symbo is an Irdai-registered brokerage and insurance firm that allows customers to buy plans from their favourite brands, apps and digital insurers.

26. Ministry of Rural Development, Meesho sign MoU to onboard rural women as online sellers

- The Ministry of Rural Development and Meesho signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Thursday to drive digital inclusion of all women registered under State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs) and enable them to sell online.
- This will give a big boost to the work of marketing. 2.35 crore self-help groups were there till 2014.
- By 2024, we have set a target of 10 crore houses.
- Over the last few months, Meesho has tied up with several government-run self-help groups (SHGs), such as Sanjeevini & Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission and UMEED & Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission.

Vidit Aatrey - Founder and CEO - Meesho

27. CSC SPV, NIC and NICS I Partner for providing one-stop managed end-to-end NIC's eOffice and SPARROW Product

- CSC E-Governance Services India Limited (CSC SPV), National Informatics Centre (NIC) and National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICS I) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] for providing one-stop managed end-to-end NIC's e-Office and SPARROW product to the Central and State Government Organizations/Enterprises.

- **Sanjay Kumar Rakesh**, MD & CEO, CSC E-Governance Services India Limited (CSC SPV).
- **Dr. Vinay Thakur**, MD-NICS I.
- **Shri Rajesh Gera** is the Director General of National Informatics Centre.

28. Tata Motors to supply 25,000 XPRES-T electric sedans to Uber

- Tata Motors will supply 25,000 XPRES-T electric vehicle units to Uber in one of the largest deals in the green mobility space till date. As per a memorandum of understanding inked between the two entities, Uber will utilise the electric sedans in its premium category service.
- The price of a single unit of XPRES-T starts from Rs. 13.04 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).
- In July 2021, the automaker launched the XPRES brand exclusively for fleet customers, and the XPRES-T EV is the first vehicle under this brand.
- The new XPRES-T electric sedan comes with two range options - 315km and 277 km (ARAI certified range under test conditions).
- The electric fleet would be operational across Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad.

Uber India and South Asia President: Prabhjeet Singh.

29. Telefnica Germany Selects TCS as Transformation Partner to Build Future-Ready Operations Support

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been selected by Telefnica Germany, a leading integrated telecommunications provider in Germany, to help the latter transform

its end to end service assurance applications and processes within its Operations Support Systems (OSS) stack and further enhance customer experience.

30. Saraswat Bank partners Tagit to deploy omnichannel banking

- Saraswat Bank has partnered with Singapore based digital banking solutions provider Tagit to implement omnichannel digital banking solutions for its retail & corporate customers. Under the association, the bank will use Tagit's Mobeix Digital Banking platform to enhance customer experience.

Saraswat Bank, established in 1918 is the largest Urban Co-operative Bank in India. Saraswat Bank, headquartered in Mumbai.

31. Olectra In Partnership With Reliance Unveils Hydrogen Bus

- Olectra Greentech in technical partnership with Reliance unveiled a Hydrogen Bus, which is a carbon-free alternative to traditional public transportation. Olectra Greentech Ltd., a subsidiary of Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd., is set to offer the next-generation transport system to the Indian market.
- A single hydrogen fill allows the bus to travel up to 400 km.
- Olectra aims at commercially launching these buses within a year.

32. CSC Academy and NIELIT Sign MoU to Enhance Digital Literacy and skill development in India

- CSC Academy, a subsidiary of Common Service Centre e-Governance Services India Limited, and NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance digital literacy and skill development in India.

- Shri Sanjay Kumar Rakesh, MD & CEO, CSC SPV.
- Dr. Rishikesh Patankar, CEO, CSC Academy.
- Dr. Madan Mohan Tripathi, Director General, NIELIT.
- **About NIELIT:** NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology) is a premier institute in the field of information technology and is affiliated with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.

33. APEDA ties up with Lulu to promote export of millet products in Gulf countries

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Lulu Hypermarket to promote export of millets to the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCCs).
- India has exported millets worth \$46.05 million during April-November 2022-23 and the UAE was a major importing country of Indian millets.

APEDA Chairman: M Angamuthu.

34. Infosys Collaborates with Microsoft to Accelerate Industry Adoption of Cloud

- Infosys, Indian multinational information technology company, today announced its collaboration with Microsoft, to help accelerate enterprise cloud transformation journeys worldwide.

- According to the Infosys Cloud Radar, enterprises can add up to \$414 billion in net new profits, annually, through effective cloud adoption. Anant Maheshwari, president, Microsoft India.

Salil Parekh, CEO & MD Infosys.

35. Kerala inks pact with UN Women to empower women in tourism

- Kerala entered into an agreement with UN Women, boosting women-friendly activities in the State's tourism sector by training stakeholders who include young representatives and civil organisations.
- As per the pact inked at the first-ever Global Responsible Tourism Summit in Kumarakom, both parties will promote women-friendly tourism in Kerala.

36. Karnataka Bank and Paisalo Digital Limited enter into Co-Lending Agreement

- Karnataka Bank (KBL), a leading Private Sector Bank and Paisalo Digital Limited (PDL), a Non-Deposit taking NBFC registered with the Reserve Bank of India have entered into a Co-Lending arrangement to provide financial support to small income segment and to give impetus to the Micro & Small Enterprise (MSEs) Segment of the country.

Mahabaleshwara M S, Managing Director & CEO, Karnataka Bank.



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Schemes

1. Budget 2023: FM Sitharaman announces Mahila Samman Bachat Patra

- Finance Minister announced Mahila Samman Bachat Patra- a one-time new small savings scheme for a two-year period up to March 2025. This initiative will avail a deposit facility for a woman up to 'two lakh for two-year period at a fixed interest rate of 7.5% with partial withdrawal option.
- The initiative is launched to commemorate the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

2. Government Extends PM-KUSUM Scheme Till March 2026 As Covid Affects Implementation

- The government has extended PM-KUSUM scheme till March 2026 as its implementation was significantly affected due to the pandemic. Launched in 2019, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan aimed at adding solar capacity of 30,800 MW by 2022 with total central financial support of Rs 34,422 crore, including service charges to the implementing agencies.

- Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has launched the PM-KUSUM Scheme
- The scheme aims to add solar capacity of 30,800 MW by 2022 with total central financial support of Rs. 34,422 Crore including service charges to the implementing agencies.
- The Scheme consists of three components:
 - Component A: 10,000 MW of solar capacity through installation of small Solar Power Plants of individual plants of capacity upto 2 MW.
 - Component B: Installation of 20 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
 - Component C: Solarisation of 15 Lakh Grid-connected Agriculture Pumps.

3. 2,310 MSMEs got over '651cr loan under ECLGS in '22-23

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on May 13, 2020, launched Rs 3 lakh crore government guaranteed collateral free ECLGS for MSMEs and other business enterprises to meet their operational liabilities. The scheme was extended in the Union budget for fiscal 2022-23 up to March 2023 and its total guarantee cover was extended to Rs 5 lakh crore.
- As many as 2,310 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Punjab availed the facility of 100% guaranteed collateral free loan of over Rs 651 crore under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) in financial year 2022-23 till December 21, 2022.
- Whereas a total of 2,301 MSMEs in the neighbouring state of Haryana were sanctioned loan of Rs 1,113 crore under this scheme during this period, 885 MSMEs in Himachal Pradesh got a loan of Rs 156 crore and 83 such industries in Chandigarh got loan amounting to Rs 56 crore.

4. Rural development minister Giriraj Singh launches Mission Antyodaya Survey

- Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Giriraj Singh launched the Mission Antyodaya Survey 2022-23 to assess the outcome of various development schemes in rural areas.

- The Department of Rural Development has been conducting the Mission Antyodaya Survey across all gram panchayats since 2017-18 to measure the outcomes through convergence of various schemes.

5. UDAN Scheme: Over Rs 2,300 Crore Given As VGF; Revival Of 100 Unserved And Under-Served Airports

- The government has approved the 'Revival of unserved and under-served airports' scheme for the development of 100 unserved and under-served Airports, Helipad and Water Aerodromes by 2024.
- the government has doled out Rs 2355 crore as Viability Gap Funding (VGF) to selected airline operators, for the operation of UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) flights.
- Viability Gap Funding means a grant to support projects that are economically justified but not financially viable.
- The Civil Aviation Ministry launched Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) — **UDAN on 21 October 2016**, to stimulate regional air connectivity and make air travel affordable to the masses.
- UDAN is a market driven scheme, where interested airlines based on their assessment of demand on particular routes, submit their proposals at the time of bidding. Bidding rounds are conducted from time to time for covering more destinations/stations and routes under the scheme.
- Currently, more than 4,600 UDAN routes are being operationalised, out of which, Tourism Ministry has also given funds for more than 50 routes under the RCS-UDAN scheme.
- **A total number of 73 airports including, nine Heliports and two water aerodromes, have been operationalised, since 2017, under the UDAN scheme.**
- Under the UDAN scheme, the unserved and underserved airports/airstrips namely Ludhiana, Adampur, Bathinda and Pathankot have been identified in Punjab for operation of UDAN flights, till the completion of four rounds of bidding.
- UDAN flight operations from the Ludhiana, Adampur, Bathinda and Pathankot airports have been commenced by the Selected Airline Operators.

6. 'Vibrant Villages' Along India-China Border Approved

- The Union Cabinet has approved the centrally-sponsored Scheme called 'Vibrant Villages Programme' for financial years 2022-23 to 2025-26 with an outlay of '4,800 crore. The target is to develop the villages along the China border.
- There will not be an overlap with the Border Area Development Programme. Of the '4,800 crore, a sum of '2,500 crore would be used for roads.
- The scheme is aimed at developing infrastructure and livelihood opportunity in four states and one Union Territory along the northern borders, including Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

7. Govt Approves Rs 4,800 Crore Scheme For Holistic Development Of Border Villages

- The Union Cabinet approved a centrally sponsored scheme called the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) for comprehensive development of border villages.
- The scheme has been approved for the financial years 2022-23 to 2025-26. with financial allocation of Rs 4,800 crore.

- The programme is designed to improve the quality of life of people living in identified border villages. In the first phase of the scheme, 663 villages will be taken up in the programme.
- The **Vibrant Village Action Plans** will be created by the district administration in collaboration with Gram Panchayats to ensure 100 percent saturation of Central and state schemes, including connectivity with all weather roads, 24x7 electricity, and healthcare centres.
- The scheme **will not overlap with Border Area Development Programme**.
- The programme will lay special emphasis on road connectivity as Rs 2,500 crore out of the financial allocation of Rs 4,800 crore will be used for roads.

8. Shri Parshottam Rupala launches Sagar Parikrama Phase-III from Hazira Port in Gujarat

- Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, has launched the Sagar Parikrama Phase-III from Hazira Port in Gujarat.
- The main objectives of Sagar Parikrama are to disseminate information of various fisheries-related schemes and programs being implemented by the government, promoting responsible fisheries and protecting marine ecosystems.

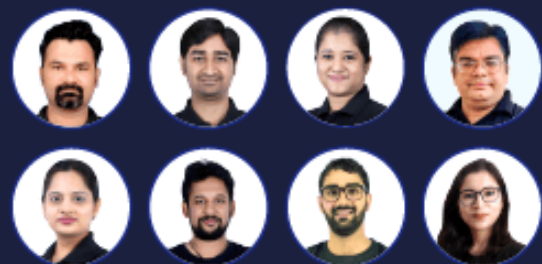
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Appointments & Resignations

1. Morgan Stanley names Arun Kohli new country head for India

- Mr. Kohli will be replacing Sanjay Shah, who will be retiring from service. The latter was with Morgan Stanley since 1996 and rose through the ranks to become its India head in 2021.
- Between 2012 and 2016, Kohli was the chief operating officer and managing director of Morgan Stanley's Asia Pacific operations.

Morgan Stanley, CEO: James P. Gorman. Morgan Stanley is an American multinational company.

2. RBI appoints V Ramachandra as member of advisory committee of Srei NBFCs

- Reserve Bank of India has appointed V Ramachandra as a member of the Advisory Committee of the two Srei Group companies undergoing insolvency proceedings ' Srei Infrastructure Finance and Srei Equipment Finance.
- The Advisory Committee also comprises Venkat Nageshwar Chalasani, former deputy MD at State Bank of India, TT Srinivasaraghavan, former MD of Sundaram Finance.
- The RBI, in October 2021, constituted an Advisory Committee to advise the administrator of the Srei NBFC twins, in the operations of the financial service providers during the corporate insolvency resolution process.

3. Equatorial Guinea appoints Manuela Roka Botey as first female PM

- Equatorial Guinea has appointed Manuela Roka Botey as prime minister. She became the first woman in the country to hold the position. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has ruled the country since 1979, made the announcement.
- She replaces former premier Francisco Pascual Obama Asue, who has been in the position since 2016.

Equatorial Guinea Capital: Malabo

4. Mahindra Finance names Raul Rebello as MD and CEO-designate

- Mahindra Finance, the vehicle financing unit of the Mahindra & Mahindra Group, has appointed Raul Rebello as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer-Designate.
- Raul, who is currently the Chief Operating Officer of the company, will take charge as MD and CEO when Ramesh Iyer retires on April 29, 2024.

5. Indian-American Ami Bera appointed to House Intelligence Committee

- Recently, Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera was appointed as a member of the influential US House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for the 118th Congress.
- The Intelligence Committee is charged with providing oversight of the nation's intelligence activities, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Office of the Director of National Intelligence etc

6. Madhvendra Singh appointed as first CEO of Gujarat Maritime Cluster.

- Gujarat Ports Infrastructure Company has appointed Madhvendra Singh as the first CEO of the Gujarat Maritime Cluster.
- It is the first of its kind Commercial Maritime Cluster in the country aimed at creating a hub for maritime services of international standards. Gujarat Maritime Board established GMC through its subsidiary, Gujarat Ports Infrastructure Company.

7. PESB recommends the name of Saravanan U for NFL's CMD post

- Saravanan U is set to be the next Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), a Miniratna PSU under the Department of Fertilizers. He has been recommended for the post by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) panel. Presently, he is serving as CMD of Madras Fertilizers Limited (MFL).
- The NFL's CMD post fell vacant after its former head Virendra Nath Datt superannuated.

8. Pfizer India appoints Meenakshi Nevatia as new MD, CEO

- Pfizer India has announced the appointment of Meenakshi Nevatia as its new CEO and Managing Director. Nevatia will serve in this role for the next five years.
- Last year in August, she was appointed as the chairperson for India Executive Committee of the Asia Pacific Medical Technology Association (APACMed).

9. Tata Motors VP Rajan Amba appointed as MD of Jaguar Land Rover India

- Rajan Amba, VP of Sales, Marketing & Customer Care, Tata Motors, has been appointed as the Managing Director of Jaguar Land Rover India. He will take charge on March 1, 2023. Amba replaces Rohit Suri, who announced his retirement earlier this year.
- Prior to joining Tata Motors, Amba was the Chief Operating Officer at Carat Lane.
- Jaguar Land Rover has been a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Motors, in which Tata Sons is the largest shareholder, since 2008.

10. Lieutenant General MV Suchindra Kumar appointed new Army Vice Chief

- Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has been appointed as the new Vice Chief of Army Staff. He is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of Army Staff (Strategy) in the Army Headquarters.
- Lt Gen Kumar will succeed Lt Gen B S Raju who has been appointed as the Jaipur-headquartered South Western Army Commander.

11. UN Social Development Commission elects Ruchira Kamboj its Chair for 62nd session

- The UN Commission for Social Development has elected India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ruchira Kamboj as its chair for the 62nd session.
- Kamboj was elected chair by acclamation at the first meeting of the 62nd session of the UN Commission for Social Development at the UN headquarters.
- It also elected Jon Ivanovski from North Macedonia, Carla Mara Carlson from Dominican Republic and Thomas Lammar from Luxembourg as the Vice-Chairs of the 62nd session.
- The Commission during its last meeting of the 62nd session approved the text 'Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development', in which the UN Economic and Social Council would decide that the priority theme for the 62nd session of the Commission will be 'Fostering social

development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication'.

12. Meghana Pandit named CEO of Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust

- India-born professor Meghana Pandit has become the first woman of colour to be appointed CEO of Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Foundation Trust.
- Meghana, who was named to the post on a fixed term basis in 2022, has now been appointed permanently after a rigorous and competitive process.
- Professor Jonathan Montgomery, Chair of Oxford University Hospitals.
- Meghana was consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist, and divisional director at Milton Keynes before joining University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, where she was Chief Medical Officer from May 2012 to December 2018.

13. Rajesh Rai appointed as CMD of ITI Limited

- Rajesh Rai has been appointed as Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of ITI Limited, a PSU under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Rai for a period of five years with effect from the date of his assumption of charge of the post.

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| ITI Limited is a PSU in the telecommunications technology segment established as a departmental factory in 1948. |
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14. Reserve Bank of India appoints Shri Vikramaditya Singh Khichi as a member in the Advisory Committee of M/s Reliance Capital Ltd

- Consequent upon the resignation of Shri Srinivasan Varadarajan from the Advisory Committee with effect from February 17, 2023, it has been decided to appoint Shri Vikramaditya Singh Khichi as a member of the Advisory Committee with immediate effect.
- The Advisory Committee shall advise the Administrator in the operations of Reliance Capital Ltd.
- Reserve Bank of India, vide its press release dated December 07, 2021, had constituted an Advisory Committee under Rule 5 (c) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency and Liquidation Proceedings of Financial Service Providers and Application to Adjudicating Authority) Rules, 2019, to advise the Administrator in the operations of the financial service providers during the corporate insolvency resolution process.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Advisory Committee will now comprise of following members:• Shri Sanjeev Nautiyal, ex-DMD, State Bank of India• Shri Praveen P Kadle, ex-MD & CEO, Tata Capital Limited• Shri Vikramaditya Singh Khichi, ex-ED, Bank of Baroda |
|---|

15. Centre appoints Rajeev Raghuvanshi as new DCGI

- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the appointment of Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi as Drugs Controller General of India, Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
- Dr Raghuvanshi had joined the IPC as secretary-cum-scientific director on February 16, 2021.
- Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi will replace Dr. VG Somani.

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Awards

1. Former PM Manmohan Singh Conferred With Lifetime Achievement Honour In UK

- Former prime minister Dr Manmohan Singh was recently conferred a Lifetime Achievement Honour by the India-UK Achievers Honours in London for his contribution to economic & political life.
- The India-UK Achievers Honours by NISAU UK, in partnership with the British Council in India & the UK's Department for International Trade honors achievement of Indian's who studied in UK.

2. Indian music composer Ricky Kej creates history by winning third Grammy Award

- Indian music composer Ricky Kej has won his third Grammy Award at the 65th Annual Grammy Awards for his globally acclaimed album, **Divine Tides** with Rock-legend Stewart Copeland. After winning his third Grammy, He has become the only Indian to win 3 Grammy Awards. Ricky's previous wins came in 2022 and 2015 for **'Best New Age Album' for Divine Tides and Winds of Samsara**.
- The music album Divine Tides is a tribute to Vasudeva Kutumbakam - The World is one family The album, which contains nine songs and eight music videos, was around the world from the exquisite beauty of the Indian Himalayas to the Icy forests of Spain.

3. VP Nandakumar, Manappuram Finance gets Hurun India award

- VP Nandakumar, Managing Director & CEO, Manappuram Finance Ltd has bagged The Hurun Industry Achievement Award 2022 for his remarkable achievements in the world of business.
- Adi Godrej, chairman, Godrej Group, Cyrus S. Poonawalla, MD Serum Institute of India Ltd, Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-founder, Infosys and Sanjiv Goenka of RPG were the earlier recipients of the award.

4. Asia's most prestigious book award "Golden Book Awards" announces winners 2023

- The awards are judged by a panel of literary experts, like Dr Kailash Pinjani (President Indian Authors Association), Dr Deepak Parbat (Founder of Superfast Author) & Murali Sundaram (Founder of TLC), who choose the winners based on factors such as originality, creativity, and impact on the literary world. Golden Book Awards is sponsored by Wings Publication International.

- The winners of Golden Book Awards 2023 are-
- J.K Rowling - Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets Of Dumbledore
- Gaur Gopal Das - Energize Your Mind: A Monk's Guide To Mindful Living
- Deepak Chopra - The Seven Spiritual Law Of Success: A Practical Guide To Achieving Your Dreams
- Kamlesh Patel - The Wisdom Bridge: Nine Principles To A Life That Echoes In The Hearts Of Your Loved Ones
- Jeff Kinney - Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Diper Overlode
- Ashneer Grover - Doglapan: The Hard Truth About Life And Start-Ups
- Ruskin Bond - How To Live Your Life
- Namita Thapar - The Dolphin And The Shark: Stories On Entrepreneurship
- Sneha Desai, Sunil Tulsiani & Brian Tracy - Ultimate Secrets To Wealth
- Raj Shamani - Build, Don't Talk - Things You Wish You Were Taught In School
- Bhupendra Singh Raathore - The Magic Of Thinking Rich

- Deepak Bajaj - Network Marketing In 60 Minutes
- Deepti Naval - A Country Called Childhood: A Memoir
- Smita Goswamy - Family Run To Family Led
- Subadra Ilan - An Enticing Career
- Aadya Dube - Always Be Unique
- Navin Reuben Dawson - Chimaera
- Rajeev Kumar Dubey - Urvi
- Dr Soumendra Nath Bandyopadhyay - The Mysteries Of The Universe-Where Fact Is More Interesting Than Fiction
- Ankush Pare - Secret to overcome stammering and becoming an effective speaker
- Parag Pandya - Padagha (Japanese Version - Bussokusekika)
- Moasenla R. Jamir - Foreign Engine In Flight - A Light Of Passage In Poems
- Gowri Venket - Superstar Of My Life - Saibaba
- Dr Sreeveni V - Self-Worth As Your First Impression - Signature Of Your Expression
- Ashutosh Madhukar Marathe - The Extra In Ordinary
- Dr K. Sreekumar - Buddhavelicham
- Rakhi Kapoor - Now You Breathe - Overcoming Toxic Relationships And Abuse
- Chandrima Chowdhury - The Tales Of The Uncommon Commons
- Dr P. Madhurima Reddy - The Awakening
- Aashish Patidar Property Shastra - A Vedic Guide To Buy The Right Property
- S. Ilanchezhian - 10x Ceo To The Board Joy To Yoy
- Kiran Sidde - Vidyarthi-Betal
- Osama Regaah - Travel And Thoughts

5. NTPC bags 'ATD Best Awards 2023' for 6th consecutive year

- NTPC Limited, the largest power generating company has been honoured with 'ATD Best Awards 2023' by the Association for Talent Development, USA.
- This is the sixth time that NTPC has won this award for demonstrating enterprise success in the field of talent development.
- The ATD Best Awards recognises organisations that demonstrate enterprise through talent development.

6. Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award for ABK Prasad

- Veteran journalist ABK Prasad has been chosen for the prestigious Raja Ram Mohan Roy National Award for Excellence in Journalism-2020.
- Anne Bhavani Koteswara Prasad, popularly known as ABK, has the rare honour of being the editor of all the mainstream journals of Andhra Pradesh during his journalistic career spanning over 75 years.
- He also served as the Chairman of Official Language Commission from 2004 to 2009 in the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh.
- The award has been conferred by Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, Chairperson, Press Council of India.

- The award will be presented to ABK Prasad at the Deputy Speaker Hall, Constitution Club of India, Rafi Marg, New Delhi, on February 28.

7. Germany's Angela Merkel receives UNESCO peace prize in Ivory Coast

- The Flix Houphout-Boigny Peace Prize awarded to Merkel is named for Ivory Coast's first president after independence from France in 1960. The award was presented to Merkel in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast's capital and the hometown of the late Houphout-Boigny.
- Mrs. Merkel led Germany for 16 years, since handing over to successor Olaf Scholz in December 2021.

8. Karnataka Bank gets Digidhan Award

- The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology has conferred the private sector lender Karnataka Bank with two 'Digidhan awards' for achieving the target with highest percentage in BHIM/UPI transactions under the private sector bank category consecutively for the past two fiscal years. Mahabaleshwara MS, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Karnataka Bank,
- This award is an ideal tribute to the founding fathers of this great institution as Karnataka Bank is stepping into its 100th year of its fruitful existence.

9. Kollam district won Swaraj Trophy 2021-22 for Best District Panchayat

- The Kollam district panchayat won the Swaraj Trophy for the best district panchayat in the State for the 2021-22 financial year. The Kannur district panchayat stood second in the rankings. The Thiruvananthapuram Corporation bagged the trophy for the best corporation. The Mulanthuruthy grama panchayat won the award for the best grama panchayat in the State and Pappinissery
- The Kollam district panchayat won the Swaraj Trophy for the best district panchayat in the State for the 2021-22 financial year.
- The Kannur district panchayat stood second in the rankings. The Thiruvananthapuram Corporation bagged the trophy for the best corporation.
- The Mulanthuruthy grama panchayat won the award for the best grama panchayat in the State and Pappinissery and Marangattupilly grama panchayats won the second and third places.

10. Kashmir Files bags best film award at Dadasaheb International Film Festival in Mumbai

- Vivek Agnihotri's 'The Kashmir Files' bagged the Dadasaheb International Film Festival Awards and SS Rajamouli's 'RRR' received the International Film of the Year.
- The grand celebration of Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival (DPIFF) 2023 took place in Mumbai.
- Alia Bhatt won the Award for Best Actress for Gangubai Kathiawadi.
- Ranbir Kapoor collected the Best Actor award for his performance in Brahmastra. Veteran actor Rekha was honoured for her Outstanding Contribution To The Film Industry.

