

**January 2023**

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## Banking & Finance

### 1. SBI Card and Punjab & Sind Bank Join Hands To Launch Co-Branded Credit Cards

Punjab & Sind Bank has partnered with SBI Card to launch co-brand credit cards for its customers. The partnership will introduce 'credit cards' as a new product segment under the bank's portfolio and for this both the partners have rolled out three card variants - PSB SBI Card ELITE, PSB SBI Card PRIME, and PSB Simply SAVE SBI Card.

### 2. Sebi bans DS Capital Venture, its directors from markets for 3 years

Capital markets regulator Sebi has barred DS Capital Venture and its directors from the securities markets for three years for violating regulatory norms. DS Capital Venture (DS Capital) is registered as an Sebi-investment adviser and its directors are Sanjay Dwivedi, Piyush Kumar Sharma, Deepali Sharma and Abhishek Tiwari.

### 3. Tata AIA Life introduces Emerging Opportunities Fund with Ulips

Tata AIA Life Insurance has launched Emerging Opportunity Fund, which will invest in mid-cap companies and emerging market leaders with the potential to generate significant future growth. The investment objective of the Fund is to generate capital appreciation in the long term by investing in a portfolio of stocks that offer opportunities in the mid-cap space.

### 4. Punjab & Sind Bank board approves capital raising of upto '250 crore

The public sector lender announced that its board approved proposal for raising capital upto Rs 250 crore by various modes, including equity and bonds issuance. The funds will be raised in one or more tranches within a period of 12 months from the date of approval by way of issuance of these instruments, said the PSU bank. GoI's ownership stood at 98.25% as on 30 Sept 2022. Punjab & Sind Bank is a relatively small PSB, founded in 1908 in New Delhi.

### 5. RBI survey for price movements, inflation assessment launched

The Reserve Bank of India has launched the Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH) which will provide useful inputs for monetary policy. In the January 2023 round, the survey will be conducted across 19 cities. It aims to capture subjective assessments of price movements and inflation, based on individual consumption baskets.

The RBI statement said the survey seeks qualitative responses from households on price changes (general prices as well as prices of specific product groups) in the three months ahead as well as in the one-year ahead period and quantitative responses on current, three months ahead and one year ahead inflation rates.

### 6. RBI lifts restrictions on Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted restrictions related to Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services on recovery operations via third party collection agents. The lifting of restrictions followed submissions made by M&M Finance and its pledge to strengthen recovery practices and outsourcing arrangements, while tightening the process of onboarding third-party agents.

### 7. RBI to audit 9,500 NBFCs to check on levels of compliance

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to engage the services of external auditors to audit majority of the 9,500-odd non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) to delve into their operations and check whether their registered office is at the place mentioned in their application for registration, among others.

The RBI cancelled the certificate of registration (CoR) of 3,110 NBFCs between FY15 and FY22, with the largest number of cancellations (1,851) being in FY19. As on October 1, 2022, the CoRs of 5,451 NBFCs were cancelled by the central bank.

The proposed audit exercise could lead to cancellation of CoRs of more NBFCs in FY24.

There are 9,500-odd NBFCs but the RBI's supervisory staff strength is only about 1,500.

The focus of the proposed audit could be on NBFCs in the Base Layer (under the scale based regulation) comprising non-deposit taking NBFCs below the asset size of '1,000 crore and NBFCs undertaking activities such as Peer-to-Peer Lending (Platform), Account Aggregator and Non-Operative Financial Holding Company.

The Reserve Bank has prescribed progressively stringent regulatory regimes for NBFCs in the Upper and Middle layers.

There are 11 types of NBFCs including Investment and Credit Company, Infrastructure Finance Company, Core Investment Company, Micro Finance Institution, Account Aggregator, Peer to Peer Lending Platform and Housing Finance Company.

### 8. Yes Bank partners with Microsoft to transform mobile banking experience

Yes Bank announced its partnership with Microsoft to bring forth a next generation mobile application with a view to provide customers with a personalised banking experience. Yes bank will leverage Microsoft's Azure platform to create the app which will offer customers a host of services such as online payments, shopping, rewards, offers, as well as customized dashboards.

#### **9. Sebi issues debt broker license to Zerodha-backed GoldenPi Technologies**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India has issued a debt broker license to Bengaluru-based fintech firm GoldenPi Technologies. With the development, GoldenPi became the first online bond platform provider to receive a debt brokerage license from Sebi. Incorporated in 2017, the Zerodha-backed company currently offers more than 100+ bonds and debentures for daily listing.

Last year, the regulator introduced regulations for online debt trading platforms which stated that no company or individual shall act as an online bond platform provider without the certificate of registration as a stock broker under the SEBI Regulations, 2021.

#### **10. NARCL highest NPV bidder with Rs 5,555-cr offer in Srei resolution**

National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL), or the government-backed bad bank to take over stressed assets of lenders, has emerged as the leading bidder in the auction for Srei Infrastructure Finance and Srei Equipment Finance. NARCL's bid was the highest with a net present value (NPV) of Rs 5,555 crore.

#### **11. IndusInd Bank partners Qatar and British Airways to launch co-branded credit card**

IndusInd Bank, British Airways Executive Club and Qatar Airways Privilege Club announced their partnership to introduce the unique multi-branded credit card, with two leading international airlines, powered by Visa. The multi-branded credit card is slated to be launched and made available to consumers in the first quarter of the financial year 2023 - 2024.

#### **12. ICICI Bank announces the launch of digital solutions for exporters, a comprehensive set of banking and value-added services**

The set of solutions offer industry-first facilities such as instant disbursement of Export Packing Credit (Insta EPC) and Trade APIs. Insta EPC provides export finance instantly, while Trade APIs enable the smooth handling of export transactions directly from exporters' ERP systems, thereby providing greater convenience.

#### **13. Axis Bank and fintech company, OPEN join hands to launch a digital current account for businesses**

Private lender, Axis Bank announced joining hands with the digital banking fintech company, OPEN launch a digital current account for its customers including SMEs, freelancers, homepreneurs, influencers and others. The current account holders will get access to Axis bank's over 250 banking services along with OPEN's financial automation tools for business management. Anish Achuthan, co-founder and chief executive officer, OPEN.

Founded in 2017, Open Financial Technologies operates SME neo-banking platform Open Money, embedded finance platform, Zwitch and enterprise digital banking platform for banks, BankingStack. Over 30 lakh businesses currently use its digital banking platform.

The 100th Unicorn from India, Open is backed by leading global investors like IIFL Finance, Temasek, Google, Visa, Tiger Global, amongst others.

#### **14. Bandhan Bank launched 'Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust' campaign**

Bandhan Bank has launched an integrated marketing campaign featuring the bank's brand ambassador, cricketer, Sourav Ganguly. The 'Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust' campaign, the company said, emphasises the 'trust' that the brand has been able to earn in a span of seven years as a bank and over the last two decades in the various avatars prior to the bank. Chandra Shekhar Ghosh-Founder, MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank.

Bandhan Bank was founded in 2001.

#### **15. HSBC Mutual Fund launches multi cap fund NFO**

HSBC Mutual Fund has launched HSBC Multi Cap Fund, an open-ended equity scheme investing across large cap, mid cap, and small cap stocks. The new fund offer (NFO) opens on January 10. This will be the first NFO post the acquisition of L&T AMC and schemes of L&T Mutual Fund by HSBC Asset Management.

As mandated by Sebi, the fund will have minimum weightage of 25% to large, mid and small caps and flexible allocation of balance up to 25% to equity or debt securities and money market instruments.

#### **16. Banks' gross bond issuances surged Rs. 90,000 cr in April-Dec 2022**

Gross bond issuances by banks surged to '90,000 crore in the April-December FY23 against '70,000 crore in FY22, surpassing the previous high of '80,000 crore in FY17, as they scrambled to bridge the gap between credit and deposit growth, according to ICRA. The credit rating agency expects overall gross bond issuances by banks to rise further to '1.3-1.4 lakh crore in FY23.

#### **17. NABARD raises close to Rs 5,000 crore through three-year bonds**

In the first issue of fund raising through bonds in 2023, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has raised close to Rs 5,000 crore via three-year bonds. The coupon for the three-year bond was 7.63 per cent. The yield on government bonds with similar maturity was above 7.16 per cent. Shaji K V-Chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Bank



NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC). It was dedicated to the service of the nation by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on 05 November 1982. Set up with an initial capital of Rs.100 crore, it's paid up capital stood at Rs.17,080 crore as on 31 March 2022.

#### **18. Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance and Punjab & Sind Bank enter strategic partnership**

Public sector lender Punjab & Sind Bank and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance on Wednesday entered into corporate agency partnership, under which bank customers can avail insurance products of the life insurer. Punjab & Sind Bank is the 25th scheduled commercial bank that is partnering with Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance for distributing its life goals-based product suite.

Punjab & Sind Bank MD & CEO Swarup Kumar Saha Bajaj Allianz Insurance MD & CEO Tarun Chugh

#### **19. RBI grants in-principle approval for payment aggregator licence to EnKash**

Fintech startup EnKash has got in-principle approval from RBI for payment aggregator's licence, the company. The licence will enable EnKash to broaden its product offerings to millions of businesses for digital transactions. Founded in 2018, EnKash claims to have assisted 1 lakh businesses to digitise and decentralise their corporate payments.

#### **20. PayRup, India's Fastest Payment app is launched**

PayRup India's fastest payment app was launched. PayRup is built by cutting-edge technology of web 3.0. It provides advanced digital payment experience with outstanding user experience. PayRup users can pay utility bills and landline bills, recharge their mobile, broadband, DTH, and purchase Gift Cards.

#### **21. SEBI allows futures contract on corporate bond index**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India has allowed exchanges to introduce future contracts on Corporate Bond Indices. SEBI had constituted a working group of representatives of NSE, BSE and MSEI to enhance liquidity in the bond market and also to provide opportunity to the investors to hedge their positions.

According to SEBI, the criteria included: Underlying the derivative contract should be composed of corporate debt securities; constituents should have adequate liquidity and diversification at issuer level, as decided by the stock exchanges; should be periodically reviewed (at least on half-yearly basis); single issuer should not have more than 15 per cent weight in the index and there should be at least 8 issuers in the index.

Besides, the index should not have more than 25 per cent weight in a particular group of issuers (excluding securities issued by PSUs, Public Financial Institutions (PFIs) and Public Sector Banks (PSBs)).

#### **22. Paytm bank gets RBI nod to operate as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit**

Paytm Payments Bank on Monday said it has received final approval from the Reserve Bank of India to operate as a Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit. Under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), a BBPOU is allowed to facilitate bill payment services of electricity, phone, DTH, water, gas insurance, loan repayments, FASTag recharge, education fees, credit card bill and taxes. BBPS is owned by the National Payments Corporation of India.

PPBL has got the final approval from RBI to operate as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU) under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. As an entity under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), PPBL has got the final authorization to conduct bill payment and aggregation business as a BBPOU.

#### **23. RBI prior approval now a must for picking up over 5% stake in banks**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday said any person looking to acquire more than 5 per cent stake in a bank will need prior approval from the regulator. The RBI has defined 'major shareholding' as 'aggregate holding' of 5 per cent or more of the paid-up share capital or voting rights in a banking company by a person.

Following the due diligence of the entity which plans to acquire a stake in banks, the decision of the regulator to permit or deny or to permit to acquire lower number of shares will be binding on the applicant and the bank, the RBI said.

After an acquisition, if the shareholding falls below 5 per cent, the person will be required to seek fresh approval from the RBI if the person intends to again raise the aggregate holding to 5 per cent or more. Any person from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) non-compliant jurisdiction will not be allowed to acquire a major shareholding in a bank.

#### **24. Fintech platform CredAble closes India's distinctively first trade receivable securitization under RBI's SSA Direction**

The Securitization is backed by approved trade receivable invoices with Multi Anchor 'Multi Vendor PERSEC RBI securitization structure. The same is said to be originated by Equentia Financial Service Pvt. Ltd. 'a wholly owned non deposit taking NBFC subsidiary of Equentia SCF Technologies Private Limited (CredAble).

Ram Kewalramani, Co-Founder & MD, CredAble.

Securitization is the financial practice of pooling multiple kinds of contractual debt, such as home mortgages, commercial mortgages, auto loans, MSME loans or credit card debt obligations and selling their affiliated cash flows as securities, which may be alluded to as bonds, pass-through securities, or collateralized debt obligations, to third party investors (CDOs).

#### **25. RBI releases Discussion Paper on Expected Loss (EL)-based Approach for loan loss provisioning by banks**

The proposed approach is to formulate principle-based guidelines supplemented by regulatory backstops wherever necessary. Further, regional rural banks and smaller cooperative banks (based on a threshold to be decided based on comments) are proposed to be kept out of the above framework. The key requirement under the proposed framework shall be for the banks to classify financial assets (primarily loans, including irrevocable loan commitments, and investments classified as held-to-maturity or available-for-sale) into one of the three categories - Stage 1, Stage 2, and Stage 3, depending upon the assessed credit losses on them, at the time of initial recognition as well as on each subsequent reporting date and make necessary provisions.

#### **26. Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited Awarded with the Best Bank Award**

Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB) has bagged 'Best Small Bank Award' in the 'Best Banks Survey for the year 2022' done by Business Today-KPMG (BT-KPMG Best banks survey). The bank has won this award under the category of banks with the book size of less than '1 lakh crore.

#### **27. SBI lends Rs 200 million to Red Fort Capital to boost 'Quick Business Loan' portfolio**

Red Fort Capital Finance, an Investment Grade Non-Bank Finance Company that specialises in providing Quick Business Loans to MSME's, announced that the State Bank of India has sanctioned it a Rs 20 crore term loan. The money will be used for onward lending to the country's SMEs, representing a Rs 40 trillion credit opportunity. Parry Singh, CEO of Red Fort Capital Finance.

#### **28. ESAF Bank bags Inclusive Finance India Award 2022**

ESAF Small Finance Bank has bagged the prestigious Inclusive Finance India Awards 2022 for its contributions in advancing the goal of financial inclusion and supporting inclusive growth.

K. Paul Thomas, MD and CEO, ESAF Bank, received the award from Anantha Nageshwaran, Chief Economic Advisor at the 19th Inclusive Finance India Summit held in New Delhi. ESAF: MD and CEO: K. Paul Thomas Headquarters: Thrissur.

#### **29. Govt switches bonds with RBI in a cash-neutral deal**

The Indian government bought back bonds maturing in 2024 from the Reserve Bank of India, while also issuing bonds maturing in 2032 worth a similar quantum. The government bought back 6.18% bonds maturing in 2024 worth 226.10 billion rupees (\$2.78 billion) at a price of 98.62 rupees while it issued 8.28% 2032 bonds worth 210.26 billion rupees to the RBI at 106.05 rupees.

The transaction involved buying back a security maturing in FY2024/25 from the Reserve Bank and issuing fresh security for equivalent market value, to make the transaction cash neutral

India is likely to undertake bond switch auctions with the RBI to meet its target for fiscal, traders had said on Tuesday.

Before this switch, New Delhi had switched bonds worth over 820 billion rupees this financial year, below its target of 1 trillion rupees. (\$1 = 81.2680 Indian rupees)

#### **30. Paytm, Citi end tie-up for co-branded credit card**

Citibank and payments platform, Paytm, have ended their partnership for a co-branded credit card Paytm CITI Card, ahead of the merger of Citibank's commercial banking business with Axis Bank. Both Citibank and Paytm have written to cardholders informing them that the co-branded credit card will be shut down, and offering them other cards they could opt for.

In March 2022, Axis Bank had announced acquiring Citigroup's retail banking business in India for '12,325 crore, subject to requisite approvals. This comprised Citibank's consumer business, including credit cards, retail banking, wealth management and consumer loans. Post acquiring around 30 lakh unique Citibank customers, Axis Bank will have about 2.85 crore savings accounts, over 2.3 lakh Burgundy customers and 1.06 crore cards. It will also increase Axis Bank's credit card customer base by 31 per cent with 25 lakh additional cards, making Axis Bank amongst the top three players in the Indian market.

#### **31. RBI asks SBM Bank (India) to stop transactions under LRS**

The Reserve Bank of India has asked SBM Bank (India), the Indian subsidiary of State Bank of Mauritius (SMB), to immediately stop transactions under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) until further notice. The banking regulator in a statement said the action was based on certain material supervisory concerns observed in the bank.

LRS pertains to external remittances by resident individuals for purposes like abroad studies, medical treatment, maintenance of close relatives, and investments and travel.

SBM commenced operations in India on December 1, 2018. It was the first universal bank in the country to receive a banking licence from the RBI through the wholly owned subsidiary (WOS) route. Globally, it is part of SBM Group.

'The Reserve Bank of India, in exercise of its powers under sections 35A and 36(1)(a) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, directed SBM Bank (India) Ltd to stop, with immediate effect, all transactions under Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) till further orders.

### **32. RBI extends deadline for renewal of agreements for existing safe deposit lockers in a phased manner by 31st December 2023**

The Reserve Bank of India has extended the deadline for renewal of agreements for the existing safe deposit lockers in a phased manner by the 31st of December 2023. The RBI said banks will have to complete the process of renewal of agreements in a phased manner and asked them to unfreeze lockers that may have been frozen due to non-renewal of agreement.

As per the revised RBI guidelines, the banks were required to renew their locker agreements with existing locker customers by January 1, 2023.

### **33. RBI imposes '26 lakh penalty on Nutan Nagarik Sahakari Bank**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of '26.00 lakh on Nutan Nagarik Sahakari Bank Ltd., Ahmedabad (the bank) for non-compliance with the directions issued by RBI on 'Co-operative Bank-Interest rate on deposits' and 'Guidelines for issue of ATM-cum-Debit cards by UCBs'.

This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI conferred under section 47A(1)(c) read with sections 46(4)(i) and 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

### **34. Bank Of Baroda Introduces Vikram Credit Card Dedicated To Soldiers**

Bank Of Baroda Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL), a fully-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, has introduced the Vikram Credit Card for members of the Indian military, paramilitary, and police forces. The Vikram Credit Card, according to BFSL, strengthens its commitment to meet the credit needs of the soldiers, who selflessly protect us and serve our country.

BFSL already has exclusive cobranded credit cards with the Indian Army (Yoddha), Indian Navy (Varunah), Indian Coast Guard (Rakshamah) and Assam Rifles (The Sentinel).

### **35. SEBI imposes Rs26 crore penalty on Coffee Day Enterprises**

Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd was penalized '26 crore by the Securities and Exchange Board of India for alleged fund diversion. CDEL is the parent company of Caf Coffee Day. Sebi in its investigation found out that funds amounting to '3,535 crore were diverted from 7 subsidiaries of CDEL to Mysore Amalgamated Coffee Estates Ltd, an entity related to promoters of CDEL.

### **36. EPFO launches massive outreach programme in all districts through revamped 'Nidhi AapkeNikat' programme**

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO, launched a massive outreach programme in all the districts through a revamped 'Nidhi AapkeNikat' programme for expanding its presence across the country.

The aim of this programme is to reach all the districts on 27th of every month and strengthen the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders. EPFO: CEO:NeelamShami Rao; HQ: New Delhi.

EPFO Headquarters: New Delhi;

TheCentralProvidentFundCommissioner (CPFC) is the Chief Executive Officer of EPFO and is the ex-officio Member Secretary of the Central Board, EPF. Ms. Neelam Shami Rao, took charge as CPFC on 07-12-2021.

### **37. SBM Bank (India) raises '99 crore from LIC via tier-II bonds**

SBM Bank (India) has raised Rs 99 crore through the issuance of the second tranche of Basel-III compliant tier II bonds on 24 January 2023. The bank has raised the entire corpus from the country's largest financial institution, the LIC of India. With this fresh round of capital raising from multiple investors, SBM Bank India now has raised a total of Rs 224 crore.

### **38. NSE remains largest global derivatives market for 4th straight year**

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has emerged as the world's largest derivatives exchange in 2022 by the number of contracts traded based on statistics maintained by the Futures Industry Association (FIA), a derivatives trade body. This is the fourth consecutive year when the exchange earned the top spot.

**National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** has emerged as the 3rd largest exchange in the world in the equity segment by the number of trades (electronic order book) in 2022, an advancement from the previous year when it ranked 4th as per statistics maintained by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE).



## Economy

### 1. India's eight core industries register 5.4% growth in Nov 2022

The growth rate in the production of eight core sectors jumped to 5.4 percent in November against 3.2 percent in the corresponding month last year. In October 2022, the core sectors' output growth of eight infrastructure sectors ' coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity had stood at 0.9 percent. It stood 8.0 percent during April-October this fiscal, compared to 13.9 percent year ago.

According to the statement from the ministry of commerce and industry, the eight core industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

### 2. Centre, states collect around '1.5 trillion in GST in December 2022

Central and state governments collected '1.5 trillion in goods and services tax (GST) in December, up 15% from a year earlier, on higher sales of automobiles and a pick-up in services activity.

GST collections have remained above the '1.4-trillion mark for the 10th straight month, indicating the buoyancy in indirect tax collections.

### 3. India's factory activity rises to 13-month high in December

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to 57.8 in December from 55.7 in November 2022, as business conditions improved in two years. The PMI average for the third quarter of the current fiscal year was the highest recorded in a year.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) rose to 57.8 in December from 55.7 in November 2022, as business conditions improved in two years. A reading above 50 shows expansion while a score below 50 indicates contraction. December was the 18th straight month of India's factory activity expansion.

### 4. Corporate Tax To GDP Ratio Exceeds 3% After Two Years In FY22

Corporate tax collections exceeded 3 per cent of the GDP after a gap of two years in 2021-22, reflecting overall improvement in profitability of India Inc propelled by increase in demand for goods and services. However, the corporate tax collection is yet to surpass its five-year high of 3.51 per cent of GDP recorded in 2018-19.

In actual terms, the net corporate tax collection in 2021-22 stood at Rs 7.12 lakh crore. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current market price was Rs 236.64 lakh crore. The percentage of net corporate tax to GDP worked out to be 3.01 per cent.

While reducing the tax rate in September 2019, the government had said that any new domestic company incorporated on or after October 1, 2019, making fresh investment in manufacturing, will have an option to pay income-tax at the rate of 15 per cent if they commenced production on or before March 31, 2023. The period was later extended by another year till March 2024.

Also, domestic companies were given an option to pay taxes at a lower 22 per cent rate if they gave up exemptions and incentives. Besides, the rate of Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) too had been reduced to 15 per cent from 18.5 per cent.

The tax cut reflected in the realisation of corporate taxes in 2019-20, when collections fell to over Rs 5.56 lakh crore (2.77 per cent of GDP).

Next year in 2020-21, the corporate tax to GDP ratio declined further to 2.31 per cent on account of the combined impact of Covid-19 and tax rate cuts of the previous year. The net corporate tax collection was over Rs 4.57 lakh crore.

In the current fiscal, the Budget has pegged gross corporate tax collection (before adjusting for refunds) at Rs 7.20 lakh crore.

In the April-mid December period of the current fiscal, net corporate tax collection stood at Rs 6.06 lakh crore.

### 5. India's GDP likely to grow 7% in FY23: NSOs first advance estimates

The Indian economy may grow at 7% in FY23, which is higher than projections made by the Reserve Bank of India and the World Bank, according to the latest estimates by the National Statistical Office, which implicitly assumes lower impact of intensifying global headwinds. The economy grew 9.7% in the first half (April-September) of FY23 according to the data released in Nov. The RBI and the World Bank have projected 6.8% and 6.9% GDP growth for FY23 respectively.

In FY23, agriculture is expected to remain the bright spot, growing at 3.5 per cent on the back of a good monsoon. While electricity (9 per cent) and construction (9.1 per cent) are likely to see robust growth, driven by post-pandemic recovery, manufacturing (1.6 per cent) is expected to remain the laggard, weighed down by high input cost.

The services sector, which comprises more than half the economy, is expected to grow at a robust 9.1 per cent, proving to be the key driver of economic recovery.

Private consumption is expected to grow at 7.7 per cent in FY23, boosted by increased spending on high-value items.



However, government spending, comprising expenditures by the Centre and the state governments, is expected to remain muted at 3.1 per cent.

The NSO estimate, however, factors in robust double-digit recovery in investment demand (11.5 per cent) in FY23, as represented by gross fixed capital formation, largely due to a sustained focus on capex by the Central government.

#### **6. Asian Paints to invest Rs 2,000 crore to set up water-based paint manufacturing facility**

Asian Paints, the country's largest paints manufacturer, will invest Rs 2,000 crore to set up a water-based paint manufacturing facility with a capacity of 4 lakh kilolitre per annum.

The company had also announced plans to also invest about Rs 2,650 crore for manufacturing key raw materials including Vinyl Acetate Ethylene Emulsion (VAE) and white cement. Amit Syngle: Managing Director & CEO of Asian Paints Ltd.

#### **7. Forex reserves at \$562.9 bn; fall by \$70 bn in 2022**

India's foreign exchange reserves fell by \$70.1 billion in 2022, data released by the Reserve Bank of India shows. The forex reserves stood at \$562.9 billion in the week ended December 30. The RBI net sold \$33.42 billion till September. Forex reserves had touched a high \$642.5 billion in September of 2021, falling to around \$631.5 billion towards the end of February 2022.

#### **8. CBIC notifies the Customs Valuation Rules 2023, effective from February 11**

The CBIC has notified the Customs (Assistance in Value Declaration of Identified Imported Goods) Rules, 2023, which will come into effect from February 11.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) will come out with a list of 'identified goods', which will be subject to stricter scrutiny for their true value. The chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), Vivek Johri.

#### **9. India-China trade deficit crosses over USD100 billion for the first time**

The trade between India and China touched record high of USD 135.98 billion in 2022.

The trade deficit for India stood at USD 101.02 billion.

Data showed that India's total exports to China in 2022 was USD 17.48 billion, a year-on-year decline of 37.9%.

Meanwhile, there has India's import from China in 2022 climbed to \$118.5 billion, a year-on-year increase of 21%.

#### **10. WPI inflation eases to 22-month low of 4.95 per cent in December 2022**

Wholesale Price-based Inflation (WPI) for December 2022 eased to 22-month low of 4.95 per cent.

According to the Commerce and Industry Ministry data released, WPI inflation eased mainly due to fall in prices of food articles, especially vegetables, and oilseeds. WPI inflation was 5.85 per cent in November 2022 and 14.27 per cent in December 2021.

WPI is in line with retail inflation data released last week which showed CPI inflation eased to 5.72 per cent in December. The consumer price index (CPI)-based inflation remained within the RBI's upper tolerance limit of six per cent for the second month in a row.

#### **11. Statutory auditors to submit annual transparency report, says NFRA**

The National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) has issued a draft format of the Annual Transparency Report (ATR) to be submitted by auditors and audit firms every financial year. The gradual implementation of this filing will start with the statutory auditors of the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalisation on March 31.

Audit firms will have to provide the details of their ownership and legal, governance and management structures.

The transparency reports will cover the details about the revenues of the statutory auditor and its network firm for the current and previous years.

This will include the statutory audit and a detailed break-up of the non-audit service fees, such as attestation, assurance, and taxation services.

The audit firm will have to submit details about the network it is part of, whether in India or overseas.

The details include its legal, operating structure; domicile; the nature of its activities; and services.

In November last year, the NFRA had issued audit inspection guidelines to identify areas and opportunities for improvement in the audit firm's system of quality control.

#### **12. Pakistan is South Asia's Weakest Economy, World Bank report**

Pakistan is South Asia's weakest economy, the World Bank said, adding that the country's economic growth will slow further to 2 per cent during the ongoing year. This will mark a drop of two percentage points from its June 2022 estimate.

This pace reflects still robust growth in **India, Maldives, and Nepal**, offsetting the effects of the **floods in Pakistan** and the economic and political crises in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. The deteriorating global environment, however, will weigh on investment in the region,' the report said pointing to a **'sharp, long-lasting slowdown'** with the global growth expected at 1.7 per cent this year.

### 13. India to be a US\$ 5.4 trillion economy by 2027, fourth largest by 2025, says RBI

A Reserve Bank of India (RBI) bulletin said that India will maintain its position as the fifth-largest economy in 2023. It further said that India will become a USD 3.7 trillion economy in 2023 and will continue to maintain its lead on the United Kingdom, stressing that the macroeconomic stability is getting entrenched.

As per the International Monetary Fund (IMF), India will move into fourth place in 2025 and into third place in 2027 as a USD 5.4 trillion economy. The baseline assessment was a slowdown due to the possibility of a recession affecting the global economy.

### 14. Moldova enters Indian apple market, exports first consignment

Apples from Moldova, an east European nation, will now be available in India taking on the likes from the US, New Zealand, Turkey, Iran, Chile, Italy and other such exporting nations.

Moldova, a part of the erstwhile Soviet Union, got permission to ship its apples to India in 2018 on a trial basis. It was given a five-year window to complete the trial shipments.

Moldova: Currency: Moldovan leu; Capital: Chisinau.

### 15. India cenbank to guide inflation towards 4% target by 2024 ' bulletin

The Reserve Bank of India's 2023 monetary policy objective is to hold inflation within the mandated tolerance band and guide it towards the medium-term target of 4% by 2024, it said in its monthly bulletin published recently.

The government has mandated the central bank to keep inflation at 4 per cent with a +/- 2 per cent band.

### 16. UN slashes India's economic growth forecast by 20 bps to 5.8% for 2023

The United Nations pared down India's growth forecast by 20 basis points to 5.8 per cent for 2023 calendar year, citing higher interest rates and risks of recession in the developed world weighing on investment and exports. The report has projected global trade to contract 0.4 per cent and the world economy to grow at 1.9 per cent in 2023. For fiscal year 2023-24, UN kept its growth forecast unchanged for India at 6%.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The report projected India's retail inflation to decelerate to 5.5 per cent in 2023 from 7.1 per cent in 2022 as global commodity prices moderate and slower currency depreciation eases imported inflation.

### 17. All government vehicles older than 15 years to be scrapped from April: Centre

From April, any vehicle which is 15 or more years old, owned by governments, in the centre or state, Union Territories, public sector undertakings, municipal bodies or any organisation owned or controlled by the government, will have to retire, the new rule states.

For commercial vehicles and private vehicles, the policy will be applicable from June 2024.

Special purpose vehicles owned by governments, like armoured and other specialised vehicles used for operational purposes for defence of the country and for the maintenance of law and order and internal security, have been kept out of the ambit of the new rules.

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## National

### 1. PM Modi virtually flags off Howrah-New Jalpaiguri Vande Bharat express

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually flagged off the Vande Bharat express connecting Howrah and New Jalpaiguri in the presence of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The Vande Bharat Express will connect Howrah and New Jalpaiguri, the gateway to the northeast. This is the seventh Vande Bharat express,

Governor of West Bengal - C V Ananda Bose

### 2. NRDC to undertake Technology Commercialization for benefit of Start-Ups from 1st Jan 2023

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said that National Research Development Corporation will undertake Technology Commercialization for benefit of Start-Ups from 1st January. NRDC assists the Inter-Ministerial Board of DPIIT in technically evaluating Startups for their recognition to avail benefits extended by the government and 7500 applications has been assessed.

NRDC has entered into an MoU with The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority for mentoring and monitoring export-oriented Agri-based Start-ups. NRDC is also associated with Indian Oil Corporation Limited for the implementation of their Start-up Scheme.

### 3. India surpasses notable landmark of 1.50 lakh Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres across country

The Government said that more than eight crore 50 lakh teleconsultations have been conducted at Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres till now through e-Sanjeevni. India has surpassed a notable landmark of 1.50 lakh Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres across the country. These centres provide comprehensive primary health care services free to all age groups.

### 4. Tata group remains the top business group; Adani shines the brightest

The Tata group remained India's top business group in terms of market capitalisation (m-cap) in 2022 but Adani group companies were among the biggest gainers on the bourses for the second consecutive year. Tata companies ended CY22 with a combined group m-cap of Rs 21.2 trillion, down 9.4 per cent year-on-year (YoY) from Rs 23.4 trillion at the end of December 2021.

### 5. Trai recommends 10-year renewal for multi-system operators' registrations

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India recommended the renewal of registration of multi-system operators, who are master cable operators, should be done for a 10-year period and the process fee kept at Rs 1 lakh. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had asked TRAI recommendations on the matter, since the Cable Television Networks Rule 1994 did not have the provisions

### 6. India's first underwater metro worth over Rs 8000 crores to be operational by 2023

In a first, Kolkata will soon have India's first underwater metro service. The Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC) said that the East-West Metro Corridor project is expected to be completed by December 2023. The underwater metro which will run through the Hoogly river will be connecting Howrah and Kolkata and reduce the travel time from 90 minutes to 40 minutes.

### 7. Ministry of Rural Development launches Prajwala Challenge inviting ideas, solutions and actions to transform rural economy

With an aim to invite ideas, solutions and actions that can transform rural economy, the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission has launched the Prajwala Challenge. It is one of the platforms where ideas are invited from individuals, Social Enterprises, Start up, Private Sector, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Academic Institutions etc.