11. MIT professor Hari Balakrishnan wins 2023 Marconi Prize

- The 2023 Marconi Prize has been awarded to Hari Balakrishnan, the Fujitsu Professor in MIT's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

(EECS) and a principal investigator in the MIT Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL).

- His prior honors include the ACM SIGCOMM Award, the IEEE Koji Kobayashi Award & the Infosys Prize.
- Balakrishnan joins an illustrious list of Marconi Prize recipients with strong connections to MIT, including Sir Tim Berners-Lee, Bob Gallager, James Killian (the tenth President of MIT, who was the first Marconi Prize recipient in 1975), David Forney, Tom Leighton, Bob Metcalfe, and Ron Rivest.

12. RRR wins four trophies at Hollywood Critics Association awards

- RRR directed by SS Rajamouli again received international recognition and won four awards at Hollywood Critics Association Film Awards.
- The movie received awards for Best Action Film, Best International Feature, Best Original Song and Best Stunts. RRR starring Jr NTR and Ram Charan bagged the Critics' Choice Award for Best Song for its track Naatu Naatu.



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Ranks & Reports

1. IIRF releases MBA Ranking 2023, IIM Ahmedabad, Bengaluru in top 3

- Indian Institutional Ranking Framework released the Top Management and Business School 2023. This year, IIM Lucknow has jumped one place and has secured fourth rank. IIM Ahmedabad has taken over the first position followed by IIM Bengaluru and IIM Kolkata in second and third position respectively.
- The top three position has been attained by the public institutions while among the private institutions Mittal School of Business of Lovely Professional University (LPU), Jalandhar have gone up from 84 position last year to 41 in 2023 while MYRA School of Business, Mysuru went up by 60 ranks and getting placed at 30 in 2023.

2. Defence ministry top buyer of MSME goods in 2022: GeM

- The Ministry of Defence was the top procuring ministry of goods and services from MSME sellers in the calendar year 2022, said the government's public procurement e-commerce marketplace Government eMarketplace (GeM).
- In terms of state, **Uttar Pradesh** ranked top buyer of MSME goods worth Rs 9,642 crore through GeM in 2022.
- In 2022, the Ministry of Defense envisages procurement of goods and services worth Rs 16,747 crore from the MSME sector.

3. India's Solar Module Manufacturing Capacity to Reach 95 GW by 2025: Report

- India's solar module manufacturing capacity is expected to reach approximately 95 GW by the end of 2025, according to Mercom Capital.
- According to the report, 'State of Solar PV Manufacturing In India' Indian photovoltaic (PV) manufacturers are strategically poised for growth and adoption of new technologies over the next few years thanks to government incentives programmes
- The Cabinet approved in September 2022 a Rs 19,500 crore production linked incentive (PLI), scheme for national programme on high efficiency solar PV module.
- This was to attract investments of Rs 94,000 crore.

4. India sees six-fold jump in voters since 1951; total electorate on January 1 is over 94.50 crore

- India has witnessed a nearly six-fold increase in the total number of voters since 1951 to over 94.50 crore this year, but almost one-third of them stayed away from exercising their franchise in the last Lok Sabha polls.
- In 1951, when the voter lists for the first general elections were prepared, India had 17.32 crore registered electors.

5. TCS Named to World's Most Admired Companies List by FORTUNE(R) Magazine

- Tata Consultancy Services has been named to FORTUNE magazine's list of the World's Most Admired Companies. Regarded as a barometer of corporate reputation, the list is based on a survey of business executives, directors and analysts around the globe. Companies are evaluated based on criteria such as innovation, social responsibility, quality of products/services.

6. Average Power Availability Gone Up To 22.5 Hours In Rural, 23.5 Hours In Urban Areas: Govt

- The government informed the Parliament due to the various measures taken by it, the power availability in the country on an average has gone up to 22.5 hours in rural areas and 23.5 hours in urban areas.
- Union Power Minister R K Singh said that the Indian power system met a record power demand of 211.6 GW in June 2022.

7. India ranks first in milk production in the world contributing 24% of global milk production

- According to production data of Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database, India is the highest milk producer i.e., rank first position in the world contributing twenty-four percent of global milk production in the year 2021-22.
- The milk production of India has registered fifty-one percent increase during the last eight years. Milk production increased to twenty-two crore tonne in the year 2021-22.

8. India's national accreditation system ranked 5th in the world

- India's national accreditation system under the Quality Council of India (QCI) has been ranked 5th in the world in the recent Global Quality Infrastructure Index (GQII) 2021.
- The GQII ranks the 184 economies in the world on the basis of quality infrastructure (QI). India's overall QI system ranking continues to be in the Top 10 at the 10th position.

Chairperson of Quality Council of India, Jaxay Shah

QCI functions through 5 main accreditation boards:

- **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)**
- **National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET)**
- **National Board for Quality Promotion (NBQP)**
- **National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH)**
- **National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)**

9. Indian civil aviation system jumps to 55th rank in latest ICAO audit: DGCA

- The Indian civil aviation system has jumped from 112th rank to 55th rank in the latest audit done by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) stated.
- After the November 2022 audit, India received an updated overall effective implementation (EI) of 85.65%.
- UN's body ICAO had in 2018 conducted the previous audit.

ICAO: Secretary General: Juan Carlos Salazar

HQ: Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

- ICAO is funded and directed by 193 national governments to support their diplomacy and cooperation in air transport as signatory states to

the Chicago Convention (1944).

- The ICAO Council is a permanent body of the Organization responsible to the Assembly. It is composed of 36 Member States elected by the Assembly for a three-year term.
- The Council elects its President for a term of three years, and he may be re-elected. Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano is the sixth and current President of the ICAO Council.

10. India ranks 47th in OECD's services trade restrictiveness index

- Reflecting presence of huge market barriers in the country, India stood at 47th position in Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI) conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for the year 2022. However, there was an improvement from last year's ranking by one position.

- OECD, Headquarters: Paris, France; Founded: 30 September 1961.
- **How does OECD rank countries in STRI?** The STRI indices take into consideration the government policies in several sectors that define the ease of trading in those sectors and industries. Based on these factors, STRI indices assign value to countries between zero and one. As per the index, zero shows least restriction and one shows no restriction. The database also records details based on a Most Favoured Nation basis.
- A total of **38 OECD member countries and 12 non OECD members** including Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Peru, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand and Vietnam. The index includes sectors like air transport, road freight cover, government regulations, etc.

11. India ranks 42 in 55 countries on International IP Index

- India has been ranked 42nd out of 55 countries in the US Chamber of Commerce's latest International IP Index report.
- The annual International IP Index evaluates the protection of IP rights in 55 of the world's leading economies, together representing around 90% of global GDP.
- The report covers everything from patent and copyright laws to the ability to monetise IP assets and the ratification of international agreements.
- By analysing the IP landscape in global markets, the index aims to help nations navigate toward a brighter economic future marked by greater innovation, creativity, and competitiveness, according to a media release.

12. NTPC has been ranked as the top independent power producer and energy trader globally by S&P Platts

- National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited, the country's largest power generating company has been ranked as the number one independent power producer and energy trader globally in the S&P Global Commodity Insights Top 250 Global Energy Company Rankings-2022.
- These rankings are based on four key metrics- asset worth, revenues, profits, and return on investment. NTPC currently provides 24% of the total electricity produced in India.

13. India 7th biggest nation ready to adopt crypto in 2023, US second

- According to HedgewithCrypto research, **Australia** is the biggest country when it comes to the adoption of cryptocurrency in 2023 with a score of 7.37 out of 10. The sale of cryptocurrency and other digital assets is legal and regulated in Australia. India emerged as 7th biggest nation ready to adopt crypto in 2023. USA ranks as the second biggest country in crypto adoption.

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Important Days

1. Indian Coast Guard Day | 1 February

- The Indian Coast Guard Day is celebrated on February 1 every year to honour organisations that look after maritime security. This year, India will be celebrating the 47th Coast Guard Day.
- The interim Indian Coast Guard was originally established on February 1, 1977, to prevent the sea-borne smuggling of goods that hampered India's domestic economy.
- Currently, Indian Coast Guard is ranked as the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world.

The motto of the Indian Coast Guard is **Vayam Rakshamah**

- **Virender Singh Pathania**, is the current Director General of the Indian Coast Guard
- The Indian Coast Guard is headed by the Director-General, who resides at the headquarters in New Delhi.
- The Coast guard is also involved in volunteering, searching, holding rescue operations at sea and guarding the national waters and borders of our country.
- The work of the Indian Coast Guard varies for multiple fields in collaboration with the Indian Navy, the Customs Department and the Police. The guard is allotted to different regions including the North-West region situated in Gandhinagar, Gujrat, the East region in Chennai, and the North East region in Kolkata and Andaman and Nicobar regions.

2. World Interfaith Harmony Week | 1-7 February

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated the first seven days of February as World Interfaith Harmony Week in 2010. Since then, it has been celebrated globally every year.
- The idea of World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the United Nations in 2010 by Jordan's King Abdullah II.

3. World Wetlands Day | 2 February

- World Wetlands Day is celebrated annually on 2 February. The day is observed to create awareness among people about the importance of wetlands and different ways to restore their rapid loss and degradation.
- Wetlands play an important role in maintaining the ecological balance. Approximately, 40 percent of all plant and animal species live, breed, and flourish in wetlands.
- **The theme of World Wetlands Day 2023 is "It's Time for Wetlands Restoration,"**
- On 2 February 1971, Convention on Wetlands was accepted as an International Treaty in Ramsar, Iran. On 30 August 2021, UN General Assembly adopted resolution 75/317 for World Wetlands Day.
- The World Wetlands Day started in 1997 when the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands started educating general public about the significance of protecting the wetlands. Posters, factsheets, documents, and other outreach materials were distributed among people about the conservation of Wetlands.

There are 75 Ramsar Sites in India as of February 2023

4. World Cancer Day | 4 February

- World Cancer Day takes place every year on 4 February. It aims to prevent millions of deaths each year by raising awareness and education about cancer, and pressing governments and individuals across the world to take action against the disease.
- The theme for World Cancer Day 2022-2024 is "Close the Care Gap" a call for equitable access to cancer treatments.

5. International Day of Human Fraternity | 4 February

- The International Day of Human Fraternity has been observed every year on February 4 for the last couple of years. This day, which falls in the middle of the International Interfaith Harmony Week.
- The International Day of Human Fraternity was instituted to celebrate the historic document titled 'Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together'.
- It was signed by Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, & Pope Francis on Feb 4, 2019.

6. International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation | 6 February

- International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is observed on February 6. Female genital mutilation (FGM) involves altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons and is recognised internationally as a violation of human rights and the integrity of girls and women.
- Theme for 2023: Partnership with Men and Boys to Transform Social and Gender Norms to End Female Genital Mutilation.
- 6 February 2023 marks the 12th anniversary of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation established by the United Nations General Assembly in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

7. PM inaugurates India Energy Week 2023 in Bengaluru

- India Energy Week is being organised from the 6th to the 8th of February and aims to showcase India's rising prowess as an energy transition powerhouse. The Prime Minister launched the uniforms under the 'Unbottled' initiative of Indian Oil. These uniforms are made of recycled PET bottles.
- The Prime Minister informed that the government is working on mission mode to increase the consumption of natural gas in our energy mix from 6% to 15% by 2030 where all the needed infrastructure will be provided by **One Nation One Grid**.
- The government is trying to increase the capacity of LNG Terminal regasification the Prime Minister said. He further added that the terminal regasification capacity of 21 MTPA has doubled in 2022 while efforts are being made to increase it even more.
- He also added that the number of CGDs in the country has gone up 9 times and the number of CNG stations has gone up to 5000 from 900 in 2014. The Prime Minister also touched upon the gas pipeline network which has increased to 22,000 kilometres from 14,000 in 2014 and pointed out that the network will expand to 35,000 kilometres in the next 4-5 years.

8. National Deworming Day | 10 February

- February 10 is observed as National Deworming Day, an initiative of the Union Health Ministry, in an attempt to make every child in the country worm-free. More than 836 million children are at risk of parasitic worm infections across the world.
- According to WHO, 241 million children between the ages of 1 and 14 years are at risk of parasitic intestinal worms in India. National Deworming Day was launched by the government in 2015.

9. World Pulses Day | 10 February

- World Pulses Day is a designated United Nations global event to recognize the importance of pulses as a global food.
- It has been proclaimed on February 10 of each year since 2019 by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 20, 2018.
- **The theme for this year's World Pulses Day 2023 is 'Pulses for sustainable Future'.**
International Year of Pulses (IYP)- 2016

10. International Day of Women and Girls in Science - 11 February

- Celebrated every year on February 11, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science is observed by the United Nation to promote the full and equal access and participation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields.
- **The theme is IDEAS (Innovate, Demonstrate, Elevate, Advance, Sustain).**
- This year will be the 8th International Day of Women and Girls in Science.
- The day is implemented by UNESCO and UN-Women, in collaboration institutions and civil society partners that aim to promote women and girls in science.

Sima Sami Bahous is the Executive Director of UN Women headquartered in New York City.

11. World Unani Day - February 11

- World Unani Day is observed on February 11 every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of social reformer and renowned Unani scholar Hakim Ajmal Khan, widely regarded as the pioneer of Unani medicine in India.

12. National Productivity Day - February 12

- India celebrates National Productivity Day every year on February 12 to mark the foundation day of the National Productivity Council (NPC). The NPC's mission is to promote awareness towards increasing the productivity of the country.
- NPC is an autonomous organisation which was established in 1958 under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **The theme for National Productivity Day this year is 'A chance to set goals'.**
- The National Productivity Day marks the formation of the National Productivity Council (NPC), and it was registered on February 12, 2022, under the Societies Registration Act, 1960.
- The day is celebrated as part of National Productivity Week, which is observed from February 12 to 18.

13. World Day of Social Justice | 20 February

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on 10 June 2008.
- On 26 November 2007, the General Assembly declared that, starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, 20 February will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice. 2023
- **Theme: Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice.**

14. International Mother Language Day | 21 February

- The world celebrates International Mother Language Day to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as multilingualism on February 21 every year.
- In 1999, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) approved the idea of celebrating International Mother Language Day.
- According to the UNESCO website, the day was established on the initiative of Bangladesh and has been observed worldwide since 1999. This day honoured and remembered the historical language movement and the martyrs who gave their lives in Bangladesh in 1952.
- This day, also known as 'Matrihasha Diwas,' is widely observed and celebrated.

15. Central Excise Day 2023 | 24 February

- Central Excise Day is celebrated every year on 24 February to honor and appreciate the efforts, services, and contribution of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs.
- Central Excise Day is dedicated to commemorate the Central Excise and Salt Act which was established on 24th February 1944.
- The CBIC officers play a critical role in the country's industrial development. Every Indian citizen must pay taxes to contribute in the country's economic progress.

16. World NGO Day | 27 February

- The World NGO Day is an annual international observance on February 27 to recognize the contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- The day was first celebrated in 2010 and has since become an annual event that highlights the work of NGOs around the world.

17. National Science Day | 28 February

- National Science Day is celebrated in India on February 28 to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by physicist Sir CV Raman on the same day in 1928. For this discovery, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
- **"Global Science for Global Wellbeing" is the official theme for National Science Day 2023.**
- National Science Day was first celebrated in 1986
- **The Raman effect & Raman scattering** is the change in the wavelength of light that occurs when a light beam is deflected by molecules.
- The official theme for National Science Day 2023 by the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

18. Rare Disease Day | 28 February

- Rare Disease Day is an international event held on the last day of February to raise awareness about the impact of rare diseases on patients' lives and to emphasize the need for research. Rare Disease Day 2023 Theme: Majority of the rare diseases

are genetic in nature. In 2017, India formulated a National Policy on Rare Diseases & a revised policy in 2021.

- A rare disease is an ailment that affects a small percentage of the population. Majority of the rare diseases are genetic in nature.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a debilitating lifelong disease or disorder condition with a prevalence of 1 or less, per 1000 population is defined as a rare disease.

Examples of rare diseases

- cystic fibrosis.
- muscular dystrophy.
- spina bifida.
- haemophilia.

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Summit & Conferences

1. Bengaluru To Host First G20 Energy Transition Working Group Meeting From 5 To 7 February

- The first G20 Energy Transition Working Group (ETWG) Meeting under India's presidency will be held in Bengaluru from 5 to 7 February.
- The meeting will have over 150 participants including G20 member countries, nine special invitee guest countries ' Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, UAE and Spain.

2. The United Kingdom named the Partner Country at BioAsia 2023

- For the 20th edition of the largest event in the biotechnological industry of Asia, global business firm BioAsia picked the United Kingdom (UK) as its country partner. Eager to expand its relations with the Indian life-sciences industry, UK is home to over 6,330 businesses that employ over 2,68,000 people in the industry that generated 88.9 billion revenue in 2020.
- With the theme of - 'Advancing for ONE: Shaping the next generation of humanized healthcare', BioAsia 2023 is all set to be held from February 24 to 26 in Hyderabad.

3. Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya chairs CEO Conclave at PLASTINDIA 2023

- Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya chairs CEO Conclave at PLASTINDIA 2023 in New Delhi.
- The conference saw the presence of over 90+ CEOs of the Plastic Industry from both India and abroad. This conclave aims to bolster the ecosystem of stakeholders involved in plastic industry

4. President of India inaugurates the 2nd Indian Rice Congress at Cuttack

- President Droupadi Murmu has inaugurated the second Indian Rice Congress at National Rice Research Center Institute (NRRI) in Bidyadharpur, Cuttack.
- The international program will be held for 4 days till 14th February. In this Rice Congress, various topics including national food security, global food crisis, increase of rice production in changing climate will be discussed

5. Sh. Piyush Goyal holds 1st meeting of the newly constituted Textile Advisory Group for Manmade Fibre at Vanijya Bhavan, New Delhi

- Shri Goyal cited the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for man-made fibre (MMF) apparel, MMF fabrics and products of technical textiles, as the Government's flagship intervention to augment the size and scale of the domestic MMF sector and assured of providing dedicated handholding support to the PLI beneficiaries.
- Association of Man-Made fibre industry of India (AMFI) and Association of Synthetic Fibre Industry (ASFI) presented the overview of the sector and major challenges such as the high degree of fragmentation in the downstream textile value chain from weaving to garmenting and need of protective measures to contain rising imports MMF raw materials (PTA, MEG) and MMF yarn and fabric (PFY, PSF, NPY).

6. The President inaugurates the 2nd Indian Rice Congress in Cuttack

- The 2nd Indian Rice Congress-2023 was inaugurated in Cuttack today by the President Smt. Draupadi Murmu in the presence of Odisha Governor Prof. Ganeshi

Lal, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.

- The rice production in the country was only 89 million tonnes in 2010, which has increased by 46 percent to 130MT in 2022.

Dr. Himanshu Pathak, Secretary, DARE and Director General of ICAR.

7. Tourism Ministry to organise 1st Global Tourism Investors' Summit from May 17 to 19

- The Tourism Ministry will organise 1st Global Tourism Investors' Summit from the 17th to 19th of May this year in New Delhi to showcase opportunities in the Tourism and hospitality sector.
- The Summit will deliberate on potential opportunities for investment across tourism segments including hotels and restaurants, adventure and eco tourism, cruise and other related tourism

8. International Bioresource Conclave & Ethnopharmacology Congress concludes in Imphal

- A three-day International Bioresource Conclave and Ethnopharmacology Congress of Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal came to an end. It was organized by Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal in collaboration with Society for Ethnopharmacology India and International Society for Ethnopharmacology, Switzerland.
- Theme: 'Reimagine Ethnopharmacology: Globalization of Traditional Medicine'



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Science & Technology

1. Assam hosts first day of G20 sustainable Finance working Group meeting

- Assam is hosting its first Sustainable Finance Working Group (SFWG) G20 meeting being held from February 2 and 3. The meeting was inaugurated by Union Minister of AYUSH and Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal.
- The 1st SFWG meeting is attended in person by 95 delegates from G20 member countries, 10 invitee countries and 14 international organisations.

2. MeitY inaugurates G20 Cyber Security Exercise and Drill

- The Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Shri Alkesh Kumar Sharma inaugurated the G20 Cyber Security Exercise and Drill for more than 400 domestic and international participants under India's G20 Presidency.
- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) conducted this Cyber Security Exercise and drill in hybrid mode (Physical and Virtual) where international participants from more than 12 countries joined through online mode while domestic participants from diverse sectors such as Finance, Education, Telecom, Ports & Shipping, Energy, IT/ITeS and others attended in-person as well as in virtual mode. The event further progressed with conducting of Strategic Table Top Exercise (TTX) and Operational Drill using CERT-In Exercise Platform.

3. Google Releases ChatGPT Rival AI 'Bard' ; to Early Testers

- Google CEO Sundar Pichai announced the soft launch of Bard to a set of "trusted testers".
- Google explains that Bard is an experimental conversational AI service, powered by LaMDA (Language Model for Dialogue Applications).
- LaMDA was announced two years ago, at the 2021 Google I/O keynote, as Google's next-generation language and conversation capabilities.

Alphabet i.e. Google's parent company, Chief Executive Officer: Sundar Pichai.

4. Skye Air launches India's first traffic management system for drones

- Skye Air, a Gurugram-based drone solutions provider, launched traffic management system for drones in India. Launched in the presence of Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India Nitin Gadkari, the software will allow drone operators to plan routes, make flight plans and assess risks before running drone-based operations in the country.
- The solution, called Skye UTM, is a first-of-its-kind for India.

5. Jupiter Reclaims Title of Planet With the Most Moons

- Jupiter isn't just the largest and most massive planet in the solar system ' now it has the largest number of moons orbiting it after scientists discovered another 12 moons, bringing the behemoth's total up to **92**.
- The orbits of the 12 hitherto undiscovered moons of Jupiter have been published by the Minor Planet Center operated by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

6. ISRO launches new rocket SSLV-D2 from Sriharikota

- The Indian Space Research Organisation launched the second edition of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle from the first launch pad of Satish Dhawan space centre at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

- The new rocket will attempt to put three satellites - ISRO's EOS-07, US-based firm Antaris' Janus-1, and Chennai-based space startup SpaceKidz's AzaadiSAT-2 - into a 450km orbit.

Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation- S Somanath

7. India's First Hydrogen Internal Combustion Engine Powered Heavy Duty Truck Unveiled In Bengaluru

- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and Ashok Leyland unveiled India's first Hydrogen Internal Combustion Engine (H2-ICE) powered heavy duty truck.
- The vehicle was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bengaluru at the India Energy Week.
- According to Reliance, it is a "unique and affordable", indigenously developed technology solution. India Energy Week | 6 - 8 February 2023.
- **Ashok Leyland**, the Indian flagship company of the **Hinduja Group** and one of India's leading commercial vehicle manufacturer, along with RIL, has been developing this unique technology over the past year and has been under test since August 2022.
- The Ashok Leyland H2-ICE heavy-duty truck range (19-35 tonne) is powered by Hydrogen, a renewable and clean energy source, maintaining overall architecture similar to a conventional diesel-based combustion engine thus helping quicker migration to cleaner energy sources at relatively lower cost delta.

8. 'Lexi': India's first AI assistant powered by ChatGPT

- Lexi, a ChatGPT-powered AI chatbot, has arrived in India. Velocity, a financial technology firm, launched the chatbot to assist e-commerce owners by presenting them with business information in a simplified manner.
- The combination of ChatGPT with Velocity Insights enables eCommerce entrepreneurs by giving AI-powered business insights in a conversational way.
- ChatGPT became available to the general public in November 2022.

Abhiroop Medhekar, CEO and co-founder of Velocity.

9. Aadhaar Mitra: UIDAI launches new AI chatbot

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has recently launched a new AI backed up chatbot which will help people with their Aadhaar-related queries. Dubbed as 'Aadhaar Mitra', the AI/ML-based chatbot will take up Aadhaar-based queries like tracking Aadhaar PVC status, registering and tracking grievances etc and is aimed to offer a 'better resident experience.'

Dr. Saurabh Garg, CEO UIDAI.

10. Intel launches new Xeon workstation processors for professional creators

- Chip maker Intel has launched the new Xeon W-3400 and Xeon W-2400 desktop workstation processors (code-named Sapphire Rapids), which are built for professional creators to provide massive performance for media and entertainment, engineering and data science professionals.

11. World's First Cloud-Built Demonstration Satellite Launched JANUS-1 Successfully

- Antaris, creator of the most advanced software platform for space, announced that the world's first satellite fully conceived, designed and manufactured using the company's end-to-end cloud platform has successfully reached orbit.
- JANUS-1 rode on the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) SSLV-D2 rocket, which was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre of India.
- JANUS-1 a 6U satellite featuring payload and subsystem technologies from AICRAFT, Morpheus Space, Netra, SayariLabs Kenya, SpeQtral, Transcelestial and Zero-Error Systems (ZES) that will perform internet of things (IoT) communications, advanced experimental laser communications, radio communications and machine learning (ML) during orbit.
- Antaris SatOS software manages core bus responsibilities while orchestrating multitenant payloads and onboard computing--in addition to showcasing secure TT&C protocols with Amazon Web Services (AWS) and ATLAS Space Operations, who are providing ground communications services.

12. India's lunar mission Chandrayaan-3 achieves another milestone

- In a boost to India's lunar mission, Chandrayaan-3 has successfully underwent EMI-EMC (Electro-Magnetic Interference/ Electro-Magnetic Compatibility).
- The EMI-EMC test is conducted for satellite missions to ensure functionality of the satellite subsystems in the space environment and their compatibility with the expected electromagnetic levels.
- In a statement, the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO, said it is a major milestone in the realization of the satellites. During the Chandrayaan-3 lander EMI/EC test, Launcher compatibility, Antenna Polarization of all Radio-Frequency (RF) systems, Standalone auto compatibility tests for orbital and powered descent mission phases, and Lander & Rover compatibility tests for post-landing mission phase were ensured. The performance of the systems was satisfactory.
- Chandrayaan-3 is a planned third lunar exploration mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

13. Serum Institute to establish centre of excellence for Infectious Diseases & Pandemic Preparedness in Hyderabad

- Serum Institute of India has announced the establishment of a Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla Centre of Excellence in Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness at Hyderabad. It will be located at the Indian Institute of Public Health in the city.
- The centre will serve as a hub for public health education, outreach, and response efforts during outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Serum Institute of India Headquarter- Pune, Maharashtra

Defence

1. Indian military holds joint training exercise Trishakti Prahar in north Bengal

- The Indian military concluded exercise Trishakti Prahar 'a joint training exercise' which began in North Bengal on January 21.
- As per defence sources, the aim of the exercise was to practice battle preparedness of the security forces, using latest weapons and equipment in a networked, integrated environment, involving the Army, the Indian Air Force and CAPFs.

2. Indian Army Gets 'World's First' Fully Operational SWARM Drone System; Capable Of Hitting Targets 50 Km Away

- NewSpace Research, a Bengaluru-based start-up has delivered SWARM drones to Indian Army, which makes the Army the first major armed force in the world to operationalise these high-density SWARM drones.
- SWARM Drones are a group of autonomous UAVs which engage with each other using radio signals, to plan and complete various mission objectives using advanced AI algorithms.

3. Garuda Aerospace unveils solar-powered drone SURAJ

- Drone startup Garuda Aerospace unveiled its latest drone, SURAJ, a solar-powered unmanned reconnaissance J-Glider, at Aero India 2023.
- SURAJ is an ISR high-altitude drone designed specifically for surveillance operations, providing real-time information to the high command and protecting jawans on the ground.
- The drone's J-shaped wings are equipped with solar-powered cells that serve as its primary fuel source, while an auxiliary battery provides additional propulsion or decreased speed as required. The drone will carry a versatile payload of high-resolution zoom cameras with thermal imagery and foliage-penetrating lidar sensors with a maximum capacity of 10 kg.

4. Defence Minister launches 'iDEX Investor Hub

- Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the 'iDEX Investor Hub' (iIH), under which more than Rs 200 crores had already been pledged by leading Indian investors.
- He also launched the ninth edition of 'Defence India Startup Challenges (DISC 9)' on "Cybersecurity" during the annual defence innovation event 'Manthan' as part of the Aero India 2023
- Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) is the flagship initiative of the Department of Defence Production to encourage start-ups and other such entities engaged in defence innovation.
- DISC launched, is the first collaboration of iDEX with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (i4C) division of the Ministry of Home Affairs

5. IAF develops 'Vayulink' platform for steady jammer-proof communication

- The IAF has come out with an innovative solution that would help pilots to deal with bad weather and also provide them jammer-proof uninterrupted communication with the base station. Known as 'Vayulink', the data link communication uses the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) that is also known as NAVIC, to send radio communication to the base station.

- The IAF has put up a gallery on Vayulink to provide information about its platform at the India Pavilion in the ongoing Aero India 2023 here.
- Vayulink is an ad-hoc data link communication system, which when installed in an aircraft, gives position of other aircrafts close by, encrypted traffic data over secured channel.

6. India-Uzbekistan biennial military training Exercise DUSTLIK 2023 to begin in Uttarakhand

- As part of a military-to-military exchange program between the Indian Army and Uzbekistan Army, the fourth edition of biennial training Exercise DUSTLIK (2023) will be conducted from 20 February to March 5, 2023 in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.
- This joint exercise is aimed at enhancing military capability to undertake multi-domain operations in a Sub Conventional scenario under United Nations Mandate.

7. INS Sumedha reaches Abu Dhabi to participate in IDEX and NAVDEX

- Indian Naval Ship Sumedha has reached Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates to participate in Naval Defence Exhibition - NAVDEX 23 and International Defence Exhibition - IDEX 23.
- The ship's participation in two leading regional naval and defence exhibitions will showcase the strengths of India's indigenous ship building and underscore the vision of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.
- **INS Sumedha is the third ship of the indigenously built Saryu class Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels** and was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 2014. The ship is fitted with an impressive array of weapons and sensors, can carry an integral helicopter and boasts of long endurance.

8. Lt Gen RS Reen takes over as Director General Quality Assurance

- Lt Gen RS Reen took over as Director General Quality Assurance.
- A 1986-batch officer, Lt Gen Reen is an alumnus of Indian Military Academy, Dehradun.
- The Officer had completed his BE (Electrical) from National Institute of Technology, Srinagar, Specialisation in Radio Engineering and post-graduation in Communication Engineering from MC EME, Secunderabad.
- The DGQA is an Inter-Service Organisation functioning under the Department of Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence. It is responsible for second party Quality Assurance of all defence stores and equipment, both imported as well as indigenous, for the Indian Army, Indian Navy (excluding Naval Armaments) and common user items for the Indian Air Force procured from private sector and public sector undertakings.

9. In a first, Indian submarine INS Sindhukesari docks in Indonesia amid South China Sea conflict

- An Indian submarine has, for the first time ever, docked in Indonesia, which is among the countries locked in a maritime dispute with China in the contentious South China Sea, as part of the continuing overall diplomatic-military outreach to Asean countries.
- India, for instance, had transferred a Kilo-class submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar in 2020.
- The 3,000-tonne diesel-electric submarine, INS Sindhukesari, reached Jakarta for the maiden operational turnaround after transiting through the Sunda Strait.

10. Indian Air Force to participate in Exercise Cobra Warrior at Waddington in UK

- An Indian Air Force contingent comprising 145 Air Warriors is participating in Exercise Cobra Warrior at the Waddington Air Force Base of the Royal Air Force in United Kingdom. The exercise is scheduled from 06 to 24 Mar 23.
- The Exercise Cobra Warrior is a multilateral Air exercise in which Air Forces from Finland, Sweden, South Africa, USA and Singapore will participate.

11. Indian Air Force contingent reaches in UAE to participate in Exercise Desert Flag VIII

- An Indian Air Force contingent comprising 110 Air Warriors reached at Al Dahfra airbase of United Arab Emirates for participating in Exercise Desert Flag VIII. The IAF is participating with five Light Combat Aircraft, LCA Tejas and two C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.
- This is the first occasion when LCA Tejas will participate in an international flying exercise outside India. The aim of the exercise is to participate in diverse fighter engagements.
- Exercise Desert Flag is a multilateral air exercise in which Air Forces from UAE, France, Kuwait, Australia, UK, Bahrain, Morocco, Spain, Republic of Korea, and USA would also be participating. The exercise is scheduled from 27 Feb 23 to 17 Mar 23.

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Books & Authors

1. JP Nadda launched book 'Modi: Shaping a Global order in flux'

- BJP national president JP Nadda has launched a book "Modi: Shaping a Global Order in Flux" in Chanakyapuri.
- While addressing the readers, Nadda said, "This book is going to open a debate on how PM Modi has taken a decision which has changed India's image worldwide. It's necessary to understand what was the image of India before Modi ji came to power."



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Miscellaneous

1. Alibaba exits India's Paytm, selling shares for \$167 million

- China's Alibaba Group sold its remaining stake in Indian digital payments firm Paytm for about 13.78 billion rupees (\$167.14 million) through a block deal.
- The exit comes days after Paytm posted its first-ever quarterly operating profit as a listed firm, nine months ahead of its own target.

AlibabaExec Chairman and CEO: Daniel Zhang
HQ: Hangzhou, China

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Obituary

1. Former Law Minister Shanti Bhushan passes away

- Former Union law minister and lawyer Shanti Bhushan passed away at the age of 97. Bhushan served as the law minister in the Morarji Desai-led Janata Party government from 1977 to 1979, which came to power after Emergency.
- Bhushan was among the founding members of the Aam Aadmi Party which was formed in 2012.

2. Padma Bhushan Awardee and legendary singer Vani Jayaram passes away

- Vani Jayaram, also popularly known as Vani Jayaram, is a legendary playback singer in the South film industry. The National Award Winning and Padma Bhushan singer passed away, at the age of 78 years.
- The legendary singer has not bagged one but four State Awards, three National Awards, International awards and many more.

3. Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's former military ruler, passes away

- Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's former military dictator who ruled for nearly a decade from 1999 but spent later years fighting a litany of charges in exile, died in Dubai. He was 79.
- Musharraf, a retired four-star general, passed away after a long battle with a rare disease named amyloidosis.
- In 2001, Musharraf became president and held power for seven years.

4. Legendary Musician Burt Bacharach Passes Away at 94

- Legendary American pop composer, songwriter, and pianist, Burt Bacharach, passed away in Los Angeles.
- The veteran musician was known for creating melodies like 'Walk on By,' 'Do You Know the Way to San Jose,' 'I'll Never Fall in Love Again,' 'Alfie' and 'I Say a Little Prayer' among many others.
- He had won several accolades, including 8 Grammys and 3 Oscars.

5. Veteran actor Javed Khan Amrohi passes away at 60

- Veteran actor Javed Khan Amrohi passed away, at the age of 60.
- He had acted in films like Lagaan and Andaz Apna Apna.

6. Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha passes away

- Legendary Yakshagana playback singer and scriptwriter Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha passed away at his residence near Moodbidri in Dakshina Kannada district. He served in the Yakshagana field for over 60 years.
- He was duly recognised as the Bheeshma of Thenkuthittu style of Yakshagana. His fans, in recognition of his contributions to Yakshagana, had constructed 'Balipa Amrutha
- The performances are based on mythological episodes taken from epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, as well as the *Bhagavatham*.
- The name Yakshagana translates to 'music of celestial beings'. Originally Yakshagana was known by different names in different regions.
- It was formerly called *Bayatala* by some people in Karnataka. In Kannada, Bayatala denotes an art form presented in open air. *Therukoothu* of Tamil Nadu, *Kutiyattam* and *Chakyarkoothu* of Kerala, and *Veedinataka* of Andhra Pradesh can be considered as sister art forms of Yakshagana.

Yakshagana is a traditional folk dance form popular in Coastal Karnataka districts. Yakshagana is a rich and time-honoured art form performed in the South Canara districts of Karnataka and Kasaragod district of Kerala.

7. Classical dance legend Kanak Rele passes away

- The world-renowned doyen of Mohiniattam, Dr Kanak Y Rele, passed away following a brief illness. She was 85.
- Dr Rele was awarded the Padma Shri (1989), Padma Bhushan (2013), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1994), Kalidas Samman (2006) and MS Subbulakshmi Award, amongst other accolades.
- The Mohiniyattam exponent was awarded the first Guru Gopinath National Puraskaram.



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Person in news

1. Puma India signs Indian Captain Harmanpreet Kaur as its latest brand ambassador

- Sports brand Puma India has on-boarded Indian women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur as its new brand ambassador, part of its commitment towards the women's business, especially in the sports segment in India.
- In the fiscal year ending December 2021, Puma India cemented its leadership position in India's sports and lifestyle market, earning a revenue of Rs 2044 crore
- With this, Kaur, joins Puma's roster of ambassadors such as Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Yuvraj Singh, Sunil Chhetri, and recently Harrrdy Sandhu and Anushka Sharma.
- Within the sports fraternity, she joined sprinter Usain Bolt, footballers Neymar Jr and Sunil Chhetri, boxer MC Mary Kom, cricketer Harleen Deol and Para-Shooter Avani Lekhara.

2. PM Modi emerges as top-ranked global leader with a 78% approval rating

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as the world's most popular leader with an approval rating of 78 per cent. This was revealed in a Global Leader Approval Ratings released by a US based consulting firm Morning Consult.
- PM Modi has left behind US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in terms of popularity.

3. Veteran Filmmaker And Dadasaheb Phalke Awardee K Viswanath Dies at 92

- Dadasaheb Phalke awardee and renowned filmmaker Kasinadhuni Viswanath died at the age of 92.
- Viswanath, popularly known as 'Kalatapasvi', who was born in February 1930 in Andhra Pradesh.
- He became the 48th recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke award, the highest recognition in Indian cinema. He was conferred with the award for the year 2016
- A prominent name not just in Telugu cinema but also in Tamil and Hindi films, his other honours include Padma Shri in 1992, five National Awards, 20 Nandi Awards (given by the Andhra Pradesh government) and 10 Filmfare trophies including the Lifetime Achievement award.

4. Gymnast Dipa Karmakar handed 21-month ban after failing dope test

- Star gymnast Dipa Karmakar has been handed a 21-month ban for failing a dope test conducted by International Testing Agency.
- Karmakar's dope sample collected out-of-competition by the ITA was found to contain Higenamine, which is a prohibited substance under World Anti-Doping Agency Code.
- International Testing Agency is an independent organisation that manages the anti-doping programme of the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG).

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| Higenamine was added to the World Anti-Doping Agency list of prohibited substances in 2017. |
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5. Shamika Ravi appointed as member, EAC-PM

- Economics professor and researcher Shamika Ravi has been appointed as a member of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

- Shamika Ravi is currently non-resident senior fellow of the governance studies program at the Brookings Institution Washington D.C.
- EAC-PM, chaired by economist Bibek Debroy, currently has one member and six part-time members.
- Member Sanjeev Sanyal welcomed Ravi in a social media post. Part-time members of the advisory body include economist Rakesh Mohan and Sajjid Z. Chinoy, Managing Director and Chief India Economist at J.P. Morgan.
- Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Giants, Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore and UP Warriorz are the five franchises.

Hopkins for 2nd time in a row

- Natasha Perianayagam, an Indian-American student, was nominated to the Johns Hopkins Center For Talented Youth's list of the "world's brightest" students for the second year in a row based on the results of assessments taken by more than 15,000 students from 76 different countries that were above grade level. 13-year-old Perianayagam attends Florence M. Gaudineer Middle School in New Jersey.
- As a Grade 5 student in the spring of 2021, she also took the Johns Hopkins Center For Talented Youth (CTY) test.

7. Smriti Mandhana becomes most expensive player for WPL 2023, to play for RCB

- In the opening bid of first ever Women's Premier League, India's star player and vice-captain Smriti Mandhana was sold to Royal Challengers Bangalore for '3.4 crore -- \$415,000 approx. This is the highest bid by any franchise in the WPL 2023 auction.
- Nat Sciver (Mumbai Indians) and Ashleigh Gardner (Gujarat Giants) each were bought at Rs 3.2 crore.

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| Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Giants, Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore and UP Warriorz are the five franchises. |
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8. Jean-Eric Vergne wins action-packed Hyderabad E-Prix; Mahindra in top 10

- Jean-Eric Vergne pulled off an energy management and defensive masterclass to win the first-ever Hyderabad E-Prix. The DS Penske driver started the last lap with just one percent of useable energy compared to Nick Cassidy's four percent. But he was able to fend off the pressure to take his first win in almost two years.
- Mahindra Racing finished their first home race in the points. Oliver Rowland drove the final few laps with front wing damage, but managed the situation to finish sixth.

9. Ayushmann Khurrana appointed as National Ambassador of child rights for UNICEF India

- UNICEF India named Hindi film star Ayushmann Khurrana as a National Ambassador.
- He had earlier served as UNICEF India's Celebrity Advocate for ending violence against children and the broader child rights agenda.
- Cynthia McCaffrey, said Khurrana's work as a Celebrity Advocate had helped them amplify and drive the work of protecting the rights of children. Cynthia McCaffrey, UNICEF India Representative.

10. Bell in honour of late CDS Bipin Rawat placed at Nepal's Shree Muktinath temple

- In a solemn ceremony at Nepal's Shree Muktinath Temple, a bell was placed in honour of India's late Chief of Defense Staff, General Bipin Rawat. The bell, named "Bipin Bell," was installed as a tribute to the late CDS.
- The bell was placed during the visit of four former Indian army chiefs—Gen VN Sharma, Gen JJ Singh, Gen Deepak Kapoor and Gen Dalbir Suhag.
- The four former Indian army chiefs were in Nepal to reduction the 260th Nepali Navy Day celebrations, the keep the Indian Navy band from 11 Gorkha Rifles made their first-ever efficiency.

11. Marcel Siem wins Indian Open, 1st Euro Tour title since '14

- Marcel Siem ended his long wait for a fifth European tour title with victory at the Hero Indian Open by a single shot.
- The German's last win on the tour came eight years and 116 days ago at the 2014 BMW Masters. A closing 68 saw him edge out countryman Yannik Paul for the victory with a 14-under 274.



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Insurance

1. New India Assurance (NIA) has launched a 'Pay as You Drive'

- New India Assurance (NIA) has launched a 'Pay as You Drive' (PAYD) policy, which offers a comprehensive motor insurance policy that charges premium based on the usage of vehicle. The policy has two components - third-party cover and own-damage cover.

2. Edelweiss General Insurance rebranded as Zuno General Insurance Limited

- Edelweiss General Insurance has rebranded itself as Zuno General Insurance Limited, which, it says, is a new age digital insurer with an aspiration to reimagine and redefine Insurance to make it easy, friendly, and transparent.
- Zuno GI was the first in the country to launch usage-based insurance using mobile telematics and has been developing this category since 2020.

Shanai Ghosh, MD & CEO, Zuno General Insurance



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India & World

1. APEDA organizes Virtual-Buyer Seller Meet to harness export opportunities in UAE for millets

- As a part of its series of sensitization programmes that are aimed at promoting the export of millets and its value added products, the Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) organised a Virtual-Buyer Seller Meet to harness export opportunities in United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- India is one of the leading producers of millets in the world with an estimated share of around 41 percent in the global production. As per FAO, world production of millets in the year 2020 was 30.464 million metric tonnes (MMT) and India's share was 12.49 MMT, which accounts to 41 percent of the total millet production. India recorded 27 percent growth in millet production in 2021-22 as compared to millet production in the previous year was 15.92 MMT.
- **India's top five millet producing states are Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.**
- Share of export of millets is nearly 1% of the total millet production. Exports of millets from India include mainly whole grain and the export of value-added products of millets from India is negligible.

- APEDA works under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- APEDA Chairman: M Angamuthu.

2. International Seabed Authority with headquarters in Jamaica has officially designated India as a "Pioneer Investor".

- Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said, the world today recognises India's Blue Economy resources and the International Seabed Authority with headquarters in Jamaica has officially designated India as a "Pioneer Investor".
- International Seabed Authority (ISA) and Ministry of Earth Sciences also exchanged PMN (Polymetallic Nodules) exploration extension contract.

- **The International Seabed Authority (ISA)** is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations **Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** and the **1994 Agreement** relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1994 Agreement).
- ISA which has its headquarters in Kingston, Jamaica, came into existence on 16 November 1994, upon the entry into force of UNCLOS.

3. Quad Nations Launch Public Campaign To Improve Cyber Security

- The Quad -- a plurilateral framework comprising India, Australia, Japan, and the US -- has announced the launch of a public campaign to improve cyber security in these four nations.
- Named "Quad Cyber Challenge", Internet users across the Indo-Pacific and beyond have been invited to join it and pledge to practice safe and responsible cyber habits

4. India, IEA to work together to enhance global energy security, stability, sustainability

- The government of India and the International Energy Agency (IEA) will work together to strengthen cooperation in the field of data and research and enhance global energy security, stability, and sustainability.
- The Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC), under the ministry of petroleum and natural gas (MoPNG), has signed a statement of intent (Sol) with IEA.

- IEA, Headquarters: Paris, France.
- Executive director: Fatih Birol. Founded: November 1974.

5. India, US and Brazil to establish a global biofuel alliance

- India, Brazil & the US, as leading biofuel producers and consumers, will work together during the next few months towards setting up a global biofuel alliance along with other interested countries.
- This alliance will be aimed at facilitating cooperation and intensifying the use of sustainable biofuels, including in the transportation sector," the MoPNG said. Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), Shri Hardeep S Puri.
- The Global Biofuel Alliance is one of the priorities under India's G20 Presidency and was announced by India's Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Sing Puri during India Energy Week 2023.
- The Global Biofuel Alliance will collaborate with and complement existing regional and international organisations as well as initiatives in the bioenergy, bioeconomy, and energy transition fields more broadly, including the Clean Energy Ministerial Biofuture Platform, the Mission Innovation Bioenergy initiatives, and the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP).

6. India-Japan joint military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' begins

- India-Japan joint training exercise 'Dharma Guardian' has begun today at Camp Imazu in the Shiga province of Japan from 17 February - 2 March.
- It is the 4th edition of the joint military exercise 'Dharma Guardian' between India and Japan.
- This joint exercise will help develop inter-operability, bonhomie, camaraderie and friendship between the two armies.

7. Cabinet approves MoUs between ICAI and ICA England & Wales for mutual recognition of qualification, training

- The MoU is to provide recognition of the qualification, training of each other's members and admit the members in good standing by prescribing a bridging mechanism on the prevailing terms and conditions. The Parties to this MoU will provide each other with the information on material changes to their qualifying/admission requirements, CPD policy, exemptions, etc.
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), founded by an **Act of Parliament in 1949**, has established itself as a world-class institution dedicated to upholding the values of transparency, accountability, and integrity. ICAI is the world's second largest accounting body, with over 3.60 lakh members and over 7.80 lakh students.

- **Recently in news:** Council of the ICAI has elected its new Torchbearers, for the year 2023-24, i.e. **CA Aniket Sunil Talati as President** and **CA Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal as Vice-President**.

8. India 'Egypt hold 3rd 'Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism' meeting By PBNS

- India has been collaborating with numerous countries and organizations to counter global terrorism at various levels. Egypt is one such country with whom India has constantly worked to combat terrorism. The third meeting of the India-Egypt Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism was conducted in New Delhi.
- India's current investment in Egypt is more than USD 3.15 billion with bilateral trade of approximately USD 7.26 billion in 2021-22.
- A discussion of multilateral counterterrorism cooperation, including in the United Nations and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), was also held during the meeting.

Fattah El-Sisi, the president of Egypt.

9. First G20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to be held in Bengaluru

- The first G20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors under the G20 Indian Presidency will be held on 24th and 25th February in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das will jointly chair this meeting.
- The G20 FMCBG meeting will be preceded by a meeting of G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies on 22nd Feb. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur will inaugurate the G20 FCBD meeting.
- The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues. India holds the Presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023

10. Power Minister launches SADUN to modernise power distribution utilities in South Asia

- RK Singh, the minister of power and new and renewable energy, has launched the South Asia Distribution Utility Network (SADUN), which aims to modernise distribution of utilities in South Asia via knowledge sharing among the region's discoms.
- USAID had conceptualised SADUN in January 2020 based on a consensus among the participants over a need for an initiative which focused on distribution network in the region.
- Apart from enabling knowledge sharing among discoms and enhancing focus on distribution issues at the regional-level, the network aims to enable utility-to-utility (U2U) connect to reap the benefits of aggregation.
- USAID has already shared a white paper on SADUN with member nations to get their concurrence on the blueprint of the network and move ahead in the process of implementation.

- SADUN is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Power, USAID and PFC. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- HQs- Washington DC.

11. India to host Permanent Mission Roundtables at UN Head Quarter as Chair of G- 20

- India will host the Permanent Mission Roundtables at United Nation Head Quarter as Chair of G- 20 and ahead of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Summit this year to be held in New York.
- During the event, the focus will be on India's growth story and achievements and how these might be scaled for the potential benefit of the global South. Antnio Guterres, Secretary-General of United Nations
- On the 23rd of this month, a roundtable titled Gandhian Trusteeship: A panel discussion on Sustainable Lifestyles and Enduring Pace will be held.

12. India and Singapore launch joint digital payment mechanism enabling easy and faster cross-border transactions

- India and Singapore have launched a joint digital payment mechanism enabling residents of both the countries to make easy and faster cross-border transactions.
- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of India and Pay Now of Singapore have made a tie-up to facilitate these transactions.
- This facility was jointly launched by Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das and Managing Director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore Ravi Menon.

13. India urges I2U2 partners to work together to achieve sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle for all

- In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clarion call for LiFE Lifestyle for Environment, Secretary External Affairs Ministry Dammu Ravi, urged I2U2 partners to work together to achieve a sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle for all.
- Mr. Ravi reaffirmed India's commitment to the I2U2 partnership at the first I2U2 Business Forum which begun in Dubai

The I2U2 partnership, which includes **India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States**, aims to promote tangible economic cooperation among its members in a variety of sectors such as food security, water, energy, space, transportation, health, and technology.

14. Cabinet approves Air Services Agreement between India and Guyana

- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of the Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Co-operative Republic of Guyana.
- At present there is no Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Co-operative Republic of Guyana at present.
- India and Guyana are signatories to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).
- The new Air Services Agreement between India and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana will provide enabling environment for enhanced and seamless connectivity while providing commercial opportunities to the carriers of both the sides.

Guyana, is a country on the northern mainland of South America

15. Sri Lanka Approves Adani Green's \$442 Million Wind Power Project

- The board of investment of Sri Lanka has issued the letter of approval to the renewables arm of the Indian conglomerate Adani Group, for setting up two wind power plants in Mannar and Pooneryn, in Sri Lanka, for an investment of \$442 million, or Rs 3,657 crore.
- The project will add 350 megawatts of electricity to the national grid within two years.

16. Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya releases working paper by Stanford University and Institute for Competitiveness

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare virtually addressed the 'The India Dialog' session on the Economic Impact of Vaccination & Related Matters. The dialog was organized by Institute for Competitiveness and US-Asia Technology Management Center, Stanford University.
- He also released the working paper by Stanford University and Institute for Competitiveness titled *"Healing the Economy: Estimating the Economic Impact on India's vaccination and related issues"*.
- The paper discusses the role of containment as a measure to prevent the spread of the virus. It highlights that, as against the top-down approach, a bottom-up approach was critical in containing the virus.
- Moreover, the Stanford report remarkably notes that robust measures at the ground level, like contact tracing, mass testing, home quarantine, distribution of essential medical equipment, revamping healthcare infrastructure, and constant coordination among stakeholders at the centre, state, and district levels, not only helped contain the spread of the virus but also in augmenting the health infrastructure.

17. Danish Crown Prince Frederik Andre Henrik Christian, Crown Princess Mary Elizabeth arrive in India

- Denmark Crown Prince Frederik Andre Henrik Christian and Crown Princess, Mary Elizabeth arrived for a four-day visit to India from February 26-March 2.
- The visit is the first ever from the Danish Royal family in two decades. Earlier, the Crown Prince travelled to India in 2003. Queen Margrethe II visited India in 2003 as a Crown Princess.

18. G20 presidency: W20 inception meet to be held in Aurangabad on Feb 27-28

- The W20 (Women 20) inception meeting as part of India's presidency of the G20 forum will take place in Aurangabad in Maharashtra on February 27-28
- The W20 is an official engagement group under G20 and was established during the Turkish presidency in 2015.
- W20 India took over the presidency from W20 Indonesia on December 12 2022.

19. India joins Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate

- India has joined a global platform launched by the US and the UAE with an aim to accelerate investment and support for climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation, the state department said here.
- The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) was launched by the two nations in November 2021.

Environment

1. Scientists Discover New Species of Voiceless Frog in Tanzania

- The new species is a member of a group of spiny-throated reed frogs within the *Hyperolius* genus.
- Named *Hyperolius ukaguruensis*, the new species occurs in the Mamiwa-Kisara North Forest Reserve in the Ukaguru Mountains of Tanzania.
- This small, silent Ukaguru spiny-throated reed frog doesn't croak, chirp, sing or ribbit.

2. CAQM invokes restriction under GRAP-II as Delhi's air quality deteriorates

- The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has invoked restrictions, including a ban on diesel generator sets, under Stage II of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in view of an increase in air pollution levels in Delhi.

GRAP is a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the capital and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation.

3. India finalises 13 activities under 3 heads for trading of carbon credits

- The Union government has finalised a list of activities to be considered for trading of carbon credits under Article 6.2 mechanism to facilitate transfer of emerging technologies and mobilise international finance in India.
- Overall 13 activities have been finalised under three heads ' GHG mitigation activities, alternate materials, and removal activities.
- The final list for GHG mitigation includes areas like renewable energy with storage (only stored component), solar thermal power, off- shore wind, green hydrogen, compressed biogas, emerging mobility solutions, high end technology for energy efficiency, sustainable aviation fuel, use of best available technologies, tidal energy, high voltage direct current transmission in conjunction with the renewable energy projects.
- Green ammonia received final approval as an alternative material for removal activities, carbon capture utilisation and storage.
- These activities will facilitate adoption/transfer of emerging technologies and may be used to mobilise international finance in India. The activities will initially be for the first three years and may be updated/revised by NADAIPA, the ministry of environment, forest, and climate change said in a statement.
- The Authority is mandated, inter-alia, to take decisions on the type of projects that may take part in the international carbon market under Article 6 mechanisms.
- This is in the backdrop of the Paris Agreement Rulebook being finalised in respect of Article 6 which focuses on carbon trading through bilateral/cooperative approaches and international market mechanisms. India has taken steps mandated by the host party/country.

4. World Pangolin Day observed on February 18, 2023

- World Pangolin Day is observed annually on the third Saturday in February and takes place on February 18 this year. The day aims to celebrate pangolins, raise awareness and recommit international N.G.O.s to the fight against the global capturing of pangolins in Africa and Asia.

- Pangolins are a highly prized commodity, often illegally trapped, trafficked, and killed for its scale by organized crime networks on a large scale to serve the need of the traditional medicine market in Asia where pangolin scales are unfortunately believed to be a cure-all of sorts and pangolin flesh is considered a delicacy.
- In Vietnam and Central and the southern parts of West Africa, pangolins are often offered at restaurants catering to wealthy clients who consider their meat rare and a statement of status.
- When frightened, a pangolin will curl up into a tight ball to protect its tender underside, making it a prime target for illegal poachers.

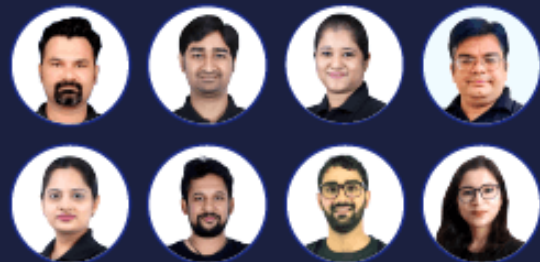
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Apps & Portals

1. Coal India arm MCL introduces drone technology in coal mines

- India coal arm Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) has introduced drone technology in coal mines by launching a web- based portal VIHANGAM along with a drone and ground control system.
- MCL is making use of drone technology for environmental monitoring, volume measurement and photogrammetric mapping of mine for digitalization of mining process.
- The VIHANGAM portal allows an authorised person to access real time drone video from the mine through a dedicated 40 Mbps internet lease line near the mines.
- There is a control station that flies the drone and the system can be operated through the portal from anywhere.
- This pilot project is at present operational at Bhubaneswari and Lingraj opencast mines of Talcher Coalfield.
- Besides deploying state- of- art technology to further enhance record coal production, MCL has also stepped up the use of latest equipment to further enhance safety standards. It has recently introduced Robotic Nozzle Water Sprayer in its coal stockyard. The equipment can spray water up to 70 meters in the form of mist. The nozzle also termed as swivel nozzle, is installed on a water tanker of 28 kilolitres capacity.
- Engaged in coal mining activities in Sundergarh, Jharsuguda and Angul districts of Odisha, Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) contributes more than 20 % of the total coal produced in India.

2. Yuva Sangam registration portal launched

- The Yuva Sangam registration portal was launched in New Delhi. It is an initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to build close ties between the youth of the North East Region & rest of India under the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.
- Under the initiative over 20 thousand youth will travel across the country and gain a unique opportunity of cross-cultural learning.

3. Indian Railways Introduces 'Zoop' ' A WhatsApp-based Food Delivery Facility

- Indian Railways has launched a new service, 'Zoop,' a WhatsApp-based food delivery facility for train passengers.
- The service will be available on the popular messaging platform, allowing passengers to place food orders from the comfort of their seats.
- The facility is aimed at providing passengers with a convenient and hassle-free experience while traveling by train.

4. MEA launches 'mPassport Police App' to expedite police verification for passports

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has launched a new app, the 'mPassport Police App,' to help expedite passport issuance by streamlining the police verification process. The app has been launched for the Delhi Police jurisdiction, as the government seeks to improve citizen services and make passport issuance easier.
- The introduction of the 'mPassport Police App' by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is a part of its efforts to simplify the passport issuance process for citizens. The app will make police verification easier by allowing digital and paperless

verification reports through mobile tablets, which are expected to cut down verification time from 15 days to just five days.

- The app has been launched for Delhi Police jurisdiction only. Additionally, the integration of DigiLocker with the Passport Seva Programme will allow citizens to submit their various documents in a paperless mode, eliminating the need to carry original documents to the Passport Kendra.

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Acquisitions & Mergers

1. Vi board clears debt conversion to equity. Govt to now hold 33.44% stake

- Debt-ridden telecom company Vodafone Idea said its board has approved the allotment of equity shares worth Rs 16,133 crore to the government. After the conversion, the government will own 1,613 crore shares for Rs 10 each in the firm, which roughly translates into 33.44 percent stake.
- The government cleared conversion of Rs 16,133 crore interest dues of Vodafone Idea into equity after receiving a firm commitment from Aditya Birla Group to run the company and bring necessary investment.

2. LendingKart announces acquisition of Upwards for '100 crore

- Lendingkart, a firm that specializes in providing working capital loans announced on Wednesday the acquisition of digital lending platform 'Upwards' for '100 crore. The company management said that they believe that acquiring Upwards will align with its mission of providing finance to the underserved with the help of robust technology.

3. Kotak acquires Sonata Finance in '537-crore all-cash deal

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has acquired micro-finance company Sonata Finance for '537 crore in an all-cash deal. Sonata Finance will be a wholly owned subsidiary of the bank after receiving regulatory and other approvals.
- The transaction provides the bank with the opportunity to scale up its operations in the rural and semi-urban markets in the northern states of India.

4. CCI gives nod to KKR purchasing stake in Hero Future Energies Global

- Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the purchase of stake in Hero Future Energies Global Ltd by Ardor Holdings II Pte.
- Ardor Holdings II Pte Ltd is a special purpose vehicle of global investment firm KKR & Co Inc.
- CCI also cleared the acquisition of 20% equity share capital of Keimed Pvt Ltd (Keimed) by Shobana Kamineni through Prime Time Logistics Technologies. HFE is the renewable energy arm of the Hero Group.

5. HUL to sell Annapurna and Captain Cook brands for Rs 60 cr to Singapore co

- Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) has signed an agreement for the sale of its atta and salt business, which it markets under the brands 'Annapurna' and 'Captain Cook', respectively, to Uma Global Foods and Uma Consumer Products for Rs 60.4 crore.

6. Bill Gates Buys Stake in Heineken for \$902 Million

- The Microsoft founder and philanthropist picked up 3.8% of Heineken Holding, according to a filing by the Dutch regulator AFM. He bought 6.65 million shares in Heineken Holding, in his individual capacity, and another 4.18 million shares through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Trust.
- Heineken Holding is the world's second-largest brewer.

7. SpiceJet to de-merge cargo arm by April 1, convert Carlyle's debt to equity & raise funds via QIP

- SpiceJet will de-merge its cargo business to subsidiary SpiceXpress & Logistics into a new company by April 1.

- Carlyle Aviation Partners has agreed to convert its outstanding lease rental into equity. SpiceJet will convert shares worth around \$ 29.5 million at a price of Rs 48 per equity share.
- Carlyle Aviation Partner will have over 7.5% equity stake in SpiceJet Ltd..
- Additionally, SpiceJet will transfer Compulsorily Converted Debentures (CCDs) of SpiceXpress and Logistics Private Limited (SXPL), held by SpiceJet aggregating to US \$65.5 million. The CCDs will be converted into equity shares of SpiceXpress at an anticipated future valuation of \$1.5 billion or Rs 12,422 crore.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet

8. Vistara Brand To Be Discontinued With Air India Merger

- Tata Group now owns 4 Indian airlines, including Air India, Air India Express, Vistara, and AirAsia India.
- Below is the plan to integrate these various airline brands:
 1. Air India and Vistara to be merged into one, and the airline will be branded as Air India
 2. Air India Express and AirAsia India to be merged into one, and the airline will be branded as Air India Express. Air India CEO: Campbell Wilson.
- Tata Group has huge plans for Air India, including a massive order for 470 new Airbus and Boeing jets, spending \$400 million to update the interiors of long haul jets, and leasing 30 jets (including former Delta 777s) to add capacity in the short term.

9. Dr Reddy's acquires Mayne Pharma's USA prescription portfolio for \$105 mn

- Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire the US generic prescription product portfolio of Australia-based Mayne Pharma Group for \$90 million upfront and contingent payments of up to \$15 million (Rs 123 crore).
- The acquisition will complement DRL's US retail prescription pharmaceutical business with limited competition products.

Erez Israeli, Chief Executive Officer, DRL.



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Agri-Business

1. Govt sets up task force to promote SSP fertiliser

- The government has set up a task force under the aegis of Fertiliser Association of India to find out ways to improve the quality of Single Super Phosphate (SSP) fertiliser and promote its use as an alternative to Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP).
- The government is promoting the combination of SSP and urea in the ratio of 3:1 in order to encourage its use among farmers.
- Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Bhagwant Khuba said the consumption of SSP has increased in the country from 44.88 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 to 56.81 lakh tonnes in 2021-22.
- During the last rabi (winter) season, states like Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh had promoted SSP as a successful alternative to DAP, he added.

2. Govt approves commercial release of Nano-DAP

- Agriculture ministry approved commercial release of nano-diammonium phosphate (nano-DAP), which is expected to reduce subsidy and the import dependence on the fertiliser variety. Nano-DAP will be manufactured by IFFCO and Coromandel International.
- IFFCO would be selling 500-ml bottles of nano-DAP costing around Rs 600-650 while conventional DAP is Rs.1350.

3. Dr Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid Plants at Aonla and Phulpur in UP

- Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated the IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid Plants at Aonla and Phulpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- He said that Government's Expert Committee has given approval to Nano DAP and it will also come to replace DAP shortly.
- He added that Nano-DAP will immensely benefit our farmers and it will be available at half the cost of DAP.

- Dileep Sanghani, Chairman IFFCO
- Dr Uday Shankar Awasthi, MD and CEO of IFFCO

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FinTech

1. PhonePe Launches UPI International Service In Five Countries

- Digital payments decacorn PhonePe has launched support for cross-border UPI payments, under UPI International.
- The Walmart-owned payments major became the first in its category to integrate UPI International. PhonePe would now be available across merchant outlets that have a local QR code in the UAE, Singapore, Mauritius, Nepal and Bhutan. NPCI plans to roll out UPI International to more countries over 2023.
- The digital payments app said that users can use their Indian bank accounts to pay at merchant outlets in the aforementioned countries. Earlier, Indian users had to use either foreign currency in cash or via a forex card.

UPI International, introduced by the cross-border arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI International Payments Limited), facilitates UPI transactions for the Indian diaspora abroad.

2. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Hello Ujjivan - India's first voice, visual, vernacular banking app

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launched Hello Ujjivan, India's first mobile banking application with 3 V's -- voice, visual, and vernacular-enabled features -- to provide banking access to individuals who have limited reading and writing skills.
- The app is designed to instil banking habits in our MicroBanking and Rural customers who are digitally challenged.
- Hello Ujjivan, co-created with Navana.AI, is accessible by voice in eight regional languages, including Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Gujarati, Kannada, Oriya, and Assamese.
- Customers can speak to the app in their native language to perform banking transactions and access services such as paying loan EMIs, opening FD and RD accounts, transferring funds, checking account balance, and updating passbooks, among others.

Mr. Ittira Davis, MD & CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.

3. Paytm Payments Bank becomes first to launch UPI LITE feature

- Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) is now live with its UPI LITE, a feature enabled by National Payments Corporation of India for multiple small-value UPI transactions.
- Designed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), UPI LITE was launched by the Reserve Bank of India in September 2022.
- Once loaded, a UPI LITE wallet allows a user to do instant transactions of up to Rs 200, making the entire experience quick and seamless. A maximum of Rs 2,000 can be added twice in a day to UPI LITE, making the cumulative daily usage up to Rs 4,000.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) was incorporated in 2008 as an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.

- Paytm Payments Bank remained the largest UPI beneficiary bank for 19 months in a row with over 1,726.94 million transactions in December 2022, ahead of all major banks in the country.
- With 386.50 million registered transactions, the bank is one of the top 10 remitter banks for UPI transactions, the release said NPCI's latest report.
- It is also one of the leading issuers and acquirer banks for the National Electronics Toll Collection (NETC) FASTag.

Surinder Chawla, MD and CEO, Paytm Payments Bank.

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Legal

1. Term of 22nd Law Commission extended till August, 2024

- The Union Cabinet extended by one-and-a-half year the term of the 22nd Law Commission which is mandated to identify laws which are "no longer relevant" and recommend for their repeal.
- The 22nd law panel was constituted for a period of three years on February 21, 2020 and its chairperson, Justice Rituraj Awasthi (retd), assumed office on November 9, 2022. The term of the 21st Law Commission ended on August 31, 2018.
- The Law Commission is a non-statutory body, constituted by the central government.
- Besides identifying laws which are no longer relevant, law commission is also mandated to suggest enactment of new legislations as may be necessary to implement the Directive Principles and to attain the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution.

Article 44 under the Directive Principles says "The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India".

2. CJI DY Chandrachud announces launch of 'neutral citations' for SC judgements

- Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud announced launch of 'neutral citations' which would ensure a uniform pattern of citing the decisions of the Supreme Court. It is introduced implementation of a uniform, reliable and secure methodology for identifying and citing decisions in the apex court.
- The CJI also talked about the other initiative, the Electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project, which is aimed at providing free access to its about 34,000 judgements to lawyers, law students and the common public.
- On January 2 this year, Justice Chandrachud had announced the launch of the e-SCR project.
- The apex court would also introduce neutral citations, he had said, adding that Delhi and Kerala high courts already have it.



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PSUs

1. NMDC Signs Up Champion Boxer Nikhat Zareen As Its Brand Ambassador

- National miner and India's largest producer of iron ore, NMDC, has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with World Boxing Champion and gold medal winner of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, Nikhat Zareen to represent NMDC as its brand ambassador.

- Nikhat Zareen is Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist.
 - Shri Sumit Deb, CMD, NMDC.
 - 'NMDC was Incorporated in 1958 as a Government of India public enterprise.
 - NMDC, a **Navratna** Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Steel, Government of India is the single largest producer of iron ore in India.

2. Centre Approves Conversion Of Vodafone Idea's Dues Into Equity Worth Rs 16,133 Crore

- In a relief for debt-ridden Vodafone Idea, the government has approved conversion of over Rs 16,133 crore interest dues of the telecom company into equity.
- The government decided to convert the interest dues of Vodafone Idea into equity after receiving a firm commitment from Aditya Birla Group to run the company and bring necessary investment.

3. ONGC Videsh Signs MoU With YPF SA, Argentina

- ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), a wholly owned subsidiary and overseas arm of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) the National Oil Company of India, is India's largest upstream international oil and gas Company.
- OVL has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 7th February 2023 with YPF SA, Argentina on the sidelines of the maiden India Energy Week 2023.
- Mr. Rajarshi Gupta, MD ONGC Videsh signed MoU with Mr. Pablo Gonzalez, President YPF SA, Argentina

Arun Kumar Singh Chairman ONGC.

4. HAL gets DGCA nod for indigenously developed 'black boxes'

- The Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd has received the Indian Technical Standard Order (ITSO) authorisation from Directorate General of Civil Aviation for its indigenously developed Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) and Flight Data Recorder (FDR).
- Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) and Flight Data Recorder (FDR) are popularly known as 'black boxes'
- The ITSO is a minimum performance standard for specified materials, parts, processes, and appliances used on civil aircraft.
- CVR and FDR are used to record critical flight parameters and audio environment in a crash proof memory which is later used for investigation of aircraft incident or accident.

States/UTs

Andhra Pradesh

1. Visakhapatnam to be the new capital of Andhra Pradesh: AP Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that Vishakapatnam would be the state capital.
- He made the announcement at the International Diplomatic Alliance Meet and Curtain Raiser for Andhra Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2023 organised in New Delhi.

Amaravati is the present capital of Andhra Pradesh.

Arunachal Pradesh

1. Shri Sarbananda Sonowal celebrates Uying Festival at Boleng, Arunachal Pradesh

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal attended the colourful Siang Uying Festival - which is an important festival of the Adi community at Boleng, Arunachal Pradesh.
- The festival of Uying is celebrated to herald the season of cultivation, beginning of the Adi community's new year, arrival of spring seasons as well as a great way.

Gujarat

1. India's G20 presidency: Gujarat's Rann of Kutch to host first Tourism Working Group meet

- As part of India's G20 presidency, Gujarat will host the first Tourism Working Group (TWG) meeting in the state's Rann of Kutch from February 7 to 9.
- The TWG meeting, which will be attended by Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, will be the second G20 event in the state after the 'Business 20 Inception' programme held in Gandhinagar last month.

2. Gujarat passes bill to stop paper leak in recruitment exams

- With the objective of curbing paper leaks in government recruitment exams, the Gujarat Legislative Assembly has unanimously passed a Bill that provides for up to 10 years in prison for such malpractices.
- As per the provisions of the bill, the accused shall also be liable for fine which shall not be less than Rs 10 lakh, which may extend to Rs 1 crore.
- Gujarat Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2023 was passed.

Haryana

1. Union Home Minister & Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah presented the 'President's Colour' to the Haryana Police in Karnal

- Shri Amit Shah said that Presentation with the President's Colour, showcases a sign of great credibility for the organization and the institution.
- He said that Haryana Police has become one of the 10 state police forces in the country to receive this highest honour from the President.
- After Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Assam, now the name of Haryana Police has also been added to the police forces to receive this highest honour.
- Indian Navy was the first one to receive this honor in 1951 and since then 10 State Police Forces and several Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have also been presented with the President's Colour.

Haryana Police came into inception on November 1, 1966

2. North India's first nuclear plant set up in Haryana's Gorakhpur

- Gorakhpur Haryana Anu Vidyut Pariyojana's (GHAVP) having two units of 700 MWe capacity each of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) indigenous design is under implementation near Gorakhpur village in Fatehabad district of Haryana, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology and the Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said.
- On this, an amount of '4,906 crore has been spent out of the total allocated funds of Rs 20,594 crore.

Himachal Pradesh

1. Asian Development Bank (ADB) approves USD 130 million loan for horticulture sector in Himachal Pradesh

- ADB has approved a USD 130 million loan to increase agricultural productivity and promote horticulture agribusinesses to raise farmers' income in Himachal Pradesh.
- Farmers will be organized into cluster-wide community horticulture production and marketing associations and district-wide cooperative societies.
- A farmer-producer company (FPC) will be created at the state level.
 - ADB: President: Masatsugu Asakawa
 - ADB HQ: Mandaluyong, Philippines

Jharkhand

1. Jharkhand gets Rs 5,271 cr from Budget for rail infrastructure augmentation

- Jharkhand has been allocated a whopping Rs 5,271 crore from the Union Budget to augment the railway infrastructure of the state.
- The annual average budget outlay for Jharkhand was around 11 times higher than what the state used to get between 2009 and 2014.
- As many as 57 stations will be redeveloped in the state and they would be made world-class stations.
- Various projects would also be taken up under Sugamya Bharat scheme for the differently abled persons such as installing lifts in some stations

Kerala

1. Kerala announces Rs 200 crore for setting up green hydrogen hubs over next 2 yrs

- The Kerala government has, reportedly, announced a Rs 2 billion scheme to develop green hydrogen hubs in Trivandrum and Kochi.
- This scheme has been announced for viability gap funding, grant, and equity support to establish green hydrogen hubs over the next two years.

2. Kerala becomes first state to use robotic scavengers to clean manholes

- The Kerala government launched robotic scavenger, **Bandicoot**, to clean sewages in this temple town, becoming the first state in the country to use robotic technology to clean all its commissioned manholes.
- Bandicoot, developed by Kerala-based Genrobotics, had recently bagged 'Kerala Pride' award at the Huddle Global 2022 conclave organised by Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM).

Madhya Pradesh

1. Kuno National Park welcomes 12 more Cheetahs from South Africa

- The 12 cheetahs have been brought from South Africa, five months after the first batch of eight spotted felines from Namibia were released at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. An IAF C-17 Globemaster aircraft carrying 12 cheetahs landed in MP's Gwalior.
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Minister for Environment and Forests Bhupender Yadav. Kuno is now home to 20 cheetahs.
- The intercontinental translocation of these fastest land animals - **first from Namibia and now from South Africa** - is part of the Indian government's ambitious cheetah reintroduction programme.
- The country's last cheetah died in Koriya district of present-day Chhattisgarh in 1947 and the species was declared extinct in 1952.

2. Khajuraho Dance Festival to begin in Madhya Pradesh

- In the 49th Khajuraho Dance Festival, the spring of art will blossom in the amphitheater of Khajuraho.
- The first meeting of the Culture Working Group under the chairmanship of India in G-20 is also being held in Khajuraho from February 23 to 25.
- During the dance festival, art exhibitions of various countries including India, Art-Mart, dialogue between artists and artisans and a fair of traditions and skill along with terracotta and ceramic national exhibitions will be major attractions.

Maharashtra

1. Mumbai's Churchgate railway station to be renamed after first Indian RBI governor CD Deshmukh

- The Churchgate railway station in Mumbai will soon be called as 'Chintamanrao Deshmukh station', named after the first governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) CD Deshmukh.
- Chintaman Dwarkanath Deshmukh, also known as C D Deshmukh, was the first Indian Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.
- In August 1943, he was appointed as Governor of the RBI.
- Sh. Deshmukh was one of five members of the Planning Commission when it was constituted in 1950 by a cabinet resolution. In 1950, he was appointed as the Union Finance Minister and his term as FM covered the period of the First Five Year Plan.

2. Maharashtra: Centre approves renaming of Aurangabad as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Osmanabad as Dharashiv

- The Centre on 24 February approved the renaming of two Maharashtra cities - Aurangabad and Osmanabad. Aurangabad will now be renamed as 'Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar' while Osmanabad will be called 'Dharashiv'.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said that central government had "no objection" to changing the names of both districts of Maharashtra.
- Chhatrapati Sambhaji who was the eldest son of warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, was the second ruler of the Maratha state founded by his father.
- Sambhaji Maharaj was executed on Aurangze's orders in 1689. Dharashiv, the name of a cave complex near Osmanabad, dates back to the 8th century as per some scholars.