DAY-NRLM is one of the flagship poverty alleviation programs of the Ministry of Rural Development, which aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihoods enhancements and improved access to financial services. The mission focuses for livelihood augmentation through:

The Mission so far has mobilised more than 87 Million women in to the Self Help Groups and their federations. While much headway has been made in mobilization of women and financial inclusion, deepening, enhancing and expanding Livelihoods intervention ensuring sustainable income is one of the focus of Mission. This requires creating facilitative ecosystem for multiple stakeholders like Government, Civil Society, Community Based Organisation, Industry, Academia, Private Sector, Start Ups etc to come together and work in collaboration with each other for transforming the rural economy and creating life advancement opportunities in Rural India for socio economic prosperity

### 8. Railways rolls out energy efficiency plan to meet 2030 net-zero target

The railways ministry has rolled out a five-pronged energy efficiency plan to become carbon-neutral by 2030. The ministry is looking to reduce overall energy use with efficient operations and increase renewable energy usage. India, in its commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, has set a target to become net zero by 2070. For the railways, the target year is 2030.



### **9. Prime Minister Virtually Inaugurates Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation in Kolkata**

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS) at Joka in Kolkata via video conferencing. SPM ' NIWAS has been set up at a cost of around Rs. 100 Crore, on 8.72 acres of land at Joka, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata, West Bengal.

The inauguration of SPM-NIWAS was followed by a day-long national conference on 'Drinking Water Quality' Issues & Challenges' organized by DDWS and supported by UNICEF, INREM Foundation, WaterAid.

### **10. Government Proposes Self Regulation, Due Diligence For Online Gaming Companies**

The Ministry of Electronics and IT has published draft rules for online gaming companies. It aims to safeguard users against potential harm of skill-based games. The government has proposed a self-regulatory mechanism, mandatory verification of players and physical Indian address for online gaming companies, according to the draft online gaming rules.

Online gaming companies will be covered under the new IT rules that were issued in 2021 for social media platforms.

Self-regulatory bodies will be registered with the ministry and may register online games of such online gaming intermediaries who are its members and which meet certain criteria.

### **11. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates National Genome Editing & Training Centre (NGETC) at Mohali, Punjab**

Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated "National Genome Editing & Training Centre" at National Agri-food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) Mohali, Punjab. NGETC is a one-roof state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a national platform to cater to the regional needs to adapt different genome editing methods, including CRISPR-Cas mediated genome modification.

### **12. Varanasi Cantonment Railway Station Wins 5-Star 'Eat Right Station' Award**

Varanasi Cantonment Railway Station has been awarded a 5-Star 'Eat Right Station' certification for providing high-quality, nutritious food to passengers.

The certification is granted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to railway stations adhering to standard food storage and hygiene practices.

'The certification is granted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to railway stations adhering to standard food storage and hygiene practices. The 5-Star rating indicates full compliance by the station to ensure safe and hygienic food is available to passengers.' FSSAI is a statutory body established under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India. 'The 'Eat Right Station' certification is awarded by FSSAI to railway stations that set benchmarks in providing safe and wholesome food to passengers. The station is awarded a certificate upon a conclusion of an FSSAI-empanelled third-party audit agency with ratings from 1 to 5. 'The certification is part of the 'Eat Right India' movement ' a large scale effort by FSSAI to transform the country's food system to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable food for all Indians. 'Eat Right India adopts a judicious mix of regulatory, capacity building, collaborative, and empowerment approaches to ensure that our food is suitable both for the people and the planet. 'The other railway stations with star certification include Anand Vihar Terminal Railway Station (Delhi); Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Mumbai); Mumbai Central Railway Station, (Mumbai); Vadodara Railway Station, Chandigarh Railway Station and Bhopal Railway Station.

### **13. BPCL launches low-smoke Superior Kerosene Oil for Indian Army**

Indian state refiner Bharat Petroleum Corp announced the launch of low-smoke superior kerosene oil (SKO) for the Indian Army in Jammu. BPCL has emerged as the first OMC to commence the supply of the new LSLA grade SKO supplies to the Army, which will go a long way in improving the serving environment and alleviate the issues related to smoke and smell in use of SKO.

Normal Kerosene emits substantial smoke, which poses health hazards to the Army personnel who use it at higher altitudes, where oxygen level is very low. Hence, the low smoke kerosene is a big step towards providing a cleaner fuel to our soldiers operating in very tough terrains.

### **14. State-run firms to remain exempt from public shareholding norms: Govt**

Indian state-run companies will continue to be exempt from the minimum public shareholding (MPS) norm that requires listed companies to maintain a 25% public shareholding, a government notification said. The exemptions from the MPS norm will be valid for a "specified period" even if there is a change in ownership or control after the exemption is granted.

### **15. BIS launches portal for mapping of industrial units and laboratories**

The BIS Portal for mapping of Industrial Units and Laboratories was launched by Union Minister Piyush Goyal. It is a centralized platform for information on industrial units and laboratories across the country.

This will enable analysis of test facilities in the country and help entrepreneurs in accessing information about testing facilities.

**Launch of Standards National Action Plan (SNAP) 2022- 27:** Standards National Action Plan (SNAP) 2022 - 27, the document to serve as strong foundation for standardization to meet the emerging technologies and concerns of sustainability and climate change. SNAP 2022 - 27 will play an important role in steering the national standardization efforts which would lead to standards becoming a key enabler of India's economic aspirations. The implementation of key recommendations and strategies of the document will be pivotal in enriching and strengthening Quality Culture in the Nation.

**Launch of Revision Exercise of National Building Code of India (NBC 2016):** BIS, through its concerned technical committee, namely, National Building Code Sectional Committee, CED 46 is initiating the Exercise of Revision National Building Code of India to include sustainable city planning norms; new and sustainable building materials, design concepts, construction technologies and building and plumbing services and to deal with the various challenges being posed in the current scenario, without compromising on the safety of the occupants and assets in buildings and built environment.

**Launch of Revised National Electrical Code of India 2023**

The National Electrical Code of India 2023 (NEC 2023), a comprehensive electrical installations Code prepared by BIS, is a national instrument providing guidelines for regulating the Electrical Installations practices across the country. India's first National Electrical Code was formulated in the year 1985, which was subsequently revised in the year 2011. The current revision includes the requirements of electrical installation as per the latest International best practices. Some of the important new Chapters added in the revised NEC are requirements related to Electrical installations at special locations like Hospitals, Community facilities, Hotels, Swimming Pools, Amusement Parks, Supplies for Electric vehicles, multi-storied buildings etc.

The Indian Standards Institution (ISI) came into being on the 06 January 1947 and in June 1947 Dr. Lal C. Verman took over as its first Director.

Indian Standards Institution started operating the Certification Marks Scheme under the Indian Standards Institution (Certification Marks) Act, 1952.

Bureau of Indian standards (BIS) came into existence, through an act of parliament dated 26 November 1986, on 1 April 1987,

**16. Union Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates School of Logistics, Waterways and Communication in Agartala**

The Centre for Logistic, Communication and Waterways would facilitate in conducting studies/research, training, workshops/seminars for stakeholders like businesses, exporters/importers, Chambers of Commerce and Industries, local entrepreneurs, tourist operators etc. It has been set up under State Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (SIPARD).

SIPARD is an autonomous body funded by the Government of Tripura and partially by the Ministry of Rural Development.

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) came into existence on 27th October 1986 for development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation.

**17. Petrol blended with 20% ethanol from April 1, says Hardeep Singh Puri**

The phased roll-out of E20 (20 per cent ethanol blending in gasoline) will begin on April 1. The fuel will be available at select outlets and will not require changes to car engines. The roll-out will give further impetus to the government plans of achieving the level of 20 per cent ethanol blending in the overall petrol supply in the country by ethanol supply year 2025-26.

It added the Centre has increased the rate for CBG plants under the SATAT scheme from Rs 46 per kg to Rs 54 per kg.

The government is also investing Rs 19,744 crore into the National Green Hydrogen Mission for developing green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (million metric tonnes) per annum. Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) is aimed at reducing the country's dependence on crude oil imports, cutting carbon emissions and boosting farmers' incomes. Ethanol blending in petrol in India has risen successively from 1.53% in 2013-14 to 5% in 2019-20 to 8.10% in 2020-21 and now to as much as 10.17 %.

**18. ReNew Power installs India's first 3x platform wind turbine generators in Karnataka**

ReNew Power said it has installed India's first 3x platform wind turbine generators (WTGs) in Gadag, Karnataka. The WTGs have a nameplate capacity of 3.3-3.465 MW and are 128-140m in height. They offer significantly improved capacity over models installed in India to date, which typically have a nameplate capacity of 2-3 MW.

The new WTGs will be a part of the country's first Round The Clock; renewable energy project, combining wind, solar and a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

### **19. FSSAI Notifies Comprehensive Regulatory Standards For Basmati Rice**

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has specified the identity standards for Basmati Rice (including Brown Basmati Rice, Milled Basmati Rice, Parboiled Brown Basmati Rice and Milled Parboiled Basmati Rice) for the first time in the country.

These standards will come into force from August 1, 2023.

As per the standards, Basmati rice shall possess natural fragrance characteristic of basmati rice and be free from artificial colouring, polishing agents and artificial fragrances.

These standards also specify various identity and quality parameters for basmati rice such as average size of grains and their elongation ratio after cooking; maximum limits of moisture, amylase content, uric acid, defective/damaged grains and incidental presence of other non-basmati rice etc.

The standards are aimed at establishing fair practices in the trade of Basmati rice and protect consumer interest, both domestically and globally.

### **20. PM Modi to flag off World's Longest River Cruise-MV Ganga Vilas at Varanasi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the MV Ganga Vilas luxury cruise on the world's longest river voyage from Varanasi to Dibrugarh. He will also lay the foundation & inaugurate several projects of inland waterways in Bihar, West Bengal and Assam on this occasion. Setting sail from Varanasi, it will cover 3,200 km in 51 days to reach Dibrugarh in Assam via Bangladesh.

### **21. Railways to run its tourist train between Ayodhya and Janakpur in Nepal**

The railways will run its Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train on a route connecting pilgrimage sites of Ayodhya in India and Janakpur in Nepal from February 2023. The 'Shri Ram-Janaki Yatra: Ayodhya to Janakpur' will start from Delhi on February 17.

The tourist train will also cover Nandigram, Sitamarhi, Kashi and Prayagraj. There will be two nights stay in hotel in Janakpur and Varanasi. The visit to Ayodhya, Sitamarhi and [Prayagraj](#) will be covered in the day's halt at the destination.

### **22. Over 13 lakh people to do yoga in Karnataka to create new Guinness Book of World Records**

During the ongoing National Youth Festival in Hubballi-Dharwad in Karnataka, an attempt will be made to organise a statewide mega Yogathon, to set a new Guinness Book of World Records. So far 13 lakh students, 12000 teachers and over 8000 educational institutions have registered.

### **23. ReNew setting up solar cell units at Rs 2,000 cr investment in Rajasthan, Gujarat**

ReNew Power is investing Rs 2,000 crore to set up solar cell and module manufacturing units in Gujarat and Rajasthan. A solar cell and module manufacturing unit with an annual capacity of 2 gigawatt (GW) is being set up in Gujarat. Another unit for manufacturing of only solar modules is being set up in Rajasthan with a 4 GW annual capacity.

### **24. Cabinet approves setting up of national level Multi-state cooperative export society under Multi State Cooperative Societies Act**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved setting up and promoting a National Level multistate cooperative export society under the Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002 with support from relevant Ministries especially Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The ministriesthrough their export related policies, schemes agencies by following theWhole of Government Approach for undertaking exports of all goods and services produced by cooperatives and related entities.

The proposed society will provide thrust to exports from cooperative sector by acting as an umbrella organisation for carrying out and promoting exports.

### **25. Adani Enterprises to deploy hydrogen-powered trucks for mining**

Adani Enterprises (AEL), part of the diversified Adani portfolio of companies, on Tuesday signed an agreement to launch a pilot project to develop a hydrogen fuel cell electric truck (FCET) for mining logistics and transportation with homegrown Ashok Leyland and Ballard Power of Canada. The FCET is scheduled to be launched in India in 2023.

Adani Enterprises is the first in Asia and among the first in the world to adopt hydrogen fuel cell-operated trucks for mining.

### **26. Assam's CharaideoMaidam nominated for UNESCO world heritage tag**

Maidams, the resting place of royal families of the Ahom era in Assam's Charaideo district, will be India's sole nomination for recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for 2023-24, Chief Minister HimantaBiswaSarma said.

The 'Maidams' was first listed in the tentative list of UNESCO's World Heritage site in April 2014.

### **27. Patanjali awarded Rs 4 cr project for scientific exploration of floral diversity near Ganga banks**

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), which comes under the Ministry of Jal Shakti and implements the government's NamamiGange programme, has awarded a project worth Rs 4.32 crore to



Haridwar-based Patanjali Research Institute and Patanjali Organic Research Institute. The project is aimed at 'scientific exploration' of floral diversity near the Ganga river banks. Acharya Balkrishna, chairman of PoRI

### **28. Sh. Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurates North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh**

Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurated North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh. He also inaugurated a 500kWp floating Solar Project with Fountains at Dhanas Lake in Chandigarh.

Both projects have been designed and executed by CREST (Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science and Technology Promotion Society). Banwari Lal Purohit, The Governor of Punjab and Administrator Chandigarh.

The 2000kWp Floating Solar Power Plant at Water Works has been installed at a total cost of 11 crores 70 lakhs and the 500kWp Floating Solar Power Plant with fountains have been installed at Dhanas Lake at a total cost of three crore 34 lakh rupees.

These Projects have been designed and executed by CREST (Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science Technology Promotion Society), UT Chandigarh and will generate a minimum of 35 Lac Units(kWh) of Solar Energy per year with 20 percent module efficiency.

### **29. OPPO India, MeitY's CSC Academy to train 10,000 women in cyber security**

OPPO India and government's Common service Centre Academy have announced they will train 10,000 women in cybersecurity and cyber wellness in the country. The initiative to empower rural and semi-urban women through the 'Cyber Sangini' programme, supported by the MeitY, aims to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to become certified 'Cyber Sangini's'

The Cyber Sanginis will be trained about the existing laws and frameworks available to every citizen to protect them from such cyber incidents.

### **30. Indian Railways introduces 'Ideal Train Profile' to maximise the capacity utilisation**

The Indian Railways has introduced 'Ideal Train Profile' to maximise the capacity utilisation & revenue generation in reserved mail express trains by regularly analysing the demand pattern of every single train. It is a seat capacity optimisation decision support done due to the fact that the number of ticket-class combinations on a single train journey date can exceed 5000 At present there are 19 Railway Zones and 70 Divisions in the country.

According to a ministry of railways official, the pattern of demand for accommodation is not always on an end-to-end basis, but rather varies in all trains depending on various factors such as its origin-destination pairs, timings, class of accommodation, availability of alternate trains or means of transportation.

This paradox is best resolved by allocating accommodation quotas based on the business need of serving the demands for different origin-destination pairs. Traditionally, this is done on Indian railways by analysing the historic data of a particular train or similar trains operating on a given route.

The pilot project was started on seven zonal railways, Eastern, Central, Northern, Southern, South Central, Western, and West Central Railway. The pilot project has so far been rolled out in over 200 trains in Indian Railways. It is expected that the utility will also help to enhance confirmed seat availability and increase the occupancy of a train by up to 5 per cent.

The modules have been developed by an in-house team, led by R Gopalakrishnan of the Centre of Railway Information Systems, after an extensive effort spanning over two years.

### **31. Govt approves proposal for sale of 30 Lakh MTs of wheat under Open Market Sale Scheme**

The Government has approved a proposal for the sale of 30 Lakh Metric Tonnes of wheat under the Open Market Sale Scheme. Wheat will be offered to the flour millers, and bulk buyers through e-auction for a maximum quantity of three thousand Metric Tonnes per buyer, per auction, from an FCI Region under e-auction. Wheat will be offered to State governments and UTs for their schemes without e-auction.

It is decided that FCI will offload wheat within the next two months to the market for immediate impact on the rising wheat and Atta prices. FCI will start the process of E-auction of stocks immediately, throughout the country from January to March 2023.

### **32. Rashtrapati Bhavan's Mughal Gardens renamed Amrit Udyan**

The Rashtrapati Bhavan gardens was renamed Amrit Udyan.

'Amrit Udyan', earlier known as Mughal Gardens, will open for the public from January 31, 2023.

Sir Edwin Lutyens had finalized the designs of the Amrit Udyan as early as 1917, however, it was only during the year 1928-1929 that plantings were done. The Amrit Udyan is spread over a vast expanse of 15 acres.

### **33. Khadi Fest-23 inaugurated in Mumbai**

The month-long Khadi Fest- 23 was inaugurated by the Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission in Mumbai. The Khadi Fest provides a platform to the Khadi Institutions, Prime Minister's

Employment Generation Programme and Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries units to market the products of thousands of artisans directly to customers Mr. Manoj Kumar is the Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

#### **34. STARTUP20 INCEPTION MEET ' NIIO SHOWCASE**

The Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation(NIIO) showcased medical innovations undertaken by Indian Naval officers during the inception meeting of the Startup20 Engagement Group under India's G20 presidency.

Various medical innovations includes ' Aadyant' Oxygen Recycling System (ORS) ,Nebiro' smart portable nebuliser etc were displayed.

#### **35. Godrej Agrovet launches Samadhan for farmers, becomes first Indian company to win IPOS certification**

Godrej Agrovet Ltd. has introduced Samadhan, a one stop solution centre for oil palm farmers, under its Oil Palm business. Providing a comprehensive package of knowledge, tools, services and solutions to farmers, 'Samadhan' aims to be a critical enabler in Palm Oil industry and assist oil palm farmers in optimising their yields by adopting latest agricultural techniques.

Also, the company has become the first in the country to be awarded a verification Certification under the Indian Palm Oil Sustainability (IPOS) Framework. The IPOS Framework, established by the Solvent Extractors Association of India with assistance from Solidaridad, the Indian Institute of Oil Palm Research, and SOPOPRAD, has been created for the Indian industry and lays down a set of environment friendly, economically viable and socially beneficial practices and guidelines. Aimed at facilitating the well-being of farmers while ensuring that the growth is sustainable from environmental and social perspectives, the certification further reinstates the sustainable practices adopted by company's oil palm business. The National Mission on Edible Oil - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) has generated a new sense of excitement and momentum in the oil palm industry since its launch in August 2021. The program is a landmark initiative from the Indian government that aims to promote the long-term sustainable development of oil palm and provide additional support to new farmers, particularly in the Northeast region, to help them overcome the challenges of starting a new farm. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare has set a goal to cultivate 1,000,000 hectares of oil palm by 2027 under the NMEO-OP scheme. The program's introduction of the Viability Gap Payment (VGP) for long term sustainable development and increased incentives for new farmers are two key features that make it unique and supportive of the industry.

#### **36. Govt calls for EOIs for Rs 410 bn port project in Great Nicobar**

Expressions of interest (EOI) from interested parties are being sought by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways for Rs 410 billion international transshipment port project at Great Nicobar Island in the Bay of Bengal. The project is anticipated to include funding from the government and PPP concessionaire, according to an announcement from the ministry.

The airport, township, and power plant are among the additional projects planned near the transshipment port, the release stated. The project is close to transshipment destinations including Singapore, Klang, and Colombo and is situated along a major international commerce route.

The project, according to the statement, focuses on three main factors that can make it a leading container transshipment port: its strategic location in relation to proximity to the international shipping trade route (40 nautical miles), the availability of natural water depth of over 20 metres and the carrying capacity of transshipment cargo from all the nearby ports, including Indian ports.

#### **37. Luminous to Build India's First Green Solar Panel Factory in Uttarakhand**

Luminous Power Technologies said that it will build India's first green-energy-based solar panel manufacturing plant in Uttarakhand. According to a company statement, the new Rudrapur manufacturing plant is expected to be fully functional by the end this year. It will allow for a solar production capacity up to 500 MW per year, expandable to 1 GW.

#### **38. India can achieve target of Leprosy Mukt Bharat by 2027, says Union Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya**

During the event, Dr Bharati also launched National Strategic Plan and Roadmap for Leprosy 2023-2027. The aim of the Plan is to eradicate Leprosy in the country by 2027. The Minister also launched the National Guidelines for Surveillance for Antimicrobial Resistance in Leprosy. India can achieve the target of Leprosy Mukt Bharat by 2027 with the support of society.

Reiterating Mahatma Gandhi enduring concern for people affected with leprosy, India's efforts to eliminate leprosy from this country under National Leprosy Eradication Programme is a great tribute to his vision. He added that the government is successful in achieving prevalence rate 1 case per 10,000 population at national level in 2005.

## International

### 1. Lula da Silva takes office for a third term as Brazil's President

Luiz Incio Lula da Silva took office on January 1 for a third term as Brazil's President. The 77-year-old ex-metalworker, who previously led Brazil from 2003 to 2010, took the oath of office before Congress, vowing to 'maintain, defend and obey the constitution' as he returns to lead Latin America's biggest economy after a divisive election in October.

### 2. China launches Asia's first semi-high-speed hydrogen train with a range of 600 km

CRRC Corporation Limited recently unveiled its first hydrogen urban train, which is Asia's first hydrogen train. The hydrogen train has a maximum speed of 160 km/h, and an operational range of 600 km without refueling. India is likely to get its first hydrogen train by 2023. Germany became the first country to operate the world's first hydrogen-powered passenger train fleet.

### 3. Kilauea Volcano In Hawaii Erupts Again After A Brief Pause

The Kilauea volcano in Hawaii has started erupting after a brief pause, less than a month after its neighbour Mauna Loa stopped spilling lava from an earlier eruption, according to the officials at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. The summit of Kilauea is located far from populated areas, inside Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Hawaii's Kilauea volcano also erupted in April 2021.

When Mauna Loa, the largest volcano in the world, erupted for the first time in 38 years on November 27, Hawaii had two volcanoes spilling lava side by side for nearly two weeks starting that day.

### 4. UAE names state oil giant ADNOC chief Sultan Jaber as President of COP28 climate conference

Sultan al-Jaber, the head of state oil giant ADNOC, would act as president of the COP28 climate conference it is hosting this year.

The UAE, a major OPEC oil exporter, will be the second Arab state to host the climate conference after Egypt hosted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) 27th Conference of the Parties (COP 27) in 2022.

The UAE, the first country in the region to ratify the Paris Agreement, has committed to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

The COP28 conference will be the first global stocktake since the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015.

### 5. Huge rare earth metals discovery in Arctic Sweden

Europe's largest deposit of rare earths - which are used from mobile phones to missiles - has been found in Sweden.

No rare earths are mined in Europe at the moment and a Swedish minister hailed the find as a way of reducing the EU's dependence on China.

### 6. Dhaka International Film Festival begins

The 21st Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) kicked off on Jan 14 in the Bangladesh's capital Dhaka. The festival was inaugurated at the National Museum auditorium by Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen. The biggest film festival of Bangladesh will show 252 films from 71 countries during the festival between 14-22 January at multiple venues in Dhaka.

### 7. India produces record over 5,000 lakh metric tons of sugarcane in sugar season 2021-22

India has produced a record over 5,000 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) of sugarcane in the sugar season 2021-22. About 3,574 LMT of sugarcane was crushed to around 394 LMT of sugar. 36 LMT of sugar out of this was diverted to ethanol production and 359 LMT of sugar was produced by sugar mills.

During the sugar season between October and September 2021-22, India has emerged as the world's largest producer and consumer of sugar. It has also become the world's second-largest exporter of sugar after Brazil.

### 8. Brazil declares medical emergency in Yanomami territory following reports of children deaths from malnutrition

In Brazil, the government has declared a medical emergency in the Yanomami territory following reports of children dying of malnutrition and other diseases caused by illegal gold mining. A decree published by the government said, the aim of the declaration was to restore health services to the Yanomami people that had been dismantled by the previous government.

Yanomami territory is the country's largest indigenous reservation bordering Venezuela. The government announced food packages that will be flown to the territory where some 26,000 Yanomamis live in a region of rainforest and tropical savanna the size of Portugal. Yanomami has been invaded by illegal gold miners for decades.

### 9. Microsoft Invests \$10 Billion in ChatGPT Maker OpenAI

Microsoft Corp. is investing \$10 billion in OpenAI, whose artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT.

The deal will give a boost to Microsoft's Azure cloud, while providing OpenAI with additional specially designed supercomputers to run its complex AI models and fuel its research.

Azure will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI, the company said.



The service gives Microsoft's cloud customers access to various OpenAI tools like the GPT-3.5 language system that ChatGPT is based on, as well as the DALL-E model for generating images from text prompts.

#### **10. UNGA adopts resolution on 'Education for Democracy' co-sponsored by India**

In a bid to provide education to all, a resolution titled "Education for Democracy" has been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The resolution that was co-sponsored by India reaffirms the right of everyone to education for the strengthening of democracy. UNGA Headquarters: New York. UNGA Founded: 1945, New York.

#### **11. Canada to commercialize world's first photonic-based quantum computer**

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a new federal investment to build and commercialize the world's first photonic-based, fault-tolerant quantum computer.

Quantum computer will have the potential to provide world leading capabilities to help solve complex data problems and could be used in a variety of sectors such as finance, transportation, Health etc.

Quantum computing relies on vastly enhanced computing capacity to quickly crack problems that would take conventional computers years to solve

#### **12. UNESCO Adds Odesa to List of World Heritage in Danger**

The United Nations' cultural agency, UNESCO, had designated the historic centre of Odesa, a strategic port city on Ukraine's Black Sea coast, a World Heritage in Danger site. Odesa has been bombed several times by Russia since its invasion of Ukraine. In July 2022, part of the large glass roof and windows of Odesa's Museum of Fine Arts, inaugurated in 1899 was destroyed.



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## Sports

### 1. BCCI recommends Yo-Yo Test, DEXA as part of India selection criteria

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) put forth a number of recommendations in the review meeting on January 1 in Mumbai.

One of the recommendations were the introduction of the Yo-Yo Test and DEXA as selection criteria. DEXA is a type of bone density scan. A type of X-ray called dual energy X-ray absorptiometry is passed through the body during the scan.

### 2. Patnaik inaugurates Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium ahead of World Cup

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated one of the largest hockey stadiums in India in Rourkela ahead of the Men's Hockey World Cup 2023. Built at an estimated cost of '261 crore, the stadium, located in Sundargarh district, has been christened as Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium Complex. The Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium has **seating capacity of over 20,000 spectators** and is one of the **largest hockey stadiums in India**.

The Birsa Munda Stadium will host India's first match of the World Cup 2023 against Spain on January 13.

In all, this is the fourth time India will be hosting the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup. The 1982 edition was held in Mumbai while the national capital New Delhi hosted it in 2010, and the 2018 edition was also held in Odisha.

### 3. Anahat Singh clinches Girls U-15 squash title at British Junior Open tournament in Birmingham

Indian squash prodigy Anahat Singh clinched the girls Under-15 squash title at the most prestigious British Junior Open tournament in Birmingham. The British Junior Open is held in January every year in the UK where all the best players from all over the world compete to win the coveted title. The 14-year-old defeated Sohaila Hazem of Egypt, 3-1 in the final.

### 4. Novak Djokovic saves championship point to beat Korda to Adelaide title

Novak Djokovic defeated America's Sebastian Korda in a nerve-wracking final to win the Adelaide International men's singles title. The 21-time Grand Slam winner won the match 6-7 (8-10), 7-6 (7-3), 6-4 in three hours and nine minutes. Djokovic also equalled Rafael Nadal's tally of 92 ATP singles titles in the Open Era.

### 5. South Africa All-Rounder Dwaine Pretorius Announces International Retirement

Cricket South Africa (CSA) confirmed that Proteas all-rounder Dwaine Pretorius has retired from international cricket with immediate effect. Since making his international debut in 2016, the 33-year-old has represented South Africa across all three formats in 30 T20 Internationals (T20I), 27 One-Day Internationals (ODI) and three Tests.

### 6. Sania Mirza announces her retirement from professional Tennis

Sania Mirza has confirmed her retirement from professional Tennis. The former doubles World No. 1 champion has announced that she will retire at the WTA 1000 event in Dubai in February. Sania Mirza made her senior debut in 2001. She has won six Grand Slam titles in her career - three in women's doubles and three in mixed doubles.

Sania Mirza was the world No. 1 doubles player in the WTA Rankings from April 2015 until January 2017. The period saw her win three Grand Slam titles in a row.

Sania Mirza also holds the distinction of competing at four different Olympic Games. At the Asian Games, the Indian tennis player has won eight medals (two gold, three silver, and three bronze). Sania Mirza competed at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi and won a silver in singles and a bronze in women's doubles.

### 7. Mascot, torch and anthem of Khelo India Youth Games to be unveiled in Bhopal

The mascots of Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG)-2022, Asha and Mowgli, and its smart torch 'Amarkantak' were released along with the theme song by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Torch Amarkantak, named after the place where the Narmada River.

The fifth edition of KIYG, which will take place from January 30 to February 11, is being held in Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Mandla, Balaghat and Khargone (Maheshwar).

For the first time water sports namely kayaking and canoeing, canoe slalom and rowing, as well as fencing will be part of these games. A total of 27 games will be played across 23 game venues.

### 8. FIH Men's Hockey World Cup commences in Cuttack; First match to be played on 13th January

FIH Men's Hockey World Cup got off to a colourful start in the historic Barabati stadium in the millennium city of Cuttack in Odisha. The magnificent opening ceremony of the tournament was graced by Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik. The state government has built a new hockey stadium in Rourkela ahead of the event. Odisha is hosting the international event after 2018.

### 9. PM Modi inaugurates 26th National Youth Festival in Karnataka

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Youth Festival on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, which is being held in the poll-bound state of Karnataka. The theme for this year is 'ViksitYuvaViksit Bharat'

The 26th edition of the National Youth Festival, from January 13 to 16 at Hubballi-Dharwad. The theme for this year is ViksitYuvaViksit Bharat. The festival is being organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Government of Karnataka.

### 10. Virat Kohli becomes fifth highest run scorer in ODI cricket

Star Indian batter Virat Kohli became the fifth-highest run-scorer in history of ODI cricket, overtaking Sri Lankan legend Mahela Jayawardene to enter into top-five. Virat added another record to his pile of accomplishments during India's third and final ODI of the series against Sri Lanka in Kerala.

Virat is currently racing towards his 46th ODI and 74th international cricket century. He has hit his 65th ODI fifty. At the time of becoming the fifth-highest run-scorer, Virat had 12,652 runs in 268 ODIs at an average of 57.78, with 45 tons and 65 half-century. His best score in the format is 183. The highest run-scorer in ODI history is Indian legend Sachin Tendulkar. He has scored 18,426 runs at an average of 44.83. He has 49 centuries and 96 fifties in this format, with the best of 200\*.

Following Tendulkar are, Sri Lankan great Kumar Sangakkara (14,234 runs in 404 matches), Australian great Ricky Ponting (13,704), Sri Lankan all-rounder Sanath Jayasuriya (13,430 in 445 matches) and Virat.

### 11. Indian pair of Yuki Bhambri-Saketh Myneni wins Bangkok Open Challenger title

In Tennis, the top-seeded Indian team of Yuki Bhambri and Saketh Myneni came from behind to win the Bangkok Open title, as they beat Christopher Rungkat and Akira Santillan at Nonthaburi, Thailand. This win is likely to give the 28-year-old Yuki his career-high doubles rank of 90 while the big-serving Myneni, 35, should also touch a career-best 74 in the ATP doubles.

### 12. Cricketer Smriti Mandhana signed by Herbalife Nutrition India as sponsored sports athlete

Nutrition company Herbalife Nutrition India Private Limited is partnering with international women's cricketer, Smriti Mandhana as a 'nutrition sponsor'. The company said it has about 150 sponsored teams and athletes around the world.

She is the fifth Indian athlete and the second cricketer to join the company including Virat Kohli, Mary Kom, Lakshya Sen, and Manika Batra.

### 13. India sets ODI world record with 317-run win over Sri Lanka

India set a world record by defeating Sri Lanka by a mammoth 317 runs in the third and final ODI of the series in Thiruvananthapuram. After posting 390/5 in 50 overs at the Greenfield International Stadium, India bowled out the opposition for a paltry 73 in 22 overs to seal the three-match series 3-0. Mohammed Siraj was the pick of the bowlers with four wickets. India's victory margin of 317 runs is the largest in ODI history in terms of runs.

The previous best was 290 by New Zealand against Ireland in 2008.

### 14. Viacom 18 Bags Women's IPL Media Rights At Rs 951 Crore

Viacom18, won the media rights of the upcoming Women's Indian Premier League (WIPL) for a five-year period between 2023-2027, at an auction.

It made a bid of Rs 951 crore for 34 matches, translating to a bid of Rs 7.09 crore per match, thus making it the second-biggest cricket league in the world.

Established IPL franchises such as Mumbai, Chennai, and the reigning champions Gujarat Titans, totalling 8 current IPL teams, have expressed interest in buying teams in WIPL. The franchises are to be revealed on 25 January.

The league will follow an IPL-like auction, with capped players having the option of placing themselves in either '30 lakh, '40 lakh, or '50 lakh categories, as their base price.

The digital rights for the league will be with JioCinema. The 22-match league is expected to kick off in the first week of March.

### 15. Prime Minister Modi to inaugurate second phase of Saansad Khel Mahakumbh in UP's Basti

PM inaugurated the second phase of Saansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23 in Basti, Uttar Pradesh. The Khel Mahakumbh organises diverse competitions in both indoor and outdoor sports like wrestling, Kabaddi, Kho Kho, Basketball, Football, Hockey, Chess, Badminton and Table Tennis. Apart from these, competitions in essay writing, painting, rangoli making are also organised.