Rajasthan

1. Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot announces Budget 2023

Here are the key highlights of the Budget:

- Ujjwala scheme consumers to get LPG cylinder at **Rs 500**; 76 lakh to get benefit.
- Government to give electric **free two-wheelers** to girl students
- **100 units/month** electricity to be provided free of charge to domestic consumers as compared to 50 units/month earlier
- One-time registration to appear in competitive exams; no multiple fees to be charged
- Medical cover under **Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme** increased to Rs 25 lakh/family per year from Rs 10 lakh
- Inflation relief package of Rs 19,000 crore to provide relief to the masses from rising prices. The package includes free food packets every month to poor families.
- Free **Chief Minister Annapurna food packets** every month along with free ration to about one crore families coming under the purview of the National Food Security Act which will include one kilogram pulses, sugar, salt and one litre edible oil. A sum of Rs 3,000 crore will be spent on this.
- Govt to provide benefits under the old pension scheme to personnel of various boards and corporations in the state. Benefits of the scheme will be granted to personnel of boards, corporations, academies and universities.
- This is the first time when a state budget will be shown live in all government and private colleges of the state.

2. PM Modi praises initiative of 'Suposhit Maa' by Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised the initiative of 'Suposhit Maa' by Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla.
- Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla inaugurated Suposhit Maa Abhiyan in Ramganjmandi area of Kota. The goal of this initiative to keep every mother and child healthy.

Uttar Pradesh

1. PM Modi inaugurates Global Investors Summit 2023 in Lucknow

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2023. The PM also inaugurated Global Trade Show and launched Invest UP 2.0.
- The global investors meet scheduled from February 10-12 is the flagship investment summit of the Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- The summit would be concluded by President Droupadi Murmu on February 12.

2. Uttar Pradesh government launches portal for 'One Family, One ID'

- UP government has launched the portal for creation of 'Family ID - One Family One Identity', to identify families as a unit for implementing the 'one job per family' proposal.
- All such families that are not eligible for the National Food Security Scheme will be able to avail the ID, while the ration card ID of the families having it, will be considered as their family ID. Portal was created to give households that did not have ration cards a 12-digit unique ID
- The database will be helpful in better management of beneficiary schemes, timely targeting, transparent operation, giving 100 percent benefit of the scheme to eligible people, and simplification of government facilities for the general public.

- Based on the integrated database obtained through Parivar ID, families deprived of employment can be identified, and suitable employment opportunities made available to them on priority.
- This portal was created to give households that did not have ration cards a 12-digit unique family ID.

3. Yogi Govt aims for Atmanirbhar UP, USD 1 tn economy with Rs 7 lk cr budget for FY24

- The Uttar Pradesh Government presented the budget FY24 with an aim to lay the foundation for a self-reliant Uttar Pradesh and focus on the all-around development of the state for making it a USD 1 trillion economy.
- The finance minister Suresh Kumar Khanna told that budget of Rs 6,90,242.43 crore for FY24 was the biggest in the state's history.
- Targeting youths, the budget made provision of Rs 1,050 crore under the **Chief Minister Kanya Sumangala Yojana** Rs 4,032 crore for destitute widows and Rs 600 crore for the Samuhik Vivahscheme for the marriage of girls of all classes.
- The finance minister Suresh Kumar Khanna proposed Rs 150 crore for the marriage grant scheme for daughters of poor people belonging to other backward classes.
- For providing tablets and smartphones to eligible students under Swami Vivekananda Youth Empowerment Scheme, a provision of Rs 3,600 crore has been made in the budget for the financial year 2023-24.
- On the infrastructure front, the finance minister proposed a provision of over **Rs 21,159 crore** for the construction of roads and bridges, and Rs 6,209 crore for their maintenance.
- Khanna said Rs 3,473 crore is proposed for the work of bridges and roads for agricultural marketing facilities and Rs 1,525 crore for roads in rural areas.
- While Rs 1,700 crore is proposed for the construction of railway overhead bridges and Rs 1,850 crore for other bridges, the budget proposed Rs 2,588 crore for widening/ strengthening and new works of state highways.
- A provision of Rs 2,538 crore is proposed for widening/strengthening and new works of major/other district roads, Khanna said.
- With religious tourism in mind, the budget proposed Rs 1,000 crore for the development of **Dharmarth Marg**(roads to religious places).
- The budget also proposed Rs 3,000 crore for maintenance of roads and Rs 2,500 crore for construction from the State Road Fund, Khanna said.
- The Finance Minister has set an investment target of Rs 10 lakh crore and the creation of 20 thousand jobs in the next 5 years under the new Uttar Pradesh Tourism Policy 2022.
- A budget provision of Rs 7,248 crore was also proposed for the old age/farmer pension scheme, while Rs 1,120 crore was set aside for Divyang Pension Yojana.
- A provision of Rs 12,631 crore has been proposed for various programmes under the National Rural Health Mission, Khanna said.
- ***Last year, the State Government presented an annual budget of Rs 6.15 lakh crore for 2022-23. A supplementary budget for Rs 33,769.55 crore was presented in December 2022, taking the total size of the budget to about Rs 6.50 lakh crore. ***

Delhi

1. DMRC: India To Get Its First National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre In Delhi

- The first National Metro Rail Knowledge Centre is in the process of development in New Delhi.
- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has awarded the contract, for the design and construction of the facility, to GA Infra Private Limited.
- The centre will be constructed under a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model at an estimated cost of Rs 46 crore. It will be situated at the Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station in Delhi.
- The DMRC already runs a metro museum at the Patel Chowk station in Delhi, where it has on display, equipment and models attempting to document the journey of the Delhi Metro from an 8 km network in 2002 to about 390 km across Delhi, in 2021.

2. Delhi Metro launches first-ever indigenously developed train control & supervision system

- In a first for a mass rapid transit system in India, an indigenously developed signalling technology was launched on Saturday for operations on the Red Line of the Delhi Metro, officials said. India's first-ever Indigenous Automatic Train Supervision System (i-ATS) has been developed by a joint team of DMRC and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- The i-ATS system was formally launched on the Red Line from the Operations Control Centre (OCC) in Shastri Park by Manoj Joshi, the **Secretary of Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, who is also Chairman of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation.**
- The development of the i-ATS is a major step towards the development of an indigenously built **CBTC (Communication Based Train Control)** based signalling system for metro railway since the ATS is an important sub-system of the CBTC signalling system. ATS is a computer-based system, which manages train operations.

Vikas Kumar, Managing Director, DMRC and Bhanu Prakash Srivastava, CMD, BEL.

3. DMRC to soon launch India's first virtual shopping, recharge app for metro

- Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) will soon launch India's first virtual shopping app, 'Momentum 2.0' for the Delhi metro commuters.
- The passengers will be able to get customised services like last-mile connectivity options, e-shopping choices, digital lockers at the metro stations via this app.
- The app, which will be called Momentum 2.0, will enable passengers to buy a range of products and book various services, including features like instant recharge of metro smart cards and payment options for utility services

Jammu and Kashmir

1. India's first glass igloo restaurant in J-K's Gulmarg

- This unique glass igloo restaurant is developed by Kolahoi Green Heights, a hotel in Gulmarg. The hotel claims it is the first glass igloo restaurant in the valley. It is worth noting that earlier they had built the valley's first snow-covered restaurant.
- In 2021, the same hotel built a snow igloo in Gulmarg which was the biggest snow igloo in Asia.

2. Lithium reserves found in Jammu and Kashmir by GSI

- The Centre has informed that 5.9 million tonnes of lithium reserves have been found for the first time in the country. The reserves were discovered during exploration by the Geological Survey of India in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Currently, India is import-dependent for many minerals like lithium, nickel and cobalt.
- Lithium is a non-ferrous metal and is one of the key components in EV batteries.

Ladakh

1. Yaya Tso to become Ladakh's first biodiversity heritage site

- Yaya Tso, known as birds' paradise for its beautiful lake located at an altitude of 4,820 metres, has been proposed as Ladakh's first biodiversity heritage site (BHS).
- The Biodiversity Management Committee, the panchayat of Chumathang village, along with SECURE Himalaya Project recently resolved to declare Yaya Tso as Ladakh's first BHS under the Biological Diversity Act.

2. Cabinet approves construction of Shinku La Tunnel to provide all-weather connectivity in Ladakh

- The Union Cabinet has approved the construction of Shinku La Tunnel on the Nimu-Padam-Darcha road link to provide all-weather connectivity to the border areas of Ladakh.
- The length of the tunnel will be 4.1 km. It will be completed by December 2025.
- It will help connect the Ladakh area, especially Zaskar Valley, with the entire country.
- Before this, the Atal tunnel was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi linking Manali to Leh and it provides all-weather connectivity throughout the year. Another tunnel which is under construction is the Zojila tunnel on the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh national highway. It will be inaugurated soon.

3. Pangong Tso lake marathon in Ladakh registered as world's highest Frozen Lake Marathon in the Guinness Book

- In Ladakh, country's first ever Frozen Lake Marathon on Pangong Tso has been officially registered in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's highest Frozen Lake marathon.
- The theme of the marathon is The Last Run and is organized with an aim to promote winter as well as border tourism in Ladakh while creating awareness of climate change.

Committees

1. 16-member panel set up to draft Digital Competition Act within 3 months

- The government has appointed a 16-member committee of union secretaries, law experts, and industry stakeholders to draft within three months the Digital Competition Act after studying anticompetitive practices. The panel will be headed by Manoj Govil, secretary in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and it will study the existing provisions in Competition Act, 2002.
- The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** will provide secretarial and research assistance and logistic support to the panel.
- It will study best international practices on regulation in digital markets, other regulatory regimes, institutional mechanisms or government policies regarding competition in digital markets.

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Important CA

1. Economic Survey envisages Indian economy to grow at 6.5 % in 2023-24 fiscal

Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, presented the Economic Survey 2022-23 in the Union Parliament. The report suggested that India will witness GDP growth of 6.0 per cent to 6.8 per cent in 2023-24, depending on the trajectory of economic and political developments globally.

State of the Economy 2022-23: Recovery Complete

- Recovering from pandemic-induced contraction, Russian-Ukraine conflict and inflation, Indian economy is staging a broad based recovery across sectors, positioning to ascend to the pre-pandemic growth path in FY23.
- India's GDP growth is expected to remain robust in FY24. GDP forecast for FY24 to be in the range of 6-6.8 %.
- Private consumption in H1 is highest since FY15 and this has led to a boost to production activity resulting in enhanced capacity utilisation across sectors.
- The Capital Expenditure of Central Government and crowding in the private Capex led by strengthening of the balance sheets of the Corporates is one of the growth driver of the Indian economy in the current year.
- The credit growth to the MSME sector was over 30.6 per cent on average during Jan-Nov 2022.
- Retail inflation is back within RBI's target range in November 2022.
- Indian Rupee performed well compared to other Emerging Market Economies in Apr-Dec2022.
- Direct Tax collections for the period April-November 2022 remain buoyant.
- Enhanced Employment generation seen in the declining urban unemployment rate and in the faster net registration in Employee Provident Fund.
- Economic growth to be boosted from the expansion of public digital platforms and measures to boost manufacturing output.

India's Medium Term Growth Outlook: with Optimism and Hope

- Indian economy underwent wide-ranging structural and governance reforms that strengthened the economy's fundamentals by enhancing its overall efficiency during 2014-2022.
- With an underlying emphasis on improving the ease of living and doing business, the reforms after 2014 were based on the broad principles of creating public goods, adopting trust-based governance, co-partnering with the private sector for development, and improving agricultural productivity.
- The period of 2014-2022 also witnessed balance sheet stress caused by the credit boom in the previous years and one-off global shocks, that adversely impacted the key macroeconomic variables such as credit growth, capital formation, and hence economic growth during this period.
- This situation is analogous to the period 1998-2002 when transformative reforms undertaken by the government had lagged growth returns due to temporary shocks in the economy. Once these shocks faded, the structural reforms paid growth dividends from 2003.

- Similarly, the Indian economy is well placed to grow faster in the coming decade once the global shocks of the pandemic and the spike in commodity prices in 2022 fade away.
- With improved and healthier balance sheets of the banking, non-banking and corporate sectors, a fresh credit cycle has already begun, evident from the double-digit growth in bank credit over the past months.
- Indian economy has also started benefiting from the efficiency gains resulting from greater formalisation, higher financial inclusion, and economic opportunities created by digital technology-based economic reforms.
- Thus Chapter 2 of the Survey shows that India's growth outlook seems better than in the pre-pandemic years, and the Indian economy is prepared to grow at its potential in the medium term.

Fiscal Developments: Revenue Relish

- The Union Government finances have shown a resilient performance during the year FY23, facilitated by the recovery in economic activity, buoyancy in revenues from direct taxes and GST, and realistic assumptions in the Budget.
- The Gross Tax Revenue registered a YoY growth of 15.5 per cent from April to November 2022, driven by robust growth in the direct taxes and Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- Growth in direct taxes during the first eight months of the year was much higher than their corresponding longer-term averages.
- GST has stabilised as a vital revenue source for central and state governments, with the gross GST collections increasing at 24.8 per cent on YoY basis from April to December 2022.
- Union Government's emphasis on capital expenditure (Capex) has continued despite higher revenue expenditure requirements during the year. The Centre's Capex has steadily increased from a long-term average of 1.7 per cent of GDP (FY09 to FY20) to 2.5 per cent of GDP in FY22 PA.
- The Centre has also incentivised the State Governments through interest-free loans and enhanced borrowing ceilings to prioritise their spending on Capex.
- With an emphasis on infrastructure-intensive sectors like roads and highways, railways, and housing and urban affairs, the increase in Capex has large-scale positive implications for medium-term growth.
- The Government's Capex-led growth strategy will enable India to keep the growth-interest rate differential positive, leading to a sustainable debt to GDP in the medium run.

Monetary Management and Financial Intermediation: A Good Year

- The RBI initiated its monetary tightening cycle in April 2022 and has since raised the repo rate by 225 bps, leading to moderation of surplus liquidity conditions.
- Cleaner balance sheets led to enhanced lending by financial institutions.
- The growth in credit offtake is expected to sustain, and combined with a pick-up in private capex, will usher in a virtuous investment cycle.
- Non-food credit offtake by scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) has been growing in double digits since April 2022.
- Credit disbursed by Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) has also been on the rise.

- The Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs has fallen to a seven-year low of 5.0.
- The Capital-to-Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) remains healthy at 16.0.
- The recovery rate for the SCBs through Insolvency and Bankruptcy (IBC) was highest in FY22 compared to other channels.

Prices and Inflation: Successful Tight-Rope Walking

- While the year 2022 witnessed a return of high inflation in the advanced world after three to four decades, India caps the rise in prices.
- While India's retail inflation rate peaked at 7.8 per cent in April 2022, above the RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent, the overshoot of inflation above the upper end of the target range in India was however one of the lowest in the world.
- The government adopted a multi-pronged approach to tame the increase in price levels
 - Phase wise reduction in export duty of petrol and diesel
 - Import duty on major inputs were brought to zero while tax on export of iron ores and concentrates increased from 30 to 50 per cent
 - Waived customs duty on cotton imports w.e.f 14 April 2022, until 30 September 2022
 - Prohibition on the export of wheat products under HS Code 1101 and imposition of export duty on rice
 - Reduction in basic duty on crude and refined palm oil, crude soyabean oil and crude sunflower oil
- The RBI's anchoring of inflationary expectations through forward guidance and responsive monetary policy has helped guide the trajectory of inflation in the country.
- The one-year-ahead inflationary expectations by both businesses and households have moderated in the current financial year.
- Timely policy intervention by the government in housing sector, coupled with low home loan interest rates propped up demand and attracted buyers more readily in the affordable segment in FY23.
- An overall increase in composite Housing Price Indices (HPI) assessment and Housing Price Indices market prices indicates a revival in the housing finance sector. A stable to moderate increase in HPI also offers confidence to homeowners and home loan financiers in terms of the retained value of the asset.
- India's inflation management has been particularly noteworthy and can be contrasted with advanced economies that are still grappling with sticky inflation rates.

Social Infrastructure and Employment: Big Tent

- Social Sector witnessed significant increase in government spending.
- Central and State Government's budgeted expenditure on health sector touched 2.1% of GDP in FY23 (BE) and 2.2% in FY22 (RE) against 1.6% in FY21.
- Social sector expenditure increases to Rs. 21.3 lakh crore in FY23 (BE) from Rs. 9.1 lakh crore in FY16.
- Survey highlights the findings of the 2022 report of the UNDP on Multidimensional Poverty Index which says that 41.5 crore people exit poverty in India between 2005-06 and 2019-20.

- The Aspirational Districts Programme has emerged as a template for good governance, especially in remote and difficult areas.
- eShram portal developed for creating a National database of unorganised workers, which is verified with Aadhaar. As on 31 December 2022, a total of over 28.5 crore unorganised workers have been registered on eShram portal.
- JAM (Jan-Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile) trinity, combined with the power of DBT, has brought the marginalised sections of society into the formal financial system, revolutionising the path of transparent and accountable governance by empowering the people.
- Aadhaar played a vital role in developing the Co-WIN platform and in the transparent administration of over 2 billion vaccine doses.
- Labour markets have recovered beyond pre-Covid levels, in both urban and rural areas, with unemployment rates falling from 5.8 per cent in 2018-19 to 4.2 per cent in 2020-21.
- The year FY22 saw improvement in Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) in schools and improvement in gender parity. GER in the primary-enrolment in class I to V as a percentage of the population in age 6 to 10 years - for girls as well as boys have improved in FY22.
- Due to several steps taken by the government on health, out-of-pocket expenditure as a percentage of total health expenditure declined from 64.2% in FY14 to 48.2% in FY19.
- Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Under Five mortality rate (U5MR) and neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) have shown a steady decline.
- More than 220 crore COVID vaccine doses administered as on 06 January, 2023.
- Nearly 22 crore beneficiaries have been verified under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme as on 04 January, 2023. Over 1.54 lakh Health and Wellness Centres have been operationalized across the country under Ayushman Bharat.

Climate Change and Environment: Preparing to Face the Future

- India declared the Net Zero Pledge to achieve net zero emissions goal by 2070.
- India achieved its target of 40 per cent installed electric capacity from non-fossil fuels ahead of 2030.
- The likely installed capacity from non-fossil fuels to be more than 500 GW by 2030 resulting in decline of average emission rate by around 29% by 2029-30, compared to 2014-15.
- India to reduce emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.
- About 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity to come from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- A mass movement LIFE' Life style for Environment launched.
- Sovereign Green Bond Framework (SGrBs) issued in November 2022.
- RBI auctions two tranches of '4,000 crore Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrB).
- National Green Hydrogen Mission to enable India to be energy independent by 2047.
- Green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne) per annum to be developed by 2030. Cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over '1 lakh crore and creation of over 6 lakh jobs by 2030 under the National green

Hydrogen Mission. Renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW and abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual GHG emissions by 2030.

- The Survey highlights the progress on eight missions under the NAP on CC to address climate concerns and promote sustainable development.
- Solar power capacity installed, a key metric under the National Solar Mission stood at 61.6 GW as on October 2022.
- India becoming a favored destination for renewables; investments in 7 years stand at USD 78.1 billion.
- 62.8 lakh individual household toilets and 6.2 lakh community and public toilets constructed (August 2022) under the National Mission on Sustainable Habitat.

Agriculture and Food Management

- The performance of the agriculture and allied sector has been buoyant over the past several years, much of which is on account of the measures taken by the government to augment crop and livestock productivity, ensure certainty of returns to the farmers through price support, promote crop diversification, improve market infrastructure through the impetus provided for the setting up of farmer-producer organisations and promotion of investment in infrastructure facilities through the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.
- Private investment in agriculture increases to 9.3% in 2020-21.
- MSP for all mandated crops fixed at 1.5 times of all India weighted average cost of production since 2018.
- Institutional Credit to the Agricultural Sector continued to grow to 18.6 lakh crore in 2021-22
- Foodgrains production in India saw sustained increase and stood at 315.7 million tonnes in 2021-22.
- Free foodgrains to about 81.4 crore beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act for one year from January 1, 2023.
- About 11.3 crore farmers were covered under the Scheme in its April-July 2022-23 payment cycle.
- Rs 13,681 crores sanctioned for Post-Harvest Support and Community Farms under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.
- Online, Competitive, Transparent Bidding System with 1.74 crore farmers and 2.39 lakh traders put in place under the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Scheme.
- Organic Farming being promoted through Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO) under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).
- India stands at the forefront to promote millets through the International Year of Millets initiative.

Industry: Steady Recovery

- Overall Gross Value Added (GVA) by the Industrial Sector (for the first half of FY 22-23) rose 3.7 per cent, which is higher than the average growth of 2.8 per cent achieved in the first half of the last decade.
- Robust growth in Private Final Consumption Expenditure, export stimulus during the first half of the year, increase in investment demand triggered by enhanced public capex and strengthened bank and corporate balance sheets have provided a demand stimulus to industrial growth.
- The supply response of the industry to the demand stimulus has been robust.

- **PMI manufacturing has remained in the expansion zone** for 18 months since July 2021, and Index of Industrial Production (IIP) grows at a healthy pace.
- **Credit to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has grown by an average of around 30%** since January 2022 and credit to large industry has been showing double-digit growth since October 2022.
- **Electronics exports rise nearly threefold**, from US \$4.4 billion in FY19 to US \$11.6 Billion in FY22.
- **India has become the second-largest mobile phone manufacturer globally**, with the production of handsets going up from 6 crore units in FY15 to 29 crore units in FY21.
- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows into the Pharma Industry has risen four times**, from US \$180 million in FY19 to US \$699 million in FY22.
- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes introduced across 14 categories, with an estimated capex of '4 lakh crore over the next five years, to plug India into global supply chains. Investment of '47,500 crores has been seen under the PLI schemes in the FY22, which is 106% of the designated target for the year. Production/sales worth '3.85 lakh crore and employment generation of 3.0 lakh have been recorded due to PLI schemes.
- **Over 39,000 compliances have been reduced and more than 3500 provisions decriminalized** as of January 2023.

Services: Source of Strength

- The services sector is expected to grow at 9.1% in FY23, as against 8.4% (YoY) in FY22.
- **Robust expansion in PMI services**, indicative of service sector activity, observed since July 2022.
- India was among the top ten services exporting countries in 2021, with its share in world commercial services exports increasing from 3 per cent in 2015 to 4 per cent in 2021.
- **India's services exports remained resilient** during the Covid-19 pandemic and amid geopolitical uncertainties driven by higher demand for digital support, cloud services, and infrastructure modernization.
- Credit to services sector has grown by over 16% since July 2022.
- US\$ 7.1 billion FDI equity inflows in services sector in FY22.
- Contact-intensive services are set to reclaim pre-pandemic level growth rates in FY23.
- Sustained growth in the real estate sector is taking housing sales to pre-pandemic levels, with a 50% rise between 2021 and 2022.
- Hotel occupancy rate has improved from 30-32% in April 2021 to 68-70% in November 2022.
- Tourism sector is showing signs of revival, with foreign tourist arrivals in India in FY23 growing month-on-month with resumption of scheduled international flights and easing of Covid-19 regulations.
- Digital platforms are transforming India's financial services.
- India's e-commerce market is projected to grow at 18 per cent annually through 2025.

External Sector

- Merchandise exports were **US\$ 332.8 billion** for April–December 2022.
- India diversified its markets and increased its exports to Brazil, South Africa and Saudi Arabia.
- To increase its market size and ensure better penetration, in 2022, CEPA with UAE and ECTA with Australia come into force.
- India is the **largest recipient** of remittances in the world receiving **US\$ 100 bn in 2022**. Remittances are the **second largest major source of external financing** after service export
- As of December 2022, Forex Reserves stood at **US\$ 563 bn** covering **9.3 months** of imports.
- As of end-November 2022, India is the **sixth largest foreign exchange reserves holder** in the world.
- The current stock of external debt is well shielded by the comfortable level of foreign exchange reserves.
- India has relatively low levels of total debt as a percentage of Gross National Income and short-term debt as a percentage of total debt.

Physical and Digital Infrastructure Government's Vision for Infrastructure Development

- **Public Private Partnerships**
 - In-Principal Approval granted to 56 projects with Total Project Cost of '57,870.1 crore under the VGF Scheme, from 2014-15 to 2022-23.
 - IIPDF Scheme with '150 crore outlay from FY 23-25 was notified by the government on 03 November, 2022.
- **National Infrastructure Pipeline**
 - 89,151 projects costing '141.4 lakh crore under different stages of implementation
 - 1009 projects worth '5.5 lakh crore completed
 - NIP and Project Monitoring Group (PMG) portal linkage to fast-track approvals/ clearances for projects
- **National Monetisation Pipeline**
 - ' 9.0 lakh crore is the estimated cumulative investment potential.
 - ' 0.9 lakh crore monetisation target achieved against expected '0.8 lakh crore in FY22.
 - FY23 target is envisaged to be '1.6 lakh crore (27 per cent of overall NMP Target)
- **GatiShakti**
 - PM GatiShakti National Master Plan creates comprehensive database for integrated planning and synchronised implementation across Ministries/ Departments.
 - Aims to improve multimodal connectivity and logistics efficiency while addressing the critical gaps for the seamless movement of people and goods.

Electricity Sector and Renewables

- As on 30 September 2022, the government has sanctioned the entire target capacity of 40 GW for the development of 59 Solar Parks in 16 states.

- 17.2 lakh GWh electricity generated during the year FY22 compared to 15.9 lakh GWh during FY21.
- The total installed power capacity (industries having demand of 1 Mega Watt (MW) and above) increased from 460.7 GW on 31 March 2021 to 482.2 GW on 31 March 2022.