The Khel Mahakumbh is a novel initiative that will provide opportunity and platform to the youth of Basti District and neighbouring areas to showcase their sporting talent. It will motivate them to take sport as a career option. It also endeavours to inculcate the spirit of discipline, team work, healthy competition, self-confidence and nationalism among the youth of the region.



#### **16. Shooting World Cup 2023: Ex-SC judge AK Sikri appointed Administrator**

The Delhi High Court has appointed retired Supreme Court judge Arjan Kumar Sikri as administrator to oversee the utilisation of funds for the ISSF World Cup to be held in India in March while allowing release of money by the Centre to the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to be used for the event.

#### **17. All India Snooker Open: Laxman Rawat edges past Aditya Mehta to win title**

Laxman Rawat of Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) beat teammate Aditya Mehta 9-6 in an entertaining best-of-17-frame final of the National Sports Club of India (NSCI) All India Snooker Open 2023 in Mumbai.

Rawat had finished runner-up losing to Sourav Kothari (PSPB) in the final of the last edition.

#### **18. Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn wins India Open Badminton title**

Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the India Open title. He defeated World No.1 Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the men's singles final of the India Open Badminton Championship 22-20, 10-21 and 21-12 today at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. Korean sensation An Seyoung won the Women's singles final. She beat World No.1 Japanese Akane Yamaguchi 15-21, 21-16, 21-12.

#### **19. ICC announces all-female panel of match officials for 2023 Women's T20 World Cup in historic first**

ICC has named all-women panel of match officials for Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

Indian trio of GS Lakshmi, Vrinda Rathi and Janani Narayanan is also part of the panel

Three match referees and 10 umpires make up the 13-woman panel of officials

India's Rathi and Janani, who had earlier this month become the first female umpires to officiate in the prestigious Ranji Trophy, will be umpiring at a T20 World Cup for the first time.

#### **20. Greenko named title sponsor for maiden Hyderabad E-Prix**

Formula E and Ace Nxt Gen, the promoter of the first ABB FIA Formula E World Championship race in India, announced that Greenko will be the title partner of the 2023 Greenko Hyderabad E-Prix.

Greenko Group, founded in 2006, is a leading energy transition and decarbonization company.

The 11 teams and 22 drivers will be competing in the all-new GEN3 race car.

#### **21. Anish Giri wins Tata Steel Masters 2023**

Dutch player Anish Giri, five times the runner-up in Wijk aan Zee, has won the 85th edition of Tata Steel Chess after pouncing on a blunder by Richard Rapport while Jorden van Foreest took down long-term leader Nodirbek Abdusattorov. Magnus Carlsen beat Arjun Erigaisi on demand to catch Nodirbek in a tie for 2nd place, while Wesley So finished 4th.

#### **22. Fifth Khelo India Youth Games opens in Madhya Pradesh at a glittering function in Bhopal**

The fifth edition of Khelo India Youth Games 2022 started in Madhya Pradesh. These games will conclude on February 11. Union Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Anurag Singh Thakur and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the Khelo India Youth Games-2022 in a colourful ceremony at Taty Tope Nagar Stadium in Bhopal.

The KIYG will be held at 23 venues across eight cities of the state in which nearly 6,000 athletes will take part in 27 different sports, an official said.

For the first time, sports like kayaking, canoeing, canoe slalom and fencing will be part of the Khelo India Youth Games.

The Games are being held in eight MP cities Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur Mandla, Balaghat and Khargone (Maheshwar) while the cycling event will take place in Delhi.

#### **23. Most T20 Wickets: Yuzvendra Chahal becomes NUMERO UNO as India's Best T20 bowler**

Yuzvendra Chahal has become India's most successful T20I bowler. Chahal achieved the feat when he went on to dismiss New Zealand opener Finn Allen. With 91 wickets, from just 75 games, the leg spinner now has gone past Bhuvneshwar Kumar to take the top spot in the shortest format of the game.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar also has 90 wickets in 74 matches. As of January 2023, the leading wicket-taker of in international Twenty20s is Tim Southee

#### **24. Koneru Humpy wins India's first ever Silver medal at World Blitz Chess Championship in Almaty, Kazakhstan**

Former world rapid champion Koneru Humpy has won India's first-ever Silver medal in the FIDE World Blitz Chess Championships in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Humpy defeated China's Zhongyi Tan to win Silver in the 17th and final round. Fourth seeded Humpy scored an impressive 12.5 points, just half a point behind the gold medal winner Bibisara Balabayeva of Kazakhstan.

Humpy is the second Indian to win a medal at World Blitz, after Viswanathan Anand.

## Agreements & MoUs

### 1. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Amazon collaborate for future engineer program

National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) will organize two-days' face-to-face capacity building programme for EMRS teachers to implement Amazon Future Engineer Program in collaboration with the Learning Links Foundation (LLF). NESTS and amazon will empower teachers and students in the field of digital education.

### 2. Google to partner with Indian Institute of Science for Project Vaani

Google plans to collaborate with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for project Vaani. Project Vaani aims to ensure the collected and produced data will be open-source. This collaboration is aimed to build an artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) model to collect and transcribe open-source speech data from across all of India's 733 districts.

The tech giant also announced a fund of \$1 million to Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras to build India's first Responsible AI center. The center aims to research on various aspects of bias in artificial intelligence (AI) in Indian perspective.

### 3. ADB, India sign \$350 million loan to improve Connectivity in Maharashtra

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India today signed a \$350 million loan to improve the connectivity of key economic areas in the state of Maharashtra. The project would help address intra-regional disparities by improving connectivity, facilitating access to services, and accelerating inclusive economic growth of lagging districts in the state.

### 4. HDFC Bank partners Microsoft in its digital transformation journey

HDFC Bank said it is partnering with Microsoft in the next phase of its digital transformation. will leverage Microsoft Azure to consolidate and modernise its enterprise data landscape through a Federated Data Lake to scale its information management capabilities across enterprise reporting and advanced analytics, using artificial intelligence.

### 5. Coal India Ltd & Unions ink MoU Recommending Minimum Guaranteed Benefit to Employees

Coal India Limited (CIL) and the four central trade unions BMS, HMS, AITUC and CITU, on 3rd January 2023 have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) recommending 19% Minimum Guaranteed Benefit (MGB) to its 2.38 lakh non-executive employees as part of the ongoing National Coal Wage Agreement 'XI' (NCWA-XI).

### 6. ADB, India sign \$220 million loan to strengthen power sector in Tripura

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$220 million loan to improve energy security, quality of supply, efficiency, and resilience of power sector in Tripura. The Project will fund the replacement of Rokhia power plant with a highly efficient combined cycle gas turbine that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Mr Hoe Yun Jeong, Officer-in-Charge of ADB's India Resident Mission

### 7. India Accelerator joins hands with ICICI Bank and Infosys Finacle to promote the startup ecosystem in India

India accelerator, a seed-stage accelerator program, has launched i3 Launchpad, a program to nurture and co-innovate with the start-up ecosystem in India. This has been developed in collaboration with ICICI Bank and Infosys Finacle, part of EdgeVerve Systems, a wholly-owned product subsidiary of Infosys.

The objective of the i3 Launchpad is to support a community of entrepreneurs who are on a mission to create brands that can have a global impact.

It is designed to help start-ups accelerate their success by leveraging mentorship, resources, and opportunities from Infosys Finacle, ICICI Bank, and India Accelerator (IA)

The program is open to start-ups across all industries and will onboard two cohorts a year, with a target of 12-18 start-ups in each cohort.

### 8. ADB, India sign \$300 million loan to improve connectivity in Assam

The Asian Development Bank and the Government of India signed a \$300 million loan to upgrade over 300 kilometres of state highways and major district roads in Assam. The roads to be upgraded under the project, including six road sections in the state's western, central and southern regions, are connected to SASEC corridors linking India with Bhutan and Bangladesh.

### 9. International Hockey Federation signs JSW as global World Cup partner

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has signed a partnership with The JSW Group for the upcoming FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 Bhubaneswar-Rourkela, which will start on 13 January 2023. The 15th edition of FIH's flagship event for men will be played from 13 to 29 January in Odisha, India.

### 10. KKCL replaces MPL as Indian cricket team's official sponsor

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has signed Kewal Kiran Clothing Ltd, maker of Killer jeans, as the official sponsor of the Indian cricket team, replacing gaming and esports company MPL. KKCL will

don the brand Killer logo on Team India's Kit until 31st May 2023. In September, the BCCI replaced Paytm with Mastercard as the title sponsor for all matches in home.

#### **11. Axis Bank signs up with IISc to set up math and computing centre**

Axis Bank signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) to establish the Centre for Mathematics and Computing at the institute. The Centre will conduct research and development work on the foundations of mathematics and computing to accelerate innovation in the fields of artificial intelligence and data science.

#### **12. CSC Academy and UNICEF train 50000 young women in financial literacy through P2E platform**

UNICEF (YuWaah) and CSC Academy and recently completed training 50,000 young women in financial literacy through a blended learning program using the Passport to Earning (P2E) e-platform.

The young women were trained across the country with outreach and support from Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), who are part of the Common Service Center (CSC) Academy network.

In the Pilot phase, 500 CSC Academy centers from 10+ States/UTs such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand etc were engaged in training 50,000 adolescent girls and young women with Financial Literacy skills training using an online self-paced model with offline support and nudges.

#### **13. India, U.K sign and exchange letters for Young Professionals Scheme**

The governments of India and the U.K. marked PravasiBharatiya Divas on January 9, 2023 by kicking off the Young Professionals Scheme, which will permit up to 3,000 of their degree-holding citizens aged between 18 and 30 to live and work in each other's countries for a period of two years.

#### **14. BSE partners with Goa govt to encourage listing among state MSMEs**

Stock exchange BSE has partnered with the Goa government to create awareness amongst SMEs in the state on the benefits of listing and also guide them on raising capital through equity infusion. BSE said it is the largest SME Exchange in India with 410 companies with a market cap of Rs 64,520 crore listed so far. The exchange was set up in March 2012.

BSE had earlier also entered into similar partnerships with multiple state governments viz., Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, etc., to promote listings among local SMEs.

#### **15. Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board signs MoUs with chapters of eight countries of GOPIO**

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board signed MoUs with chapter of eight countries of Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin at the MP Tourism Pavilion of Brilliant Convention Centre in Indore at 17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention. The MoUs were signed with France Metropole Paris, Mauritius, Reunion Island, Martinique, Sri Lanka, GOPIO International, Malaysia and Mauritius

#### **16. India and Panama sign agreement on cooperation in training of diplomats**

In a spirit of boosting existing ties, India and Panama signed an agreement on cooperation in the training of diplomats. The agreement would allow diplomats from both countries to continue benefiting from the exchange of knowledge and experiences in their respective fields of diplomatic academics.

External Affairs Minister-Dr. S Jaishankar Panamanian Foreign Minister-JanainaTewaney

#### **17. RailTel bags Rs 170.11 cr contract from Puducherry govt for Smart City**

RailTel Corporation of India Ltd, a Mini Ratna Public Sector Unit (PSU) under the Ministry of Railways has received a work order from the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management, Government of Puducherry for design, develop, supply, install, test, commission and Operations and Maintenance (O & M) for five years of Integrated Command Control Centre (ICCC).

#### **18. NTPC REL signs MoU with Government of Tripura for collaboration in Renewable Energy Development**

NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd signed a MoU with Government of Tripura in New Delhi for Development of Floating and Ground Mounted based Renewable Energy Projects in the State of Tripura. This MoU embarks upon the journey towards development of large sized Renewable Energy Projects in the State of Tripura and shall help Govt of Tripura in meeting its Clean Energy Commitments.

#### **19. Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority signs pact with SBI**

Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with State Bank of India to help farmers in getting low interest rate loans. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the intent of promoting awareness about the new loan product called 'Produce Marketing Loan' to exclusively fund against e-NWRs.

The Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) was constituted on 26.10.2010 under the Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007 vide Government of India Gazette Notification dated 26th October 2010. The Act provides for the establishment of the WDRA to exercise the powers conferred on it and to perform the functions assigned to it under the Act, Rules and Regulations for the development and regulation of warehouses, negotiability of warehouse receipts and promote orderly growth of the warehousing business in the country. The WDRA is a Statutory Authority under the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. The Authority has its Headquarters in New Delhi.



## **20. L&T Partners With Norway-Based H2Carrier To Develop Floating Green Hydrogen, Green Ammonia Projects**

Larsen & Toubro announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Norway-based H2Carrier (H2C) to co-operate towards developing floating green ammonia projects for industrial-scale applications with an aim to decarbonise the global economy. Under the terms of the MoU, L&T will become a partner for EPCIC of the topsides for H2C's floating process plants.

## **21. India announces 100 million Maldivian Rufiyaa for community development projects in Maldives**

Dr. Jaishankar announced an additional grant of 100 Million Maldivian rupiyas for more such community development projects. He said the MoUs and agreements are a reaffirmation of a strong developmental partnership between the two countries. He expressed happiness on witnessing an MoU between Maldivian National University and Kochi University of Science & Technology.

## **22. IPA, RIS sign agreement to set up Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity**

An agreement was signed between the Indian Ports Association (IPA) and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) for setting up a Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity. The Memorandum was signed in the presence of the Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal.

The proposed project of Transshipment Port at Galathea bay at Greater Nicobar in Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be the future which will be advantageous for the BIMSTEC Nations, adding India's GatiShakti initiative will go beyond the shores where the neighbouring countries' ports can also derive benefits.

## **23. IREDA signs MoU with MNRE, setting annual performance target for the year 2022-23**

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India, setting annual performance target for the year 2022-23.

The Government of India has set a target '3,361 crores for Revenue from Operation, up by approx. 18% from the previous year achievement. The Government of India has also set various performance-related key parameters such as Return on Net Worth, Return on Capital Employed, NPA to Total Loans, Asset Turnover Ratio and Earning per share, etc.

## **24. NABH and HSSC Sign MoU for the Recognition and Skilling Initiatives of Healthcare Professionals Across the Country**

Dr Atul Kochhar, CEO of National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) and Ashish Jain, CEO of Healthcare Sector Skill Council (HSSC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding today aimed at recognition of HSSC certification for NABH accreditation; develop training programs for Skilling, Reskilling and Upskilling required for healthcare professionals.

## **25. IIT Guwahati signs MoU with Industry partners to foster drone technology in northeast India**

Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Assam Electronics Development Corporation Ltd (AMTRON), and RC Hobbytech Solutions Pvt. Ltd. to work together on strengthening and expanding drone based training, research and development, manufacturing for varied sectors such as agriculture, disaster management, wildlife conservation.

## **26. State Bank of India (SBI) partners with MMRDA to provide NCMC-based ticketing solution for Mumbai metro lines**

SBI has partnered with MMRDA for providing NCMC based ticketing solution for the recently commissioned Mumbai metro lines.

The Acquiring solution will be provided through SBI Payments, the merchant acquiring subsidiary of SBI. It will facilitate seamless commuting experience through an array of digital payments including NCMC (National Common Mobility Card), QR and PoS. Mr. Dinesh Khara, Chairman, State Bank of India

## **27. ADB, NSFTPL sign Rs 1000 crore loan agreement to upgrade India's Jawaharlal Nehru Port Container Terminal**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Nhava Sheva Freeport Terminal Private Limited (NSFTPL) have signed a USD 131 million (about '1,066 crore) loan agreement to upgrade the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Container Terminal, Navi Mumbai, to enhance international trade in India through efficient, transparent, and state-of-the-art logistics infrastructure.

NSFTPL is a special purpose vehicle jointly owned by J M Baxi Ports and Logistics Limited (JMBPL) and CMA Terminals.

The financing package comprises \$61.4 million from ADB's ordinary capital resources and \$69.6 million from Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund (LEAP) administered by ADB.

LEAP is an ADB-managed fund capitalised with a \$1.5 billion commitment by the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Established in 2016, LEAP focuses on delivering high-quality and sustainable private sector infrastructure projects that reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, and offer

accessible and affordable health care, education, and communication services to ADB's developing members.

### **28. Tata Chemicals Europe inks pact with Vertex for low carbon hydrogen supply**

Tata Chemicals Europe (TCE) and Vertex Hydrogen have signed an offtake agreement for the supply of over 200 megawatts of low carbon hydrogen.

Under the new pact, Vertex will supply TCE with hydrogen as the chemicals manufacturer continues to decarbonise its operations in the UK with a target of achieving 'net zero' manufacturing by 2030. Vertex Hydrogen is a joint venture between Essar Oil UK and Progressive Energy.

### **29. Prasar Bharati and National Media Authority (NMA), Egypt, to exchange programmes for TV and Radio**

India and Egypt signed an MOU to facilitate content exchange, capacity building, and Co-Productions between Prasar Bharati and National Media Authority of Egypt. The MOU is part of the efforts by Prasar Bharati to expand the reach of DD India Channel to show-case the country's progress through programs focussed on economy, technology, social development & also rich culture.

### **30. Tata Motors Partners ICICI Bank to Offer Financing for EV Dealers**

Tata Motors has announced its partnership with ICICI Bank to offer dealer financing solutions to its authorised passenger EV dealers. Under this scheme, ICICI Bank will provide inventory funding to the authorised passenger EV dealers. This inventory funding is in addition to the Bank's funding to dealers for diesel and petrol models.

### **31. MeitY's R&D Institute SAMEER signs MoU with Siemens Healthineers for low-cost MRI technology**

To create a deeptech health care R&D and supply chain ecosystem in the country, SAMEER, India's premier R&D Institute of Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has signed an MoU Siemens Healthineers.

The MoU will be focused towards making available low-cost MRIs, a step towards affordable healthcare and diagnostic access for every Indian. Dr. P. Hanumantha Rao is the Director General of SAMEER. SAMEER, which is the acronym for Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research, specialises in RF Microwaves Radar and Communication Systems, E3 testing and Medical Electronics a strategic partnership.

### **32. MoU signed with South Africa to introduce 12 African Cheetahs into India annually; first batch to be flown in next month**

India and South Africa on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to introduce 12 African Cheetahs annually over the next eight to ten year.

In terms of the agreement, an initial batch of 12 cheetahs will be flown from South Africa to India next month.

The cats will join eight Cheetah brought in India from Namibia last year.

### **33. ISpA partners IIT Madras, US Consulate to drive space ecosystem development in Indo-Pacific**

Indian Space Association (ISpA) has partnered with IIT Madras and US Consulate General Chennai and announced the formation of a working group of associations of various nations called Association of Space Entrepreneurs in the Indo Pacific (ASEIP) which will later transcend to Association of associations. Lt Gen AK Bhatt (Retd), Director General of ISpA.

The Working Group will include one leading association from India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia where ISpA would be the Founding Member representing India. The ASEIP will be responsible to bring together stakeholders and associations in the space technology sector to mentor and support emerging entrants to the industry internationally. It will also explore ways to optimize business opportunities and serve as an international lobby for government policy in India, the United States and Indo Pacific countries.

### **34. NITI Aayog's AIM, CBSE, Intel India collaborate to bring change in education sector**

Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission(AIM), Central Board of Secondary Education(CBSE) and Intel India have collaborated to bring a change in the education sector by embedding future skills, such as artificial intelligence (AI), in the formal curriculum, according to an official statement.

The larger aim is to align the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's guidance to increase the pace of tech integration for youth, the need to bridge the future skills gap in the country, and optimise the current infrastructure (ATLs, etc) towards making India AI-ready.

Together, they launched the AIoT (Artificial intelligence of things) Integration in the school curriculum in September 2022 and initiated a pilot,

### **35. PepsiCo Foundation and CARE launches 'She Feeds the World' programme in India**

PepsiCo Foundation, the philanthropic arm of PepsiCo and CARE, have launched 'She Feeds the World' program in India to strengthen the role of small-scale women producers through sustainable training and economic support. The program will be implemented in the Alipurduar and Cooch Behar districts of West Bengal, aims to reach out to more than 48,000 women, men and children.

## Schemes

### 1. Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana covers over 16,554 tribal villages for integrated development of tribal dominated villages

Over 16,554 tribal villages have been covered so far under the Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana for the integrated development of tribal dominated villages. Tribal Affairs Ministry said, an amount of over 1,900 crore rupees has already been released to the States. The objective of scheme is to achieve socio-economic development of selected villages through convergence.

The Ministry has revamped the existing Scheme of Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme with Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna, for implementation during 2021-22 to 2025-26. Central government is now working to develop 36,428 villages with at least 50 percent tribal population and 500 Scheduled Tribes across the country into model tribal villages.

The main objective of this scheme is to achieve integrated socio-economic development of selected villages through convergence approach. It includes the following components.

Preparing Village Development Plan based on the needs, potential, and aspirations;

Maximizing the coverage of individual / family benefit schemes of the Central / State Governments;

Improving the infrastructure in vital sectors like health, education, connectivity and livelihood;

scheme envisions to mitigate gaps in prominent 8 sectors of development viz. Road connectivity (Internal and Inter village /block), Telecom connectivity (Mobile /internet), School, Anganwadi Centres, Health Sub-Centre, Drinking water facility, Drainage and solid waste management.

A sum of '20.38 lakh per village as gap-filling has been provisioned for approved activities including administrative expenses under PMAAGY. An amount of Rs. 7,276 cr has been approved by the Cabinet for the scheme in next 5 years. Besides, States / UTs are encouraged for convergence of resources as Central / State Scheduled Tribe Component (STC) funds and other financial resources available with them for saturation of infrastructure and services in the villages identified under PMAAGY.

### 2. Government approves Central Sector Broadcasting Infrastructure & Network Development Scheme with outlay of over Rs. 2,539 crore

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved scheme worth Rs 2,539.61 cr for Doordarshan and All India Radio, in a boost to public sector broadcasting. The investment, announced under the Central Sector 'Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)' scheme, will be up to 2025-26 and will aim to modernise the two entities run by Prasar Bharati.

### 3. 50 Electric Buses launched in Delhi with support under FAME India Phase II scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries

As many as 50 electric buses were launched in Delhi with support under the FAME India Phase II scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries, informed the government. In 2019, government approved '10,000 crore for a period of three years. Out of total budgetary support, about 86 percent of the fund has been allocated for incentives so as to create demand for electric vehicles.

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-India) Scheme is launched under National Mission on Electric Mobility in 2011/ National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020, unveiled in 2013. The scheme aims to encourage progressive induction of reliable, affordable and efficient electric and hybrid vehicles (xEV). The First Phase of the scheme was initially approved for a period of 2 years, commencing from 1st April, 2015. The Scheme has been extended from time to time with the last extension allowed for a period up to 31st March 2019.

Government has approved Phase-II of FAME Scheme with an outlay of **Rs. 10,000 Crore** for a period of 3 years commencing from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Out of total budgetary support, about 86 percent of fund has been allocated for Demand Incentive so as to create demand for Electric Vehicles (xEVs) in the country. This phase aims to generate demand by way of supporting **7000 Electric Buses** (e-bus), **5 lakh Electric Three Wheelers (e-3W)**, **55000 Electric Four Wheeler Passenger Cars** including Strong Hybrid (e-4W) and **10 lakh Electric Two Wheelers (e-2W)**.

### 4. Centre named new Integrated Food Security Scheme as Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY)

The Centre has named the new Integrated Food Security Scheme as Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana. Earlier, the Union Cabinet had approved new integrated food security scheme for providing free foodgrains to Antodaya Ann Yojna and Primary Household beneficiaries. Implementation of the new scheme has started from 1st January 2023, benefitting more than 80 crore people.

In order to maintain uniformity across the states, free foodgrains will be provided under the PMGKAY for the year 2023 to the poor beneficiaries as per the entitlement under the the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

Under the NFSA, the entitlement of foodgrains per person per month is 5 kg for priority households category, while 35 kg per family per month for Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) families.



Till December 2022, the NFSA beneficiaries were getting their foodgrains entitlement at a highly subsidised rate of Re 1, Rs 2 and Rs 3 per kg for coarse cereals, wheat and rice, respectively. Now, they will get it for free this year.

According to the ministry, necessary steps have already been taken for smooth implementation of the PMGKAY in the field. The ministry and state-run Food Corporation of India (FCI) officials are regularly interacting with state government officers for smooth roll out of the new scheme.

The central government will spend more than Rs 2 lakh crore in 2023 as food subsidy under the NFSA and other welfare schemes to remove the financial burden of the poor.

The National Food Security Act 2013, also known as Right to Food Act.

#### **5. Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) interest rate was hiked for January-March 2023 quarter**

The government has hiked interest rate on Kisan Vikas Patra for the quarter January ' March 2023. The Kisan Vikas Patra is a small savings tool that will make it easier for people to contribute to long-term savings plans. Deposits made into KVP accounts will now earn an interest rate of 7.2% annually compounded. Kisan Vikas Patra is a saving certificate scheme first launched in 1988 by Indian Posts.

#### **Who can open Kisan Vikas Patra Yojana**

A single adult, Joint Account (up to 3 adults), a guardian on behalf of minor or on behalf of person of unsound mind, a minor above 10 years in his own name can open Kisan Vikas Patra.

#### **Types of KVP accounts.-**

(1) On an application to the accounts office in Form-1, the following types of accounts can be opened under the Scheme, namely :-

(a) Single Holder Type Account

(b) Joint A- Type Account Kisan Vikas Patra has a lock in period of 2 years 6 months. Premature closure before 2 years 6 months is allowed only:

On the death of the holder or any of the holders in the case of joint holder.

On forfeiture by a pledge being a gazetted government officer.

When ordered by a court of law.

#### **6. Union Minister Jitendra Singh launches Geospatial Hackathon to promote Innovation and Start-Ups in India's Geospatial ecosystem**

Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh launched Geospatial Hackathon to promote Innovation and Start-Ups in India's Geospatial ecosystem. The aim of the hackathon is to promote partnerships not only among the public and private geospatial sectors but also to strengthen country's geospatial Start-Up ecosystem.

#### **7. Right to Sight: Rajasthan first state to implement blindness control policy**

In a first in the country, the Rajasthan government has implemented a policy for blindness control with the objective of 'Right to Sight'.

The policy has been introduced with an aim to bring light in the lives of more than three lakh people suffering from visual impairment in the state. The prevalence rate of blindness in the country was 1.1 per cent in 2020 and work would be done to bring it down to 0.3 per cent through the blindness control policy. Under the policy, the Rajasthan government will mandatorily run Keratoplasty Centres and Eye Banks at all the government medical colleges. Also, cornea collected by private organisations and NGOs getting financial help from the government will have to be provided to the government institutions on priority.

#### **8. Padho Pardesh scheme discontinued by MoMA**

The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) has discontinued the scheme of interest subsidy on education loans for overseas studies for students belonging to minority communities (Padho Pardesh). All banks were notified by the Indian Banks' Association last month about the discontinuation of the Padho Pardesh Interest Subsidy Scheme from 2022-23. The scheme so far was being implemented through Canara Bank, the designated nodal bank.

Under the scheme, interest payable by the students availing education loans as prescribed under the Education Loan Scheme of the IBA for the period of moratorium (that is course period, plus one year or six months after getting a job, whichever is earlier) shall be borne by the Government of India.

After the period of moratorium is over, the interest on the outstanding loan amount shall be paid by the student, in accordance with the existing Educational Loan Scheme. The Candidate will bear the Principal instalments and interest beyond moratorium period.

#### **9. Health records of over 10 crore linked digitally to Ayushman Bharat Health Account**

Over 10 crore health records have been linked digitally to the Ayushman Bharat Health Account under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), a step which help people create a comprehensive medical history across various healthcare providers.

On September, 2021, the prime minister had announced the nationwide roll-out of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) which aims to develop the backbone necessary to support the integrated digital health infrastructure of the country.

#### 10. Mastercard has announced plans to expand its Girls4Tech STEM education program in India

Mastercard has announced plans to expand its Girls4Tech STEM education program in India, to reach 100,000 additional female students by 2024. The program, supported by the Mastercard Impact Fund and in partnership with the American India Foundation, will provide STEM education to girls aged 8 to 14 in 40 different government schools in Delhi and across the country.

#### 11. A first: Atal Pension Yojana logs 10 million enrolments in a calendar year

The Atal Pension Yojana (APY) 'targeted towards unorganised sector workers' saw the highest-ever takers in 2022 with enrolments rising 36 per cent. The figure crossed 10 million for the first time in a calendar year, data released by the finance ministry showed. The number of enrolments in 2022 rose to 12.5 million from 9.2 million in 2021.

The enrolments in 2022 grew by 81 per cent compared to the pre-pandemic year of 2019, when 6.9 million subscribers had enrolled for the pension scheme.

The highest number of enrolments age-wise was from 21-25 years (28 per cent), accounting for 13.7 million subscribers, followed by 25-30 years (25 per cent) with 12.1 million subscribers. The least number of subscribers were those above 35 years (11.14 per cent).

The Centre launched the APY in 2015 to ensure minimum social security for unorganised sector workers. The minimum age of joining the scheme is 18 years and maximum age is 40 years.

A subscriber under the APY is required to make a monthly/quarterly/six monthly contribution of an amount determined by the pension chosen and the age of joining the scheme.

The subscriber will receive a government-guaranteed minimum pension of Rs 1,000, Rs 2,000, Rs 3,000, Rs 4,000 or Rs 5,000 per month. It will be paid after the age of 60 until death, depending on the contribution chosen.

Till November 30, 2022, the top-five states in enrolments were Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are also the top-performing states in terms of women enrolments followed by West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

#### 12. PM lauds achievement of 11 crore tap water connections under Jal Jeevan Mission

The Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide tap water supply to households with a special focus on women and children by 2024, achieved the 11 crore mark of tap connections. Since August 2019, Government of India in partnership with States is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission -Har Ghar Jal to make provision of potable water to every rural household of the country by 2024.



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## Appointments & Resignations

### 1. CRPF DG Sujoy Lal Thaosen takes additional charge as BSF DG

CRPF Director General (DG) Sujoy Lal Thaosen has been given the additional charge of the post of the Border Security Force (BSF) DG following the retirement of incumbent Pankaj Kumar Singh on December 31. Pankaj Singh, a 1988-batch Indian Police Service officer of the Rajasthan cadre, completes his 1.4-year-long tenure as BSF Chief this December.

BSF guards the 6,300 km long Indian boundary with Pakistan and Bangladesh apart from rendering a variety of roles in the internal security domain of the country.

### 2. Indian Overseas Bank elevates Ajay Kumar Srivastava as its MD & CEO

Public sector Indian Overseas Bank has elevated Ajay Kumar Srivastava as its managing director and chief executive officer with effect from January 1, 2023.

Prior to taking up the new role, Mr. Srivastava was serving the Chennai-headquartered bank as its executive director.

### 3. Suhail Sameer steps down as BharatPe CEO; Nalin Negi to be interim leader

Fintech unicorn BharatPe has appointed current chief financial officer Nalin Negi as the firm's interim chief executive officer (CEO) until its board finds a replacement for Suhail Sameer, who stepped down from the position. Sameer took over as the CEO of BharatPe in August 2021, a year after he was appointed as the president of the company.

### 4. Sanjiv Kapoor To Remain CEO-Designate Of Jet Airways

Jet Airways said Sanjiv Kapoor remains the CEO-designate of the company till the airline's ownership is transferred to the consortium by the lenders. After the Insolvency resolution process in June 2021, Jalan-Kalrock Consortium was declared the winning bidder for Jet Airways. The airline has not flown since April 2019 when it ceased all operations due to financial issues.

### 5. Prasanna Kumar Motupalli appointed CMD of NLC India Ltd

Prasanna Kumar Motupalli has been appointed as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the state-run NLC India Ltd (NLCIL), a Personnel Ministry order said.

NLC India Limited is a central public sector undertaking under the administrative control of the Ministry of Coal.

NLC India Ltd, Founded: 1956; Headquarters: Chennai.

### 6. India's Vinaya Prakash Singh takes over as Secretary General of Asian Pacific Postal Union

India has taken over the leadership of the Asia Pacific Postal Union (APPU) in January 2023. Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh will take over the charge of Secretary General of the Union for a tenure of 4 years. This is the result of the elections during the 13th APPU Congress held in August-September 2022.

**What is Asian Pacific Postal Union?** Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) is an intergovernmental organisation of 32 member countries of the Asia-Pacific region. APPU is the only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations.

The Asia Pacific Postal Union's headquarters are in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Asia Pacific region accounts for around one-third of the world's postal workforce and about half of the world's mail volume.

### 7. Paytm bank gets RBI nod for Surinder Chawla as new CEO

Paytm Payments Bank has secured the Reserve Bank of India's approval for the appointment of Surinder Chawla as its new chief executive.

Paytm Payments Bank CEO Satish Kumar Gupta retired in October 2022. Since then, Deependra Singh Rathore has been serving as interim CEO of the payments bank.

### 8. Meta appoints former Tata CliQ CEO Vikas Purohit as global business head in India

Vikas Purohit will head Facebook parent Meta's global business group in India, said the social media platform. Purohit, the former CEO of Tata CliQ, will lead Meta's strategic relationship with brands and agencies to drive revenue growth across key channels, the company said in a statement. Purohit will lead the company's business vertical teams and agency teams.

### 9. Anurag Kumar appointed CMD of ECIL

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of Anurag Kumar for the post of Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL).

ECIL was set up under the Department of Atomic Energy on 11th April 1967.

Dr. A.S. Rao was the Founder MD of ECIL.

### 10. NASA appoints Indian-American space expert AC Charania as chief technologist

AC Charania, an India-American aerospace industry expert has been appointed as NASA's new chief technologist. He has been designated as principal advisor to Administrator Bill Nelson on programmes and technology policy at NASA's headquarters.

AC Charania replaced Indian-American scientist Bhavya Lal, who served as acting chief technologist prior to the former's appointment.



### **11. Cognizant Appoints Ravi Kumar S as Chief Executive Officer**

Nasdaq-listed Cognizant named Ravi Kumar S as its new chief executive officer (CEO) and board member. Kumar succeeds Brian Humphries in both roles. Kumar joins Cognizant in 2022 after a 20-year career at Infosys. The company had previously announced that Kumar would join the company as president, Cognizant Americas.

### **12. UK Treasury Adviser Lombardelli Named as OECD Chief Economist**

The Chief Economic Adviser to the UK Treasury, Clare Lombardelli, has been appointed as the OECD's new chief economist.

She will lead the OECD's economic work, succeeding France's Laurence Boone, who has held the post since 2018.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Headquarters: Paris, France; Founded: 30 September 1961.

### **13. Govt extends tenure of Bank of Baroda MD Sanjiv Chadha by 5 months**

Government has extended the tenure of managing director (MD) and CEO of Bank of Baroda (BoB) Sanjiv Chadha for about five months till June 30.

The order dated January 14, 2023 comes ahead of his three-year tenure that ends on January 19.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the proposal of the Department of Financial Services for extending the term of Chadha till June 30, 2023, when he attains 60 years, the retirement age, sources said. Meanwhile, the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB), the headhunter for directors of state-owned banks and financial institutions, on Saturday recommended elevation of Executive Director (ED) Debadatta Chand as managing director of Bank of Baroda. Besides, the Bureau recommended Union Bank of India ED Rajneesh Karnatak for the position of MD & CEO in Bank of India.

### **14. Vikram Kirloskar's daughter Manasi takes over as Toyota Kirloskar Motor VC**

Kirloskar motoes said Manasi Tata, daughter of late Vikram Kirloskar, will take over as its new Vice Chairperson with immediate effect.

She will also take over as the Vice Chairperson of Toyota Kirloskar Auto parts (TKAP), Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM)

In December 2022, Kirloskar Systems Pvt Ltd had appointed Tata as Director on the board of the company's joint-venture companies, including Toyota Industries Engine India Pvt Ltd, Kirloskar Toyota Textile Machinery Pvt Ltd (KTTM), Toyota Material Handling India Pvt Ltd (TMHIN), and Denso Kirloskar Industries Pvt Ltd (DNKI).

### **15. Jaguar Land Rover India head Rohit Suri to retire on March 31**

Rohit Suri, President and Managing Director, Jaguar Land Rover India, will be retiring from his position on March 31, 2023.

Rohit Suri joined the Tata Group as the Head of Premier Car Division at Tata Motors. He has led Jaguar and Land Rover in India since 2009. His retirement marks the end of a 14-year-long stint with the Tata-owned premium brand.

### **16. Centre names Praveen Sharma as director Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission**

Praveen Sharma has been selected for appointment as Director in the National Health Authority (Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission) under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

National Health Agency was reconstituted as the National Health Authority on 2nd January 2019.

Ram Sewak Sharma is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority (NHA).

### **17. IATA's TravelTech committee gets new chair, two co-chairs**

The Internet and Mobile Association of India has announced the appointment of a new chair and two co-chairs to its TravelTech Committee. Sanjay Mohan, group CTO, MakeMyTrip India will be the committee's new chair and RikantPittie, co-founder of EaseMyTrip, and Yang Li, head-public affairs (APAC), Booking.com, will be the new co-chairs.

Committee members: MakeMyTrip, Airbnb India, ConfirmTkt, Zophop Technologies & Booking.com

### **18. Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings steps down as CEO**

Netflix Inc co-founder Reed Hastings will be stepping down as chief executive, handing the reins of the streaming service to longtime partner and co-CEO Ted Sarandos and the company's chief operating officer, Greg Peters.

Sarandos and Peters will share the title of chief executives, with Hastings serving as executive chairman.

### **19. Vedanta Cairn Oil and Gas appoints Nick Walker as CEO**

Vedanta Cairn Oil & Gas, India's largest private oil and gas exploration and production company, announced it has appointed Nick Walker as Chief Executive Officer, effective January 5, 2023. Before this appointment, Walker was President and Chief Executive Officer at Lundin Energy, a large European independent E&P companies.

## **20. Siddharth Sharma appointed CEO of Tata Trusts, Aparna Uppaluri as COO**

Tata Trusts has appointed Siddharth Sharma as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trusts and Aparna Uppaluri as the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Their appointment will come into effect from 1 April 2023.

Sharma, the chief sustainability officer at Tata Sons, will succeed N Srinath, who stepped down from the CEO's post in 2022 following his retirement. Tata Trusts holds 66% stake in Tata Sons.

## **21. Chris Hipkins sworn in as New Zealand prime minister**

Chris Hipkins has been sworn in as prime minister by New Zealand's governor general during a ceremony in the capital, Wellington. The Labour Party elected the former COVID-19 response and police minister Mr Hipkins to lead the party and the country. Before Mr Hipkins became prime minister, Ms Ardern tendered her resignation to King Charles's representative in New Zealand. He is the 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand.

## **22. Shamalbhai B Patel re-elected as chairman of Amul**

Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation that markets milk and dairy products under the Amul brand announced the appointment of Shamalbhai B Patel as its chairman and Valamjibhai Humbal as vice chairman. Shamalbhai B Patel is the chairman of Sabarkantha District Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd., Sabar dairy and associated with dairy cooperatives of Gujarat. GCMMF is made up of 18 member unions covering 33 districts.

GCMMF is India's largest food products organization with annual sales turnover of ₹46,481 crores during last financial year. It markets a wide range of milk and milk products under the brand name Amul. Currently, the member unions of GCMMF procure an average 264 lakhs litres of milk every day from 36 lakhs milk producers in 18,154 villages of the state.

## **23. Government extends tenure of Sangeeta Verma as CCI's acting Chairperson**

The government has extended the tenure of Sangeeta Verma as the acting Chairperson of the Competition Commission of India, which has been functioning without a full-time Chairperson for three months now. There are only two members. CCI is without a full-time Chairperson since the retirement of Ashok Kumar Gupta from the post on October 25, 2022. CCI consists of a Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the Central Government.

Each member will have a tenure of 5 years or till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. A member will be paid a consolidated monthly salary of ₹4 lakh and will not be entitled to a house and car. The Competition Act, 2002, as amended by the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2007, follows the philosophy of modern competition laws. The Act prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominant position by enterprises and regulates combinations (acquisition, acquiring of control and M&A), which causes or likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition within India.

## **24. Toyota names Koji Sato new CEO as Akio Toyoda takes chairman role**

Koji Sato, the automaker's 53-year-old chief branding officer, who is also president of Toyota's luxury brand Lexus, will take over as chief executive from April 1, as Akio Toyoda becomes chairman. The current chairman Takeshi Uchiyamada will drop his chairman title but remain on the board. Toyota Founder: Kiichiro Toyoda.

Toyota is a Japanese multinational automotive manufacturer headquartered in Toyota City, Aichi, Japan.

## **25. RBI approves appointment of Prabdev Singh as India head of JP Morgan Chase**

JPMorgan Chase & Co. has received approval from India's central bank to name Prabdev Singh as the lender's chief executive officer in the country. The Reserve Bank of India last week approved a three-year term for Singh. Singh had been JPMorgan's interim CEO since November, replacing Madhav Kalyan who 'in October' was named head of payments for Asia Pacific.

The Wall Street firm, which traces its presence in India back to 1922, started commercial banking operations in the country about 15 years ago. JPMorgan has four commercial bank branches in the country, data on its website show.

## **26. Unilever appoints Hein Schumacher as new CEO**

Unilever announced the appointment of Hein Schumacher as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Hein will replace Alan Jope, who announced in September 2022 his intention to retire from Unilever.

Hein is currently CEO of the global dairy and nutrition business Royal FrieslandCampina and became a Non-Executive Director of Unilever in October 2022.

Unilever Chairman- Nils Andersen. Unilever plc- British multinational consumer goods company with headquarters in London.

## **27. Air Marshal A.P. Singh to be new Vice Chief of Indian Air Force**

Air Marshal A P Singh has been appointed as the new Vice Chief of the Indian Air Force.

He will succeed Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, who will retire from service on January 31, 2023.

Air Marshal A P Singh is currently serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Air Command.

He was commissioned into the fighter stream of the IAF on December 21, 1984.

### 28. Rajeew Singh Raghuvanshi Appointed As Drugs Controller General Of India

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has recommended the name of Dr Rajeew Singh Raghuvanshi as the new Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

DCGI heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) which is responsible to ensure quality drug supply across the country. It also has the authority to give approval to new drugs and regulate clinical trials.

Earlier on November 11 last year, Dr V G Somani term as DCGI which came into effect on Nov 16, 2022, was extended for three months.


### 29. Graham Reid, Team India's Men's Hockey coach, steps down after debacle in Hockey World Cup 2023

Indian Men's Hockey Team Chief Coach Graham Reid submitted his resignation to Hockey India President Dr. Dilip Tirkey, a day after the conclusion of the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 Bhubaneswar-Rourkela.

The Analytical Coach Greg Clark and Scientific Advisor Mitchell David Pemberton also tendered their resignation.

### 30. Czech Republic Elects Petr Pavel President Over Andrej Babis

Petr Pavel, a retired general and former senior Nato commander, has swept to the Czech presidency after a landslide victory over the former prime minister Andrej Babi in an election overshadowed by rows over the war between Russia and Ukraine. Pavel, 61 was a former army chief of staff and Nato second-in-command Czech president Capital: Prague Currency: Czech koruna




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## Awards

### 1. Gouri Amma Foundation award for Cuban rights activist Aleida Guevara

The first KR Gouri Amma national award will be given to Cuban social activist Dr Aleida Guevara. She has been an advocate of human rights, running two homes for disabled children in Cuba and two more for refugee children with domestic problems. The pediatric specialist is the daughter of Che Guevara and is an active member of the Cuban Medical Mission. The award by KR Gouri Amma foundation consists of \$3,000, a statute and a citation

### 2. CJI DY Chandrachud To Be Conferred With 'Award for Global Leadership' By Harvard Law School Center On Legal Profession

The Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession (HLS CLP) has announced Chief Justice of India Dr. DY Chandrachud as the 2022 recipient of its 'Award for Global Leadership' in recognition of his lifetime of service to the legal profession in India and around the world. The said Award is the Center's highest professional honor.

The past recipients include Ambassador Samantha Power, Former US Permanent Representative to the United Nations and current Director of the Agency for International Development, Brad Smith, Vice Chair of Microsoft, and Kenneth Frazier, former Chair and CEO of Merck. Chief Justice Chandrachud, who took oath as Chief Justice in November 2022, holds an LLM and an SJD from Harvard Law School.

### 3. Adar Poonawalla gets Patangrao Kadam award, Maha Dy CM hails SII for vaccine work

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis lauded vaccine manufacturer Serum Institute of India and its CEO Adar Poonawalla for their contribution in the fight against COVID-19. Poonawalla was conferred with first Dr Patangrao Kadam Memorial Award. Patangrao Kadam was a leader who created 190 institutes to provide quality education and created quality human resource

### 4. Digital India Awards 2022: e-NAM wins Platinum Award in Digital Empowerment of Citizen category

e-NAM, a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, has won the Platinum Award in the Digital Empowerment of Citizens Category in Digital India Awards 2022 held in New Delhi. Digital India Awards has been instituted by MeitY, under the aegis of National Portal of India to encourage and honour innovative digital solutions/ exemplary initiatives.

e-NAM is a digital platform integrating 1260 APMC mandis across 22 States and 3 UTs to facilitate online trading of 203 agriculture and horticulture commodities to enable farmers to realize better remunerative prices for their produce. e-NAM is catalysing the digital transformation of mandi operations and e- trading of agricultural commodities. As on 31.12.2022, more than 1.74 Crore farmers 2.39 Lakh traders have been registered on e-NAM portal. A total trade consisting of 69 million metric tonnes of worth Rs. 2.42 lakh crore has been recorded on e-NAM platform.

e-Vivechna App (MP) received platinum award in Digital Initiatives at Grassroots Level category, while DeGS Computer Basic Training (Jharkhand) received gold and Ksheerasree Portal (Kerala) received silver award in the same category.

### 5. Thiru Kumar Nadesan chosen to receive PravasiBharatiya Samman Award for his contribution towards community welfare

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards today here upon 27 overseas Indians as part of the PravasiBharatiya Divas Convention on Non-Resident Indians, Persons of Indian Origin, or an organization established and run by Non-Resident Indians in recognition of their outstanding achievements both in India and abroad.

Thiru Kumar Nadesan received PravasiBharatiya Samman Award for his contribution towards community welfare.

Mr. Nadesan had initiated a fundraiser to assist stranded Indian Citizens in Sri Lanka during the Covid outbreak. He actively promotes business and cultural exchanges between India and Sri Lanka.

The awardees, who represent excellence achieved by the Indian diaspora in different fields, include Jagadish Chennupati of Australia in the field of science and technology and education, Sanjeev Mehta of Bhutan in education, Dilip Loundo of Brazil in art and culture and education, Alexander Maliakel John of Brunei in medicine, Vaikuntam Iyer Lakshmanan of Canada in community welfare, Joginder Singh Nijjar of Croatia in art and culture, Ramjee Prasad of Denmark in IT and Kannan Ambalam of Ethiopia in community welfare.

The other awardees are Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay of Germany in community welfare, Mohamed Irfaan Ali of Guyana in politics and community welfare, Reena Vinod Pushkarna of Israel in business and community welfare, Maqsooda Sarfi Shiotani of Japan in education, Rajagopal of Mexico in education, Amit Kailash Chandra Lath of Poland in business, Parmanand Sukhumal Daswani of the Republic of Congo in community welfare, Piyush Gupta of Singapore in business, Mohanlal Hira and Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel of South Sudan in community welfare.

Sivakumar Nadesan of Sri Lanka (community welfare), Dewanchandrebhose Sharman of Suriname (community welfare), Archana Sharma of Switzerland (science and technology), Frank Arthur Seepersad of Trinidad and Tobago (community welfare), Siddharth Balachandran of the UAE (business), Chandrakant Babubhai Patel of the UK (media), Darshan Singh Dhaliwal of the US (business and community welfare), Rajesh Subramaniam of the US (business) and Ashok Kumar Tiwary of Uzbekistan (business) are also among the awardees.

#### **6. Harry Brook, Ashleigh Gardner Named ICC Players Of The Month For December 2022**

Harry Brook bagged his maiden ICC Men's Player of the Month crown after a blistering run of scores which helped England claim a historic World Test Championship (WTC) series victory in Pakistan. Australia's Ashleigh Gardner secured the ICC Women's Player of the Month award as her contributions with bat and ball guided her side to T20I series victory in India.

#### **7. New Goa Manohar International Airport wins best sustainable greenfield airport award**

GMR Goa International Airport (GGIAL), a subsidiary of GMR Airports Infrastructure, has won 'Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport' award under aviation sustainability and environment at ASSOCHAM's 14th International Conference-cum-Awards for Civil Aviation 2023. The award was presented for 'excellent initiatives' taken by GGIAL in implementing sustainability.

#### **8. R Vishnu Prasad receives award for being the most outstanding scientist of 2022.**

R Vishnu Prasad was awarded 'The most distinguished scientist of the year 2022' at Vigyan bhawan, delhi by shri Anurag thakur, Hon'ble minister of information & broadcasting. R Vishnu Prasad, a scientist with 69 patents has been honored with the Indian Achievers Award as the most distinguished scientist.

The Indian Achievers Award is the india's most prestigious award and a prestigious recognition that is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to society in a variety of fields. Vishnu, who has been working tirelessly on sustainability, smart cities and is on a mission towards clean India on solid waste management and treatment of large water bodies, was selected by a jury headed by Hon'ble Justice Gyan Sudha Misra.

Some of his fellow awardees were Param vir chakra subedar major Sanjay kumar, Indian field hockey player late major dhyanchand, film actress shruti haasan, padma shri alokmehta, Indian professional boxer vijendarsingh, Indian Olympic athlete & padma shri Sudha singh, national paralympic coach Satyanarayana, IPS yashasvi Yadav, Chairman & MD of T-Series Bhushan kumar and The Kashmir Files Actor Darshan Kumar.

Shruti Haasan received this honour from Anurag Thakur for her achievements in the field of films, music, and philanthropy work.

#### **9. President Droupadi Murmu presents Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 11 children**

President Droupadi Murmu, conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar, 2023 on 11 children at an award ceremony held in New Delhi.

The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar are being conferred upon children in the age group 5-18 years, for their excellence in six categories ' Art and Culture, Bravery, Innovation, Scholastic, Social Service and Sports.

This year, awards were presented in the categories of Art and Culture, Bravery, Innovation, Social Service and Sports.

#### **10. Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhan Puraskar-2023**

For the year 2023, Odisha State Disaster Management Authority and Lunglei Fire Station (LFS), Mizoram, both in the Institutional category, have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhan Puraskar-2023 for their excellent work in Disaster Management. The award is announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has instituted an annual award known as Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhanPuraskar to recognize and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organizations in India in the field of disaster management.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate in case of an institution and Rs. 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual. Under the guidance of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, the country has significantly improved the disaster management practices, preparedness, mitigation and response mechanisms resulting in significant reduction in casualties during natural calamities.

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

Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), was established in 1999 in the aftermath of the Super Cyclone. OSDMA embarked on multiple initiatives including raising of the Odisha Disaster Response Action Force (ODRAF), Multi-hazard Early Warning Service (MHEWS) framework, and a cutting-edge technology-enabled web/smartphone-based platform called SATARK (System for

Assessing, Tracking, and Alerting Disaster Risk Information based on Dynamic Risk Knowledge). OSDMA provided effective response during various cyclones, Hudhud (2014), Fani (2019), Amphan (2020) and Odisha floods (2020). OSDMA conducted disaster preparedness initiatives in building community resilience in 381 tsunami prone villages/wards and 879 multi-purpose cyclone/ flood shelters located within 1.5 km from coastline.

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

#### **11. Hindustani vocalist Padma Vibhushan Dr Prabha Atre conferred with Pandit HariprasadChaurasia Lifetime Achievement Award**

Hindustani vocalist Padma Vibhushan Dr Prabha Atre was conferred with the Pandit HariprasadChaurasia Lifetime Achievement Award. The award was presented to her by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

Shinde presented Dr Atre with a citation and Rs 1 lakh at the program, during which a symphony of 90 flutists was performed.

Legendary sarod exponent Ustad Amjad Ali Khan was conferred the Pandit HariprasadChaurasia Lifetime Achievement Award last year.

#### **12. President approved 412 Gallantry Awards for Defence personnel**

President DroupadiMurmu has approved 412 Gallantry awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others. These include six Kirti Chakras, including four posthumous, and 15 Shaurya Chakras including two posthumous. These include one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry), 92 Sena Medal, including four posthumous, one Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry), 7 Vayu Sena Medal. It includes 29 Param Vishisht Seva Medals.

President has also awarded President Tatrakshak Medal and Tatrakshak Medal to Indian Coast Guard Personnel for their act of conspicuous gallantry, exceptional devotion to duty and distinguished service. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh has approved 62 Mentioned in Despatches to Armed Forces personnel.

**Post-independence, first three gallantry awards namely Param Vir Chakra, MahaVir Chakra and Vir Chakra were instituted by the Government of India on 26th January, 1950 which were deemed to have effect from the 15th August, 1947.**

Thereafter, other three gallantry awards i.e. Ashoka Chakra Class-I, Ashoka Chakra Class-II and Ashoka Chakra Class-III were instituted by the Government of India on 4th January, 1952, which were deemed to have effect from the 15th August, 1947. These awards were renamed as Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra respectively in January, 1967.

These gallantry awards are announced twice in a year - first on the occasion of the Republic Day and then on the occasion of the Independence Day. Order of precedence of these awards is the Param Vir Chakra, the Ashoka Chakra, the Mahavir Chakra, the Kirti Chakra, the Vir Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra.

#### **13. Global Entrepreneur Sunil Krishnan awarded coveted Dr Ambedkar Award for Contribution to India**

Global Entrepreneur Sunil Krishnan awarded coveted Dr Ambedkar Award for Contribution to India at the hands of Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari. The recent recipient of the prestigious Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Award for Contribution to India for Spreading Indian Cuisine WithMoksh, Sunil Krishnan is one of the most revered entrepreneurs and restaurateurs in South Africa.



## Ranks & Reports

### 1. UPI processes record 7.82 bn transactions in December, ends 2022 on a high

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), ended the 2022 calendar year on a high note as the volume of transactions touched a record 7.82 billion in December, amounting to Rs 12.82 trillion.

On a year-on-year basis, in December, volume of transactions was up 71 per cent and value of transactions was up 55 per cent.

In the calendar year 2022, UPI processed over 74 bn. transactions, worth Rs 125.94 tn.

Data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the umbrella body for retail, digital payments in the country, showed volume of transactions in December was up 7.12 per cent compared to November, while value of transactions was up 7.73 per cent during the same period.

UPI crossed the first billion transactions in October 2019, almost three years after its launch in **2016**.

### 2. Chennai, Southern cities top in terms of women employment: Report

Chennai is India's best city for women's employment and it is followed by Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Mumbai, said a report by Avtar, a firm specialising in workplace inclusion. The report ranks 111 cities on parameters nurturing a conducive ecosystem for women's employment. Ahmedabad, Visakhapatnam, Kolkata, Coimbatore and Madurai form the rest of the Top 10 cities. These cities have a population of more than one million

Tiruchirappalli, Vellore, Erode, Salem, Tirupur, Puducherry, Shimla, Mangalore (officially Mangaluru), Thiruvananthapuram, and Belagavi are the top 10 cities in another category of cities with a population of less than one million.

Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, and Karnataka got top five state averages in the country.

In north India, the top three cities are Delhi, Srinagar, and Amritsar.

### 3. India beats Japan, becomes world's third largest auto market: Report

India is now the world's third-largest auto market, reports Nikkei Asia. Based on preliminary results, the country's I, topping the 4.2 million sold in Japan. According to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, new vehicles delivered in India totalled 4.13 million between January and November 2022, the report says.

The report adds that the country's sales volume is expected to rise further with the inclusion of pending fourth-quarter sales figures for commercial vehicles. Tata Motors and other automakers are yet to reveal their year-end results.

In 2021, China continued to lead the global auto market, with 26.27 million vehicles sold. The US remained second at 15.4 million vehicles, followed by Japan at 4.44 million units.

According to Nikkei Asia, the easing of the automotive chip crunch in 2022 provided a springboard for a recovery. Along with Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors and other Indian automakers saw sales grow during last year.

According to Nikkei Asia, China surged past Japan to become the second-largest auto market in 2006. In 2009, China overtook the US to become the world's largest market.

### 4. Delhi, Bangalore Among The Top-Performing Global Airports Of 2022

According to Cirium Aviation Analytics' list of the top-performing global airports of 2022 Bangalore's Kempegowda International Airport won the 2nd rank, whereas Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport acquired the 7th spot. While Kempegowda International Airport saw on-time departure for 84.08% of 201,897 flights, Delhi's IGI witnessed 81.84% on-time departure.

The top 10 airports according to the report are:

Tokyo, Japan (HND) Haneda Airport

Bengaluru, India (BLR) Kempegowda International Airport

Salt Lake City, USA (SLC) Salt Lake City International Airport

Detroit, USA (DTW) Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport

Philadelphia, USA (PHL) Philadelphia International Airport

USA (MSP) Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

Delhi, India (DEL) Indira Gandhi International Airport

Seattle, USA (SEA) Seattle-Tacoma International Airport

Bogotá, Colombia (BOG) El Dorado International Airport

North Carolina, USA (CLT) Charlotte Douglas International Airport

Along with the above analytics, Cirium also released a list of most punctual airlines globally wherein Azul Airlines surfaced as "the global leader. It is a Brazilian carrier based in Barueri, a suburb of St. Paulo.

### **5. World Bank says India will be fastest-growing economy among seven largest emerging markets and developing economies**

World Bank said in a report that India is expected to be the fastest-growing economy among the seven largest emerging markets and developing economies. While the World Bank projected a gloomy outlook for the global economy, it said that the Indian economy is expected to grow at the rate of 6.6 percent in the fiscal year 2023-24.

In its report titled Global Economic Prospects, the World Bank noted that India's growth expanded by 9.7 percent on an annual basis in the first half of the fiscal year 2022-23, reflecting strong private consumption and fixed investment growth.

The World Bank also slashed its forecast for global growth this year by nearly half to just 1.7 percent from its previous projection of 3 percent.

### **6. Delhi Was India's Most Polluted City In 2022: Report**

Delhi was the most polluted city in India in 2022 with PM2.5 levels more than double the safe limit and the third highest average PM10 concentration, according to an analysis of Central Pollution Control Board data. Haryana's Faridabad (95.64 micrograms per cubic metre) ranked second and Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad (91.25 micrograms per cubic metre) third, according to data.

PM2.5 is tiny particulate matter that is less than 2.5 microns in diameter and can enter the lungs and bloodstream.

PM2.5 pollution in the national capital has reduced by over 7 per cent in four years, from 108 micrograms per cubic metre in 2019 to 99.71 micrograms per cubic metre in 2022, the report by NCAP Tracker said.

However, it still remains way below the desired level. The government's flagship National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) targets to reduce pollution by 20 per cent to 30 per cent by 2024 (as compared to 2017 levels).

NCAP Tracker is a joint project of news portal Carbon Copy and a Maharashtra-based start-up Respirer Living Sciences; and is designed to track India's progress in achieving clean air targets.

The Centre launched NCAP on January 10, 2019 to reduce PM2.5 and PM10 levels in 102 cities by 20 per cent to 30 per cent by 2024 (with 2017 being the base year).

Now there are 131 cities which are called non-attainment cities, as they did not meet the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for the period of 2011-15 under the National Air Quality Monitoring Programme.

In September 2022, the government set a new target of a 40 per cent reduction in particulate matter concentration by 2026.

The top four cities with the highest PM2.5 are Delhi and NCR cities and the top nine are from across the Indo-Gangetic plains, the data showed.

Ghaziabad (217.57 micrograms per cubic metre) was the most polluted non-attainment city in the country in terms of PM10 levels, while Faridabad (215.39 micrograms per cubic metre) ranked second and Delhi (213.23 micrograms per cubic metre) stood third.

In 2021, Ghaziabad was the most polluted with respect to PM2.5 levels while it ranked third in terms of PM10 levels.

The country's current annual average safe limits for PM2.5 and PM10 are 40 micrograms per cubic metre and 60 micrograms per cubic metre, respectively.

### **7. In a first, India among the top five ECM markets globally in 2022**

India was among the top five markets, globally, in terms of equity fundraising despite the quantum of funds raised declining by 43 per cent. According to a report by Kotak Investment Banking, funds to the tune of \$16.4 billion were transacted via equity capital market activity in India in 2022. Traditionally, India has rarely featured in the top 10 in terms of ECM activity.

### **8. IndiGo, Coimbatore Airport Among World's 20 Most Punctual Airlines, Airports: Report**

The country's largest airline IndiGo and state-owned Coimbatore airport are among the 20 most punctual airlines and airports globally, according to a report. When it comes to On-Time Performance (OTP) in 2022, IndiGo is ranked 15th while Coimbatore airport is at the 13th position, as per the report by aviation analytics firm OAG.

IndiGo and the Airports Authority of India (AAI)-owned Coimbatore airport are the only Indian airline and airport, respectively, in the OAG's Punctuality League report released.

The list is topped by Garuda Indonesia with an OTP of 95.63 per cent, followed by Safair (95.30 per cent) and Eurowings (95.26 per cent) at the second and third spots, respectively.

Thai AirAsia (92.33 per cent) is at fourth place and Jeju Airlines (91.84 per cent) is in fifth position.

In the top 20 list, IndiGo is ahead of Thai Smile Airways (16th rank), Delta Air Lines (17), Viva Air Columbia (18), Etihad Airways (19) and Emirates (20).

Among the top 20 mega airlines by OTP, IndiGo is at fifth place in the list, topped by All Nippon Airways (88.79 per cent).

Japan Airlines (88.07 per cent) is at second place, followed by LATAM Airlines Group (85.03 per cent) and Azul Airlines (84.87 per cent).

Mega airlines are the world's top 20 operators in terms of scheduled flights in 2022.

Among the top 20 airports in terms of OTP globally in 2022, Coimbatore airport is at 13th place with a score of 88.01 per cent and the cancellation rate was only 0.54 per cent.

The list is topped by Japan's Osaka international airport (Itami) with an OTP of 91.45 per cent.

As per OAG, the definition of OTP is flights that arrive or depart within 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival or departure times.

#### **9. UP emerges top gaming destination; tier 2-3 towns outpacing metros: Report**

Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for mobile gamers, followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Bihar and West Bengal, according to India Mobile Gaming Report 2022 by gaming platform Mobile Premier League released. Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Himachal Pradesh have seen the highest increase in mobile gamers in 2022 compared to 2021.

In terms of games, Ludo Dice, Snakes and Ladders, Carrom, Fruit Dart, Block Puzzle and Poker were some of the top games played by gamers across different Indian cities.

In Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Ghaziabad and Allahabad have the highest share of gamers.

Last year, India became the largest consumer of mobile games in the world, recording over 15 billion downloads, as per a report by Lumikai, a gaming-focused venture capital fund.

India's gaming market was worth USD 2.6 billion in the financial year 2022 and it will reach USD 8.6 billion by 2027 with a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 27 per cent.

#### **10. Rural Health Statistics Report 2021-22 released by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

The latest edition of the Rural Health Statistics 2021-22 shows that India is facing a shortfall of 83.2% of surgeons, 74.2% of obstetricians & gynaecologists, 79.1% of physicians and 81.6% of paediatricians. There has been an over 50% rise in the number of allopathy doctors in primary health centers since the launch of the National Rural Health Mission in 2005.

Since 1992, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has published this annual report.

#### **11. 18th Edition of The Global Risks Report 2023 by World Economic Forum**

The World Economic Forum taking place in Davos, Switzerland released the 18th edition of the Global Risk Report 2023 based on the 2022-2023 Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS) that reveals the cost of living crisis, food supply crisis, energy supply crisis, rising inflation and cyberattacks on critical infrastructure are the major risks, the world is witnessing currently. WEF Global Risks Report ranked the 'cost of living crisis' in first place among all.

#### **12. Global employment will grow by just 1% in 2023: International Labour Organization**

The ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2023 report, projects the global employment growth to be only 1% in 2023, less than half the level in 2022. This would lead to an addition of around 3 million jobs to 208 million. ILO's latest job forecast is lower than its previous estimate of 1.5% growth for 2023. ILO director-general - Gilbert Houngbo

#### **13. India's richest 1% own more than 40% of total wealth: Oxfam**

A new study by Oxfam showed that the richest 1% in India now own more than 40% of the country's total wealth, while the bottom half of the population together share just 3% of wealth. The rights group Oxfam International has released the India supplement of its annual inequality report on the first day of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting.

Mentioning gender inequality, the report stated that female workers earned only 63 paise for every 1 rupee a male worker earned.

For Scheduled Castes and rural workers, the difference is even starker -- the former earned 55 per cent of what the advantaged social groups earned, and the latter earned only half of the urban earnings between 2018 and 2019, the report revealed.

Oxfam said the total number of billionaires in India increased from 102 in 2020 to 166 in 2022. The combined wealth of India's 100 richest has touched USD 660 billion an amount that could fund the entire Union Budget for more than 18 months.

#### **14. National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) to introduce Annual Transparency Report by the Audit Firms**

In accordance with Rule 8(2) of the NFRA Rule 2018, NFRA considers it appropriate to prescribe publication of Annual Transparency Report containing certain critical information about the auditor's operational activities, management, governance and ownership structures, policies and procedures necessary to deliver high-quality audits, etc.

Ajay Bhushan Prasad Pandey is the Chairperson of National Financial Reporting Authority.

The National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) was **constituted** on 01st October 2018 by the Government of India under **Sub Section (1) of section 132 of the Companies Act, 2013**.



### **15. Jio is India's strongest brand, ranked ninth globally: Brand Finance report**

Reliance Jio has been ranked as the strongest brand in India and placed ninth among the world's strongest brands, according to the latest report 'Global 500 ' 2023' published by Brand Finance. 'Jio' was placed ninth among the world's strongest brands ahead of brands like EY, Coca Cola, Accenture and Porsche, and behind the likes of Google, YouTube, Deloitte and Instagram. This is the annual report on the world's most valuable and strongest brands.

### **16. ECLGS saved 14% MSME loans from becoming NPAs: SBI report**

In a recent research by SBI, it has been reported that the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme has helped banks in averting 14 per cent of MSME loans from turning into NPAs. It said, the state of Gujarat was the biggest beneficiary of the scheme followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. These five states together accounted for 75% of the outstanding NPA.