Making Indian Logistics Globally Competitive

- National Logistics Policy envisions to develop a technologically enabled, integrated, cost-efficient, resilient, sustainable and trusted logistics ecosystem in the country for accelerated and inclusive growth.
- Rapid increase in National Highways (NHs) /Roads Construction with 10457 km NHs/roads constructed in FY22 compared to 6061 km in FY16.
- Budget expenditure increased from '1.4 lakh crore in FY20 to '2.4 lakh crore in FY23 giving renewed push to Capital expenditure.
- 2359 Kisan rails transported approximately 7.91 lakh tonnes of perishables, as of October 2022.
- More than one crore air passengers availed the benefit of the UDAN scheme since its inception in 2016.
- Near doubling of capacity of major ports in 8 years.
- Inland Vessels Act 2021 replaced 100-year-old Act to ensure hassle free movement of Vessels promoting Inland Water Transport.

India's Digital Public Infrastructure

- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI)**
 - UPI-based transactions grew in value (121 per cent) and volume (115 per cent) terms, between 2019-22, paving the way for its international adoption.
- **Telephone and Radio - For Digital Empowerment**
 - Total telephone subscriber base in India stands at 117.8 crore (as of Sept,22), with 44.3 per cent of subscribers in rural India.
 - More than 98 per cent of the total telephone subscribers are connected wirelessly.
 - The overall tele-density in India stood at 84.8 per cent in March 22.
 - 200 per cent increase in rural internet subscriptions between 2015 and 2021.
 - Prasar Bharati (India's autonomous public service broadcaster) - broadcasts in 23 languages, 179 dialects from 479 stations. Reaches 92 per cent of the area and 99.1 per cent of the total population.
- **Digital Public Goods**
 - Achieved low-cost accessibility since the launch of Aadhaar in 2009
 - Under the government schemes, MyScheme, TrEDS, GEM, e-NAM, UMANG has transformed market place and has enabled citizens to access services across sectors
 - Under Account Aggregator, the consent-based data sharing framework is currently live across over 110 crore bank accounts.
 - Open Credit Enablement Network aims towards democratising lending operations while allowing end-to-end digital loan applications
 - National AI portal has published 1520 articles, 262 videos, and 120 government initiatives and is being viewed as viewed as a tool for overcoming the language barrier e.g. 'Bhashini'.

- Legislations are being introduced for enhanced user privacy and creating an ecosystem for standard, open, and interoperable protocols underlining robust data governance.

Possible Question: According to the Economic Survey 2022-2023, the GDP forecast for FY24 is to be in the range of _____ to _____.

2. Infibeam Avenues becomes first payments platform to process retail CBDC transactions

- Infibeam Avenues's flagship payments brand -- CCAvenue, has become the first payment gateway player to process Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) or Digital Rupee transactions for online retail merchants. CCAvenue has facilitated CBDC online transactions for one of the leading private sector banks.
- RBI had on December 1 launched the first pilot of the e-rupee retail segment. The central bank notified eight banks for the pilot--beginning with State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank and IDFC First Bank in the first phase across Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar.
- In the second phase, the pilot will be carried out by Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank and KotakMahindraBank, with the facility being extended to Ahmedabad, Gangtok, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Indore, Kochi, Lucknow, Patna and Shimla.
- Infibeam Avenues recently received the Payment Aggregator license from RBI, followed by a perpetual license to operate as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU).

Possible Question: Which of the following has become the first payment gateway player to process Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) or Digital Rupee transactions for online retail merchants?

3. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 1: Capital Expenditure Increased By 33% To ' 10 Lakh Crores

- The central government will spend ' 10 trillion on longer term capital expenditure in 2023/24, extending a strategy adopted to revive growth in the aftermath of the Covid crisis. The allocation is higher than the ' 7.5 trillion budgeted in the previous year and the highest on record. The year-on-year increase of 33% is only marginally lower than last year's 35% jump.
- The ratio of capex-to-GDP, which rose to 2.7% in 2022/23, is estimated at 3.3% in the new financial year
- The government will also continue a '1.3 trillion long-term loan to states for longer term investments, the minister said.
- In 2023-24, the ministries with the highest allocations account for 55% of the estimated total expenditure. Of these, the Ministry of Defence has the highest allocation in 2023-24, at Rs 5,93,538 crore.
- It accounts for 13.2% of the total budgeted expenditure of the central government. Other ministries with high allocation include: (i) Road Transport and Highways (6% of total expenditure), (ii) Railways (5.4%), and (iii) Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution (4.6%). Table 5 shows the expenditure on Ministries with the 13 highest allocations for 2023-24 and the changes in allocation as compared to the revised estimate of 2022-23.

Possible Question:As per Union Budget 2023-2024, The central government will spend ' 10 trillion on longer term capital expenditure in 2023/24 which is a _____ increase.

4. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 2: Govt proposes 16% increase in National Calamity Contingent Duty on specified cigarettes

- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to revise National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD) on specified cigarettes upwards by about 16 percent.
- The NCCD on specified cigarettes was last revised three years ago. The year 2020 was when one of the biggest hikes in tax on cigarettes was levied as excise duties went up by 212-388 percent.

Possible Question:As per Union Budget 2023-2024, Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to revise National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD) on specified cigarettes upwards by _____.

5. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 3: Govt proposes to cut customs duty on goods to 13% from 21%

- The Government has proposed to reduce the basic customs duty rates on goods, other than textiles and agriculture, to 13 per cent from 21 per cent. This has necessitated minor changes in the basic customs duties, cesses and surcharges on some items including toys, bicycles, automobiles and naphtha.
- In order to avoid cascading of taxes on blended compressed natural gas, the budget proposed to exempt excise duty on GST-paid compressed biogas contained in it.
- it proposed to extending the customs duty exemption to the import of capital goods and machinery required for the manufacture of lithium-ion cells for batteries used in electric vehicles.
- The finance minister also proposed to provide relief in customs duty on the import of certain parts and inputs like a camera lens and continue the concessional duty on lithium-ion cells for batteries for another year in order to further deepen domestic value addition in the manufacture of mobile phones.
- The minister stated that mobile phone production in India had increased from 5.8 crore units valued at about Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to 31 crore units valued at over Rs 2,75,000 crore in the last financial year as a result of various initiatives of the government, including the Phased Manufacturing programme.
- She also proposed to reduce the BCD on parts of open cells of TV panels to 2.5 per cent to promote value addition in the manufacture of televisions.
- The finance minister proposed an increase in the BCD on electric kitchen chimneys from 7.5 to 15 per cent and a reduction on heat coils from 20 to 15 per cent. This change would rectify the inversion of duty structure and encourage the manufacturing of electric kitchen chimneys.
- To support the Ethanol Blending Programme and facilitate India's endeavour for energy transition, she proposed to exempt BCD on denatured ethyl alcohol. She also announced a reduction of BCD on acid-grade fluorspar from 5 to 2.5 per cent

to make the domestic fluorochemicals industry competitive. The BCD on crude glycerin for use in the manufacture of epichlorohydrin was also proposed to be reduced from 7.5 to 2.5 per cent.

- The minister proposed to reduce the BCD on key inputs for the domestic manufacture of shrimp feed to enhance the export competitiveness of marine products. She stated that marine products recorded the highest export growth in the last financial year, benefitting farmers in the coastal states of the country.
- The Budget proposed to nullify the BCD on seeds used in the manufacturing of Lab Grown Diamonds from the current 5 per cent. The finance minister stated that India contributed about three-fourths of the global turnover by value in cutting and polishing the natural diamonds industry. With the depletion in deposits of natural diamonds, the industry is moving towards Lab Grown Diamonds.
- She proposed to increase the duties on articles made from dore and bars of gold and platinum to enhance the duty differential. The customs duties on dore and bars of gold and platinum were increased earlier this fiscal. She also proposed to increase the import duty on silver dore, bars and articles to align them with that on gold and platinum.
- To facilitate the availability of raw materials for the steel sector, she proposed to continue the exemption from BCD on raw materials for the manufacture of CRGO Steel, ferrous scrap and nickel cathode. She also proposed to continue the concessional BCD of 2.5 per cent on copper scrap to ensure the availability of raw materials for secondary copper producers who are mainly in the MSME sector.

Possible Question: As per Union Budget 2023-2024, The Government has proposed to reduce the basic customs duty rates on goods, other than textiles and agriculture, to _____ from _____.

6. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 4: FISCAL DEFICIT TO BE AT 5.9% IN FY 2023-24

- The Finance Minister further stated that the fiscal deficit is estimated to be 5.9% of GDP in BE 2023-24. To finance the fiscal deficit in 2023-24, the net market borrowings from dated securities are estimated at **Rs. 11.8 lakh cr.** The balance financing is expected to come from small savings and other sources. The gross market borrowings are estimated at Rs. 15.4 lakh crore.
- In Budget Estimates 2023-24, the Finance Minister stated that the total receipts other than borrowings and the total expenditure are estimated at **Rs. 27.2 lakh crore and Rs. 45 lakh crore** respectively. Moreover, the net tax receipts are estimated at Rs. 23.3 lakh crore.
- In the Revised Estimate 2023-24, the Finance Minister stated that the total receipts other than borrowings is **Rs. 24.3 lakh crore**, of which the net tax receipts are **Rs. 20.9 lakh crore**. The Revised Estimate of the total expenditure is Rs. 41.9 lakh crore, of which the capital expenditure is about Rs. 7.3 lakh crore.
- The Revised Estimate of the fiscal deficit is 6.4 per cent of GDP in RE 2022-23, adhering to the Budget Estimate.
- The Finance Minister stated that the revenue deficit is expected to be at 2.9 % in FY 2023-24 over 4.1% in 2022-23.

- Gross Tax Revenue (GTR) is projected to grow at 10.4 per cent in FY 2023-24 over FY 2022-23.
- Both, the Direct and Indirect Tax receipts are individually estimated to grow at 10.5 per cent and 10.4 per cent, respectively.
- It is estimated that the Direct and Indirect taxes to contribute 54.4 per cent and 45.6 per cent, respectively, to GTR noted the fiscal policy statement. The Tax to GDP ratio is estimated at 11.1 per cent.
- The total revenue receipts and revenue expenditure of the Centre are estimated at Rs. 26.32 lakh crore and Rs. 35.02 lakh crore, respectively, in BE 2023-24.
- Based on this, the ratio of revenue receipts to revenue expenditure is estimated at 75.2 per cent in BE 2023- 24 improving from 67.9 per cent and 67.8 per cent in RE 2022-23 and FY 2021-22, respectively. Tax-GDP ratio has improved from 10.7 per cent in BE 2022-23 to 11.1 per cent in RE 2022-23 and BE 2023-24. The ratio of capital expenditure to Fiscal Deficit (Capex-FD) is estimated at 56.0 per cent in BE 2023-24 as compared to 41.5 per cent in RE 2022-23 and 37.4 per cent in FY 2021-22.
- The Finance Minister stated that the States will be allowed a fiscal deficit of 3.5 per cent of GSDP of which 0.5 per cent will be tied to power sector reforms. States will also be provided a fifty-year interest free loan. The entire fifty-year loan to states has to be spent on capital expenditure within 2023-24.

Possible Question: As per Union Budget 2023-2024, The finance minister stated that the fiscal deficit is estimated to be _____ of GDP in BE 2023-24.

7. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 5: CAPITAL INVESTMENT OUTLAY INCREASED BY 33% TO ' 10 LAKH CRORE

- The Finance Minister proposed to increase capital investment outlay for the third year in a row, by 33% to ' 10 lakh crore, which would be 3.3% of GDP and almost three times the outlay in 2019-20. The direct capital investment by the Centre is complemented by the provision for creating capital assets through Grants-in-Aid to States.
- **EFFECTIVE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE:** Smt. Sitharaman added that the direct capital investment by the Centre is complemented by the provision for creating capital assets through Grants-in-Aid to States.
- She said that this **Effective Capital Expenditure** of the Centre would be budgeted at 13.7 lakh crore i.e., 4.5% of GDP.
- **INTEREST-FREE LOAN TO STATES CONTINUED.**
- To spur investment in infrastructure and to incentivize States for complementary policy actions, the Finance Minister proposed to continue the 50-year interest free loan to State Governments for one more year with the outlay in this regard being enhanced significantly to ' 1.3 lakh crore.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE SECRETARIAT:** The Finance Minister in her Budget 2023-24 speech noted that after the subdued period of the pandemic, private investments are growing again. To attract private investment in sectors predominantly dependent on public resources,

- Smt. Sitharaman said that the newly-established **Infrastructure Finance Secretariat** will assist all stakeholders for more private investment in infrastructure sectors like railways, roads, urban infrastructure and power.

Possible Question: As per Union Budget 2023-2024, The finance minister stated that the Effective Capital Expenditure is estimated to be _____ of GDP.

8. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 6: Nominal GDP growth pegged at 10.5% in FY24

- The Union Budget has pegged India's nominal GDP at 10.5% in the financial year 2023-24.
- Nominal GDP includes changes in prices due to inflation and presumes importance in the Budget as other numbers are calculated on this projection.
- According to the Fiscal Policy statements the Nominal GDP was projected to grow at 15.4 % year-on-year (Y-o-Y) in FY2022-23.

Possible Question: In February 2023, The Union Budget 2023-2024 has pegged India's nominal GDP at _____ in the financial year 2023-24.

9. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 7: Rs 35,000 crore towards energy transition; Rs 19,700 crore for Green Hydrogen

- Finance Minister proposed an allocation of ' 35,000 crore for priority capital investments towards energy transition and net zero objectives, and energy security by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. An additional Rs 19,700 crore towards the government's Green Hydrogen Mission to lower carbon intensity and reduce fossil fuel use was announced. India's target to reach an annual production of green hydrogen 5 MMT by 2030
- Finance Minister stated that **Battery Energy Storage Systems** with capacity of **4,000 MWH** will be supported with **Viability Gap Funding**.
- A detailed framework for Pumped Storage Projects will also be formulated* she added while announcing the measures for steering the economy on the sustainable development path.
- Renewable Energy Evacuation:** The **Inter-state transmission system** for evacuation and grid integration of 13 GW renewable energy from Ladakh has been proposed with an investment of ' 20,700 crore including central support of ' 8,300 crore.
- Green Credit Programme:** Finance Minister proposed a **Green Credit Programme**, to be notified under the Environment (Protection) Act for encouraging behavioural change by incentivizing environmentally sustainable and responsive actions by companies, individuals and local bodies. *This will help mobilize additional resources for such activities* she added.
- PM-PRANAM:** PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth will be launched to incentivize States and Union Territories to promote alternative fertilizers and balanced use of chemical fertilizers.
- GOBARdhan scheme:** Establishment of 100 new waste to wealth plants under GOBARdhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) scheme have been proposed for promoting circular economy. These will include **200**

compressed biogas (CBG) plants, including 75 plants in urban areas, and 300 community or cluster-based plants at total investment of ' 10,000 crore.

- To avoid cascading of taxes on blended compressed natural gas exemption of excise duty is GST-paid CBG contained in it, has also been proposed.
- Finance Minister also announced a proposal for introducing a 5 per cent CBG mandate in due course, for all organizations marketing natural and bio gas. *For collection of bio-mass and distribution of bio-manure, appropriate fiscal support will be provided.*
- **Bhartiya Prakritik Kheti Bio-Input Resource Centres**; *Over the next 3 years, we will facilitate 1 crore farmers to adopt natural farming* the Finance Minister said while announcing the proposal to set-up **10,000 Bio-Input Resource Centres**, thereby creating a national-level distributed **micro-fertilizer and pesticide manufacturing**.
- **MISHTI**: Building on India's success in afforestation, Finance Minister announced that **Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes** will be taken up for mangrove plantation along the **coastlines and salt pan lands**, wherever feasible, through convergence between MGNREGS, CAMPA Fund and other sources.
- **Amrit Dharohar**: Highlighting the importance of local communities in conserving the wetland ecosystem, Finance Minister also announced the **Amrit Dharohar** scheme which will **promote** their unique conservation values.
- This scheme will be implemented over the **next three years** to encourage optimal use of wetlands, and **enhance bio-diversity, carbon stock, eco-tourism opportunities and income generation for local communities**.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister proposed an allocation of _____ for priority capital investments towards energy transition and net zero objectives, and energy security by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

10. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 8: 50 DESTINATIONS TO BE DEVELOPED AS A 'COMPLETE PACKAGE OF TOURISM'

- At least 50 destinations will be selected and developed as a complete package of tourism. These destinations will be selected through challenge mode using an integrated and innovative approach while the focus of development of tourism would be on domestic as well as foreign tourists.
- To strengthen the domestic tourism, Sector specific skilling and entrepreneurship development will be dovetailed to achieve the objectives of the **Dekho Apna Desh** initiative, the Budget 2023-24 proposed.
- To encourage tourism in the border villages, tourism infrastructure and amenities will be facilitated under the **Vibrant Villages Programme**, announced the Finance Minister, **Unity Mall** to promote and sell State's own One District, One Product (ODOPs), Geographical Indication (GI) and other handicraft products, will be set up in states.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister announced "Unity Mall", which of the following statement is TRUE for Unity Mall?

11. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 9: '9000 CRORE FOR REVAMPED CREDIT-GUARANTEE SCHEME TO MSMEs

- Smt. Sitharaman announced that the revamped credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs, proposed in the previous Budget, will take effect from 1st April 2023 through infusion of '9000 crore in the corpus. 'This will enable additional collateral-free guaranteed credit of '2 lakh crore. Further, the cost of credit will be reduced by about 1%,' she said.
- **VIVAD SE VISHWAS I 'RELIEF FOR MSMEs:** Giving significant relief to MSMEs, the Finance Minister proposed that in cases of failure by MSMEs to execute contracts during the Covid period, 95 per cent of the forfeited amount relating to bid or performance security, will be returned to them by government and government undertakings.
- **VIVAD SE VISHWAS II 'SETTLING CONTRACTUAL DISPUTES:** To settle contractual disputes of government and government undertakings, wherein arbitral award is under challenge in a court, a voluntary settlement scheme with standardized terms will be introduced. This will be done by offering graded settlement terms depending on pendency level of the dispute.
- **MSMEs AND PROFESSIONALS:** Stating that MSMEs are growth engines of our economy, the Finance Minister said that micro enterprises with turnover up to '2 crore and certain professionals with turnover of up to '50 lakh can avail the benefit of presumptive taxation. The Finance Minister proposed to provide enhanced limits of '3 crore and '75 lakh respectively, to the tax payers whose cash receipts are no more than 5 per cent. Moreover, to support MSMEs in timely receipt of payments, Smt. Sitharaman further proposed to allow deduction for expenditure incurred on payments made to them only when payment is actually made.
- **START-UPS:** While presenting the Union Budget, the Union Finance Minister said, "Entrepreneurship is vital for a country's economic development. We have taken a number of measures for start-ups and they have borne results. India is now the third largest ecosystem for start-ups globally, and ranks second in innovation quality among middle-income countries. I propose to extend the date of incorporation for income tax benefits to start-ups from 31.03.23 to 31.3.24. I further propose to provide the benefit of carry forward of losses on change of shareholding of start-ups from seven years of incorporation to ten years.
- **"NATIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION REGISTRY:** The Finance Minister also announced setting up of a National Financial Information Registry to serve as the central repository of financial and ancillary information. '*This will facilitate efficient flow of credit, promote financial inclusion, and foster financial stability,*' she said. Smt. Sitharaman added that a new legislative framework will govern this credit public infrastructure, and it will be designed in consultation with the RBI.
- **GIFT IFSC:** To enhance business activities in GIFT IFSC, Budget 2023-24 proposes a slew of initiatives viz. **delegating powers** under SEZ Act to IFSCA to avoid dual regulation, **single window IT system** for registration and regulatory approval, **permitting acquisition financing** by IFSC banking units of foreign banks, establishing **subsidiary of EXIM Bank** for trade re-financing, recognizing offshore derivative instruments as valid contracts.

- **FINANCIAL SECTOR REGULATIONS:** In order to meet the needs of *Amrit Kaal* and to facilitate optimum regulation in the financial sector, the Finance Minister proposed to incorporate public consultation, as necessary and feasible, to the process of regulation-making and issuing subsidiary directions. Smt. Sitharaman added that financial sector regulators will be requested to comprehensively review existing regulations to simplify, ease and reduce cost of compliance. *'For this, they will consider suggestions from public and regulated entities. Time limits to decide the applications under various regulations will also be laid down,'* she said.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister said that micro enterprises with turnover up to _____ and certain professionals with turnover of up to _____ can avail the benefit of presumptive taxation.

12. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 10: PRADHAN MANTRI PVTG DEVELOPMENT MISSION TO BE LAUNCHED WITH AN OUTLAY OF Rs.15000 CRORE

- In order to improve socio-economic conditions of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs). Under Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission Rs.15,000 crore will be made available to implement the Mission in the next three years under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes.
- **Eklavya Model Residential Schools:** The Finance Minister stated that 38,800 teachers and support staff will be recruited for the 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools, serving 3.5 lakh tribal students in the next three years.
- **Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme:** The Finance Minister stated that the Aspirational Blocks Programme has been launched covering 500 blocks for saturation of essential government services across multiple domains such as health, nutrition, education, agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure.
- **PM Awas Yojana:** The outlay for PM Awas Yojana is proposed to be enhanced by 66 per cent to over Rs.79,000 crore.
- **Water for Drought Prone Region:** In the drought prone central region of Karnataka, central assistance of Rs.5,300 crore is proposed to be given to Upper Bhadra Project to provide sustainable micro irrigation and filling up of surface tanks for drinking water.
- **Bharat Shared Repository of Inscriptions (Bharat SHRI):** The Finance Minister stated that a Bharat Shared Repository of Inscriptions will be set up in a digital epigraphy museum, with digitization of one lakh ancient inscriptions in the first stage.
- **Support for poor prisoners:** In order to provide support to poor persons who are in prisons and unable to afford the penalty or the bail amount, the Finance Minister stated that the required financial support will be provided.

Possible Question: In order to improve socio-economic conditions of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs). In Union Budget 2023-2024, Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission was introduced with a financial outlay of _____.

13. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 11: COASTAL SHIPPING TO BE PROMOTED THROUGH PPP MODE WITH VIABILITY GAP FUNDING

- Speaking in line with green growth Minister proposed that coastal shipping will be promoted as the energy efficient and lower cost mode of transport, both for passengers and freight, through PPP mode with viability gap funding.
- A part of the State's outlay of fifty year loan to be spent on capital expenditure is also linked or allocated for scrapping old government vehicles

14. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 12: URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FUND TO BE ESTABLISHED

- Smt. Sitharaman mentioned that an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) will be established through use of priority sector lending shortfall. This will be managed by the National Housing Bank, and will be used by public agencies to create urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- **Making Cities Ready for Municipal Bonds:** The Finance Minister said that the cities will be incentivized to improve their credit worthiness for municipal bonds. This will be done through property tax governance reforms and ring-fencing user charges on urban infrastructure.
- **Urban Sanitation:** All cities and towns will be enabled for 100 per cent mechanical desludging of septic tanks and sewers to transition from manhole to machine-hole mode. Enhanced focus will be provided for scientific management of dry and wet waste.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023- 2024, Finance Minister mentioned that an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) will be established through use of priority sector lending shortfall. It will be managed by _____.

15. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 13: HIGHEST EVER CAPITAL OUTLAY OF '2.40 LAKH CRORE FOR RAILWAYS

- The Finance Minister stated that a capital outlay of '2.40 lakh crore has been provided for the Railways. This highest ever outlay is about 9 times the outlay made in 2013- 14. One hundred critical transport infrastructure projects, for last and first mile connectivity for ports, coal, steel, fertilizer, and food grains sectors have been identified.
- They will be taken up on priority with investment of '75,000 crore, including '15,000 crore from private sources.
- The Finance Minister further said that fifty additional airports, heliports, water aerodromes and advance landing grounds will be revived for improving regional air connectivity.
- **Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure:** Smt Sitharaman also mentioned that an expert committee will review the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure. The committee will recommend the classification and financing framework suitable for Amrit Kaal.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, The Finance Minister stated that a capital outlay of _____ has been provided for the Railways.

16. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 14: TEACHERS' TRAINING TO BE REVAMPED VIA DISTRICT INSTITUTES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- The Union Budget proposal to re-envision teachers' training through innovative pedagogy, curriculum transaction, continuous professional development, and ICT implementation by developing District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) as institutes of excellence is expected to benefit the State considerably.
- The Minister announced the setting up of a National Digital Library for Children and Adolescents for facilitating availability of quality books across geographies, languages, genres and levels, and device-agnostic accessibility.

17. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 15: HEALTH SECTOR

- Increasing the FY24 healthcare budget to Rs 89,155 crore from the previous year's estimate of Rs 86,200 crore, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also announced a plan to set up 157 new nursing colleges in co-location with the existing 157 medical colleges established since 2014.
- **Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission:**
- Smt Nirmala Sitharaman also announced launch of Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission which will entail awareness creation, universal screening of 7 crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in affected tribal areas, and counseling through collaborative efforts of central ministries and state governments.
- **ICMR Labs available for R&D:** To promote research in medical sector and innovation, the Finance Minister said that facilities in select ICMR Labs will be made available for public and private medical college faculty and private sector R&D teams.
- **Research & Innovation in Pharma Sector:** A new programme to promote research and innovation in pharmaceuticals will be taken up through centers of excellence, the Finance Minister announced.
- We shall also encourage industry to invest in research and development in specific priority areas she added.
- **Dedicated multidisciplinary courses for medical devices:** Highlighting importance of futuristic medical technologies and high-end manufacturing in medical sector, Smt Sitharaman stated that dedicated multidisciplinary courses for medical devices will be supported in existing institutions to ensure availability of skilled manpower for futuristic medical technologies, high-end manufacturing and research.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister introduced which of the following missions?

18. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 16: 5 income tax rule changes announced in Budget 2023

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has increased the rebate limit for individual taxpayers from ' 5 lakh to ' 7 lakh a year. She also announced new tax slabs and scrapped the old twin-structure system that was unboxed in 2020, which taxed citizens under 25 per cent without exemptions and 30 per cent with exemptions allowed.