Since the launch of the scheme by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May 2020, MSME loan accounts worth Rs 1.8 trillion in absolute terms were saved from slipping into NPAs. According to the report, in FY21, the financial system disbursed loans worth Rs 9.5 trillion to MSME sector, which is significantly higher than preceding years of Rs 6.8 trillion in FY20. This sharp jump in MSME lending in 2021 has been supported by the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme of ECLGS. Launched by Government of India as a special scheme in view of COVID-19 crisis To provide 100% guarantee coverage to Banks and NBFCs to enable them to extend emergency credit facilities to Business Enterprises / MSMEs in view of COVID-19 to meet their additional term loan/additional working capital requirements.

Interest rate charged is capped at 9.25% for banks and 14% for NBFCs.

Maximum tenure of 4 years from the date of disbursement.

Moratorium period on Principal amount is 12 mon

### **17. Electronic Toll Collection Through FASTag Grows 46 Per Cent, Increases To Rs 50,855 Crore In 2022**

Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) through FASTag has witnessed constant growth over the last few years. Total toll collection via FASTag on fee plazas, including state highway fee plazas during calendar year 2022 was Rs 50,855 crore. This is an increase of approximately 46 per cent as compared to Rs 34,778 crore in 2021.

' The average daily toll collection through FASTag on National Highway fee plazas was Rs 134.44 crore in December 2022, and the single day highest collection touched Rs 144.19 crore on 24 December 2022.

' Similarly, the number of FASTag transactions also witnessed a growth of approximately 48 per cent in 2022 as compared to that in 2021. The number of FASTag transactions in 2021 and 2022 were 219 crore and 324 crore respectively.

' With 6.4 crores FASTags issued as on date, the total number of FASTag enabled fee plazas across the country also grew to 1,181 (including 323 state highway fee plazas) in 2022 from 922 in the previous year 2021.

### **18. Investment Through P-Notes Drops To Rs 96,292-Crore In December 2022**

Investment in the Indian capital markets through participatory notes slightly dropped to Rs 96,292 crore at the end of Dec. 2022 from the preceding month on higher valuation of domestic markets.

Investment via P-notes normally moves in line with FPI investment. When there is a global risk to the environment, investment through P-notes increases and vice-versa.

Participatory notes are issued by registered Foreign Portfolio Investors to overseas investors who wish to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly. They, however, need to go through a due diligence process.

## Important Days

### 1. World Braille Day | January 4

World Braille Day, celebrated since 2019, is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. World Braille Day is observed in honour of Louis Braille, the Frenchman who invented a reading and writing system for the blind and visually challenged.

Braille is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical and scientific symbols. Braille (named after its inventor in 19th century France, Louis Braille) is used by blind and partially sighted people to read the same books and periodicals as those printed in a visual font.

### 2. World Day Of War Orphans | 6 January

The World Day of War Orphans is observed on January 6 every year with an aim to raise awareness about children orphaned in wars, spread information about their plight and emphasise the psychological, social, and physical obstacles that children experience as they grow up. The World Day of War Orphans was founded by the French organisation SOS Enfants enDetresses.

### 3. World Hindi Diwas | 10 January

World Hindi Diwas or Vishwa Hindi Divas is observed on 10 January annually. The day is celebrated globally to commemorate the anniversary of the first time that Hindi was spoken in the United Nations General Assembly in 1949. Vishwa Hindi Diwas is different from Hindi Diwas, which is observed on September 14.

### 4. National Youth Day | 12 January

The National Youth Day is celebrated in India on January 12 every year, which is the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, one of the country's most influential spiritual leaders. The Government of India declared January 12 as National Youth Day in 1984. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the 2023 National Youth Festival in Karnataka's Hubballi-Dharwad.

### 5. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to observe Road Safety Week from 11th to 17th January 2023

Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India is observing the Road Safety Week from 11th to 17th January 2023, under "SwachhataPakhwada", to propagate the cause of safer roads for all. During the week, various activities will be organised including various awareness campaigns related to the causes of road accidents and measures to prevent them.

### 6. National Startup Day | 16 January

In 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced January 16 as the National Startup Day, to celebrate the spirit of the Indian startup ecosystem. The importance of January 16 is that it was the founding day of the Startup India initiative. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade also organised the Startup India Innovation Week from January 10-16. 2022 celebrates the seventh anniversary of the Startup India initiative.

### 7. Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with Indian Coast Guard, Ministry of Defence to present Adi Shaurya -ParvParakram

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence, with the Indian Coast Guard as the coordinating agency, is organising a Military Tattoo and Tribal Dance Festival 'Aadi Shaurya ' ParvParakram Ka,' on the special occasion of Amrit Mahotsav and to mark the 126th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose (ParakramDiwas).

ParakramDiwas (also called Parakram Divas) is celebrated on January 23 every year. It is an Indian national holiday marking the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose (popularly called Netaji), a prominent nationalist, politician, and freedom fighter.

### 8. UNESCO to dedicate the 2023 International Day of Education to Afghan girls and women

Marking the occasion of the International Day of Education, being held on January 24, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced the decision to dedicate the day to girls and women in Afghanistan who have been forcefully stripped of their basic right to education.

UNESCO: Director-General: Audrey Azoulay; HQ: Paris, France.

### 9. International Day of Education | 24 January

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as the International Day of Education with an aim to emphasise the role of education for peace and development. The theme for 2023 is 'To Invest in People, Prioritize Education.' UNESCO has dedicated this year's International Education Day to women of Afghanistan who are being deprived of their right to education.

This year marks the 5th International Day of Education.

The significance of celebrating the International Day of Education is to make education accessible to everyone irrespective of religion, caste, and creed.

According to the United Nations, The right to education is enshrined in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The declaration calls for free and compulsory elementary education. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, goes further to stipulate that countries shall make higher education accessible to all.

#### **10. National Girl Child Day | 24 January**

National Girl Child Day is marked on January 24 to celebrate the girl child. The day, an initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, has been celebrated in India every year since 2008. It was celebrated for the first time with an aim to raise awareness about the inequalities faced by girls and women in society at various levels.

#### **11. India Celebrates 74th Republic Day | 26 January 2023**

India celebrated its 74th Republic day on 26th January 2023.

The 74th Republic Day celebrations took place on the revamped Central Vista avenue this year. This was the first Republic Day celebrations hosted at the ceremonial boulevard after Rajpath was renamed to 'Kartavya Path' last year. For the first time, women will form part of BSF Camel Contingent.

#### **12. International Customs Day | 26 January**

International Customs Day is celebrated on January 26 every year and was initiated by the World Customs Organization in 1983. This day celebrates all the customs officials and agencies that ensure effective world trade management. Theme for 2023 'Nurturing the next generation: promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs'

The Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) currently known as the World Customs Organisation (WCO) was established on January 26, 1953. They formally announced the observance of ICD in an inaugural session that was conducted in Brussels, Belgium.

International Customs Day was first celebrated in 1983 by the Customs Council to observe 30 years of its first session. In 1994, the CCC has been renamed as World Customs Organisation.

#### **13. International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust | 27 January**

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is observed on January 27. It is the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The United Nations Holocaust memorial ceremony in the United Nations General Assembly Hall will be under the theme 'Home and Belonging' for 2023.

The Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, was a systematic extermination of six million Jews and millions of others, such as Romani, homosexuals, people with disabilities, political dissidents, and religious minorities, by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II.

#### **14. Data Privacy Day - 28 January**

January 28 is celebrated as Data Privacy Day (DPD) across the world.

The objective of the day is to sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles. It encourages everyone to own their privacy responsibilities to create a culture of privacy.

The theme for this year is 'Think Privacy First'.

#### **15. World Leprosy Day (WLD) | Last Sunday of January**

World Leprosy Day is observed on the last Sunday of January each year. Established in 1954 by French philanthropist Raoul Follereau, it aims to raise awareness about leprosy (now called Hansen's disease) and teach people about this ancient disease that is easily curable today. Leprosy was renamed as Hansen's disease. In 2023 the day falls on 29th January. Theme for 2023 is 'Act Now. End Leprosy.'

#### **16. Martyrs' Day or Shaheed Diwas | 30 January**

Martyrs' Day, also known as Shaheed Diwas, is observed in India on January 30 to commemorate the death of Mahatma Gandhi, who was assassinated on this day in 1948. The day is observed as a day of non-violence and peace. The day is marked by tributes and the laying of wreaths at Gandhi's memorial at Raj Ghat in New Delhi. International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi

#### **17. World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day | 30 January**

On 31 May 2021, the World Health Assembly (WHA) recognized 30 January as World Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) Day through decision WHA74(18). This decision formalized 30 January as a day to create better awareness on the devastating impact of NTDs on the poorest populations around the world.

Theme for 2023: Act Now. Act Together. Invest in Neglected Tropical Diseases

Examples of Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) : onchocerciasis, trachoma, and lymphatic filariasis

#### **18. National Anti Leprosy Day | 30th January**

In India, Anti Leprosy Day is observed on 30th January every year. 30th January is Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom day. He was deeply committed to the cause of leprosy-affected persons. Leprosy is also one of the neglected tropical diseases. National Leprosy Eradication Programme is a centrally sponsored scheme.



## Summit & Conferences

### 1. Kerala CM inaugurates Indian Library Congress in Kannur

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated Indian Library Congress at the Collectorate Ground in Kannur. The People's Mission for Social Development and Library Council organized the event in association with Kannur University. The program was presided over by Dr V Shivdan, and Higher Education Minister of Kerala Dr R Bindu.

### 2. 1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference On Water To Deliberate Water Vision@2047

Ministry of Jal Shakti organized '1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water' with the theme 'Water Vision@2047' in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The primary objective of the 2-days Conference is to gather inputs for the India@2047 and 5P vision from the different water stakeholders of the states, water being a state subject, and have partnership with states.

With an objective to enhance the insights of this conference, there will be one Plenary Session which will set the agenda of the Conference with a focus on Water Vision@2047. The Conference will have 5 thematic sessions viz.

Water Security in Water Deficit, Water Surplus and Hilly Regions;  
Water Use Efficiency including Reuse of Waste Water/ Grey Water;  
Water Governance;  
Climate Change Resilient Water Infrastructure, and  
Water Quality.

### 3. Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur launches logo, website & themes of Y20 Summit in New Delhi

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur launched the themes of Y20 summit, logo, and website in the Curtain raiser event of Y20 Summit India in New Delhi. The Youth 20 Summit is a unique opportunity to allow the youth to provide constructive policy inputs and to utilize the platform to voice their opinions for the world audience.

Themes of Y20 i.e. i) Future of Work: Industry 4.0, Innovation 21st Century skills, ii) Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making Sustainability a way of life, iii) Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: Ushering in an era of No War, iv) Shared Future: Youth in Democracy and Governance and Health, Wellbeing & Sports: Agenda for Youth.

### 4. First meeting of working group on G20 GPMI began in Kolkata on 9th January 2023

The first meeting of the working group on G20 Financial Inclusion Indicators (GPMI) will begin in Kolkata in January 9. All the member countries, invited countries, and invited organisations like World Bank, IMF, and the United Nations will take part in the meeting. The main session will discuss Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion. Anant Nageswaran-Chief Economic Advisor

India assumed the presidency of G20 from December 1, 2022 for an year upto November 30, 2023.

### 5. India to host 'Voice of the Global South Summit'

To articulate the views of the developing countries regarding the effects of the pandemic India will host the 'Voice of the Global South Summit' under the theme - 'Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose' - essentially envisages bringing together countries of the global south and share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform across a whole range of issues

### 6. Vice President inaugurates 83rd Conference of All India Presiding Officers' in Jaipur

Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has inaugurated the two-day-long 83rd All India Presiding Officers in Jaipur. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. Speakers and Deputy Speakers of various Legislative Assemblies including the Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman also present in the conference. The 82nd AIPOC was held in 2021 in Shimla.

This 83rd Conference of All India Presiding Officers is being held in Rajasthan after eleven years. Earlier this conference was held in Rajasthan in the year 2011.

### 7. G-20's First Infrastructure Working Group Meeting in Pune on January 16-17, 2023

The first G-20 Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) meeting under G20 India Presidency is scheduled to be held during 16th-17th January 2023 in Pune. The forum will bring together the IWG member countries, guest countries and international organisations invited by India to discuss the 2023 Infrastructure Agenda under the Indian G20 Presidency.

The meeting will be hosted by the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India along with Australia and Brazil as the co- chairs. The G20 Infrastructure Working Group deliberates on various aspects of infrastructure investments, including *developing infrastructure as an asset class; promoting quality infrastructure investment; and identifying innovative instruments for mobilizing financial resources for infrastructure investment*. The outcomes of the Infrastructure Working Group feed into the G20 Finance Track priorities and promote Infrastructure Development. The Indian G20 Presidency theme of One Earth, One Family, One Future sets the tone for the 2023 Infrastructure

Agenda under the 2023 Indian G-20 Presidency. The theme underlines the message of equitable growth and aptly ties up with the central agenda of the discussions which is building resilient, inclusive and sustainable urban infrastructure.

#### **8. Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum begins at Davos in Switzerland**

The 53rd edition of the World Economic Forum (WEF) will begin at Davos in Switzerland. The meeting will continue till 20th January. The theme for this year's WEF meeting is 'Cooperation in a Fragmented World'. World leaders are expected to share their insights on the prevalent economic conditions across the globe. WEF founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab

Global leaders taking part in the meeting include, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, European Parliament President Roberta Metsola, South Africa President Cyril M Ramaphosa, Spain Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol, Swiss President Alain Berset and Finland Prime Minister Sanna Marin. Strong participation of leaders from India is expected at the summit.

#### **9. SPIC MACAY, Culture Ministry collaborate for 'Music in the Park' series under 'Shruti Amrut' in New Delhi**

The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) organized its very popular 'Music in the Park' series this year under the name 'Shruti Amrut' in collaboration with Ministry of Culture & New Delhi Municipal Council.

SPIC MACAY is a voluntary youth movement that promotes tangible & intangible aspects of Indian & world heritage. SPIC MACAY movement was started in 1977.

#### **10. Kerala: First G20 Health Working Group Meeting under India's G20 Presidency begins in Thiruvananthapuram**

The first G20 Health Working Group meeting under India's G20 presidency began at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar and Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan delivered the keynote address at the inaugural event.

#### **11. Tourism Ministry to organize 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023**

Tourism is organizing the 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.

The aim of the summit is to bring together global business leaders, and policymakers to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India.

#### **12. PM attends All India Conference of Director Generals/ Inspector Generals of Police on 21-22 January**

The three day Conference, being held from January 20 to 22, 2023, would be held in hybrid format. About 100 invitees including DGP of States/UTs and Heads of Central Armed Police Forces and Central Police Organizations will attend the Conference physically, while the remaining invitees will participate virtually from across the country.

Prime Minister also encouraged the organisation of annual DGP conferences all across the country since 2014. The conference was organised at Guwahati in 2014; Dhordo, Rann of Kutch in 2015; National Police Academy, Hyderabad in 2016; BSF Academy, Tekanpur in 2017; Kevadiya in 2018; and IISER, Pune in 2019 and at Police Headquarters, Lucknow in 2021.

#### **13. G20: Bengaluru to host first environment meeting from February 9-11**

The first G20 environment meeting under India's presidency will be held in Bengaluru from February 9 to February 11 with focus on restoration of degraded lands and ecosystems, biodiversity enhancement, strengthening of the circular economy, and promotion of blue economy along with coastal sustainability. India took over the G20 presidency on December 1 last year.

#### **14. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurates 'International Craft Summit**

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday inaugurated an 'International Craft Summit' in Jajpur. This is the first-of-its-kind craft summit featuring a confluence of pioneering craftspeople, culture, and art enthusiasts. International delegates from 15 countries have arrived in Jajpur to engage with local artisans and other stakeholders, informed the government.

Four UN agencies and five UNESCO Creative Cities have partnered with the District to realize this ambitious and forward-looking event on behalf of the State Government.

#### **15. Business 20 inception meeting began in Gujarat; Minister Piyush Goyal asks businesses to adopt sustainable & green business**

Several policymakers, including Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal besides business leaders and senior executives represented businesses of the G20 countries are participating in the three-day B20 India inception meeting. The Business 20 is amongst the most prominent official engagement groups in G20. The three day B20 inception meeting was held in Gandhinagar. The Centre has appointed N Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata Sons, as the chair of B20.

The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world major developed and developing economies. It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the European Union (EU).

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has been formally designated as the B20 secretariat by Government of India to lead and host B20 during India G20 presidency.

Collectively, G20 accounts for 85 per cent of the global GDP, 75 per cent of international trade, and two-thirds of the world population, making it the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

#### **16. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Chairs 10th Meeting Of Group Of Infrastructure Committee**

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari chaired the 10th meeting of Group of Infrastructure Committee today to address existing inter-ministerial issues with regard to implementation of various infrastructure projects. Shri Gadkari said an action plan has been introduced to accelerate PM Gati Shakti scheme's progress.

#### **17. First India Stack Developer Conference to be held in New Delhi**

The first India Stack Developer Conference will be held in New Delhi on January 25. The conference will dwell on ways and means to ensure wider adoption of India's digital goods all over the world. The conference will be attended by over 100 digital leaders from the Industry, Government, start-ups and unicorns and academia. Delegates from G20 countries are also invited.

Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that India Stack is a multi-layer cluster of digital solutions like Aadhaar, UPI, Digi Locker, Co-Win, GeM, and GSTN that have played a significant role in the digital transformation in India.

He said, the conference will provide a platform for the Industry and developer community to explore ways to develop a robust start-up and innovation ecosystem within the country and also take India stack products to other countries. The Minister added that India Stack will be one of the focus areas at the World Government Summit 2023 which will be held at Abu Dhabi next month.

Full stack development is the end-to-end development of applications. It includes both the front end and back end of an application. The front end is usually accessed by a client, and the back end forms the core of the application where all the business logic is applied.

#### **18. National Child Science Congress to begin in Ahmedabad with more than 1400 delegates**

The 30th National Child Science Congress began in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The five-day event organized at Science City will conclude on 31st January. The program will be hosted by the Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, the Gujarat Council of Science City, and SAL Education. More than 1400 delegates including child scientists, teachers will attend the congress. The 8th edition of India International Science Festival was held at Bhopal.

#### **19. Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya virtually inaugurates National Summit on Quality of Biologicals**

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya virtually inaugurated the National Summit on Quality of Biologicals organized by the National Institute of Biologicals (NIB).

NIB set up in 1992, is an apex autonomous institute under the administrative control of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India. The Institute is located in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

The Institute is performing primary statutory function of Quality Control of Biologicals e.g. Insulin, erythropoietin, blood products, diagnostic kits e.g. HIV, HBV, HCV, therapeutic monoclonal antibodies like Trastuzumab and Rituximab used in cancer treatment etc. in accordance with provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act 1940 and Rule 1945 amended from time to time.

The Immunodiagnostic kit Laboratory of the Institute is a WHO Collaborating Centre for Quality Control of HIV, HCV, HBsAg and Syphilis In-Vitro Diagnostic Assays and Support Cell for WHO Pre-Qualification Programme for In-Vitro Diagnostics.

#### **20. 3rd INTERPOL Young Global Police Leaders Programme in New Delhi**

INTERPOL Secretary General Jurgen Stock virtually addressed the 3rd INTERPOL Young Global Police Leaders Programme (YGPLP) being held in New Delhi.

The event which is being organised by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) began on the 25th of January and will conclude on the 2nd of February. As many as 59 participants from 44 countries are taking part. International Criminal Police Organization - INTERPOL, Headquarters is in Lyon (France).

#### **21. IIT-M to hold G20 seminar on role of digital tech in education**

Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) will organize the G20 seminar on 'role of digital technology in education' at its research park on January 31, 2023, to identify policies for effective use of digital technology in education in the G20 member countries.

The G20 seminar is part of Sherpa Track First Education Working Group Meeting being held in Chennai from January 31 to February 2



## 22. Meghalaya to host G20 nations' meet on space in April, governor BD Mishra

Meghalaya Governor BD Mishra said the state will be hosting a meeting of the G20 nations to discuss how space partnerships can contribute to the economy of the countries.

As part of the G20 programme, Shillong will be hosting the Space-20 program on April 17-18.

The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies.

G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the European Union (EU).

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## Science & Technology

### **1. Science, innovation in 2023 will define India's picture in 2047: Union Minister Jitendra Singh**

Briefing the media in New Delhi Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh said that 2023 Science Vision will define India in 2047.

He has stressed on research related to science and technology reaching the local level to make the country a global hub of research and innovation during this Amrit Kaal.

### **2. All 37 CSIR Labs in India to turn into Global Centers of Research & Innovation: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh**

Union Minister Dr. Jitendarsingh said all 37 CSIR Labs in India will be turned into Global Centers of Research and Innovation in their fields of specialization at the launch of 'One Week One Lab' campaign in New Delhi. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Labs spread across the country are dedicated to different exclusive areas of work.

### **3. Airtel-backed OneWeb launches 40 satellites with SpaceX, to start global services this year**

Airtel-backed OneWeb successfully launched and deployed 40 satellites onboard a SpaceX launcher, the company confirmed in a statement. The launch was the UK-based satellite network provider's 16th successful launch, bringing the total number of satellites in its low-Earth orbit (LEO) constellation of satellites up to 542.

### **4. India has announced a donation of 12,500 doses of pentavalent vaccines to Cuba.**

India has announced a donation of 12,500 doses of pentavalent vaccines to Cuba. The decision was announced during Union Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakashi Lekhi's visit to Cuba from January 12-14.

### **5. Entire country will be covered by Doppler Weather Radar Network by 2025: Dr Jitendra Singh**

Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences, Dr Jitendra Singh has said the entire country will be covered by Doppler Weather Radar Network by 2025 to predict extreme weather events more accurately. He was delivering the keynote address on the occasion of 148th Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department (IMD) in New Delhi.

### **6. Startup firm IG Drones develops India's first 5G-enabled drone**

Startup firm IG Drones, which was born out of the Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology campus in Odisha's Sambalpur has developed a 5G-enabled drone that is capable of vertical take-off and landing. The drone named Skyhawk can be used in defence and medical applications, among other sectors. The drone can carry a 10 kg payload and has an endurance of five hours.

### **7. Cipla launches diagnostic device, says it will provide results in minutes**

Drugmaker Cipla has launched a diagnostic device to test for diabetes, infectious diseases, cardiac markers, thyroid function and other conditions.

Cippoint will allow healthcare professionals to get test results in 3 to 15 minutes, enabling a faster clinical decision-making process. The device has an automated system and is user-friendly and it can be used in remote areas

Cippoint offers a wide range of parameters to test for cardiac markers, diabetes, infectious diseases, fertility, thyroid function, inflammation, metabolic markers, and coagulation markers.

### **8. NASA-JAXA Geotail, Which Studied Earth's Protective Magnetic Bubble, Retires After 30 Years In Orbit**

The NASA-JAXA (Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency) Geotail spacecraft, which studied Earth's magnetosphere, the protective magnetic bubble of the planet, has retired after 30 years in orbit. The mission operations for Geotail ended after the failure of the spacecraft's remaining data recorder, NASA announced on January 18, 2023.

Geotail was launched on July 24, 1992. Since then, the spacecraft has gathered immense information on the structure and dynamics of Earth's protective magnetic bubble. Originally slated for a four-year run, the Geotail mission was extended several times due to its high-quality data return. Thousands of studies describing the findings of Geotail have been published over the years.

### **9. IIT Madras incubated firm develops BharOS that has no default apps**

Homegrown firm JandK Operations Private Limited, which was incubated in the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, has developed a new operating system called BharOS. The company said that the OS can be installed on commercial handsets and comes with no default apps, which allows users more choice on what apps they want on their devices.

### **10. Union Minister Jitendra Singh launches 'Geospatial Hackathon' to promote Start-Ups in India's geospatial sector**

Department of Science and Technology has announced the Geospatial Hackathon in Delhi to promote innovation and Start-Ups in India's geospatial ecosystem.

The Hackathon will conclude on March 10, 2023, with two sets of hackathon challenges to determine 4 winners for the 'best solutions' to the geospatial select problem statements: Research challenge and Start-Ups challenge.

#### 11. The India International Science Festival begins in Bhopal

The 8th edition of the India International Science Festival (IISF) was inaugurated by CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan in the presence of Union Science Minister Jitender Singh at the Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal, on January 21, 2023.

The theme of the four-day festival is Marching towards Amrit Kaal with Science, Technology, and Innovation.

#### 12. Indian And Australian Scientists Develop Artificial Synapse For Brain-Like Computing

A team of Indian and Australian scientists have developed brain-like computing using scandium nitride (ScN), a semiconducting material that is highly stable and compatible with Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor (CMOS) technology.

In the current era of artificial intelligence, brain-like computing can help meet the increasing computational demands.

A team of Indian and Australian scientists have developed brain-like computing using scandium nitride (ScN), a semiconducting material that is highly stable and compatible with Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor (CMOS) technology.

This breakthrough could provide a new material for stable, CMOS-compatible optoelectronic synaptic functionalities that require relatively less energy, making it a potential candidate for industrial use.

Traditional computers have separate memory storage and processing units, which results in the need for large amounts of energy and time to transfer data between these units during operations.

In contrast, the human brain is a highly efficient biological computer due to the presence of a synapse (the connection between two neurons), which acts as both a processor and a memory storage unit.



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## Defence

### 1. DRDO celebrated its 65th Foundation Day on January 1st

Defence Research and Development Organisation is celebrating its 65th foundation day. It was on this day in 1958 when DRDO was formed to make India strong and self-reliant in terms of science and technology and especially in military technologies. A DRDO monograph 'Infrared Signatures, Sensors and Technologies' authored by Dr Kamal Nain Chopra, was released. Chairman, DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat

### 2. Rajnath Singh dedicates 28 BRO infrastructure projects worth '724 crore

Defence minister Rajnath Singh dedicated to the nation 28 infrastructure projects of Border Roads Organisation (BRO), worth '724 crore, at Siyom Bridge on Along-Yinkiong Road in Arunachal Pradesh. The projects comprise 22 bridges, including Siyom bridge, three roads and three other projects in seven border states/union territories of northern & northeastern regions.

### 3. IIT Madras Centre of Excellence works DRDO on Advanced Defence Technologies

Indian Institute of Technology Madras has announced an operation of a Research Centre dedicated to defence technologies in collaboration with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to develop advanced technologies for national defence and security needs of the nation.

Called, DRDO Industry Academia- Ramanujan Centre of Excellence (DIA-RCoE), this centre has been established to conduct directed research in advanced technologies for defence and security and to create a world-class research centre developing cutting-edge technologies. It will also make a major contribution towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat in the defence sector

### 4. India's first woman pilot Avani Chaturvedi to fly Indian Sukhoi fighter jet in aerial wargames in Japan

Squadron leader Avani Chaturvedi, the first female fighter pilot in the Indian Air Force (IAF), is scheduled to participate in the inaugural air exercise Veer Guardian 2023. The exercise is intended to strengthen bilateral air defence cooperation between India-Japan. Veer Guardian 2023 will be held in Japan from January 16 to January 26 at the Hyakuri Air Base.

### 5. India deploys a women-only platoon of peacekeepers to the UN Mission in Abyei

India deploys a women-only platoon of peacekeepers to the UN Mission in Abyei on the border of Sudan and South Sudan as part of the Indian Battalion in the United Nations Interim Security Force, Abyei (UNISFA). The Indian contingent consists of two officers and 25 other ranks. India is among the largest troop-contributing countries to UN peacekeeping. India is deploying largest single unit of female Blue Helmets in a UN mission since 2007.

India was the first country to deploy the first-ever all-female Formed Police Unit (FPU) in the history of United Nations peacekeeping in Liberia on 30th January 2007.

It consisted of 103 women performing operational tasks and providing round-the-clock security, carrying out nighttime patrols in the capital Monrovia, and assisting in enhancing the capabilities of the Liberian police.

In the year 2014, Indian cop Shakti Devi of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, who was deployed in the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The Indian Army Major Suman Gawani received the prestigious United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for her work as a peacekeeper with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in 2019. Dr. Kiran Bedi was the UN first Police Adviser. These women have made a very significant mark in India contribution towards the UN Mission of peacekeeping.

The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) was established by the UN Security Council in response to the critical situation in the Abyei area of Sudan by resolution 1990 of 27 June 2011.

India currently ranks fourth among nations that deploy soldiers, with more than 6,700 of its soldiers and police serving in UN peacekeeping missions. Since 1948, over 200,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions conducted across the world. More than 160 Indian troops died while working for the UN, paying the ultimate price for maintaining peace.

### 6. Indian Navy To Get Autonomous Armed Swarm Boats Under The SPRINT Scheme

In a significant boost to the Indian Navy's (IN) capabilities, the Navy will get autonomous armed Swarm boats from Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt Ltd, the company tweeted.

The contract was signed under the SPRINT programme, which is "a scheme to promote niche defence technologies by Indian domestic companies".

The scheme was launched in July 2022 by Prime Minister Sh. Modi.

SPRINT stands for **Supporting Pole-Vaulting In Research and Development through Innovations for Defence Excellence (IdeX), Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) and Technology Development Acceleration cell (TDAC)**

Under the SPRINT scheme, the Navy is targeting to ink 100 contracts by the end of January 2023 and to induct 75 technologies by 15 August this year. The swarm boat contract is the 50th such contract signed by the Indian Navy.

The Navy is looking to place another order of 12 systems after the construction of the weaponised boat. The platform is capable of doing high-speed interdiction, low-intensity maritime operations, Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4-ISR) missions.

#### **7. India, Japan hold joint exercise to promote air defence cooperation**

India and Japan are holding the joint Air Exercise, 'Veer Guardian-2023' involving the Indian Air Force and Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) at Hyakuri Air Base, Japan from 12th of January. The Joint Exercise which will continue till 26th January aims at promoting Air Defence cooperation between the countries.

The Indian contingent participating in the air exercise will include four Su-30 MKI, two C-17 and one IL-78 aircraft, while the JASDF will be participating with four F-2 and four F-15 aircraft.

#### **8. 7th Armed Forces Veterans' Day celebrated across the country;**

As a mark of respect to the selfless duty of the ex-servicemen & their sacrifices towards the Nation and solidarity towards Next of Kin of the bravehearts, the seventh Armed Forces Veterans' Day was celebrated across the country on January 14, 2023. The celebrations were held at nine locations, with Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh presiding over the main function in Dehradun

The Raksha Mantri also launched the Soul of Steel Alpine Challenge, an initiative to promote tourism in border areas. He launched a website for volunteers to sign up for various adventure activities under this joint initiative of the Indian Army and CLAW Global, a veterans' organization. Road to the Enda 460-km long car rally was also flagged off by Shri Rajnath Singh as part of a joint expedition by Indian Army and CLAW. The Armed Forces Veterans Day is celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> January every year, as on this day in 1953, the First Indian Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who led the Indian forces to victory in the 1947 war, formally retired from the Service. The day is dedicated to the esteemed veterans of the country. The Veterans Day is being commemorated since 2017 to reaffirm the camaraderie between the retired, the serving and the nation and remember honour the heroes who made the supreme sacrifice and selflessly served the nation.

#### **9. Captain Surbhi Jakhmola, 1st woman officer posted on foreign assignment at BRO**

Captain Surbhi Jakhmola of the Indian Army's 117 Engineer Regiment will be the first woman officer to be posted on a foreign assignment at the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

The officer will be sent to Bhutan as part of Project Dantak.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is an executive road construction force in India that supports the Indian armed forces. BRO was transferred entirely to the ministry of defence in 2015.

#### **10. 21st edition of Naval Exercise VARUNA between India and France begins**

The 21st Edition of the Bilateral Naval Exercise between India and France- Exercise VARUNA commenced on the Western Seaboard. The exercise will witness advanced air defence exercises, tactical manoeuvres, surface firings, underway replenishment and other maritime operations.

Bilateral exercise between the two navies was initiated in 1993, it was christened as VARUNA in 2001 and has become a hallmark of India - France's strategic bilateral relationship.

#### **11. Inaugural Edition of Indo-Egypt Joint Training Exercise Cyclone - I Commences in Rajasthan**

The first ever joint exercise between the special forces of the Indian Army and the Egyptian Army named 'Exercise Cyclone-I' is in progress at Jaisalmer in Rajasthan since 14 January 2023. The exercise aims to bolster defence co-operation between the two nations and focus on sharing professional skills and interoperability of Special Forces in desert terrain.

Exercise Cyclone - I is the first exercise of its kind bringing the special forces of both the nations on a common platform. The 14 days long exercise which is being carried out in the deserts of Rajasthan engages both the contingents to advance special forces skills such as Sniping, Combat Free Fall, Reconnaissance, Surveillance Target Designation, sharing of information on weapons, equipment, innovations, tactics, techniques & procedures. The participants would also undertake joint planning and drills for Special Forces operations in a mechanised warfare setting as well as surgical strikes on terrorist camps / hideouts to include sniping of High Value Targets. The joint exercise would provide an insight into the culture and ethos of both armies thereby fostering military cooperation and interoperability to further strengthen the diplomatic relations between India and Egypt.

#### **12. Fifth Scorpene-class submarine 'Vagir' to be commissioned on January 23**

Indian Navy is all set to commission the fifth diesel-electric Scorpene as INS Vagir on January 23. Four of the Kalvari class of submarines have already been commissioned as INS Kalvari, INS Karanj and INS Vela.

Built in India by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai in collaboration with France-based M/s Naval Group, France, Vigar will boost the Indian Navy capability to further India maritime interests by undertaking diverse missions including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying and surveillance missions.