- **The new slabs are:**
- Rs 0-3 lakh - no tax

- Rs 3-6 lakh - taxed at 5 per cent
- Rs 6-9 lakh - taxed at 10 per cent
- Rs 9-12 lakh - taxed at 15 per cent
- Rs 12-15 lakh - taxed at 20 per cent
- Above 15 lakh - taxed at 30 per cent
- For pensioners, the finance minister announced extending the benefit of standard deduction to new tax regime. Each salaried person with an income of '15.5 lakh or more will benefit by '52,500.
- Maximum tax, along with surcharge, will be 39%
- The highest tax rate which in our country is 42.74 per cent.

- Minister propose to reduce the highest surcharge rate from 37 per cent to 25 per cent in the new tax regime. This would result in reduction of the maximum tax rate to 39 per cent
- Lastly, the limit of '3 lakh for tax exemption on leave encashment on retirement of non-government salaried employees was last fixed in the year 2002, when the highest basic pay in the government was '30,000 pm. In line with the increase in government salaries, I am proposing to increase this limit to '25 lakh.
- Currently, a 5 per cent tax is levied on total income between '2.5 lakh and '5 lakh, 10 per cent on '5 lakh to '7.5 lakh, 15 per cent on '7.5 lakh to '10 lakh, 20 per cent on '10 lakh to '12.5 lakh, 25 per cent on '12.5 lakh to '15 lakh, and 30 per cent on above '15 lakh. With effect from April 1, these slabs will be modified as per the Budget announcement.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has increased the rebate limit for individual taxpayers from _____ to ' _____ a year.

19. UNION BUDGET 2023-2024 LIVE SUMMARY 17: 'PM Awas Yojana' allocation raised by 66% to provide houses to poor

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made a big announcement to provide affordable houses to the people of the country. Presenting the Union Budget for the fiscal year 2023-24, she said that the outlay for 'Prime Minister Awas Yojana' is being enhanced by 66% to over Rs. 79,000 crores. This comes as a boost to the poor strata of the country, who struggle for basic amenities.

Possible Question: In Union Budget 2023-2024, Finance Minister said that the outlay for 'Prime Minister Awas Yojana' is being enhanced by _____ to over Rs. 79,000 crores.

20. RBI imposes monetary penalty on Bank of Baroda, 2 others for rule violation

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties on the Bank of Baroda, North East Small Finance Bank, and Krazybee Services Private Limited for rule violation.
- The central bank imposed a ' 30 lakh penalty on Bank of Baroda, ' 42.48 lakh on Krazybee Services Private Ltd and ' 39.50 lakh on North East Small Finance Bank.
- The RBI's inspection report on Bank of Baroda showed that the lender breached the transaction limits in small accounts and failed to ensure that the interest rates

applied in certain term deposit accounts were as per the schedule of interest rates disclosed in advance, a release said.

- Krazybee Services failed to ensure that its recovery agents did not resort to harassment or intimidation of customers while collecting debt.
- While North East Small Finance Bank failed to classify borrowal accounts as non-performing assets (NPAs), leading to a significant divergence between the reported and assessed NPAs as on March 31, 2020 and made Pillar 3 disclosures for FY 2019-20 in its Annual Report and website.

Possible Question: Recently, the Reserve Bank of India has imposed monetary penalty of _____ on Bank of Baroda for breaching the transaction limits in small accounts and failed to ensure that the interest rates applied in certain term deposit accounts were as per the schedule of interest rates disclosed in advance.

21. Google invests \$300mn in artificial intelligence start-up Anthropic

- Google Cloud reportedly invested \$300 million into artificial intelligence (AI) startup firm Anthropic. Anthropic is working on Claude, an AI assistant tool that could compete with OpenAI's ChatGPT.
- Microsoft has already announced the inclusion of the ChatGPT AI model in the Bing search engine. Google will take a stake of about 10 per cent.

Possible Question: In February 2023, According to newspaper reports which of the following companies has invested \$300 million into artificial intelligence (AI) startup firm Anthropic?

22. Centre Notifies Appointment Of 5 Judges To Supreme Court of India, Working Strength Rises To 32

- The 5 judges whose appointments have been notified are:
 1. Justice Pankaj Mithal, Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court,
 2. Justice Sanjay Karol, Chief Justice of Patna High Court,
 3. Justice P. V. Sanjay Kumar, Chief Justice of Manipur High Court,
 4. Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Patna High Court and
 5. Justice Manoj Misra, Judge, Allahabad High Court.
- Dhananjaya Y. Chandrachud, 50th and current chief justice of India.
- Currently, the Supreme Court of India has a sanctioned strength of thirty-four Judges and is presently functioning with twenty-seven Judges.

Possible Question: In February 2023, Central Government Notified the Appointment Of 5 Judges To Supreme Court of India, increasing the working strength of the Supreme Court to _____

23. Turkey earthquake: Historical "Gaziantep Castle" in southeastern Turkey collapsed

- The earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on badly damaged Gaziantep Castle, a historic site and tourist attraction in southeastern Turkey. The castle collapsed during the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck in the early hours of February 6. The death toll in massive earthquakes in Turkey and Syria has crossed 3,800. Several thousands of people are injured in the region

- A 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck the two countries yesterday while people were asleep. It is the deadliest tragedy to hit Turkey since 1939. Millions of people across Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and Israel felt the earthquake. Tremors from the powerful earthquakes were also felt as far away as Denmark and Greenland.
- Dozens of countries have pledged to aid in search and rescue operations. Offers of aid have poured in from across the world, including from India, the UAE, the European Union, and Israel.
- India has sent the 1st batch of earthquake relief material for Turkey along with NDRF Search and Rescue Teams, specially trained dog squads, medical supplies, drilling machines and other necessary equipment.

Possible Question: The Gaziantep Castle which was recently seen in news is located in which country?

24. Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC): e'-R is in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender: Govt in Lok Sabha

- The Reserve Bank of India launched the first pilot of Digital Rupee- Retail segment (e'-R) on December 01, 2022. The e'-R pilot currently covers the five cities of Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh.
- The e'-R is in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender.
- The e'-R offers features of physical cash like trust, safety and settlement.
- Giving more information, the Minister stated that RBI has identified eight banks for phase-wise participation in the retail pilot project.
- These include the State Bank of India, the ICICI Bank, the Yes Bank and the IDFC First Bank, the Bank of Baroda, the Union Bank of India, the HDFC Bank and the Kotak Mahindra Bank. The participating banks have selected individuals/account holders for the trials.

Possible Question: The Reserve Bank of India launched the first pilot of Digital Rupee- Retail segment (e'-R) on December 01, 2022. Which one of the following banks is NOT selected for the retail pilot project?

25. K Satyanarayana Raju appointed as new MD & CEO of Canara Bank

- The Union Government has appointed K Satyanarayana Raju as the Managing Director and CEO of Canara Bank, with immediate effect.
- He will be replacing L V Prabhakar who demitted office on December 31, 2022.

- Canara Bank was founded by Shri Ammembal Subba Rao Pai, a great visionary and philanthropist, in July 1906, at Mangalore.
- Canara Bank, Headquarters: Bangalore.

Possible Question: The Union Government has appointed K Satyanarayana Raju as the Managing Director and CEO of Canara Bank in February 2023, he replaced who among the following?

26. RBI Monetary Policy 2023: Monetary Policy Committee raises repo rate by 25 bps to 6.50%

- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased the repo rate, or the key rate at which the RBI lends short-term funds to commercial banks, to 6.50 per cent from

6.25 per cent. The key rate has now been raised by 250 (225 + 25) bps since May by the panel.

- The panel also decided to remain focused on withdrawal of accommodative stance.
- With this, the repo rate has been hiked for the sixth time in a row.
- SDF (Standing Deposit Facility) rate adjusts to 6.25% from 6%
- MSF (Marginal Standing Facility) rates hiked by 25 bps to 6.75%
- In its December 2022, monetary policy review, the central bank had raised the benchmark interest rate by 35 bps after delivering three back-to-back 50 bps hikes.

Possible Question: In February 2023, The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased the repo rate from _____ to _____.

27. RBI announces pilot for QR code-based Coin Vending Machine

- To improve the distribution of coins among members of the public, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is preparing a pilot project on QR code-based Coin Vending Machine (QCVM) in collaboration with a few leading banks.
- The QCVM is a cashless coin dispensation machine which would dispense coins against a debit to the customer's bank account using Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- The pilot project is planned to be initially rolled out at 19 locations in 12 cities across the country.

28. RBI expands scope of TReDS platform to allow insurance facility, secondary market ops

- The Reserve Bank of India decided to expand the scope of the Trade Receivable Discounting System or the TReDS platform allowing the use of insurance facilities. permitting entities eligible to undertake factoring business to participate as financiers on TReDS and allowing secondary market operations on the platform.

- The Reserve Bank introduced TReDS framework in 2014.
- The central bank's decision is expected to boost trade of receivables increasing cash flows to MSMEs.
- **What is TReDS?**
- TReDS is an electronic platform for facilitating the financing / discounting of trade receivables of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through multiple financiers. These receivables can be due from corporates and other buyers, including Government Departments and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- MSMEs contribute to over 30% of the country's GDP and have an employment potential of more than 110 million jobs (Ministry of MSME Annual Report 2020-21). However, a majority of MSMEs continue to struggle for survival, mainly because of a lack of timely and affordable access to credit facilities. This is one of the primary reasons why the RBI launched TReDS in July 2014.
- Currently, there are four operating TReDS platforms in India, namely Invoicemart, M1xchange and RXIL, C2FO Factoring Solutions Private Limited.

Possible Question: As of February 2023, how many TReDS platforms are there in India?

29. Salman Rushdie releases new novel 'Victory City', an ode to storytelling and freedom

- Salman Rushdie published his new novel "Victory City", an "epic tale" of a 14th-century woman who defies a patriarchal world to rule a city.
- The much-anticipated work tells the tale of young orphan girl Pampa Kampana who is endowed by a goddess with magical powers and founds the city, in modern-day India, of Bisnaga, which translates as Victory City. This is Salman Rushdie's 15th novel.

Possible Question: Who among the following has authored the new novel, "Victory City", an epic tale of a 14th-century woman who defies a patriarchal world to rule a city?

30. UNESCO to soon declare Visva-Bharati world's first living heritage university

- Founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1921, Visva-Bharati University will soon get the 'heritage' tag from UNESCO to take the distinction of world's first living heritage university. Normally heritage tag is given to a dead monument. For the first time in the world, a living university which is functioning is going to get the heritage tag from UNESCO.
- When founded in 1921 on 1,130 acres of land, it was named after Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore until Visva-Bharati Society was registered as an organisation in May 1922. Rabindranath donated some of his property, including land and a bungalow, to the society.
- Until Independence, it was a college and the institution was given the status of Central University in 1951 through a central Act. Its first vice-chancellor was Rathindranath Tagore, the son of Rabindranath Tagore, and the second vice-chancellor was grandfather of another Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen.

Possible Question: Founded in 1921, Visva-Bharati University will soon get the 'heritage' tag from UNESCO to take the distinction of world's first living heritage university. The University is located in which state of India?

31. India's sixth flight under Operation Dost reaches earthquake-hit Turkey

- India's sixth flight under Operation Dost has reached earthquake-hit Turkey. According to External Affairs ministry, more search and rescue teams, dog squads, essential search and access equipment, medicines and medical equipment are ready for deployment in the relief efforts.
- India is also preparing a field hospital in Hatay to treat the emergency cases.

President of Turkey : Recep Tayyip Erdoan
Capital: Ankara
Currency: Turkish lira

Possible Question: Which of the following statement is TRUE for Operation Dost?

32. RBI announces regulatory guidelines on climate risk and sustainable finance

- Based on analysis of feedback received on a July 2022 discussion paper on Climate Risk and Sustainable Finance, the Reserve Bank of India issued certain guidelines to regulated entities. The guidelines consist of a broad framework for acceptance of green deposits, disclosure frameworks on climate-related financial risks and guidance on climate scenario analysis and testing.
- The Reserve Bank recognises that climate change can translate into climate-related financial risks for Regulated Entities (REs) which can have broader financial stability implications.
- The guidelines shall be issued in a phased manner and the RBI will dedicate a page on its website to consolidate all instructions and related communications on climate risk and sustainable finance.
- In August 2021, the Housing Development and Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC) had launched green deposits, which were directed towards financing of green and sustainable housing credit solutions and services.

Possible Question: In February 2023, Reserve Bank of India announced regulatory guidelines on climate risk and sustainable finance. Which of the following was a part of the guidelines?

- I. Broad framework for acceptance of green deposits
- II. Disclosure frameworks on climate-related financial risks
- III. Guidance on climate scenario analysis and testing

33. MobiKwik becomes India's first app to Support Credit Cards on UPI

- MobiKwik has become one of the first fintech apps to support RuPay Credit Cards on UPI.
- The facility will help millions of customers who use UPI for their daily transactions. RuPay Credit Cards now linked directly to UPI IDs, customers can easily make payments to merchants by scanning the UPI QR code and using UPI PIN for payment authentication.

Chandan Joshi, Co-Founder & CEO, Consumer Payments, MobiKwik.

Possible Question: In February 2023, which of the following has become one of the first fintech apps to support RuPay Credit Cards on UPI platform?

34. Two HC judges elevated to SC, total strength of apex court reaches 34

- Rajesh Bindal, Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court and Aravind Kumar, Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court were elevated to the Supreme Court, bringing the total strength of the apex court to its maximum of 34 judges.
- Their names were recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium last month.
- Under the Collegium system, the Chief Justice of India along with four senior-most Supreme Court judges recommend appointments and transfers of judges.
- A High Court Collegium, meanwhile, is led by the incumbent Chief Justice and the two senior most judges of that court.
- The Collegium system is not rooted in the Constitution. Instead, it has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court.

Possible Question: Under the Collegium system, the Chief Justice of India along with _____ senior-most Supreme Court judges recommend appointments and transfers of judges

35. President Murmu appoints new Governors in 13 states

- Here is a list of the new appointments.
 1. Lt. General Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retired) as Governor of Arunachal Pradesh
 2. Lakshman Prasad Acharya as Governor of Sikkim
 3. CP Radhakrishnan as Governor of Jharkhand
 4. Shiv Pratap Shukla as Governor of Himachal Pradesh
 5. Gulab Chand Kataria as Governor of Assam
 6. Justice (Retd.) S. Abdul Nazeer as Governor of Andhra Pradesh
 7. Biswa Bhusan Harichandan, Governor of Andhra Pradesh appointed as Governor of Chhattisgarh
 8. Sushri Anusuiya Uikye, Governor of Chhattisgarh appointed as Governor of Manipur
 9. La. Ganesan, Governor of Manipur appointed as Governor of Nagaland
 10. Phagu Chauhan, Governor of Bihar appointed as Governor of Meghalaya
 11. Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Governor of Himachal Pradesh appointed as Governor of Bihar
 12. Ramesh Bais, Governor of Jharkhand appointed as Governor of Maharashtra
 13. Brig. (Dr.) BD Mishra (Retd.), Governor of Arunachal Pradesh appointed as Lt. Governor of Ladakh

Who was appointed as the Governor of Maharashtra recently?

36. World Radio Day | February 13

- On Nov 3, 2011, UNESCO declared February 13 as World Radio Day because on this day United Nations Radio was first established in 1946.
- The theme for World Radio Day 2023 is '**Radio and Peace**' which focuses on the role of radio as an independent medium of peace making.
- The first ever radio broadcast in India happened in June 1923 by Radio Club of Bombay. All India Radio (AIR) is the government owned radio station.

Possible Question: February 13 is observed as World Radio Day. What is the theme of 2023 World Radio Day?

37. Financial Literacy Week (FLW) 2023 | February 13 to 17, 2023

- The theme selected for current year FLW is "**Good Financial Behaviour - Your Saviour**" which will be observed between February 13 and 17, 2023. The theme aligns with the overall strategic objectives of the National Strategy for Financial Education: 2020-2025 which aims at building financial resilience and well-being while creating awareness among members of public.

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on a particular theme among members of public across the country.

Possible Question: The theme selected for Financial Literacy Week (FLW) 2023 is

38. HDFC Bank begins offline payment pilot under RBI sandbox

- HDFC Bank is attempting to execute digital payments in an offline mode under a regulatory facility to test innovations. Apart from executing transactions in no network areas, such a facility will be of help in urban pockets experiencing bad networks and also in aircraft.
- Digital payment typically requires one either the customer or the merchant to be online to get executed.
- HDFC Bank has begun the pilot in a partnership with Crunchfish, IDFC Bank and M2P Fintech under the RBI's regulatory sandbox programme after getting the nod in September 2022.
- The pilot is attempting to ensure that a transaction goes even when both customer and merchant are fully offline, the statement said.
- As soon as either the merchant or the customer goes online, the transaction gets settled

- Sashidhar Jagdishan- Managing Director and CEO of HDFC Bank.
- Atanu Chakraborty is the chairman of the board of HDFC Bank.

Possible Question: In February 2023, which of the following bank began offline payment pilot under RBI sandbox facility?

39. Health Ministry launches nationwide campaign to combat filariasis

- The Union Health Ministry has launched a nationwide mass drug administration (MDA) campaign aimed at ending filariasis disease transmission through door-to-door administration of anti-filarial drugs, especially in 10 affected States.
- The government of India has already unveiled a renewed five-pronged strategy for the elimination of lymphatic filariasis (LF).
- High-burden districts in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh jointly launched the campaign.
- The launch came a month after the programme received resounding support from Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya to eliminate filariasis by 2027, three years ahead of the global target.
- India has ramped up efforts to eliminate lymphatic filariasis (LF), a vector-borne disease caused by culex mosquitoes that leads to disabilities, well ahead of the global targets to safeguard communities from disabilities, as well as from social- and economic insecurity.

Possible Question: In February 2023, the Union Health Ministry has launched a nationwide mass drug administration (MDA) campaign aimed at ending _____ disease transmission in 10 affected states.

40. Tata's Air India to buy 470 aircraft from Boeing, Airbus

- Tata group, Air India placed an order for 470 planes: 250 with European plane maker Airbus & 220 with American giant Boeing --the world's largest ever single-tranche aircraft purchase.
- The order comprises 40 Airbus A350s, 20 Boeing 787s & 10 Boeing 777-9s widebody aircraft. The narrow-bodies include 210 Airbus A320 and 321 Neos and 190 Boeing 737 MAX single-aisle aircraft.
- By doing this it has eclipsed American Airlines' 2011 order for 460 planes.
- At list price the aircraft deal is valued at over **\$70 billion**.
- Along with the aircraft order, Air India has signed deals with engine manufacturers: CFM International (for narrow-body A320/B737s), GE (for Boeing 777x/787), and Rolls-Royce for A350 type planes.
- The first aircraft to arrive will be 25 Boeing 737s and six Airbus A350-900s in the second half of 2023.
- Air India had last ordered planes in 2006, when it had booked 111 aircraft: 68 from Boeing and 43 from Airbus.

- Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran
- Airbus Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Guillaume Faury
- Air India CEO Campbell Wilson.

Possible Question: Air India has placed an order for 470 planes: _____ with European plane maker Airbus & _____ with American giant Boeing --the world's largest ever single-tranche aircraft purchase.

41. Reserve Bank of India launches its Second Global Hackathon - HARBINGER 2023

- RBI is organising its 2nd global hackathon ' "HARBINGER 2023 ' Innovation for Transformation".
- The Hackathon invites participants to develop solutions that have the potential to make d
- igital financial services accessible to the differently abled, facilitate efficient compliance, extend the reach of Central Bank Digital Currencies and enhance the scalability of blockchains. **HARBINGER 2023 theme-- 'Inclusive Digital Services'.**
- **HARBINGER 2023** invites innovative ideas for the following *problem statements*.
- Innovative, easy-to-use, digital banking services for differently abled (Divyaang).
- RegTech solutions to facilitate more efficient compliance by Regulated Entities (REs).
- Exploring use cases/solutions for CBDC-Retail transactions, including transactions in offline mode.
- Increasing Transactions Per Second (TPS)/ throughput and scalability of blockchains.
- The Reserve Bank of India launched its first global hackathon - HARBINGER 2021 & Innovation for Transformation with the theme **Smarter Digital Payments** which was communicated.

Possible Question: Reserve Bank of India launched its Second Global Hackathon - HARBINGER 2023. What is its theme?

42. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar inaugurates 12th Vishwa Hindi Sammelan in Fiji

- S Jaishankar inaugurated the 12th Vishwa Hindi Sammelan in Nadi, Fiji.
- The World Hindi Conference will be co-hosted by the governments of India and Fiji from February 15-17 in Nadi, Fiji. It is External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's first visit to Fiji.
- **The main theme of the conference is 'Hindi ' Traditional Knowledge to Artificial Intelligence'.**
- The concept of World Hindi Conferences was envisaged by Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Wardha in 1973. As a result, the first World Hindi Conference was organized four and half decades back from **January 10-12, 1975 in Nagpur, India. **
- During the 11th World Hindi Conference held in **Mauritius in 2018**, a recommendation was made to organize its next edition in Fiji.

Fiji's President Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere.

Possible Question: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar inaugurated _____ Vishwa Hindi Sammelan in Nadi, Fiji.

43. India's First Waste-To-Hydrogen Plant To Be Set Up In Pune

- The country's first solid waste-to-hydrogen plant will be set up in Pune at a cost of over Rs 430 crore.
- The plant will be set up by sustainability solutions provider TheGreenBillions Ltd (TGBL), who has entered into a 30-year-long agreement with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC).
- It will treat 350 tonnes of solid garbage every day by next year. TGBL chairman and founder Prateek Kanakia.
- The first 10 tonne reactor will be installed by November 2023 and the target to complete the entire plant is November 2024.

Possible Question: The country's first solid waste-to-hydrogen plant will be set up in Pune by sustainability solutions provider _____.

44. WHO confirms Marburg disease outbreak

- The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the first-ever outbreak of Marburg disease in Equatorial Guinea saying that the Ebola-related virus is responsible for at least nine deaths in the tiny Western African country.
- There are no authorized vaccines or drugs to treat Marburg, but rehydration treatment to alleviate symptoms can improve the chances of survival.

- WHO Founded: 7 April 1948
- WHO, Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- **What is Marburg disease?**
- Marburg virus disease is a highly virulent disease that causes haemorrhagic fever, with a fatality ratio of up to 88%. It is in the same family as the virus that causes Ebola virus disease.
- The rare virus was first identified in 1967 after it caused simultaneous outbreaks of disease in laboratories in Marburg, Germany and Belgrade, Serbia

Possible Question: In February 2023, The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the first-ever outbreak of which disease in Equatorial Guinea?

45. International Solar Alliance and West African Power Pool hosts 13 African countries in New Delhi

- International Solar Alliance (ISA), in collaboration with Grid Controller of India Ltd (Grid-India) and West African Power Pool (WAPP), is hosting delegates from the West African Region in New Delhi, India, from 14th to 18th February.
- Shri R.K. Singh, Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy & President of ISA Assembly. Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, ISA.
- Sixty participants from thirteen WAPP countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo will participate in a knowledge sharing and study tour highlighting aspects of solar energy implementation.

About the International Solar Alliance

- The International Solar Alliance is an international organisation with **114 Member** and Signatory countries. It works with governments to improve energy access and security worldwide and promote solar power as a sustainable transition to a carbon-neutral future.
- ISA's mission is to unlock US\$ 1 trillion of investments in solar by 2030 while reducing the cost of the technology and its financing. It promotes the use of solar energy in the Agriculture, Health, Transport and Power Generation sectors.
- ISA member countries are driving change by enacting policies and regulations, sharing best practices, agreeing on common standards, and mobilising investments. Through this work, ISA has identified and designed and tested new business models for solar projects; supported governments to make their energy legislation and policies solar-friendly through Ease of Doing Solar analytics and advisory; pooled demand for solar technology from different countries; and drove down costs; improved access to finance by reducing the risks and making the sector more attractive to private investment; increased access to solar training, data and insights for solar engineers and energy policymakers.
- With the signing and ratification of the ISA Framework Agreement by 15 countries on 6 December 2017, ISA became the first international intergovernmental organisation to be headquartered in India.
- ISA is partnering with multilateral development banks (MDBs), development financial institutions (DFIs), private and public sector organisations, civil society, and other international institutions to deploy cost-effective and transformational solutions through solar energy, especially in the least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Possible Question: The International Solar Alliance is an international organization with _____ Member and Signatory countries.

46. Moldova's president appoints Dorin Recean as new prime minister to tackle security challenges

- Moldova's President Maia Sandu has nominated her security advisor and secretary of the national security council, Dorin Recean, to head the government as the new prime minister.
- Sandu made the appointment after Natalia Gavrilita announced her resignation after one and a half years in office.

Possible Question: Chisinau is the capital Moldova.

47. RBI grants in-principle approval to 32 entities for payment aggregator licence

- Payment arms of US technology majors Amazon and Google, along with Reliance Payment Solutions, that is part of Reliance Jio Infocomm, were among the 32 firms given in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as online payment aggregators.
- This is the first time RBI has released a list with 'current application status' for all payment aggregators.
- Shaktikanta Das is the present RBI Governor.
- Online payment aggregators are entities that on-board digital merchants and accept payments on their behalf after getting a licence by the banking regulator.

Possible Question: The payment aggregators license in India is granted by _____

48. YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki resigns, Indian-American Neal Mohan to be new CEO

- YouTube Chief Executive Officer Susan Wojcicki will be stepping down after nine years at the helm of the world's largest online video platform.
- YouTube's chief product officer, Neal Mohan, will be the new head of YouTube.
- Wojcicki, who was previously a senior vice president for ad products at Google, became CEO of YouTube in 2014.