### **13. BSF launches 'Ops Alert' along International Border with Pakistan ahead of Republic Day**

The Border Security Force (BSF) said its troopers had launched 'Ops Alert' with an aim to enhance security along the International Border (IB) with Pakistan in Kutch district of Gujarat and Barmer in Rajasthan in view of the Republic Day celebrations. It is carried out to 'thwart any ill designs of anti-national elements' during the Republic Day celebrations.

### **14. AMPHEX 2023: Biennial tri-services amphibious exercise concludes at Kakinada**

The biennial Tri-Services Amphibious Exercise, AMPHEX 2023 was conducted at Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh in January 23. AMPHEX is aimed at joint training of elements of all three services in various facets of amphibious operations to enhance interoperability and synergy. AMPHEX 23 is the first time that the exercise was undertaken at Kakinada, & was the largest every exercise.

AMPHEX 2023 successfully demonstrated the amphibious capabilities and validated the excellent coordination that exists between the three Services to undertake the full spectrum of amphibious operations.

### **15. Exercise Poorvi Akash: IAF's Eastern Air Command to conduct military drill**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will be conducting its annual Command-level exercise, Poorvi Akash, in the northeastern part of the country. The Eastern Air Command will conduct the exercise. The air combat military drill is being conducted after a gap of two years.

Rafales and Sukhoi-30MKI fighters will be participating in the air military drill.

### **16. TROPEX-Indian Navy undertaking mega exercise in Indian Ocean Region**

The 2023 edition of Indian Navy's major maritime exercise TROPEX, is currently underway in the Indian Ocean Region. This operational level exercise is conducted biennially and witnesses participation not only by all Indian Navy units but also of Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard assets. TROPEX 23 is being conducted over a duration of three months from Jan - Mar.

Exercise TROPEX was first introduced in 2005 and was held on an annual basis up until 2015. After 2015, the mandate of Ex TROPEX conduct was changed to a biennial basis with it being conducted in 2017, 2019 and 2021. Dubbed Indian Navy largest wargame, Exercise TROPEX includes various drills and exercises like Exercise SEA VIGIL and AMPHEX.

According to the Ministry of Defence, Exercise TROPEX incorporates all surface combatants of the Indian Navy, including Frigates, Corvettes, Destroyers, as well as submarines and aircraft. These assets undergo a series of complex maritime operational deployments aimed to refine and validate the Indian Navy concept of operations. Special focus is laid on enhancing the aspect of operational logistics and interoperability with other services of the Indian Armed Forces.

Aimed at joint training of elements of the tri-services in various facets of amphibious operations, Exercise AMPHEX under the TROPEX exercise enhances interoperability and synergy of the Indian Armed Forces. The 2023 edition of Exercise AMPHEX was conducted at Andhra Pradesh Kakinada from January 17 to January 22.

### **17. India Tests Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle**

India tested the Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) from Kalaam Island off the coast of Odisha.

The HSTDV was tested for the first time by the Defence Research and Development Organisation in 2019.

It is an unmanned aircraft built for flying at hypersonic speed (five times greater than that of sound). Former DRDO Chief V K Saraswat, in 2008, said that the aim of the HSTDV project was to demonstrate the performance of a scram-jet engine at an altitude of 15 km to 20 km. With the scram-jet engine, the HSTDV can travel at Mach 6 (7408.8 km/h).

### **18. PM Modi releases commemorative Rs 75 coin to mark NCC Anniversary**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a special day cover and a commemorative specially minted coin of Rs 75 denomination commemorating 75 successful years of the National Cadet Corps (NCC). Notably, the grand event took place in view of the 75 years of the inception of the NCC. NCC Director General-Lieutenant General Gurbirpal Singh, AVSM, VSM

The Cadet Corps Committee which was formed on 29 Sep 1946 with Pt HN Kunzru as chairman for formation of NCC

The Central Govt accepted the opinion of the Provincial Govts and the Standing Committee's recommendations for the formation of a Cadet Corps which was to be named as 'National Cadet Corps', as recommended by the Kunzuru Committee.



The Bill received the assent of the Governor General on 16 Apr 1948, and the National Cadet Corps came into being by an Act of the Parliament Act No. XXXI of 1948 designated 'The National Cadet Corps Act 1948'. This Act with 13 clauses, prescribed the formation of the National Cadet Corps in India. The motto of NCC is: 'UNITY AND DISCIPLINE'. The Ministry of Defence deals with NCC at National Level. The Ministry of Education deals with NCC at State Level.



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## Books & Authors

### 1. 'Fit At Any Age: A Practitioner's Guide' book by Air Marshal P V Iyer (retd).

Retired Air Marshal PV Iyer met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and on the occasion, Iyer presented a book titled 'Fit At Any Age'.

In this book, Air Marshal P.V. Iyer, a 92-year-old runner, tells us how we can make fitness part of our everyday activities at any age, leaving sufficient time for leisure.

### 2. Shashi Tharoor's Latest Book Ambedkar: A Life Launched at Kitaab Kolkata Event

Parliamentarian and author, Shashi Tharoor's latest book Ambedkar: A Life was launched at the Kitaab Kolkata event organized by Prabha Khaitan Foundation. Tharoor lucidly provides a panoramic view of Ambedkar's illustrious life while sharing deep insights and anecdotal references. Tharoor touched upon Ambedkar's strong political stances and decisions that shaped his career.

### 3. Roller Coaster: An Affair with Banking by Tamal Bandyopadhyay

The book brings to light the lives of India's commercial and central bankers. But it does not discuss their successes, failures, or the ever-evolving dynamics of monetary and fiscal policies. It's about their persona, warts and all how they are as leaders, how they evolved, and how they changed the culture and ethos of the Indian banking sector.

### 4. Jadunama, a book written on veteran writer-lyricist Javed Akhtar by Arvind Mandloi

Jadunama, a book written on veteran writer-lyricist Javed Akhtar by Arvind Mandloi, was released. Gulzar unveiled "Jadunama", a coffee table book that draws its title from Akhtar's nickname Jadu. Javed Akhtar is a recipient of Padma Shri (1999); Awadh Samman Uttar Pradesh (2001); the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Ekta Puraskar (2005); and the Padma Bhushan (2007).

### 5. Prince Harry's Spare becomes UK's fastest selling non-fiction book

Prince Harry's memoir, titled Spare, has become the UK's fastest selling non-fiction book ever. The Duke of Sussex's autobiography was officially released on January 10. Its publishers said on Tuesday that they had sold 400,000 copies so far across hardback, e-book and audio formats.

### 6. K Venu Conferred Federal Bank Literary Award

Noted writer K Venu was conferred with Federal Bank Literary Award 2022 for his autobiography 'Oranweshananthinte Katha.' Venu received the award from Balagopal Chandrasekhar, Chairman and Independent Director of Federal Bank, at a special event held as part of the Kerala Literature Festival. This is the first-ever literary award constituted by the Federal Bank.

### 7. 'COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team' by R. Kaushik, R. Sridhar

Coaching Beyond reflects primarily on R. Sridhar's seven-year coaching tenure with the Indian cricket team as its fielding coach. This book isn't as technical as it is anecdotal. It throws light, for instance, on how Virat Kohli overcame a dismal Test series in England in 2014 to smash four hundreds in as many matches in his next overseas outing, in Australia.

### 8. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan released a book titled 'India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn' by Dr Ashwin Fernandes

A newly published thought-provoking book 'India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn' Written by international Indian expat, Dr Ashwin Fernandes launched globally. This book was launched by Honourable Minister of Education of India Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, at an event at Dr Ambedkar International Centre.

Ashwin is regional director for Africa, Middle East, and South Asia at QS Quacquarelli Symonds the world's largest international education network which produces the QS World University Rankings. Dr Fernandes founded India's first nationwide private sector evaluation framework called QS I-GAUGE. He has a Doctor of Philosophy (D.Phil) along with an MBA in Marketing and a BCom degree in Financial Accounting, Auditing & Taxation. He has lived and worked in 5 countries and visited over 300 educational institutions.

## Miscellaneous

### 1. PM Modi flags off Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express.

Flagging off the Vande Bharat Express train connecting Secunderabad with Visakhapatnam through video conferencing, Mr Modi said, it will enhance ease of living, boost tourism and benefit the economy. He added, this Vande Bharat Express is going to connect the culturally diverse Telangana and Andhra Pradesh regions.

### 2. Regional carrier Flybig starts flight service from Itanagar to Guwahati

Regional carrier Flybig started service from Itanagar to Guwahati.

The carrier has commenced flight from Hollongi in Arunachal Pradesh to Guwahati in Assam.

"Itanagar is the 10th destination on Flybig network; while the third destination in Arunachal Pradesh alone. Flybig also flies six days a week to Tezu and seven days to Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh from Guwahati,

### 3. NHAI Implements Extensive Measures to Improve Road Safety on National Highways

As the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) observes 'Road Safety Week', it is undertaking extensive efforts to improve the safety of our national highways. To achieve this goal, NHAI has developed a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for conducting road safety audits. These audits are conducted at various stages of a highway's lifecycle.

### 4. Jallikattu 2023: Celebrations begin in Madurai;

Jallikattu' event also known as 'EruThazhuvuthal' and 'Mancuvirattu' started in full swing in 3 villages of Tamil Nadu's Madurai. Jallikattu, practised in Tamil Nadu as a part of Pongal celebrations on the day of Mattu Pongal, is a sport where a bull is let loose among a crowd and people participating in the the sport are supposed to take control of the bull.

### 5. Amazon back as world's most valued brand, Apple down to No 2: Brand Finance

Amazon has reclaimed the top spot as the world's most valuable brand despite its brand value falling 15 per cent this year from \$350.3 billion to \$299.3 billion, said a new report.

According to brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance's report, 'Global 500 2023', while Amazon is back at No 1, its brand value has fallen by over \$50 billion this year.

Apple (brand value down 16 per cent to \$297.5 billion from \$355.1 billion) has, meanwhile, slipped to second slot to be ranked the world second most valuable brand. This year fall in brand value relates to a fall in forecast revenue with supply chain disruptions and a constrained labour market expected to limit the supply of its marquee hardware products. From India, Tata Group brand value ranking went up to 69 from 78 last year. However, reasons for the ranking going up were not available. Among Indian IT services players, Infosys jumped to the 150th slot from 158 last year.

### 6. World's longest River Cruise MV Ganga Vilas reaches Kahalgao

World's longest River Cruise MV Ganga Vilas reaches Kahalgao World's longest River Cruise MV Ganga Vilas is in Bihar en route to Dibrugarh via Bangladesh. Thirty-two tourists from Switzerland are revelling the journey. The Cruise has reached in Kahalgao, Bhagalpur.

Once upon a time Kahalgao was known as tapobhumi of saints. Guru Vasista, Rishi Durwasa and Rishi Kohal had performed meditation here. Guru Basista had performed special puja to Lord Shiva. After that, this place is known as Bateshwarsthan. There is scenic beauty here. Tourists will also visit excavation site of Vikramshila University. The university was famous as a Centre of learning during the Pala dynasty. The university was established by the King Dharmapala in eighth century and Bakhatiyar Khilji had destroyed the university in 12th century.

Ganga Vilas was flagged off from Varanasi by Prime Minister Narendra Modi . The Cruise will cover a 3,200 km voyage being pitched as the world's longest.

### 7. National AIDS Control Organisation forms Largest Human Red Ribbon Chain in Kalinga Stadium of Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The Odisha State AIDS Control Society, Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of Odisha under the leadership of National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in coordination with the Department of Sports & Youth Services & Hockey India organized an awareness programme on HIV AIDS by forming the 'largest human red ribbon chain' in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on 19th Jan 2023.

### 8. First edition of the SCO Film Festival begins in Mumbai

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State (External Affairs and Culture) Meenakshi Lekhi inaugurated the 5-day SCO Film Festival at NPCA, Mumbai.

The film festival is being organized by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in association with SCO Council of Heads of States. Launched in Shanghai in June 2001, the SCO has eight full members.

The first edition of the SCO Film Festival in India will screen 58 films from 14 countries in both competition and non-competition categories.



The competition section is for SCO member-states and comprises various awards. The non-competition section is for all SCO countries that is member-states, observer nations and dialogue partners states. The Guest of Honour in the opening ceremony of SCO film festival was Ms. Hema Malini. The festival opened with a world premiere of Tamil movie "Appatha" directed by filmmaker Priyadarshan.

Launched in Shanghai in June 2001, the SCO has eight full members China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

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## Obituary

### 1. Tata Group veteran RK Krishnakumar, 84, passes away in Mumbai

Tata Group veteran and Ratan Tata's close confidant R.K. Krishnakumar(KK) passed away in Mumbai. He was 84.

A Padma Shree Awardee, KK was a director in Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata Group. He was instrumental in the acquisition of global tea company Tetley in 2000, that catapulted Tata Global Beverages to be a significant player in the beverages sector.

For several years he was the vice chairman of India Hotels Company Ltd. (IHCL)

### 2. Former Bengal governor Keshari Nath Tripathi passes away

Senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and former West Bengal governor Keshari Nath Tripathi passed away at 88 at his home in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj. Tripathi served as a member of the UP Legislative Assembly six times. On July 14, 2014, Tripathi was appointed as the governor of West Bengal.

### 3. Rehman Rahi, Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee passes away

Professor Rehman Rahi, renowned poet and Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee passed away at his residence in the Nowshera area of Kashmir. At the time of his death, the globally acclaimed poet was 98 years old. In 2007, he received the highest literary award in the country, the Jnanpith award for his collection 'Siyah Rood JaerenManz' (In Black Drizzle). In 2000 the poet was also honored with the prestigious Padma Shri award.

Rahi received Sahitya Akademi Award in 1961 for his collection of poems called Nawroz-i-Saba.

### 4. Renowned Assamese poet NilmaniPhookan passes away at 89

NilmaniPhookan was one of the most celebrated poet of Assam and has been awarded the country's highest literary award, the 56th Jnanpith for the year 2021.

He was awarded the 1981 Sahitya Akademi Award in Assamese for his poetry collection, Kavita (Kobita). He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 1990. The notable works of Phukan are 'XurjyaHenuNaamiAaheEiNodiyedi', 'Kabita' etc.

### 5. Padma Shri awardee Prabhaben Shah passes away

Social worker and Padma Shri awardee Prabhaben Shah of Union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman, and Diu passed away at the government hospital at Daman. She was 92. For her selfless services, Prabhaben was awarded India's fourth highest civilian Award, Padma Shri in January 2022 in the social work category.

In 1969, Prabhaben started sewing classes for women in Daman She also started the Women Cooperative Society, and Women Credit Society. She also started Gujarati and English medium Balwadi (nursery), and a library for students from economically weaker sections.

### 6. Jnanpith awardee NilmaniPhookan passes away

Jnanpith awardee and eminent Assamese litterateur NilmaniPhookan died.

Kavya Rishi Phookan received the Jnanpith award for the year 2021 for his overall contribution to the field of literature.

He is the third recipient of the Jnanpith award in Assam after Birendranath Bhattacharya and Mamoni (Indira) Raisom Goswami.

#### About the Award:

**English along with other Indian languages** is considered for the Award.

The prize carries a cash award of Rs. 11 lakhs, a citation, and a bronze replica of Vagdevi (Saraswati), the goddess of learning.

It is **sponsored by** the cultural organization **BharatiyaJnanpith**.

In 2019, author **Amitav Ghosh** was **felicited with 54<sup>th</sup> Jnanpith Award**. He became the **first English language writerto** become a Jnanpith laureate.

The first recipient of the award was the Malayalam writer G. **SankaraKurup** who received the award in 1965 for his collection of poems, Odakkuzhal (The Bamboo Flute), published in 1950.

### 7. Balkrishna Doshi, pioneer of modernist architecture in India, passes away at 95

Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, who is widely revered for his contribution in the field of architecture, has died. He was 95. For his outstanding contribution to the field of architecture, he was conferred with Pritzker Prize in 2018, RIBA's Royal Gold Medal in 2021, and the coveted Padma Shri in 1976.

His iconic projects include the Shreyas Comprehensive School Campus in Ahmedabad; the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; and Amdavadni Gufa, a cave-like art gallery that exhibits the work of artist M F Husain. However, one of Doshi's favourite projects remained the one he did for Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) in the early 1970s.

### 8. Odisha Minister Naba Kishore Das Dies of Bullet Injury

Odisha's Health Minister Naba Kishore Das, passed away from bullet injuries. The state health minister was shot and grievously injured when he got out of his car. He won his first state election from

Jharsuguda in 2009 on a Congress ticket and was re-elected from Jharsuguda in 2014. Five years later, he joined the BJD.



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## Person in news

### 1. Koustav Chatterjee becomes India's 78th Grandmaster, 10th from West Bengal

Kolkata-based chess player Koustav Chatterjee became India's 78th Grandmaster.

Koustav is also the tenth GM from West Bengal.

Koustav secured his final GM norm by drawing with GM Mitrabha Guha in the 10th round of the MPL National chess championship.

He earned his maiden GM-norm in 2021 October at Sheikh Russel GM 2021 in Bangladesh.

### 2. Indian-American Rajeev Badyal chosen for US space council position

Indian-American Rajeev Badyal is among 30 members selected by US Vice President Kamala Harris to serve on National Space Council Users' Advisory Group(UAG). UAG provides the council advice on matters related to space policy and strategy. Badyal presently leads Amazon's Project Kuiper, which aims to increase global broadband access through a constellation of LEO satellites.

### 3. Magnus Carlsen and Bibisara Assaubayeva are the World Blitz 2022 champions

Norwegian Magnus Carlsen won both the World Rapid and World Blitz chess titles in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

He is now the holder of all three world chess championship titles ' in Classical, Rapid and Blitz ' for the third time in his career, while no other player has ever won both the Rapid and Blitz titles in the same year.

#### World Blitz 2022 Women's Top 3

Silver - GM Koneru Humpy

Gold - IM Bibisara Assaubayeva (KAZ)

Bronze - IM Polina Shuvalova

#### World Blitz Open Top 3

Silver - Hikaru Nakamura (USA)

Gold - Magnus Carlsen (NOR)

Bronze - Haik Martirosyan (Bronze);

#### World Rapid Women Top

Gold - GM Tan Zhongyi (CHN)

Bronze - WIM Savitha Shri B

Silver - IM Dinara Saduakassova

#### World Blitz Open Top 3

Silver - Hikaru Nakamura (USA)

Gold - Magnus Carlsen (NOR)

Bronze - Haik Martirosyan (Bronze)

### 4. Captain Shiva Chouhan becomes first woman officer operationally deployed at Siachen

Captain Shiva Chouhan of the Indian Army's Fire and Fury Corps became the first woman officer to get operationally deployed at the world's highest battlefield, Siachen, after a month's arduous training at Siachen Battle School along with other personnel. Capt Shiva Chouhan from Rajasthan is a Bengal Sapper.

### 5. Divya Deshmukh wins second consecutive National Chess Championship, youngest to defend crown

Divya Deshmukh defeated IM Bhakti Kulkarni in the final round to become a clear champion at MPL 48th National Women Chess Championship 2022. This is her second consecutive National Women title where she remained undefeated.

Since 2011, every single National Women's champion won the event at least twice in-a-row and Divya maintained that record.

MPL 48th National Women's Chess Championship 2022 held at Sanjay Ghodawat University, Kolhapur.

### 6. Gareth Bale announces retirement from professional football

In Spain, Bale won three La Liga titles, one Copa del Rey and five Champions Leagues (2014, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2022).

He calls time on his international career as the most capped Wales men's player with 111 appearances, sitting alongside his record-setting 41 goals.

### 7. France captain Hugo Lloris announces retirement from international football

France's World Cup-winning captain Hugo Lloris announced his retirement from international football at the age of 36.

The Tottenham goalkeeper made a record 145 appearances for France and captained Les Bleus as they won the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

The goalkeeper made his international debut in 2008 and captained the team a record 121 times.

Along with the 2018 World Cup, Lloris also won the 2021 Nations League and guided France to the final of the 2016 European Championship.

Lloris final game with the national team came in the 2022 World Cup final where Argentina defeated France 4-2 in a penalty shootout after a thrilling 3-3 match.

#### **8. Manpreet Monica Singh makes history, sworn in as first female Sikh judge in US**

Indian-origin Manpreet Monica Singh has been sworn in as a Harris county judge, becoming the first female Sikh judge in the US.

She was sworn in as a judge of the Harris County Civil Court at Law No. 4 in Texas.

Indian-American Judge Ravi Sandill, the state's first South Asian judge, presided over the ceremony.

#### **9. Miss Universe 2022: R'Bonney Gabriel of United States crowned 71st Miss Universe**

R'Bonney Gabriel from the USA is Miss Universe 2022. At the grand finale of the 71st Miss Universe contest, which took place on Jan 15, Miss Universe 2021 Harnaaz Sandhu crowned the diva. In the 71st edition of the competition, Venezuela's Amanda Dudamel took second place, followed by Dominican Republic's Andreina Martinez as the second runner-up.

#### **10. South African cricketer Hashim Amla Announces Retirement**

Legendary South African cricketer Hashim Amla has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. Even though Amla had hung up his boots in international cricket in 2019, he was active in the county circuit with Surrey.

Amla played a pivotal role in Surrey winning the County Championship in 2022.

#### **11. Mukesh Ambani ranks 2nd among top 100 CEOs globally**

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) chairman Mukesh Ambani has been ranked 2nd on Brand Finance's annual report on the world's top CEOs for the year 2023.

The Brand Guardianship Index 2023 saw the rise of Nvidia CEO, Jensen Huang to 1st position. They both now rank above last year's leader Microsoft's Satya Nadella, who now ranks third.

The fourth spot on the Brand Guardianship Index 2023 went to Adobe's Shantanu Narayen, while Google CEO Sundar Pichai ranked fifth.

On the sixth place was Punit Renjen, CEO of Deloitte, and Fabrizio Freda of Estee Lauder ranked seventh. The eighth spot on the list of world's best CEOs went to Natarajan Chandrasekaran of Tata Sons.

#### **12. Nepalese ophthalmologist Dr Sanduk Ruit wins Bahrain's ISA Award for Service to Humanity**

Himalayan Cataract Project Co-Founder Dr Sanduk Ruit has won the ISA Award for Service to Humanity, a top civilian award of Bahrain.

The award carries a cash prize of USD 1 million, a certificate of merit and a gold medal. Dr Ruit is pioneer in delivering high-quality microsurgical procedures in remote eye camps.

In 2018, the Government of India awarded him the Padma Shri. He is fondly called as "God of Sight" to have saved 1,20,000 eyesight.

#### **13. Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari nominated as US Air Force Brigadier General**

Indian-American astronaut, Raja J Chari, 45, has been nominated by US President Joe Biden for an appointment to the grade of Air Force Brigadier General.

Chari is currently serving as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center, Texas. Brigadier General (BG) is a one-star General Officer rank of the United States Air Force.

In 2020, Raja Chari was selected as the Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) by NASA and the European Space Agency. Chari joined this mission after extensive experience as a test pilot. He has accumulated more than 2,500 hours of flight time in his career.

## Insurance

### 1. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance signs Suryakumar Yadav for a new campaign

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance announced an association with the world's top T20 batter Suryakumar Yadav, to launch a new digital-first campaign - "360 Financial Protection with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance".

Life insurance straddles the two most important aspects of financial planning - protection and savings.

### 2. SBI General Insurance collaborates with Himachal Pradesh Police and Doers NGO to promote road safety

SBI General Insurance has partnered with the Doers NGO to assist Himachal Pradesh police in reducing the number of traffic accidents. Under the CSR initiative, SBI General has donated a well-equipped ambulance which would provide timely medical care to the road accident victims in Mandi district within the 'Golden hour'. Kishore Kumar Poludasu, MD & CEO, SBI General Insurance.

### 3. LIC Jeevan Azad: New LIC policy for Rs 5 lakh cover and other benefits

The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has launched Jeevan Azad, which is a new plan aimed at individual savings and life insurance. LIC Jeevan Azad is a limited-period payment endowment plan that provides financial support for the family in case of unfortunate death of the life assured during the policy term.

The minimum basic sum assured under LIC Jeevan Azad Plan is Rs 2 lakh and the maximum basic sum assured is Rs 5 lakh. The policy can be taken for term of 15 to 20 years.

The minimum age of entry is 90 days completed and the maximum age at entry is 50 years.

Premium can be paid regularly at yearly, half-yearly, quarterly or monthly intervals.

### 4. Star Health and Allied Insurance and Punjab National Bank enter into long term Bancassurance Tie-up

Star Health and Allied Insurance, one of the leading Health Insurance companies in India, renewed its strategic corporate agency tie-up with Punjab National Bank (PNB) for a long-term period. Punjab National Bank, one of India's oldest and second largest nationalized bank, will continue to distribute Star Health's insurance products across all their branches pan India.



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## India & World

### 1. Indian-assisted 720 MW Mangdechhu hydro project handed over to Bhutan's DGPC

The India-assisted 720 Megawatts Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project has been handed to Druk Green Power Corporation in Bhutan. With the handing over of the project, India and Bhutan have successfully completed four mega hydroelectric power projects. The Institute of Civil Engineers, London awarded the project with Brunel Medal 2020 as a recognition of its excellence.

### 2. India assumes Wassenaar Arrangement chairmanship on Jan 1, 2023

India assumed the chairmanship of the plenary of the 42-member Wassenaar Arrangement on Jan 1 for one year.

The Wassenaar Arrangement is a voluntary export control regime that monitors transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods.

At the 26th annual plenary of the Arrangement in Vienna last month, Ireland handed over the chairmanship to India's Jaideep Mazumdar. India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in December 2017 as its 42nd participating state.

### 3. India to take over leadership of APPU having its Headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand from January

India will take over the leadership of Asian Pacific Postal Union having its Headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand from this month. APPU is an intergovernmental organization of 32-member countries of the Asian-Pacific region. The goal of APPU is to extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between member countries and to promote cooperation in the field of postal service.

Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh, erstwhile Member (Personnel), Postal Services Board will take over the charge of Secretary General of the Union for a tenure of four years.

### 4. ISRO and Microsoft collaborate to support space-tech startups in India

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Microsoft signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to fuel the growth of space-tech startups in India. The MoU seeks to empower space tech startups across the country with technology tools and platforms, go-to-market support and mentoring to help them scale and become enterprise ready.

Shri S Somanath, Chairman, ISRO. Anant Maheshwari, President, Microsoft India.

### 5. Tanzania govt delegation visits India to learn about best practices in e-governance

A 5-member delegation led by Ms. Jenista Joakim Mhagama, Minister of State in the President's Office for Public Service Management & Good Governance of the United Republic of Tanzania called on Union Minister of State (I/C) Science & Technology; Minister of State (I/C) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy & Space Dr Jitendra Singh.

### 6. India, U.S. establish new trade group to bolster supply chains

India and the United States have established a new working group to build sustainable supply chains and boost bilateral trade, the governments. The working group will initially focus on trade facilitation, digitization of customs procedures, issues related to mobilization of sustainable finance and scaling up of innovative clean technologies.

### 7. Hyderabad selected to host WEF Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The World Economic Forum (WEF) has chosen Hyderabad for establishing its Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution focused on healthcare and life sciences.

The C4IR Telangana will be an autonomous, non-profit organization and the only such of World Economic Forum in India with a thematic focus on healthcare and life science. WEF managing director: Jeremy Jurgens.

### 8. India Extends USD 40 Million For Bolstering Maldives' Sports Infrastructure

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India has extended a concessional USD 40 million Line of Credit for developing sporting infrastructure in the Maldives, as part of New Delhi's efforts to bring Prime Minister Narendra Modi's flagship projects such as "Fit India" and "Khelo India" into the ambit of the Neighbourhood First Policy.

Fit India and Khelo India were introduced by the Modi government to revive sporting and fitness culture at the grass root level in the country.

The community centre in Shaviyani Foakaidhoo is part of 45 high-impact projects that New Delhi is partnering with the Maldives government, of which 23 have been completed.

Foakaidhoo is one of the inhabited islands of the Shaviyani Atoll administrative division and is geographically part of the Miladhummadulhu Atoll in the Maldives.

### 9. India elected as Vice-chair at the 12th session of FAO's Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (ITWG) on Animal Genetic Resources

In the recently concluded 12th Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources at Rome. India was elected as Vice-chair and represented Asia & Pacific region. In 12th Session of ITWG, implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources,

monitoring of AnGR diversity and preparing the 3rd Country Report were reviewed. FAO Headquarters: Rome, Italy FAO Founded: 16 October 1945, Qubec City, Canada  
The Working Group was established by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), functions to review technical issues; advise and make recommendations to the Commission and further implement the Commission programme related to AnGR at the global level. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.



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## Environment

### 1. 2022 tied as world's fifth-warmest on record, U.S. scientists say

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had ranked 2022 as the sixth warmest since 1880. European Union scientists this week said 2022 was the fifth warmest year in their records. NASA said temperatures were increasing by more than 0.2C per decade, putting the world on track to blow past the 2015 Paris Agreement's goal to limit global warming to 1.5C to avoid its most devastating consequences. At this year's COP28 climate conference, countries will formally assess their progress towards the Paris Agreement's 1.5C goal - and the far faster emissions cuts needed to meet it. COP28 host the United Arab Emirates appointed the head of its state-owned oil company president of the conference, sparking concerns among campaigners and scientists about the fossil fuel industry influence in the talks.

### 2. Centre puts Neelakurinji on the list of protected plants

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF) has listed Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) under Schedule III of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, including it on the list of protected plants.

Those who uproot or destroy the plant will invite a fine of '25,000 and 3 years' imprisonment.

Cultivation of Neelakurinji and its possession is not allowed.

The plant was endemic to a small stretch in Western Ghats.

The plant was endemic to a small part of the Western Ghats from the Mangaladevi hills to the Nilgiri hills.

In the Western Ghats region, about 70 varieties of Neelakurinji plants have been identified.

The most popular is Neelakurinji *Strobilanthes kunthiana* Which blooms once in 12 years.

The Eravikulam National Park near Munnar is known for its extensive flowering of Kurinji, with the next flowering season expected in 2030.

### 3. Arunachal yields India's newest butterfly

A swallowtail butterfly disappearing from its previously known ranges from Myanmar and southern China to Vietnam has been recorded for the first time in India. Three butterfly enthusiasts 'Atanu Bose, Loren Sonowal and Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi' recorded the 'extremely rare' Noble's Helen (*Papilio noblei*) from three locations in the Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh. Kaiser-i-Hind is Arunachal's State butterfly



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## Apps & Portals

### 1. Rajnath Singh launches 'Soul of Steel' Alpine Challenge to promote tourism in border areas

A 'Soul of Steel' challenge will be launched in India in order to test one's high-altitude endurance. The effort that would be undertaken in Uttarakhand, is spearheaded by a venture, CLAW Global, run by veterans and is being supported by the Indian Army. The feat is on the lines of the 'Ironman triathlon' long-distance triathlon challenge in Europe.

The expedition will be formally launched on January 14. Initially, there would be 12 Indian participants plus six international teams, and the age group to apply would be between 18 and 30 years. The challenge would be spread across three months.

### 2. Shri SarbanandaSonowal inaugurates National Logistics Portal

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways SarbanandaSonowal inaugurated the 'National Logistics Portal (Marine)' a single-window portal aimed at reducing logistics cost.

It covers all modes of transport in waterways, roadways, and airways along with an e-marketplace to provide a seamless end-to-end logistic service coverage.

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## Acquisitions & Mergers

### 1. InCred Capital acquires digital investment firm Orowealth in all-cash deal

InCred Capital has acquired Orowealth, a wealth technology startup, in an all-cash deal that enables it to enter retail wealth management. Orowealth, which has more than Rs 1,100 crore worth of assets under management (AUM), will be absorbed into InCred's new wealth-tech platform InCred Money.

### 2. Reliance Consumer Products to acquire 50% stake in makers of Sosyo

Reliance Consumer Products (RCP), the FMCG arm of Reliance Retail Ventures (RRV), has announced that it will acquire a 50 per cent stake in Gujarat-based SosyoHajoori Beverages, the owner of soft drink brand Sosyo. A product of the Swadeshi movement of the Indian independence struggle, Sosyo was established in 1923 by Abbas Abdulrahim Hajoori. Isha Ambani, executive director, RRV Abbas Hajoori, chairman, SosyoHajoori Beverages

### 3. Eicher Motors To Acquire 10.35% In Spanish Firm Stark Future For Over Rs 440 Crore

Eicher Motors Ltd said it will acquire a 10.35 per cent equity stake in Spanish electric motorcycle maker Stark Future for '50 million (over Rs 440 crore). The acquisition is part of a strategic collaboration in the electric motorcycle space with Stark Future SL, said Eicher Motors, the parent company of Royal Enfield, a mid-weight motorcycle manufacturer. Eicher Motors Ltd MD- Siddhartha Lal Stark Future founder and CEO-Anton Wass

### 4. SBI MF gets RBI's nod to buy 10% stake in Equitas Small Finance Bank

The Reserve Bank of India gave its approval to SBI Funds Management Ltd to acquire up to 9.99% stake in Equitas Small Finance Bank through the schemes of SBI Mutual Fund. Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund and DSP Mutual Fund have also received RBI's approval to buy 9.99% stake each in the bank. As on September 30, 2022, SBI Large & Midcap Fund held 3.09 per cent stake in Equitas SFB PN Vasudevan- CEO of Equitas Small Finance Bank

### 5. NCLT gives approval for merger of multiplex operators PVR and Inox

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved the merger of multiplex operators PVR and Inox, the two chains said in separate filings to the stock exchanges. On March 27, 2022, PVR and Inox, the country's largest and second-largest cinema chains, had announced that they proposed to come together, which would result in a network of over 1,500 screens. The combined entity will be named PVR Inox.

The two companies while announcing the merger had said that Ajay Bijli will be the Managing Director of the combined entity and Sanjeev Kumar would be appointed as the Executive Director.

After the merger, INOX promoters will own a 16.7 percent stake, while PVR promoters will have a 10.6 percent stake in the combined entity.

### 6. Adani Green Energy Arm To Buy 50% In EsselSauryaUrja

Adani Green Energy arm will acquire 50% in EsselSauryaUrja Company of Rajasthan Ltd. (ESUCRL) from EsselInfraprojects Ltd. for Rs 15 crore. Adani Renewable Energy Holding Two Ltd. has entered into a binding term sheet with EsselInfraprojects Ltd on Jan. 17 to this effect.

The remaining 50% will continue to be held by the government of Rajasthan.

ESUCRL owns and operates a solar park with 750 MW capacity in Rajasthan. It had a turnover of Rs 9.87 crore in 2021-22. The authorised capital of ESUCRL is Rs 50 crore while the paid up capital is Rs 46.56 crore.

The acquisition will expand Adani Green's footprint in the state where Adani Green already owns and operates a solar park in a joint venture with the Rajasthan government -- Adani Renewable Energy Park Rajasthan Ltd. It was incorporated on May 27, 2015.

### 7. Vedanta To Acquire Meenakshi Energy For Rs 1,440 Crore

Vedanta Ltd. will acquire the embattled power company Meenakshi Energy Ltd. for Rs 1,440 crore. The Anil Agrawal-led company was declared the successful bidder under the corporate insolvency resolution process for Meenakshi Energy today. Following this, the board of the company approved the acquisition of the thermal power company.

Meenakshi Energy runs a two-phase, 1,000 MW coal-based power plant in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. Insolvency proceedings were initiated against the power generator in November 2019.

### 8. ITC to acquire Yoga Bar to strengthen presence in nutrition health foods space

ITC Ltd is set to acquire 100% stake in Sproutlife Foods Private Limited (SFPL) that sells health bars and muesli under the Yoga Bar brand.

ITC will acquire 100% of SFPL over a period of 3 to 4 years. 47.5% stake in SFPL will be acquired, in tranches, by March 31st, 2025; the balance stake will be acquired, basis pre-defined valuation criteria. ITC chairman: Sanjiv Puri.

### 9. Sun Pharma to acquire US-based Concert for \$576 mn

Mumbai-based Sun Pharma will acquire US-based biotech firm Concert Pharma for \$576 million to advance the potential treatment of alopecia areata, an autoimmune dermatological disease.

Concert Pharmaceuticals is a late-stage clinical biopharmaceutical company that is developing deuruxolitinib for the treatment of alopecia areata. Dilip Shanghvi is the founder of Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd.

#### **10. Canara Bank To Sell Its Stake In Russian Joint Venture To SBI For Rs 114 Crore**

Canara Bank said it plans to sell its stake in Russian joint venture Commercial Indo Bank LLC (CIBL) to the other venture partner State Bank of India for about Rs 114 crore. CIBL, incorporated in 2003, is a joint venture in Russia between SBI (60 per cent) and Canara Bank (40 per cent). Canara Bank is expected to receive USD 14.67 million or about Rs 114 crore from SBI.

#### **11. IndiGrid to acquire 100% stake in Khargone Transmission for Rs 1497 crore**

India Grid Trust will acquire a 100 per equity stake in Khargone Transmission at an enterprise value of about Rs 1,497.5 crore. The acquisition will be for a cash consideration of an enterprise value not exceeding Rs 1,497. 5 crore. The Khargone Transmission was incorporated on November 28, 2015. The transmission project was awarded by the Ministry of Power for 35 years.




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## Agri-Business

### 1. UBI sanctions 150 agri drone loans for Garuda Kisan Drones under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

Drone startup Garuda Aerospace has announced its partnership with the Union Bank of India. Under this partnership, 150 Garuda Kisan Drones have received sanction for drone loans under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF). The drone loans will help farmers to digitise land record operations for crop production, and spraying of fertilisers, chemicals.

Garuda Kisan Drone is the 1st to receive the Agri Drone loan in July 2022 from Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar. Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) has about INR 1 lakh crore out of which 1000 crores have been allocated to drones. The AIF loans are collateral-free and can secure up to Rs.10 lakhs with three months of EMI relaxation and a 5 per cent interest rate for the youth and farmers. This development will help youth to buy drones and will help them earn their livelihood.

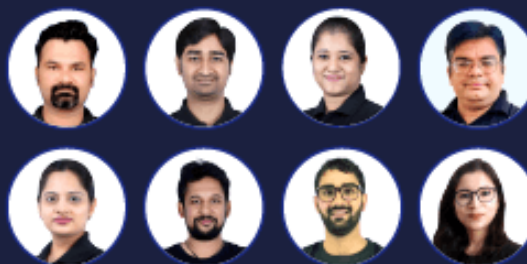
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## FinTech

### 1. Google pilots 'Soundpod by Google Pay' for UPI payments in India

Google is actively working on a Soundbox for the India market -- similar to the Paytm or PhonePe ones that you see at your neighbourhood shop which gives a sound alert on the digital payment that has been made.

The 'Soundpod by Google Pay' is accompanied by a QR code of a merchant linked with their Google Pay for business account.

The Soundpods are being built by Amazon-backed ToneTag.

### 2. PhonePe raises \$350 Mn, joins India's decacorn club

Payments app PhonePe has raised \$350 million in funding from global growth equity firm General Atlantic at a pre-money valuation of \$12 billion.

The latest valuation has put the Bengaluru-headquartered startup in India's decacorn club ( startups with a valuation of over \$10 billion).

PhonePe also recently announced a full separation from the Flipkart Group. Sameer Nigam, Founder and CEO at PhonePe.

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## PSUs

### 1. Power Grid ranked 1st in services sector across categories in PE Survey 2021-22

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited has been ranked 1st in the Services Sector across categories Gross Block, Value Addition, Net Profit, Net Worth, Dividend Declaration and Contribution to Central Exchequer and has also been ranked 3rd amongst Top 10 Top 10 Profit Making CPSEs in the recently published Public Enterprises Survey 2021-22 by DPE. Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), is under Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

### 2. President Droupadi Murmu lays foundation stone of SJVN's 1000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project

President of India Droupadi Murmu, laid the foundation stone of SJVN Limited's 1000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project at Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Governor of Rajasthan Kalraj Mishra and Chief Minister of Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot. This Project is being implemented by SJVN Limited through its wholly-owned subsidiary SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL). SJVN Limited's Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) Nand Lal Sharma.

SJVN has bagged this 1000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project under Central Public Sector Undertaking Scheme Phase-II, Tranche-III (Government Producer Scheme) through competitive bidding. The power generated by the project shall be for self-use or use by Government/Government entities, either directly or through Distribution Companies (DISCOMS).

### 3. Indian Oil Corporation to invest '2,200 crore in Tamil Nadu

The planned projects include a 'grass-roots terminal' at Asanur and Vallur, a 'captive petroleum' project, oil and lubricant-LPG jetty at Kamarajar port among others.

The company constitutes a 57% share in Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), 36.9% in petrol, and 43.9% in diesel in the state of Tamil Nadu. Shrikant Madhav Vaidya is the current MD & Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) is India flagship **Maharatna** national oil company.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd was established in the year 1959 as Indian Oil Company Ltd. In the year 1964 Indian Refineries Ltd merged with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. Indian Oil Blending Ltd a wholly owned subsidiary was merged with Indian Oil on May 2006.

### 4. GRSE signs pact with Rolls Royce Solutions to manufacture marine diesel engines

Kolkata-based public sector shipyard, Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd. has signed an MoU with Rolls Royce Solutions of Germany to locally manufacture the latter's marine diesel engines. Under the agreement, GRSE and Rolls Royce Solutions will cooperate in the licence production and localisation of the technologically advanced

MTU S4000 marine engines. Cmde P R Hari, IN (Retd), Chairman & Managing Director of GRSE Ltd.

MTU is a solution brand of Power Systems, a fully-owned subsidiary of Rolls Royce. The manufacture of these engines in India would also provide a great opportunity to local industry, particularly Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) involved in the manufacture of components and spares.

### 5. Mahanadi Coalfields Constructs Fascinating Eco-park & Coal Museum in Odisha

Coal India subsidiary Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) has constructed an eco-park and coal museum at Orient Area in Ib Valley Coalfields, Jharsuguda, Odisha, as part of its larger plan to evolve environment friendly and sustainable mining practices.

### 6. BSNL strikes deal with Echelon Edge for private networks in India

India's state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has inked a partnership with compatriot IT company firm Echelon Edge to deploy private 5G network for enterprise customers.

This partnership will enable Echelon Edge to be a provider of private LTE and 5G services under the BSNL spectrum allocated for Captive networks.

### 7. ONGC's 'Sagar Samrat' Set To Add 6,000 Barrels Per Day To India's Crude Oil Production

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri re-dedicated ONGC's iconic drilling rig 'Sagar Samrat' as a Mobile Offshore Production Unit (MOPU), which will up to 20,000 barrels per day (BPD) of crude oil and is expected to add 6,000 BPD to India's production.

Commissioned in 1973, Sagar Samrat turned tides of India's oil fortune by putting it on the global oil map.



## State/UT

### Arunachal Pradesh

#### 1. India Redesigns 11,000 MW Power Project On Brahmaputra In Arunachal To Counter Possible Chinese Misadventure In Future

The proposed 11,000 MW hydro power project on the Brahmaputra in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Siang district is being reportedly 'redesigned' due to concerns over China's proposed 60,000 MW hydropower project in Medog, Tibet.

According to reports, the design of the Indian project now includes a "buffer storage" of 9 billion cubic meters of water during monsoonal flow.

The Brahmaputra, also known as the YarlungTsangpo in China, is a transborder river that originates in the Mansarovar lake and flows 1,700 km within Tibet, 920 km in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and 260 km in Bangladesh.

It accounts for nearly 30 per cent of freshwater resources and 40 per cent of India's hydropower potential. Diverting its flow could mean agricultural impacts downstream in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

### Chhattisgarh

#### 1. Chhattisgarh CM celebrates traditional 'Cherchera' festival

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel celebrates the traditional Cherchera festival at Dudhadhari Math in the state capital Raipur. The traditional Cherchera festival is celebrated on the full moon night of 'Paush' Hindu calendar month in the happiness of taking the crops to their homes after cultivation.

### Goa

#### 1. India's First Festival of Inclusion, Purple Fest to begin in Goa

The first-of-its-kind inclusive festival in India, 'Purple Fest: Celebrating Diversity' is set to begin in Goa on 5th January. The festival aims to showcase how we can come together to create a welcoming and inclusive world for everyone. It will feature a variety of exciting live performances, sporting events etc.

### Gujarat

#### 1. International Kite Festival 2023 inaugurated with G20 Theme

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the International Kite Festival 2023 in Ahmedabad. The theme of the festival is 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. The festival is being organized by the Gujarat Tourism department and after a two-year halt due to the pandemic. Governor of Gujarat- Acharya Devvrat

### Himachal Pradesh

#### 1. Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhu launches Rs 101 crore fund for orphans, destitutes

Himachal Pradesh chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announced a '101-crore fund, the Mukhya Mantri Sukhashraya Sahayata Kosh, to facilitate the higher education of needy children and destitute women. The state government will bear the expense of beneficiaries' skill development, education, higher education and vocational training at engineering colleges, IITs, NITs.

### Kerala

#### 1. World's first palm-leaf manuscript museum comes up in T'puram

Billed as the world's first palm leaf manuscript museum, the facility is essentially a repository of curious nuggets of administrative, socio-cultural and economic facets of Travancore spanning a period of 650 years till the end of the 19th century, besides documents relating to territories of Kochi in the state's middle and Malabar further north.

#### 2. Kerala becomes country's first fully digital banking state

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan declared Kerala as the first state in the country to go fully digital in its banking service and said this recognition would boost the state economy.

The Chief Minister also said the ambitious Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project of the state government, which was almost 90 per cent completed, will reduce the digital divide.

#### 3. Kerala's Wayanad becomes first district in country to provide basic documents to all tribal people

Wayanad becomes the first district in the country to provide basic documents and facilities such as Aadhaar cards, ration cards, birth/death certificates, election ID cards, bank accounts and health insurance to all tribespeople.

Wayanad district administration has attained this as part of the Akshaya Big Campaign for Document Digitisation which was introduced in Nov 2021.

#### 4. Kerala announces maternity leave of 60 days for female students above 18 years

Higher Education Minister in Kerala R Bindu announced that girl students above the age of 18 years would get maternity leave of 60 days.

The required attendance percentage for female students will be 73%, including the menstrual leave, as against 75% earlier.

Earlier, Cochin University of Science and Tech announced to grant the of menstrual leaves to its female students.

#### **Karnataka**

##### **The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone and dedicated various developmental projects in Kodekal, Yadgir, Karnataka**

The projects include laying the foundation stone of the Yadgir multi-village drinking water supply scheme under the Jal Jeevan Mission and 65.5 km section ( fromBadadal to Maradagi S Andola) of Surat - Chennai Expressway NH-150C, and inauguration of the Narayanpur Left Bank Canal ' Extension Renovation and Modernisation Project (NLBC ' ERM).

#### **Jharkhand**

##### **Ranchi Meteorological Centre adjudged best in country Official**

Ranchi, Jan 15 (PTI) The Ranchi Meteorological Centre has been adjudged the best among such facilities across the states. The performance of the Ranchi centre in disseminating weather-related information to its stakeholders in time with a higher accuracy rate has been appreciated by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

#### **Madhya Pradesh**

##### **1. Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan announces 'LadliBahna' scheme; women to get Rs 1,000 a month**

The Madhya Pradesh government will give Rs 1,000 every month to women from all sections of society who don't pay income tax. It's been named 'LadliBahna' scheme, following from the 'Ladli Laxmi' that is a flagship scheme of the MP government for girls from poor families. LadliBahna covers a wider spectrum of beneficiaries. MP Chief Minister- Shivraj Singh Chouhan MP Governor- Mangubhai Patel

#### **Maharashtra**

##### **1. PM Modi launches projects worth Rs 38,000 cr, inaugurate two Metro rail lines during Mumbai visit**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of a string of projects worth more than Rs 38,000 crore aimed at developing infrastructure, easing urban travel, and strengthening healthcare during his visit to Mumbai.

The PM dedicated to the nation the Mumbai Metro Rail Lines 2A and 7, worth around Rs 12,600 crore. The foundation stones of these lines were laid by PM Modi in 2015.

He also laid the foundation stones for seven sewage treatment plants, a road concretisation project, and redevelopment of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus at a function to be held on the MMRDA grounds in the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC)

##### **2. New plateau type discovered from Maharashtra**

A rare low-altitude basalt plateau housing 76 species of plants and shrubs from 24 different families discovered in Thane region in the Western Ghats'one of the four global biodiversity hotspots in India, can prove to be a repository of information for species interactions.

The Western Ghats is one of four global biodiversity hotspots in India, and Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) in Pune has been studying its biodiversity, particularly its rock outcrops, for a decade. Plateaus are dominant landscapes in the Western Ghats, significant because of the predominance of endemic species. They are classified as a type of rock outcrop and provides unique and challenging environment for species to adapt to. These outcrops have seasonal water availability, limited soil and nutrients, making them ideal laboratories to study the effects of climate change on species survival. Plateaus are thus a valuable source of insight into how species can survive in extreme conditions. The ARI team led by Dr. Mandar Datar recently discovered a rare low-altitude basalt plateau in Manjare village, Thane district. This is the fourth type of plateau to be identified in the region; the previous three are laterites at high and low altitudes and basalt at high altitudes. Surveying the plateau, the team documented 76 species of plants and shrubs from 24 different families. The authors believe this is an important discovery, as the plateau shares the vegetation with the three other rock outcrops, simultaneously holding a few unique species. This gives a unique model system to study the species interactions in varying environmental conditions.

#### **Manipur**

##### **1. Manipur: Gaan Ngai festival of Zeliangrong community to be celebrated on 4th January**

The Gaan Ngai festival is one of the major festivals of Manipur which is celebrated every year after harvesting. The festival also marks the end of the year when the farmers have stored their foodgrain in their granaries. The Zeliangrong community in Manipur comprises Rongmei, Liangmei, and Zeme tribes.

##### **2. Sh. Amit Shah lays foundation stone of 21 projects worth Rs 1,311 crore at Manipur**

"The projects include, Churachandpur Medical College built at a cost of Rs 46 crore, Marjing Polo Statue built at a cost of Rs 39 crore, Manipur Olympian Park at Sangaithel, Manipur Exhibition Center in Imphal-East, District Youth Skilling and Employment Centres, Fruit Preservation Factory, Neelakuthi across five districts of the state,". Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah.

Sh. Shah also unveiled the 165-foot tall tricolor at the historic Azad Hind Fauj Headquarters at Moirang, which is the tallest national flag in the entire Northeast region. On

### **Meghalaya**

#### **1. India's first online gaming Centre of Excellence to come in Shillong**

India's first Centre of Excellence for online gaming will be set up in Shillong, said the Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeew Chandrasekhar.

Digital India Startup Hub through the Software Technology Parks of India shall set up India's first Centre of Excellence in Online Gaming in Shillong by March 2023.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) recently circulated Draft amendments to the IT Rules 2021 in relation to online gaming for public consultation.

The ministry further released draft amendments to the IT intermediary rules 2021, pertaining to online gaming for public consultations. The draft has been prepared to ensure that online games are offered in conformity with Indian laws and that the users of such games be safeguarded against potential harm.

### **Mizoram**

#### **1. Determinants of Financial Literacy and Financial Inclusion in North-Eastern Region of India: A Case Study of Mizoram by RBI**

The Financial Inclusion score and Financial Literacy score for the study region were generated using the OECD/INFE (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/International Network on Financial Education) Toolkit. The estimated average financial literacy score was 14.37 on a scale of 0 to 21 (i.e., 68.43 per cent).

Other key findings of the study are as follows:

The level of financial awareness in the region was limited - about 32 per cent of the respondents were not aware of any financial products other than the savings bank account.

About 20 per cent of the respondents reported lack of knowledge about basic payment options, and

about 43 per cent of the respondents reported lack of usage of available options despite awareness.

About half of the respondents were found to be unaware of financial institutions other than banks, viz., non-banking financial companies, microfinance institutions and small finance banks.

Use of life insurance cover was low among the respondents.

Among the identified factors, the place of residence (block), employment type and nature of family (joint versus nuclear) of the respondents were seen to strongly influence their financial inclusion and financial literacy status.

### **Nagaland**

#### **1. Nagaland: 3rd edition of annual Orange festival 2023 underway in Kohima**

In Nagaland, the third edition of the annual Orange festival 2023 is being organised in collaboration with the department of Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development, Land Resources and Kohima Smart City at Rusoma village, Kohima district. It is conceptualised to recognise and celebrate the hard work of the orange growers while facilitating them the market linkage.

At present, there are about 35,000 standing trees of orange plantation in Rusoma village and is generating an income of more than 40 Lakh rupees to the village. The two day orange festival also featured several stalls like sale of handicraft, organic vegetables and fruits, food items, sale of orange saplings, workshop on orange and coffee plantation and signature campaign on Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

### **Punjab**

#### **1. Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann launches Schools of Eminence Project**

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann launched Schools of Eminence in Mohali and said it is a revolutionary step for ensuring golden future of the students. Inspired by Delhi's Schools of Specialized Excellence, in the first phase, 117 existing government schools will be upgraded as 'Schools of Eminence'.

The aim of the scheme is to re-imagine education in government schools for holistic development of children and prepare them to be responsible citizens

The document underlines that these schools will cater to Class 9 to 12 students and will offer four main streams; non-medical, medical, commerce and humanities for 11 and 12. However, the focus will not just be on science. Students will also be exposed to art, dance, music, theatre, foreign languages, life skills etc. Professional coaches will be provided for sports training, says the scheme document.

The scheme proposes to incorporate legal studies as a part of the curriculum in these schools.

The scheme proposes to well-lit spacious rooms, electrical appliances, adequate furniture, functional toilets, vending machines for sanitary pads and incinerators machines, swimming pool, Wi-Fi, auditorium among other facilities.

Three committees at the state, district and school level will be constituted to supervise the progress of the project.



## **Tamil Nadu**

### **1. Project to protect NilgiriTahr, Tamil Nadu animal, launched**

The Tamil Nadu government operationalised the 'NilgiriTahr project' touted as the first-of-its-kind in the country which aims at restoring the original habitat of the state animal and stabilising its population. With a budgetary outlay of Rs 25.14 crore, the five-year initiative will set up a dedicated team headed by a project director to deal with the conservation.

According to the Worldwide Fund for Nature report published in 2015, there are 3,122 NilgiriTahrs in the wild. Historically, the species are known to inhabit a large portion of the Western Ghats, but they now remain restricted to scattered habitat patches in TN and Kerala.

Locally known as Varaiaadu, they are protected under Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1975.

## **Tripura**

### **1. Election Commission's 'Mission-929' to take voter turnout in Tripura to over 90%**

The Election Commission (EC) is focusing on 929 polling booths across Tripura, setting a target of 92 per cent voter turnout in the assembly elections due early this year. These booths recorded a voter turnout of less than 89 per cent, which was the average across 3,328 booths in the 2018 assembly polls.

### **2. Union Labour and Employment Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav lays the foundation stone of 100 bedded ESIC Hospital at Agartala,**

Union Minister of Labour & Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav laid the foundation stone of 100 bedded Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Hospital, Tripura from New Delhi in a virtual event

## **Uttar Pradesh**

### **1. Uttar Pradesh Receives Rs 2 lakh crore Investment Commitments in Solar Sector**

Uttar Pradesh has received investment commitments worth approximately Rs 2 lakh crore in solar energy and related sectors, according to state energy minister A K Sharma.

The state has launched the 'Uttar Pradesh Solar Energy Policy 2022,' which aims to establish 22 gigatonnes (GW) of green energy projects in the state by 2027.

### **2. UP emerges top gaming destination; tier 2-3 towns outpacing metros: MPL report**

Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for mobile gamers, followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Bihar and West Bengal, according to India Mobile Gaming Report 2022 by gaming platform Mobile Premier League released on Sunday. Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Himachal Pradesh have seen the highest increase in mobile gamers in 2022 compared to 2021.

In terms of games, Ludo Dice, Snakes and Ladders, Carrom, Fruit Dart, Block Puzzle and Poker were some of the top games played by gamers across different Indian cities.

In Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Ghaziabad and Allahabad have the highest share of gamers. Thirty-six per cent of the total gamers in UP hail from these cities. This is the second year in a row that Lucknow has earned recognition for its gaming prowess -- last year. IMGR revealed that growth in Lucknow outpaced all metro the report said. Last year, India became the largest consumer of mobile games in the world, recording over 15 billion downloads, as per a report by Lumikai, a gaming-focused venture capital fund

## **Uttarakhand**

### **1. Uttarakhand Govt Abolishes System Of Revenue Police**

1800 revenue villages of Uttarakhand have now been handed over to the police. The Dharm government has notified these villages to be brought under regular police abolishing the system of revenue police. In the first phase, the border of 52 police stations and 19 police posts will be expanded. In 2018 the High Court had ordered to completely abolish the Revenue police system

### **2. 30% women's reservation bill approved by Uttarakhand governor**

Governor of Uttarakhand Lt. Gen (retd) Gurmit Singh gave the nod to a Bill that gives 30% reservation to the native women of the State. With the Governor's nod to Uttarakhand Public Services (Horizontal Reservation for Women) Bill, 2022, the women candidates with Uttarakhand State domicile got the legal right of 30% reservation in public services and posts.

### **3. Uttarakhand tableau wins first prize, Punjab Regiment adjudged best marching contingent**

The colourful Uttarakhand tableau which showcased the state's wildlife and religious sites at the 74th Republic Day parade has won the top prize, while the Army's Punjab Regiment has been adjudged the best marching contingent among the three services.

Uttarakhand was followed by Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in the second and third positions respectively.

Gujarat's tableau emerged as the numero uno in the popular choice segment.

Among the central ministries and departments, the tableau by the CAPF, the Ministry of Home Affairs, emerged as the best in the popular choice segment.

The IAF's marching contingent emerged as the winner among the three services in the popular choice category.

Among the ministries and departments, the tableau of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Eklavya Model Residential Schools) won the best prize.

### **West Bengal**

#### **1. Prime Minister Virtually Inaugurates Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation in Kolkata**

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS) at Joka in Kolkata via video conferencing.

SPM ' NIWAS has been set up at a cost of around Rs. 100 Crore, on 8.72 acres of land at Joka, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata, West Bengal.

### **Jammu and Kashmir**

#### **1. J&K becomes first Indian UT to completely shift to e-governance mode**

Leading the digital transformation in governance, Jammu and Kashmir has become the first union territory (UT) in India to have entirely shifted to digital mode of administration.

According to an order issued by the UT chief secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, all governance and administrative services in the state are now 'only' available digital.

#### **2. J-K govt approves Rs 91 crore project for revival of sericulture, setting up 100 new rearing centres**

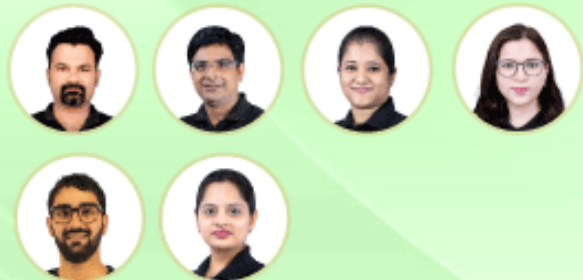
The Jammu and Kashmir government has approved an ambitious project worth Rs 91 crore for the revival and revitalization of the silk industry in the Union Territory through technological interventions. The region is known for its high-quality bivoltine silk and has the potential to become a major silk-producing hub in the country.



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## Committees

### 1. 3 grievance appellate panels to handle social media users' complaints; consultation on modalities soon

The government is considering three grievance appellate committees (GACs) to look into complaints by users against decisions of social media platforms, and consultations on various modalities of the panels will start in January.

Broadly, these appeals could be around complaints regarding sexually explicit content, misinformation, or religious incitement.

### 2. WEF launches initiative to unlock \$3 trillion a year for climate and nature

The World Economic Forum launched the Giving to Amplify Earth Action (GAEA) to help unlock the USD 3 trillion of financing needed each year to reach net-zero, reverse nature loss and restore biodiversity by 2050.

The global initiative to fund and grow new and existing public, private and philanthropic partnerships (PPPPs) is supported by more than 45 partners, including HCL Technologies through its chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra. With the energy and cost of living crises, the ambition of steering the planet towards a 1.5-degree Celsius warming pathway hangs in the balance. The recent agreement at the UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15) in Montreal to conserve 30 per cent of all Earth and sea looks bold but fragile in the face of a rising biodiversity crisis.

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## Important CA

### 1. Launch of Utkarsh 2.0 ' Reserve Bank of India's Medium-term Strategy Framework

The Reserve Bank of India's Medium-term Strategy Framework for the period 2023-2025 ' Utkarsh 2.0' was launched by Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI.

The 1st strategy framework (Utkarsh 2022) covering the period 2019-2022 was launched in July 2019. It became a medium-term strategy document guiding the Bank's progress towards realisation of the identified milestones,

Utkarsh 2.0 harnesses the strengths of Utkarsh 2022 by retaining the six Vision statements as well as Core Purpose, Values, and Mission statement. Collectively, they create a strategic guiding path. The Vision in Utkarsh 2.0 that will guide the Reserve Bank of India over the period 2023-25 are:

Excellence in performance of its functions;

Strengthened trust of citizens and Institutions in the RBI;

Enhanced relevance and significance in national and global roles;

Transparent, accountable and ethics-driven internal governance;

Best-in-class and environment-friendly digital and physical infrastructure; and

Innovative, dynamic and skilled human resources.

### 2. SpaceX launches 54 upgraded Starlink internet satellites and nails rocket landing at sea in 60th flight of the year

SpaceX launched the first batch of a new generation of Starlink satellites into orbit on Dec 28th, 2022 and nailed a rocket landing at sea to mark a record 60th flight of the year. A Falcon 9 rocket topped with 54 upgraded Starlink internet satellites ' the first generation 2 (Gen2) versions of the SpaceX fleet was launched from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida

Starlink is a satellite internet constellation designed and manufactured by SpaceX to provide high-speed, low-latency internet to people living in remote and rural locations around the globe

### 3. Centre makes digitally capturing MGNREGA attendance universal from January 1

Digitally capturing the attendance of workers employed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been made universal by the Centre from January 1, 2023. The government for transparency and accountability in May 2021, had started a pilot project to capture attendance via a mobile application, the National Mobile Monitor System(NMMS).

### 4. Over 81 crore people to get free food grain under new integrated Food Security Scheme from Jan 1

The Centre will provide foodgrains to states under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) free for one year from Jan 1 to Dec 31, 2023. Last week, the cabinet had decided to provide grains under NFSA free of cost to the 81 crore beneficiaries during 2023.

The central government will bear the food subsidy of more than Rs 2 lakh crore for the year 2023.

### 5. RBI releases 2022 list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)

State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, and HDFC Bank continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs), under the same bucketing structure as in the 2021 list of D-SIBs. The additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) requirement for D-SIBs was phased-in from April 1, 2016 and became fully effective from April 1, 2019. The additional CET1 requirement will be in addition to the capital conservation buffer.

The Reserve Bank issued the Framework for dealing with Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) on July 22, 2014. The D-SIB framework requires the Reserve Bank to disclose the names of banks designated as D-SIBs starting from 2015 and place these banks in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs). Based on the bucket in which a D-SIB is placed, an additional common equity requirement has to be applied to it. In case a foreign bank having branch presence in India is a Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB), it has to maintain additional CET1 capital surcharge in India as applicable to it as a G-SIB, proportionate to its Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs) in India, i.e., additional CET1 buffer prescribed by the home regulator (amount) multiplied by India RWA as per consolidated global Group books divided by total consolidated global Group RWA. The Reserve Bank announced SBI and ICICI Bank as D-SIBs in 2015&2016. Based on data collected from banks as on March 31, 2017, HDFC Bank was also classified as a D-SIB, along with SBI and ICICI Bank. The current update is based on the data collected from banks as on March 31, 2022.

### 6. Centre constitutes High Powered Committee to discuss measures to protect Ladakh's unique culture, language & employment

The Centre has constituted a High Powered Committee to discuss measures to protect Ladakh's unique culture, language and employment. It has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai. The Committee will discuss the protections to Culture and Language considering the geographical location and strategic importance of Ladakh.

Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur, MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Chairmans of Leh and Kargil Hill councils, representatives of Apex Body Leh, Kargil Democratic Alliance and nominee officials of Home ministry are among the members in High powered committee.

It will also discuss the protections to land and employment for the people, inclusive development, employment generation, and measures related to empowerment of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils of Leh and Kargil.

#### 7. Croatia adopts euro, enters borderless Europe club

Croatia adopted the euro currency and entered Europe's passport-free Schengen zone after a decade since joining the European Union. It became the 20th member of the eurozone. It will also be the 27th nation in the passport-free Schengen zone, the world's largest, which enables more than 400 million people to move freely around its member nations. Kuna was the old currency.

#### 8. PM Modi inaugurates 108th Indian Science Congress virtually

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 108th Indian Science Congress (ISC) through video conferencing. This year's ISC is being held at Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Maharashtra. The focal focal theme of this year's ISC is Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment.

The Science Congress will witness discussions on issues of sustainable development, women empowerment and the role of science and technology.

Addressing the inaugural session of the five-day event, Prime Minister said, India scientific community will play an important role in achieving the heights India will reach in the next 25 years.

He said, in the field of Science, India has found its place in the top 10 countries of the world. Till 2015, in 130 countries, India was at 81st place in the Global Innovation Index. In 2022, we leapt to 40th place, Mr Modi said.

He said, India is among the top three countries in PHDs and Startup ecosystem.

#### 9. NTPC starts India's first green hydrogen blending operation in PNG network

NTPC Ltd commissions India's first green hydrogen blending project. The green hydrogen blending has been started in the piped natural gas (PNG) network of NTPC Kawas township, Surat. The project is a joint effort of NTPC and Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL). Green hydrogen in Kawas is made by electrolysis of water using power from already installed 1 MW floating solar project.

Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), the regulatory body has given approval for 5% vol./vol. blending of green hydrogen with PNG to start with and the blending level would be scaled phase wise to reach 20%. Green hydrogen when blended with natural gas reduces CO2 emissions keeping net heating content same.

#### 10. MoU signed for commercial production of indigenously developed 'Lumpi-ProVac'

Agrinnovate India Limited, the commercial department of Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare granted 'Non-Exclusive Rights' for Commercial production of 'Lumpi-ProVac', to Institute of Veterinary Biological Products (IVBP), Pune National Centre for Veterinary Type Culture, ICAR-NRCE, Hisar in collaboration with ICAR-IVRI, Izatnagar, UP has developed a homologous live-attenuated LSD vaccine, named Lumpi-ProVacInd.