Possible Question: Who among the following has been appointed as the new CEO of YouTube?

49. World Bank President David Malpass to step down by June 2023

- Notably, David Malpass was selected as the 13th President of the World Bank Group by its Board of Executive Directors on April 5, 2019.
- The World Bank, a group of 189 nations, lends money to developing countries to help reduce poverty. Former US President Donald Trump appointed Malpass as World Bank chief in 2019 for a five-year period.

- Eugene Meyer was nominated and elected as the World Bank's first president in June 1946.
- The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries. Its *five institutions* share a commitment to reducing poverty, increasing shared prosperity, and promoting sustainable development.
 1. IBRD-The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
 2. IDA- The International Development Association.
 3. IFC-The International Finance Corporation.

4. MIGA-The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.

5. ICSID-The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes.

Possible Question: Who among the following was selected as the 13th President of the World Bank Group?

50. AICTE and BPRD Jointly Launch KAVACH-2023, a National Level Hackathon to tackle cyber threats and provide effective solutions

- KAVACH-2023 is a unique kind of national hackathon jointly conducted by MoE's Innovation Cell, AICTE, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D, MHA) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C, MHA) to identify innovative ideas and technological solutions for addressing the cyber security and cybercrime challenges of the 21st century.
- Grand finale of KAVACH-2023 will be a 36-hours long mega event, during which selected youths from educational institutions across the country and registered start-ups will participate to find robust, secure and effective technological solutions using their knowledge, technical expertise and innovative skills. Total prize money worth Rs. 20 Lakh will be awarded to the winning teams.

- Dr. T G Sitharam, Chairman, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

- Balaji Srivastava, Director General, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).

- Shri Rajesh Kumar, CEO, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).

Possible Question: Which of the following is a unique kind of national hackathon to identify innovative ideas and technological solutions for addressing the cyber security and cybercrime challenges?

51. RBI Bulletin: UPI transaction growth falls in January 2023 from January 2022

- The growth rate of UPI transaction volume and value for January declined in the year 2023 from 2022.
- The transaction volume of UPI in January 2022 was 100.5 percent, while in 2023 it stood at 74.1 percent.
- However, the transaction value of UPI in the first month of 2023 goes to 56.1 percent in 2023 while it stood at 93 percent last year.

Possible Question: According to RBI data, the transaction value of UPI in the first month of 2023 is _____ percent.

52. RBI: Introduction of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) related transaction code in NEFT and RTGS Systems

- Under the FCRA, 2010 (amended as on September 28, 2020), foreign contributions must be received only in the 'FCRA account' of State Bank of India (SBI), New Delhi Main Branch (NDMB). T
- he contributions to the FCRA account are received directly from foreign banks through SWIFT and from Indian intermediary banks through NEFT and RTGS systems.

- NEFT stands for National Electronic Funds Transfer. Started in November 2005, NEFT is an electronic funds transfer system set up and managed by the Reserve Bank of India. NEFT allows the online transfer of funds from one NEFT-enabled bank account to another.
- The acronym RTGS stands for Real Time Gross Settlement, which can be explained as a system where there is continuous and real-time settlement of fund-transfers, individually on a transaction-by-transaction basis (without netting).
- RTGS is available 24x7x365 with effect from December 14, 2020.
- The RTGS system is primarily meant for large value transactions. The minimum amount to be remitted through RTGS is '2,00,000/-' with no upper or maximum ceiling.
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)
- was originally enacted in 1976, and significantly revised in 2010. It creates registration requirements and spending restrictions on Indian nonprofit organizations receiving foreign donations. The most recent 2020 amendments of the FCRA brought in additional restrictions, banning subgranting among FCRA-registered organizations, setting a severe cap on administrative spending, and further centralizing control of FCRA funding with the State Bank of Delhi and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Possible Question: The RTGS system is primarily meant for large value transactions. The minimum amount to be remitted through RTGS is _____.

53. BVR Subrahmanyam Named NITI Aayog CEO As Parameswaran Iyer Shifts To World Bank

- B V R Subrahmanyam has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Niti Aayog for a period of 2 years from the date of assumption of the charge of the post, replacing Parameswaran Iyer, who has been named as the Executive Director, World Bank headquarters, Washington DC, USA for a tenure of 3 years.
- Iyer will be replacing Rajesh Khullar.
 - PM Modi- chairman of NITI Aayog.
 - Suman Bery- Vice Chairman of Niti Aayog.
 - The NITI Aayog was formed on January 1, 2015.

Possible Question: Recently, who among the following has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of Niti Aayog for a period of 2 years?

54. BAFTA Awards 2023: Austin Butler Bags The Best Actor Trophy, Cate Blanchette Honoured As The Best Actress

- Best Actor, Best Actress was conferred upon Austin Butler for his work in the biographical film 'Elvis' and Cate Blanchett for 'Tar'.
- The German film 'All Quiet on the Western Front' was the sweeping victor of the night, winning seven awards including best film and best director.
- The BAFTA Film Awards took place at the Royal Festival Hall in London, England.

Possible Question: Austin Butler bags the best actor trophy in the BAFTA Award 2023 for his work in the biographical film _____.

55. RPF hosts International Union of Railways' World Security Congress in Jaipur from Feb 21-23

- The 18th UIC World Security Congress commenced in Jaipur, India. The 3-day Conference is being jointly organized by the International Union of Railways (UIC), Paris and the Railway Protection Force (RPF)
- Mr. Sanjay Chander, Director General, Railway Protection Force, is also the Chairman, Security Platform of the UIC. International Union of Railways established in 1922 is headquartered in Paris.
- The World Security Congress is a globally recognized security platform that brings together representatives from member Railway Organizations, delegates of UIC, policy makers, senior law-enforcement officials from State Polices and Railway Protection Force to discuss the current security challenges and deliberate on innovative solutions in the Railway Sector.

Possible Question: The Indian Railway Protection Force (RPF) hosts the 18th UIC World Security Congress 2023. It is a three day conference commenced in_____.

56. US nominates former Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga for World Bank president

- The United States has nominated former Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga to lead the World Bank, President Joe Biden announced.
- The news comes days after Trump appointee David Malpass announced plans to step down in June from his role leading the 189-nation poverty reduction agency. His five-year term was due to expire in April 2024.
- He is the first Indian-born nominee to the World Bank president role.

Possible Question: The United States has nominated who among the following to lead the World Bank in February 2023?

57. Shipping Ministry to Develop Three Indian Ports as Hydrogen Hubs

- Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways identified & nominated Paradip Port (Odisha), Deendayal Port (Gujarat), & V O Chidambaranar Port (Tamil Nadu) to be developed as hydrogen hubs.
- The ports, as envisioned in the National Green Hydrogen Mission, will be made capable of handling, storage & generation of green hydrogen to meet India's 2030 hydrogen production goals.

Possible Question: V O Chidambaranar Port is located in which state of India?

58. CAG Girish Chandra Murmu selected as External Auditor of ILO in Geneva

- Comptroller and Auditor General, Girish Chandra Murmu has been selected as External Auditor of the International Labour Organization in Geneva for a four-year term from 2024 to 2027.
- The decision was taken after a rigorous selection process.
- CAG will take over from the incumbent External Auditor of ILO, Supreme Audit Institution of Philippines.

Possible Question: Comptroller and Auditor General, Girish Chandra Murmu has been selected as External Auditor of the International Labour Organization in Geneva for a _____ year term.

59. NSE gets the final SEBI approval to launch Social Stock Exchange

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) received the capital market regulator's nod to launch social stock exchanges (SSEs) as a new segment.
- This approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) means that the bourse can now launch the new platform and sign-up relevant entities for listing. Sebi already gave an in-principle to NSE to launch SSEs late last year.
- SSEs are a fundraising platform specifically created for social enterprises so that they can tap into broader sources of donations. The process of listing for SSEs works akin to normal initial public offerings (IPOs). However, instead of shares, the participants are allotted Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) instruments. Also, in normal IPOs investors can sell their shares post listing and make profits but ZCZPs yield any returns. In that sense, they are more like donations.

- Madhabi Puri Buch- current Chairperson of SEBI.
- Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO of NSE.

Possible Question: The _____ has recently received SEBI's final nod to launch social stock exchanges (SSEs) as a new segment.

60. IDFC MF set to launch India's first international debt fund

- IDFC Mutual Fund (MF) is all set to launch the IDFC US Treasury Bond 0-1 Year FOF (fund of funds), the industry's first international debt fund.
- It gives investors an opportunity to diversify beyond India, and into US treasuries which are seen as a safe-haven asset in times of economic uncertainty.
- A debt fund is a Mutual Fund scheme that invests in fixed income instruments, such as Corporate and Government Bonds, corporate debt securities, and money market instruments, etc. that offer capital appreciation.
- Debt funds are also referred to as **Fixed Income Funds or Bond Funds**.

Established in 2000, IDFC AMC is one of India's Top 10 asset managers.

Possible Question: Which of the following statement is correct about a debt fund?

61. The Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Report submitted to EAC-PM by IFC released by Dr Bibek Debroy

- The Foundational Literacy and Numeracy report was released by Dr Bibek Debroy, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).
- The report was released at #TheIndiaDialog organised by Institute for Competitiveness and US-Asia Technology Management Center, Stanford University, on February 23 & 24, 2023.
- The second edition of the **foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN)** report captures the role of language in education and focuses on improving the learning outcomes using appropriate assessments and medium of instruction.
- It captures the fundamental concepts children require to become skilled readers and highlights distinct challenges faced in a multilingual environment.
- In this context, it is crucial to understand the need to integrate the medium of instruction and teaching in languages familiar to children. A section of the report explicitly focuses on the numerous initiatives currently implemented at the

national and state level in collaboration with public-private organizations, demonstrating their efforts in achieving foundational learning goals as outlined in NIPUN.

- The report continues to be a benchmark for states and union territories to track their performance relative to their peers in achieving universal foundational learning by 2026-27.
- The report findings cover the role of nutrition, access to digital technology and language-focused instructional approach. It is further recommended to undertake various assessments pertaining to the linguistic system (includes phonology, vocabulary/lexicon, and syntax), the orthographic system (includes symbols and mapping principles), and the writing mechanisms and move the focus to improving the periodicity of NAS and the sample size of FLS for assessing the learning outcomes effectively. And finally, the need for data monitoring at a disaggregated level for FLN outcomes is also required to be integrated into the system, along with clearly defined outcome-based indicators on pedagogical framework and education in India.

Possible Question: The 'Foundational Literacy and Numeracy report' has been recently in the news. It has been released by the _____.

62. JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal bags 'Entrepreneur of the Year 2022' title

- Sajjan Jindal, Chairman and Managing Director, JSW Group, was named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2022 and will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEYO) at Monte Carlo in June 2023.
- Awards were also announced for nine other categories with the winners representing both mature industries and young entrepreneurs from startups.

Possible Question: Who among the following was named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2022?

63. RBI and NPCI Launch 'UPI One World' for Foreigners at G20 with Transcorp @trans

- RBI's Deputy Governor (Shri Rabi Sankar), Shri Nandan Nilekani and NPCI's MD & CEO (Shri Dilip Asbe) have launched 'UPI One World' for foreign nationals visiting India.
- Transcorp UPI One World wallets will initially be offered via the Transcorp-Cheq app to all G20 nationals and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs).
- Transcorp is one of four entities permitted by RBI and NPCI to issue UPI One World to foreign nationals; and the only entity with both Foreign Exchange (AD2) and Payments (PPI) licenses required to exchange currency and thereafter issue UPI One World wallets. Mr. Gerardo Zuniga (Director of International Affairs, Bank of Mexico) was issued a UPI One World wallet and successfully transacted using Transcorp's '@trans' handle.

Possible Question: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the 'UPI One World' for foreign nationals visiting India in collaboration with which among the following?

64. IREDA to set up office in Gujarat's GIFT city to finance renewable energy projects

- State-owned Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (Ireda) plans to set up an office in Gujarat's GIFT City to finance Renewable Energy projects in foreign currency.
- The office at GIFT City, Gandhinagar, will be classified as an overseas office, allowing Ireda avoid foreign exchange hedging costs.

Possible Question: The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) is planning to set up office in GIFT city to finance renewable energy projects. GIFT City is located in ____.

65. Bengaluru Open 2023: Max Purcell wins second Challenger title in a row

- Max Purcell secured his second straight ATP singles Challenger title (fourth overall), beating James Duckworth 3-6, 7-5, 7-6(5) at the Bengaluru Open on Sunday.
- The victory at the KSLTA courts will fetch the Australian 100 points and is set to carry him to a new career-high ranking (in the 110s).

Possible Question: Max Purcell won the ATP singles Challenger title at the Bengaluru Open in February 2023, Max Purcell belongs to which country?

66. The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Vadodara to host Youth 20 India Summit for environment conservation

- More than 600 delegates from 62 countries will participate in two-day Y20 India Summit at the Maharaja Sayajirao University Vadodara in Gujarat. Focusing on the theme of climate change and environmental conservation this international conference will be inaugurated by Shri Bhupendra Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat.
- Organised by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India to mark the celebration of India's G20 Presidency, the focus would be on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making sustainability a Way of Life.

Possible Question: Which of the following universities is set to host the Youth 20 India Summit for environment conservation in February 2023?

67. Lionel Messi wins 2022 FIFA Best Award, become third player to win prize twice after Ronaldo, Lewandowski

- Lionel Messi clinched the 2022 FIFA Best Men's Award in a ceremony held in Paris. The star Argentine footballer has won the prestigious award for the second time since its inception in 2016.
- Messi has become the third footballer after Cristiano Ronaldo (2016, 2017) and Robert Lewandowski (2020, 2021) to win the award for second time.
- Croatian Footballer Luka Modric won the prize in 2018.

Winners of FIFA's Best Awards:

- Men's POTY: Leo Messi
- Women's POTY: Alexia Putellas
- Men's GK: Emiliano Martinez
- Men's Coach: Lionel Scaloni
- Women's GK: Mary Earps

- Women's Coach: Sarina Weigman
- Best fan's – Argentina

- Alongside his two Best Awards, Messi has won the iconic Ballon d'Or prize a record seven times. From 2010 to 2016, the FIFA Best Awards and the Ballon d'Or were merged as part of a partnership. Messi won the Ballon d'Or in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, and 2021.

Possible Question: Who among the following clinched the 2022 FIFA Best Men's Award in Paris in February 2023?

68. Prime Minister Shri Modi transfers Rs. 16,800 crore towards PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi transferred the 13th instalment of about Rs 16,800 crore under the ambitious Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme of the Government of India, through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to the bank accounts of more than 8 crore beneficiary farmers across the country.

- PM Kisan is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India.
- It has become operational from 1.12.2018.
- Under the scheme an income support of 6,000/- per year in three equal installments will be provided to all land holding farmer families.
- Definition of family for the scheme is husband, wife and minor children.
- State Government and UT administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.
- The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.
- There are various Exclusion Categories for the scheme.

Possible Question: In February 2023, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi transferred the 13th installment of about _____ under the ambitious Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme of the Government of India.




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BANKING

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) | 4.50% |
| Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) | 18.00% |

| POLICY/EXCHANGE RATE & RESERVE RATIO | PERCENTAGE |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Repo Rate | 6.50% |
| Reverse Repo Rate | 3.35% |
| Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF) | 6.75% |
| Bank Rate | 6.75% |

APPOINTMENTS

| APPOINTMENT | POST |
|--|---|
| Arun Kohli | Morgan Stanley's Country Head for India |
| V Ramachandra | Member of the Advisory Committee of the two Srei Group companies |
| Manuela Roka Botey | Prime Minister of Equatorial Guinea |
| Raul Rebello | Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer-Designate of Mahindra Finance |
| Ami Bera | Member of the US House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence |
| Madhvendra Singh | Chief Executive Officer of Gujarat Maritime Cluster. |
| Saravanan U | Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) |
| Meenakshi Nevatia | Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Pfizer India |
| Rajan Amba | Managing Director of Jaguar Land Rover India |
| Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar | Vice Chief of Army Staff |
| Ruchira Kamboj | Chair for the 62nd session of UN Commission for Social Development |
| Meghana Pandit | CEO of Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Foundation Trust |
| Rajesh Rai | Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of ITI Limited |
| Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi | Drugs Controller General of India |
| Justice Pankaj Mithal | Supreme Court Judge |
| Justice Sanjay Karol | Supreme Court Judge |
| Justice P. V. Sanjay Kumar | Supreme Court Judge |
| Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah | Supreme Court Judge |
| Justice Manoj Misra | Supreme Court Judge |
| K Satyanarayana Raju | CEO & Managing Director of Canara Bank |
| Lt. General Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik | Governor of Arunachal Pradesh |
| Lakshman Prasad Acharya | Governor of Sikkim |
| Brig. (Dr.) BD Mishra (Retd.) | Lt. Governor of Ladakh |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Ramesh Bais | Governor of Maharashtra |
| Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar | Governor of Bihar |
| Phagu Chauhan | Governor of Meghalaya |
| La. Ganesan | Governor of Nagaland |
| Sushri Anusuiya Uikye | Governor of Manipur |
| Biswa Bhushan Harichandan | Governor of Chhattisgarh |
| Justice (Retd.) S. Abdul Nazeer | Governor of Andhra Pradesh |
| Gulab Chand Kataria | Governor of Assam |
| Shiv Pratap Shukla | Governor of Himachal Pradesh |
| CP Radhakrishnan | Governor of Jharkhand |
| Dorin Recean | Prime Minister of Moldova |
| Neal Mohan | CEO of YouTube |
| B V R Subrahmanyam | CEO of NITI Aayog |
| Girish Chandra Murmu | External Auditor of the International Labour Organization |

AWARDS

| WINNER | AWARD |
|-------------------|---|
| Dr Manmohan Singh | Lifetime Achievement Honour by the India-UK Achievers Honours in London |
| Ricky Kej | Grammy Award |
| VP Nandakumar | The Hurun Industry Achievement Award 2022 |
| NTPC Limited | ATD Best Awards 2023 |
| ABK Prasad | Raja Ram Mohan Roy National Award for Excellence in Journalism-2020 |
| Angela Merkel | Flix Houphout-Boigny Peace Prize |
| Karnataka Bank | Digidhan awards |
| Kollam district | Swaraj Trophy |
| Hari Balakrishnan | 2023 Marconi Prize |
| Sajjan Jindal | EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2022 |

IMPORTANT DAYS

| DATE | DAY | THEME |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| February 1 st | Indian Coast Guard Day | |
| February 1 st - 7 th | World Interfaith Harmony Week | |
| February 2 nd | World Wetlands Day | It's Time for Wetlands Restoration |
| February 4 th | World Cancer Day | Close the Care Gap |
| February 4 th | International Day of Human Fraternity | |
| February | International Day of Zero | Partnership with Men and Boys to |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 6 th | Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) | Transform Social and Gender Norms to End Female Genital Mutilation |
| February 6 th - 8 th | India Energy Week | |
| February 10 th | National Deworming Day | |
| February 10 th | World Pulses Day | Pulses for sustainable Future |
| February 11 th | International Day of Women and Girls in Science | IDEAS (Innovate, Demonstrate, Elevate, Advance, Sustain) |
| February 11 th | World Unnani Day | |
| February 12 th | National Productivity Day | A chance to set goals |
| February 13 th | World Radio Day | Radio and Peace |
| February 13 th - 17 th | Financial Literacy Week | Good Financial Behaviour - Your Saviour |
| February 18 th | World Pangolin Day | |
| February 20 th | World Day of Social Justice | Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice |
| February 21 st | International Mother Language Day | |
| February 24 th | Central Excise Day | |
| February 27 th | World NGO Day | |
| February 28 th | National Science Day | Global Science for Global Wellbeing |
| February 28 th | Rare Disease Day | |

OBITUARY

| OBITUARY | RELATED FIELD |
|----------------------------|---|
| Shanti Bhushan | Former Union law minister |
| Vani Jayaram | Play Back Singer |
| Burt Bacharach | American pop composer |
| Pervez Musharraf | Former Pakistan Ruler |
| Javed Khan Amrohi | Veteran Actor |
| Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha | Yakshagana playback singer and scriptwriter |
| Dr Kanak Y Rele | Mohiniattam Dancer |

IMPORTANT STATIC & CURRENT INFO

INDIAN STATES, CAPITALS, CHIEF MINISTERS & GOVERNORS

| STATE | CAPITAL | CHIEF MINISTER | GOVERNOR |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Andhra Pradesh | Amaravati | Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy | Justice (Retd.) S. Abdul Nazeer |
| Arunachal Pradesh | Itanagar | Pema Khandu | Lt. General Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik |
| Assam | Dispur | Himanta Biswa Sarma | Gulab Chand Kataria |
| Bihar | Patna | Nitish Kumar | Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar |
| Chhattisgarh | Raipur | Bhupesh Baghel | Biswa Bhusan Harichandan |
| Goa | Panaji | Pramod Sawant | P.S. Sreedharan Pillai |
| Gujarat | Gandhi Nagar | Bhupendra Patel | Acharya Dev Vrat |
| Haryana | Chandigarh | Manohar Lal Khattar | Bandaru Dattatraya |
| Himachal Pradesh | Shimla | Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu | Shiv Pratap Shukla |
| Jharkhand | Ranchi | Hemant Soren | CP Radhakrishnan |
| Karnataka | Bengaluru | Basavaraj Bommai | Thaawarchand Gehlot |
| Kerala | Thiruvananthapuram | Pinarayi Vijayan | Arif Mohammed Khan |
| Madhya Pradesh | Bhopal | Shivraj Singh Chauhan | Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel |
| Maharashtra | Mumbai | Eknath Shinde | Ramesh Bais |
| Manipur | Imphal | N Biren Singh | Sushri Anusuiya Uikye |
| Meghalaya | Shillong | Conrad Kongkal Sangma | Phagu Chauhan |
| Mizoram | Aizawl | Pu Zoramthanga | Dr Kambhampati Haribabu |
| Nagaland | Kohima | Neiphiu Rio | La. Ganesan |
| Odisha | Bhubaneswar | Naveen Patnaik | Ganeshi Lal |
| Punjab | Chandigarh | Bhagwant Mann | Banwarilal Purohit |
| Rajasthan | Jaipur | Ashok Gehlot | Kalraj Mishra |
| Sikkim | Gangtok | PS Golay | Lakshman Prasad Acharya |
| Tamil Nadu | Chennai | M. K. Stalin | R. N. Ravi |
| Telangana | Hyderabad | K. Chandrasekhar Rao | Tamilisai Soundararajan |
| Tripura | Agartala | Dr. Manik Saha | Satyadeo Narain Arya |
| Uttar Pradesh | Lucknow | Yogi Aditya Nath | Anandiben Patel |
| Uttarakhand | Dehradun | Pushkar Singh Dhami | Lt. Gen. Gurmit Singh |
| West Bengal | Kolkata | Mamata Banerjee | C V Ananda Bose |

UNION TERRITORIES, LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS & ADMINISTRATORS

| UNION TERRITORY | LT. GOVERNOR & ADMINISTRATOR |
|---|---|
| Andaman and Nicobar Island (UT) | Admiral D K Joshi (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Chandigarh (UT) | Banwarilal Purohit (Administrator) |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (UT) | Praful Patel (Administrator) |
| Delhi (NCT) | Vinai Kumar Saxena (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Jammu and Kashmir (UT) | Manoj Sinha (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Lakshadweep (UT) | Praful Patel (Administrator) |
| Puducherry (UT) | Dr.Tamilisai Soundararajan (Addl. Charge) (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Ladakh (UT) | Brig. (Dr.) BD Mishra (Retd.) (Lieutenant Governor) |

UNION MINISTERS & PORTFOLIO

| UNION MINISTER | PORTFOLIO |
|----------------------------|--|
| Narendra Modi | Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions Department of Atomic Energy Department of Space |
| Rajnath Singh | Ministry of Defence |
| Amit Shah | Ministry of Home Affairs Ministry of Cooperation |
| Nitin Gadkari | Ministry of Road Transport and Highways |
| Nirmala Sitharaman | Ministry of Finance Ministry of Corporate Affairs |
| Piyush Goyal | Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Textiles Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution |
| Narendra Singh Tomar | Ministry of agriculture and Farmers welfare |
| Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar | Ministry of External Affairs |
| Arjun Munda | Ministry of Tribal Affairs |
| Smriti Zubin Irani | Ministry of Women and child Development Ministry of Minority Affairs |
| Dharmendra Pradhan | Ministry of Education Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship |
| Pralhad Joshi | Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry of coal Ministry of Mines |
| Narayan Tatu Rane | Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises |
| SarbanandaSonowal | Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) |
| Dr. Virendra Kumar | Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Giriraj Singh | Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj |
| Jyotiraditya M. Scindia | Ministry of Civil Aviation Ministry of Steel |
| Ashwini Vaishnaw | Ministry of Railways Ministry of Communications Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology |
| Pashu Pati Kumar Paras | Ministry of Food Processing Industries |
| Gajendra Singh Shekhawat | Ministry of Jal Shakti |
| Kiren Rijiju | Ministry of Law and Justice |
| Raj Kumar Singh | Ministry of Power Ministry of New and Renewable Energy |
| Hardeep Singh Puri | Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs |
| Mansukh L. Mandaviya | Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers |
| Bhupender Yadav | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry of Labour and Employment |
| Mahendra Nath Pandey | Ministry of Heavy Industries |
| Parshottam Rupala | Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying |
| G. Kishan Reddy | Ministry of Culture Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region |
| Anurag Singh Thakur | Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports |



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