**What is Lumpy Skin Disease?** Lumpy skin disease (LSD) is a contagious viral disease of cattle and buffalo that causes relatively low mortality. It does not affect humans. The disease can result in animal welfare issues and significant production losses. **Causes & Symptoms** The lumpy skin disease virus (LSDV) is a virus of the capripoxvirus genus in the poxviridae family. It is transmitted by insects that feed on blood, like mosquitoes, ticks, and certain species of flies. Lumpy skin disease also spreads through contaminated fodder and water. The disease causes fever, nodules on the skin and can be fatal, especially in animals that have never been exposed to the virus.

#### India develops indigenous Lumpi-ProVacInd

**Lumpi-ProVacInd:** Lumpi-ProVacInd is safe in animals and induces LSDV-specific antibody-and cell-mediated immune response, besides providing complete protection against lethal LSDV challenge. Lumpi-ProVacInd is used for the prophylactic immunization of animals against Lumpy Skin Disease, which illicit protection for about one year. A single dose of the vaccine contains 103.5 TCID<sub>50</sub> of live-attenuated LSDV (Ranchi strain). The vaccine is stored at 4 degree Celsius. The vaccine must be shipped on ice and must be used within a few hours after reconstitution. The patent has been filed by the ICAR for the technology.

**Lumpy Skin Disease Outbreak in India** The Lumpy Skin Disease has been reported in India from 2019 while the first case was reported in the state of Odisha. After that, it has spread to multiple states in the country. It rapidly spread in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. In 2019, death of a large number of cattle was reported from different states with high morbidity, especially in the North-West region of the country. The disease has been controlled and contained with the available Goat Pox vaccine in the country. Considering the heavy production losses and mortality of a sizable number of cattle, ICAR initiated research on development of indigenous homologous vaccine against Lumpy Skin Disease.

### 11. Union govt clears National Green Hydrogen Mission with initial outlay of 19 thousand 744 crore rupees

The Union Cabinet approved the '19,744-crore National Green Hydrogen Mission with an objective to become a major exporter in the field and make India a global hub for the production, utilisation, and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives. The development will help India, achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy will formulate the scheme guidelines.

### 12. Odisha-based Annapurna Finance applies for universal bank license

Bhubaneswar-based Annapurna Finance Private Limited (AFPL) has applied to the Reserve Bank of India for a universal bank licence. Established in 2009, the micro-finance institution has been promoted by People's Forum (PF), a society registered in Odisha, which comes under the RBI's NBFC-MFI category. As per the RBI's licensing guidelines, **the initial minimum paid-up voting equity capital for a universal bank should be Rs 500 crore.** Thereafter, the bank should have a minimum net worth of Rs 500 crore at all time.

In April 2014, the RBI had given in-principle approval to Bandhan Bank and IDFC Bank to start universal banking operations. IDFC Bank has since merged with Capital First Ltd to form IDFC First Bank. The RBI in 2021 had announced a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee, headed by former RBI deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath, for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks.

RevathyIyer, director, central board, RBI; B Mahapatra, former executive director, RBI; T N Manoharan, former president, ICAI; and Hemant G Contractor, former MD, SBI and former chairman, PFRDA, are members of the committee.

### 13. BSE names Sundararaman Ramamurthy as MD & CEO

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has appointed Sundararaman Ramamurthy as the Managing Director and chief executive office (CEO) of the company with effect from January 4, 2023. Ramamurthy will now succeed Ashishkumar Chauhan, former MD and CEO of BSE. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved the appointment.

### 14. Sanjeev Sanyal's New Book On Role Of Revolutionaries In India's Freedom Struggle

Noted economist and popular historian Sanjeev Sanyal is set to release his latest book, **"Revolutionaries: The Other Story of How India Won Its Freedom,"**

Sanyal, has authored best-selling books including "Land of the Seven Rivers," "The Ocean of Churn," "India in the Age of Ideas," and "The Indian Renaissance." Sanjeev Sanyal is currently part of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council.

### 15. RBI allows six entities to test fintech products to deal with financial frauds under sandbox scheme

The six entities are -- BahwanCybertek, Crediwatch Information Analytics, enStage Software (Wibmo), HSBC in collaboration with Wibmo, napIDCybersec and Trusting Social.

The regulatory sandbox allows the regulator, innovators, financial service providers and customers to conduct field tests to collect evidence on the benefits and risks of new financial products. The selected entities would commence testing their products in February.

The RBI invited applications for the first cohort with the theme Retail Payments in November 2019 and for the second cohort with the theme Cross Border Payments in December 2020.

### 16. Govt approves Rs 12,882 crore for continuation of development schemes in northeast

The Centre has approved the continuation of schemes of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) with an outlay of Rs 12,882 crore for the balance period of the 15th Finance Commission (2022-23 to 2025-26).

According to an official statement, the actual expenditure in the last four years under the DoNER schemes was Rs 7,534.46 crore. Union Minister of DoNER, Tourism & Culture, Shri G. Kishan Reddy. The NESIDS, a central sector scheme with 100 per cent central funding, has been restructured having two components -- **NESIDS (Roads) and NESIDS (other than road infrastructure).**

the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) recommendations, the outlay for the **North East Special Infrastructure Scheme (NESIDS)** will be Rs 8,139.5 crore, including the committed liabilities of the ongoing projects.

The outlay for the Schemes of NEC will be Rs 3,202.7 crore, including the committed liabilities of the ongoing projects, the outlay for special packages for the Bodoland Territorial Council, the Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council (DHATC) and the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC) in Assam is Rs 1,540 crore, including the committed liabilities of the ongoing projects.

### 17. Odisha Wins World Habitat Awards 2023 For Slum Upgradation Program

Odisha won the UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023 for Jaga Mission, a 5T initiative of the state. Jaga mission is the land titling and slum upgrading program that aims at empowering the lives of slum dwellers. Earlier in 2019, Odisha's Jaga mission had received World Habitat Awards for its success in providing land tenure security to the slum dwellers.



### 18. Chess: 16-year-old M Pranesh becomes India's 79th Grandmaster

16-year-old Tamil Nadu chess player M Pranesh crossed the 2500-rating threshold and became a GM, having completed his three norms before he clinched the title in the Rilton Cup, the first tournament on the FIDE 2023 calendar, in Stockholm.

Koustav Chatterjee recently become the country's 78th Grandmaster during the National Senior Chess Championship.

### 19. RBI to issue green bonds in two tranches of '8,000 cr. each

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will auction '16,000 crore of sovereign green bonds (SGrBs) in two tranches, the central bank announced.

The RBI will auction 5-year and 10-year green bonds worth '4,000 crore each on 25 January and on 9 February, and this would be a uniform price auction.

In line with the ambition to significantly reduce the carbon intensity of the economy, the Union Budget for 2022-23 had mentioned about SGrBs.

Green bonds are financial instruments that generate proceeds for investment in environmentally sustainable and climate-suitable projects.

The features of the SGrB issuance will be as below:

- i) Issuance Method: SGrBs will be issued through Uniform Price Auction.
- ii) Non-competitive bidding facility: Five per cent of the notified amount of sale will be reserved for retail investors as specified under the Scheme for Noncompetitive Bidding Facility in the auction of Government of India Dated Securities and Treasury Bills.
- iii) Eligibility for Repurchase Transactions (Repo): SGrBs will be eligible for Repurchase Transactions (Repo) as per the terms and conditions mentioned in Repurchase Transactions (Repo) (Reserve Bank) Directions, 2018 as amended from time to time.
- iv) Eligibility for Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR): SGrBs will be reckoned as eligible investment for SLR purpose.
- v) Underwriting: The underwriting in the auction of SGrBs by the Primary Dealers will be as per the Revised Scheme of Underwriting Commitment and Liquidity Support issued by the Reserve Bank vide circular No.RBI/2007-08/186 dated November 14, 2007, as amended from time to time.
- vi) When-issued Trading: SGrBs will be eligible for When Issued trading in accordance with the guidelines on Transactions in the When Issued market in Central Government Securities issued by the Reserve Bank of India vide circular dated July 24, 2018, as amended from time to time.
- vii) Tradability: SGrBs will be eligible for trading in the secondary market.
- viii) Investment by Non-residents: SGrBs will be designated as specified securities under the Fully Accessible Route for investment in Government Securities by non-residents.

### 20. SEBI allows govt. stake in IDBI Bank to be reclassified as public post sale

Capital markets regulator SEBI has allowed the Central Government to classify its stake in IDBI Bank as "public" after its stake sale on condition that its voting rights do not exceed 15%, of the total voting rights of the bank. The government and state-run Life Insurance Corp (LIC) together hold about 95% in IDBI Bank.

The government and state-run Life Insurance Corp (LIC) have sought initial bids from investors to buy a 60.72% in the bank to a private entity and hand over management control of the bank to the winning bidder after the disinvestment process ends.

The government, with a more than 45% stake in IDBI Bank, is currently classified as a co-promoter of the lender. The government is looking to sell its 30.48% stake in IDBI Bank, while state-backed LIC will offload its 30.24% share in the lender.

### 21. RBI releases Annual Report of Ombudsman Schemes, 2021-22

The Reserve Bank ' Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), was launched on November 12, 2021, by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The ambit of RB-IOS, 2021 was extended to include non-scheduled Urban Cooperative Banks with deposits of '50 Crore & above.

The rate of disposal of complaints by RBIOs improved to 97.97 per cent in 2021-22 from 96.59 per cent in 2020-21.

Under the RB-IOS, 2021, a Centralised Receipt and Processing Center (CRPC) was established at RBI, Chandigarh to receive complaints through email/physical mode from across the country and handle the initial scrutiny and processing of these complaints before assigning the maintainable ones to ORBIOs for further redressal.

### 22. Karnataka's Heritage Cities Mysuru, Hampi Among Sites To Be Developed Under Centre's Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme

Karnataka Hampi And Mysuru are enlisted in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme, a Central Sector scheme launched in 2014-15 by Ministry of Tourism & Culture to promote, develop & harness potential of tourism & integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.

Mysuru and Hampi are among the 36 destinations that have been chosen for development under the scheme.

Heritage sites in 19 states and union territory have made it to this list. This includes **Gandikota and Arakku- Iambassingi in Andhra Pradesh, Bomjir and Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh, Jorhat and Kokrajhar in Assam, Gaya and Nalanda in Bihar, Chandigarh, Provorim and Colva in Goa, Dholavira and Dwarka in Gujarat, Kumarakom and Kozhikode in Kerala, Leh and Kargil in Ladakh among others.**

Swadesh Darshan was first launched by the central government in **2015** under which 75 sites were developed. In July 2022, the Ministry of Tourism revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) in order to develop sustainable and responsible destination centric approach with objectives such as enhancing contribution of tourism to local economies; creating jobs including self-employment for local communities; and enhancing skills of local youth in tourism and hospitality.

### **23. India's first-ever coal gasification based Talcher Fertiliser plant in Odisha will be ready by October 2024: Mansukh Mandaviya**

The proposed fertilizer plant in Odisha's Talcher will start urea production in 2024. It will be India's first and largest coal gasification-based urea plant. It is a Rs 13,200 crore worth project which will revive the shut-down fertilizer plant formerly owned by Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd (FCIL).

FCIL Talcher unit is being established by Talcher Fertilizers Ltd (TFL), a company promoted by GAIL (India) Ltd. (GAIL), Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF), Coal India Ltd. (CIL) and Fertilizers Corporation of India Ltd. (FCIL).

### **24. PravasiBharatiya Divas: PM Modi inaugurates PravasiBharatiya Divas (PBD) convention in Indore**

PM Modi inaugurated the PravasiBharatiya Divas convention in Indore.

President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali will be the chief guest and the Republic of Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi will be the special guest of honour.

The theme of the PBD convention is 'Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal'.

PravasiBharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed on **9 January**.

'9th January commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915. To mark this day, the tradition of celebrating PravasiBharatiya Divas (PBD) started in 2003. 1st PBD Convention was organised on 9 January 2003 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the development of India.' Since 2015, under a revised format, PBD Convention has been organised once every 2 years.

### **25. RS Sodhi steps down as Amul MD; Jayen Mehta takes interim charge**

Amul Federation's managing director RS Sodhi, who has been leading the Amul since 2010, stepped down.

The decision to replace Sodhi was taken at the board meeting of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), the farmers' cooperative that operates the Amul brand.

He has been replaced for an interim period by Jayan Mehta, Amul's incumbent chief operating officer. GCMMF's chairman: Shamalbhai Patel.

### **26. RBI lists 6 rating agencies for banks' capital adequacy purposes**

The Reserve Bank of India released a list of domestic credit rating agencies banks are advised to use for risk weighting their claims about capital adequacy. It listed Acuite Ratings & Research Limited, Credit Analysis and Research Limited (CARE), CRISIL Ratings Limited, ICRA Limited, India Ratings and Research Private Limited, and INFOMERICS Valuation and Rating Pvt Ltd.

Banks have to get ratings from these agencies to comply with Basel-III capital regulations, the RBI said.

The RBI said no fresh ratings/evaluations shall be obtained from Brickwork Ratings India Private Limited.

In October last year, the Securities and Exchange Board of India has cancelled the Certificate of Registration (CoR) granted to Brickwork Ratings India Private Limited as a Credit Rating Agency (CRA) and directed it to wind down its operations within a period of six months.

Rating agencies are companies that engage in the activity of issuing ratings on the instruments issued by various companies. These ratings are used by investors to form informed opinion about these organisations.

### **27. Joshimath declared as 'landslide-subsidence zone'**

Uttarakhand government has officially declared Joshimath a 'landslide-subsidence zone' in view of the growing threat of land sinking resulting in cracks in several houses and roads. Over 68 families living in the sinking town have been evacuated to temporary relief centres so far and at least 90 more families are yet to be shifted.

The United States Geological Survey describes land subsidence as a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth surface due to removal or displacement of subsurface earth materials. According to the

American body, subsidence is a global problem, and in the United States more than 17,000 square miles in 45 states have been directly affected by subsidence.

Subsidence is most often caused by the removal of water, oil, natural gas, or mineral resources out of the ground by pumping, fracking, or mining activities. This feature can also be caused by natural events such as earthquakes, soil compaction, erosion and sinkhole formation.

Land subsidence is not a new phenomenon in India; studies have shown that certain parts of Delhi like Kapashera, near the Indira Gandhi International airport, has seen land subsidence, with this specific land sinking at the rate of 11 cm per year during 2014-2016, which grew to more than 17 cm per year during the two years that followed.

In India, the main cause of subsidence is the unregulated pumping of groundwater and the rapid pace of urbanisation.

### **28. RBI deputy governor Michael Debabrata Patra reappointed for one year**

Reserve Bank of India deputy governor Michael Debabrata Patra has been reappointed for a period of one year with effect from January 15, 2023.

The appointments committee of the cabinet approved it.

Patra, a career central banker since 1985, took over as the deputy governor on January 14, 2020.

### **Other 3 deputy governors.**

Shri Mahesh Kumar Jain

Shri M. Rajeshwar Rao

Shri T. Rabi Sankar

### **29. DPIIT to organise Startup India Innovation Week from 10th to 16th Jan 2023**

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry is organizing Startup India Innovation Week from 10th January 2023 to 16th January 2023 to celebrate the Indian Startup Ecosystem as well as National Startup Day (16th January 2023).

Startup India Innovation Week 2023 will include Knowledge Sharing Sessions for entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs, and other enablers, involving relevant stakeholders from the startup ecosystem such as government officials, incubators, corporates and investors.

### **30. India successfully carries out test launch of Prithvi-II missile**

A successful training launch of a short-range ballistic missile, Prithvi-II, was carried out on January 10 from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha. "user training launch" successfully validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile, the defence ministry said.

The Prithvi-II missile has a range of around 350 kilometres.

### **31. Defence Ministry approves proposals worth Rs 4,276-cr for anti-tank, air defence missile systems**

The Rajnath Singh-led Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) gave clearance for three capital acquisition proposals - two for the Indian Army and one for the Navy. All projects are under the Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) category.

The proposals include VSHORAD (IR Homing) missile system, Brahmos Launcher and Fire Control System (FCS). Shivalik class of ships and Next Generation Missile Vessels (NGMVs) were also proposed. The DAC has accorded approval for procurement of HELINA Anti-Tank Guided Missiles, launchers and associated support equipment which will be integrated to the Advanced Light Helicopter.

This missile is an essential part of weaponization of Advanced Light Helicopter for countering enemy threats. The Ministry said, its induction will strengthen the offensive capability of the Indian Army. The DAC also accorded approval for procurement of VSHORAD (IR Homing) missile system. The Defence Ministry said, in view of the recent developments along the Northern borders of the country, there is a need to focus on effective Air Defence weapon systems which can be deployed quickly in rugged terrain and maritime domain. The Ministry said, procurement of VSHORAD missile system will strengthen the Air Defence capabilities. The DAC granted approval for procurement of Brahmos Launcher and Fire Control System for the Shivalik class of ships and Next Generation Missile Vessels for the Indian Navy.

### **32. RRR's super hit song NaatuNaatu wins prestigious Golden Globe award for Best Original Song**

Indian film RRR's super hit song NatuNatu has won the prestigious Golden Globe award for Best Original Song. The history creating track from director SS Rajamouli's blockbuster movie is composed by MM Keeravani. The singers are Kaala Bhairava and Rahul Sipligunj. 'NaatuNaatu,' which became an anthem for the Rajamouli fans is a dance number featuring Jr NTR and Ram Charan.

### **33. Hitachi Payment, BharatPe get RBI nod to operate as payment aggregators**

Hitachi Payment Services and BharatPe have received in-principle authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as payment aggregators. Hitachi, as a payment aggregator, will be able to provide its business-to-business (B2B) customers with digital payment products and value-added services such as EMI, PayLater, BBPS, and loyalty solutions.

BharatPe would be able to widen its reach and provide digital payment acceptance solutions.



Payment aggregators facilitate e-commerce sites and merchants to accept payment instruments from customers. They facilitate merchants to connect with acquirers. Fintech firms such as Razorpay, Pine Labs, Stripe, 1Pay, Innoviti Payments, MSwipe, Infibeam Avenues have received in-principle approvals from the central bank to operate as payment aggregators. More companies are expected to get the central bank nod for payment aggregator licences. The RBI, in 2020, issued guidelines that said only firms it approved can acquire and offer payment services to the merchants. While banks do not need separate approvals, non-bank entities offering payment aggregator services had to apply for authorisation from the RBI by June 2021, which was later extended.

#### **34. Govt approves incentive scheme for promotion of RuPay Debit Cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions**

The Union Cabinet approved a '2,600-crore incentive scheme to promote RuPay debit card and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions (person-to-merchant) in FY23. Under the scheme, "the acquiring banks will be provided financial incentive for promoting point-of-sale (PoS) and e-commerce transactions for current FY2022-23"

The benefits of the scheme includes the building of a robust digital payment ecosystem and to promote UPI Lite and UPI 123Pay as economical and user-friendly digital payment options. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) developed the 123PAY UPI service for feature phones. Per transaction limit is INR 5000 on UPI 123PAY. UPI Lite is an on-device wallet feature by NPCI to allow users to make small-value payments offline. The feature is curated to process transactions of value under Rs 200. A maximum of Rs 2,000 to the UPI Lite app balance at any point.

#### **35. Japan tops world's strongest passport list in 2023**

Japan continues to top the list of the world's most powerful passport for the year 2023, according to the Henley Passport Index report, 2023. Japanese citizens can travel to as many as 193 countries visa-free or visa-on-arrival access destinations around the world. The second spot is shared by Singapore and South Korea and gives visa-free access destination to 193 countries

Countries like France, Ireland, Portugal and the United Kingdom are tied at the sixth spot with a visa-free score of 187.

Countries like the United States, Belgium, New Zealand, Norway, Czech Republic and Switzerland are tied at the seventh position with regard to the most powerful passports in the world with a visa-free score of 186.

On the other hand, Australia, Canada, Greece and Malta are at the eighth position with a visa-free score of 185, while Poland and Hungary has a visa-free score of 184, followed by Slovakia and Lithuania at tenth spot with 183 score.

As per the report, the Indian passport ranks 85th in the world's most powerful passport index 2023 and gives visa-free entry to 59 destinations worldwide. Indian passport holders can travel visa-free to 59 destinations like Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Macao, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Iran and Qatar.

Afghanistan's passport is the world's worst passport ranked at 109 with a visa-free score of 27. Iraq is the second worst passport ranked at 108 with a visa-free score of 29.

Syria ranks at 107 with a visa-free score of 30. At number 106, Pakistan is in Top 5 list in the world's worst passport to hold with a visa-free score of 32. Yemen ranks at 105 with a visa-free score of 34.

#### **36. NPCI Allows NRE/NRO Accounts With International Mobile Numbers To Use UPI**

Non-resident Indians (NRIs) from 10 countries can now use UPI to send and receive money if their domestic bank accounts are linked to their phone numbers abroad. This is subject to the fact that the member banks have to ensure such types of accounts are only allowed as per extant Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) and other regulations.

To begin with NPCI will be enabling transactions from mobile numbers having country codes of Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, USA, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, along with the current domestic country code, UPI international journey started when Nepal became the first country in the world, apart from India, to adopt UPI in February 2022.

An NRE account is a bank account opened in India in the name of an NRI, to park his foreign earnings; whereas, an NRO account is a bank account opened in India in the name of an NRI, to manage the income earned by him in India. These incomes include rent, dividend, pension, interest, etc.

NRE accounts are exempt from tax. Neither the balance, nor the interest earned on these accounts is taxable. The interest earned on an NRO account is however taxable at 30% according to the Income Tax Act 1961.

The principle amount in an NRE account, and the interest accumulated thereon is open to repatriation. In other words, you can transfer these amounts to a foreign account in case of an NRE account. In case

of an NRO account, the interest amount can be repatriated; however, in case of the principle amount, you can remit only up to USD 1 million in a financial year.

An NRI can open a joint NRO account with one or more NRIs or Indian citizens. However, there can be a joint NRE account only with another NRI.

In case of an NRO account, if the deposit as well as the withdrawal is made in INR, there is no exchange rate risk involved; whereas, in case of an NRE account, currency fluctuations make you prone to exchange rate risks.

### **37. Exim Bank raises \$1 bn via 10-yr sustainability bond issue**

Export Import Bank of India bank has broken the international bond drought from India by raising \$1 billion from investors across the globe. The issuance makes Exim Bank the first Indian issuer to open the markets for dollar and sustainability bond issuances in 2023. It has raised it via a 10-year Sustainability Bond under its Environmental Social Governance-ESG framework.

### **38. SBI in partnership with National e-Governance Services launches e-Bank Guarantee**

The country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI), has launched e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility by joining hands with National e-Governance Services Limited (NeSL). With the advent of e-BG, this function will be replaced by e-stamping and e-signature. Currently, the bank issues these guarantees with physical stamping and wet signatures.

Mr. Dinesh Kumar Khara, Chairman, SBI Mr. Debajyoti Ray Chaudhuri, MD & CEO of NeSL

The e-Bank Guarantee procedure will be made easier by NeSL Digital Document Execution (DDE) technology, which offers e-Stamp and e-Sign features. Beneficiaries using NeSL platform will instantly get an e-Bank Guarantee without additional verification.

### **39. India's first Centre of Excellence of online gaming in Meghalaya**

The Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar announced that India's first Centre of Excellence (CoE) of online gaming will be set up in Shillong, Meghalaya by March 2023. The CoE will be set up under Digital India Startup Hub through the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). The STPI set up in 1991 as an autonomous society in field of Science and Tech under MeitY

MeitY has recently circulated draft amendments to the IT Rules 2021 in relation to Online Gaming for public consultation. According to the draft amendments, online games will be mandated to register and can legally operate in the country only after government clearance.

### **40. Vidisha becomes the first ever district in India for on ground deployment of innovative 5G use cases offered by startups**

Vidisha, an aspirational district of Madhya Pradesh became the first ever district in India for on ground deployment of innovative 5G use cases offered by startups - a joint initiative by Vidisha District Administration and Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), Department of Telecommunications under the guidance of Additional Secretary (Telecom) & Administrator USOF

### **41. ICG ship 'Kamla Devi', last vessel of FPV series, commissioned**

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ship 'Kamla Devi', the Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) designed, built and delivered by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd to the Indian Coast Guard was commissioned. ICGS Kamla Devi is officially the fifth and last vessel of the series of FPVs designed and built by GRSE as per the specifications of the Indian Coast Guard.

MV Ma Lishaa Passenger-cum-Cargo Ocean Going Ferry built by the shipyard for the Cooperative Republic of Guyana was also flagged off.

This is the first such ship built for exports to a Latin American country by any Defence Public Sector shipyard.

### **42. Indian scientist-led team first to find evidence of solitary waves in Mars magnetosphere**

The Navi Mumbai-based Indian Institute of Geomagnetism (IIG), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has identified and reported the solitary waves in the Martian magnetosphere with the help of high-resolution electric field data recorded by a Nasa spacecraft.

The study of the solitary waves is crucial as they directly control particle energisation, plasma loss and transport through wave-particle interactions.

In a significant discovery, Indian scientists have reported the first evidence of the presence of solitary waves or electric field fluctuations in the Martian magnetosphere. Despite several global missions to Mars, the presence of solitary waves in the Martian magnetosphere had never been reported by any space agency or institute in the world.

It studied electric field data recorded by Langmuir Probe and Waves instrument on the Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution (MAVEN) spacecraft after Nasa put the data in the public domain. Our Earth is a giant magnet, and its magnetic field protects us from high-speed charged particles that are continuously emitted from the Sun in the form of solar wind. Unlike Earth, the planet Mars do not have any intrinsic magnetic field. This allows the high-speed solar wind to interact directly with the Mars

atmosphere, like an obstacle in flow. It has been suggested that even in a weak and thin magnetosphere as that of the Mars, one can observe frequent occurrences of solitary waves. However, despite several missions to Mars, the presence of solitary waves in the Martian magnetosphere has never been reported earlier.

Solitary waves are the distinct electric field fluctuations (bipolar or monopolar) that follow constant amplitude-phase relations. Their shape and size are less affected during their propagation. The magnitude and duration of these pulses are found to be 1-25 milivolt/meter and 0.2-1.7 milliseconds, respectively. These pulses are dominantly seen in the dawn and afternoon-dusk sectors at an altitude of 1000- 3500 km around the Mars. The dominant occurrence of solitary waves in the dawn and dusk sector is still a mystery and needs further investigation. Through simulations, it is found that the spatial extent of these structures is very small (30-330 meters). As these waves are known to be responsible for the plasma energization and its transport in Earth magnetosphere, the team is further exploring their role in the particle dynamics in the Martian magnetosphere and whether such waves play any role in the loss of atmospheric ions on the Mars.

#### **43. Siemens signs Rs 26,000-crore locomotive order with Indian Railways**

Capital goods major Siemens said it had signed a Rs 26,000-crore contract to manufacture 1,200 electric freight locomotives for the Indian Railways, the biggest deal in history. Deliveries are planned over a 11-year period and the contract includes 35 years of full-service maintenance. The locomotives will be assembled in the Indian Railways factory in Dahod, Gujarat.

#### **44. India-France Naval Exercise Starts In Arabian Sea As China Increases Presence In Western Indian Ocean**

India and France commenced the twenty-first edition of the bilateral naval exercises 'Varuna' on the western seaboard of India.

These exercises were started in 1993 to jointly train and maintain peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

The Indian Navy ships INS Chennai, INS Teg, P-8I and Dornier maritime patrol aircraft, integral helicopters and MiG-29Ks will take part in this five-day exercise with the French Navy aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle, frigates FS Forbin and Provence, support vessel FS Marne and an Atlantique maritime patrol aircraft.

□ India's maritime security strategists the southwest Indian Ocean, including the Mozambique Channel (used by shipping transiting the Cape of Good Hope) and the east coast of Africa, where China has been investing heavily, as one of the primary areas of interest.

□ Over the last few years, China has invested in at least 17 ports in east Africa, giving it a robust presence in the western Indian Ocean. In 2017, it also launched its first foreign military base, located on Africa's east coast in Djibouti.

□ India has signed a logistics agreement with France, the US and Japan to use each other's bases. India is also developing its own military base on the Agalega Island of Mauritius.

#### **45. Former BSF DG Pankaj Singh appointed deputy NSA**

The government appointed retired IPS officer and former Director General of Border Security Force (BSF) Pankaj Singh as deputy national security adviser.

At present, Rajinder Khanna, Vikram Misri and Dattatray Padsalgikar are also serving as deputy national security advisers.

Ajit Kumar Doval is the fifth and current National Security Advisor (NSA) to the Prime Minister of India. He was the youngest police officer in India to be awarded the Kirti Chakra meritorious service, a gallantry award for military personnel.

#### **46. Jacinda Ardern resigns as prime minister of New Zealand**

New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Ardern has said she is resigning, in a shock announcement that came as she confirmed a national election for October this year.

Ardern became the world's youngest female head of government when she was elected prime minister in 2017 at age 37.

Her term as prime minister will conclude no later than 7 February.

#### **47. Annual State of Education Report (ASER) 2022 report released after 4 years**

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), which sheds light on learning outcomes in schools, was released, marking the return of a key national survey that captures the state of foundational literacy and numeracy in the country.

The last ASER report, based on the physical household surveys, was released in 2018 by Pratham Foundation. Pratham Foundation, CEO: Rukmini Banerji.

The latest Annual State of Education Report (ASER) 2022, led by Pratham Foundation, covers parameters such as school enrolment and attendance; basic reading, math and English abilities; and school facilities, across rural districts in the country. It was resumed after a gap of four years, reaching 19,060



villages across 616 districts. A total of 3,74,544 households and 6,99,597 children in the age group of 3 to 16 were surveyed.

The latest ASER report showed that enrolment has increased in government schools, but private tuitions have witnessed a jump as well. The report highlighted that after the pandemic, the number of students enrolled in schools in the 6 to 14 age group increased to 98.4 percent in 2022 as compared to 97.2 percent in 2018 with higher enrolment in government schools than private schools. However, the number of those going for paid private tuition also recorded a major hike.

The proportion of children (6 to 14 years) enrolled in government schools increased sharply to 72.9 percent in 2022 from 65.6 percent in 2018. The increase in government school enrolment is visible in almost every state in the country, the report stated.

'Nationally, the proportion of children in Classes I to VIII going for paid private tuition increased from 26.4 percent in 2018 to 30.5 percent in 2022,' the report highlighted.

Nationally, children's basic reading ability has dropped to pre-2012 levels, reversing the slow improvement achieved in the intervening years. This is visible in both government and private schools in most states, and for both boys and girls, the report said.

The percentage of children studying in Class III in government or private schools, who can read a Class-II level text, dropped from 27.3 percent in 2018 to 20.5 percent in 2022. 'This decline is visible in every state and for children in both government and private schools,' the report stated.

The states that show a decline of more than 10 percentage points from 2018 include those that had higher reading levels in 2018, such as Kerala (from 52.1 percent in 2018 to 38.7 percent in 2022), Himachal Pradesh (from 47.7 percent to 28.4 percent), and Haryana (from 46.4 percent to 31.5 percent). According to the findings, a massive dip is also visible in Andhra Pradesh (from 22.6 percent to 10.3 percent) and Telangana (from 18.1 percent to 5.2 percent).

#### **48. RBI releases Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks' Outlook 2021-22**

Reserve Bank of India released the 9th volume of the annual publication titled 'Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks' Outlook 2021-22'.

The publication has been brought out by the 'Department of Supervision' of the RBI.

The publication covers the financial accounts of Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks for the financial year 2021-22.

#### **49. NDRF Celebrates its 18th Raising Day on 19 January 2023**

Living up to its motto of 'Saving Lives and Beyond' during any natural disaster in the country, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 18th raising day, January 19. The Force, since its formation, has played a crucial role in disaster management and dealing with its threats.

Atul Karwal is the Director-General of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

The National Disaster Response Force was formed in **2006** under the Disaster Management Act. The Force was constituted for the purpose of specialized response to natural and man-made disasters.

Calamities like the Orissa Super Cyclone in 1999, the Gujarat Earthquake of 2001 and the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 brought to light the need for a comprehensive disaster management plan.

#### **50. MeitY unveils new technology to monitor air quality, transfers to private company for commercial development**

Electronics and information technology secretary Alkesh Kumar Sharma launched the technology for Air Quality Monitoring System (AI-AQMS v1.0), developed under MeitY-supported projects.

The new Air Quality Monitoring System AI-AQMS v1.0 will soon be available for a wider market as the new technology is transferred to JM EnviroLab for commercialization and deployment.

The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Kolkata, in collaboration with TeXMIN, ISM, Dhanbad, under the national programme on electronics and ICT applications in Agriculture and Environment (AgriEnIcs) has developed an outdoor air quality monitoring station to monitor environmental pollutants which include parameters like PM 1.0, PM 2.5, PM 10.0, Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>), ambient temperature, relative humidity, etc, for continuous air quality analysis of the environment.

#### **51. Tata Boeing Aerospace delivers first fuselage for 6 AH-64 Apache to Indian Army**

Tata Boeing Aerospace (TBAL) has delivered the first fuselage for six AH-64 Apache attack helicopters ordered by the Indian Army from its modern facility in Hyderabad.

The company said TBAL's 14,000-sq-m facility, in addition to being a global sole source supplier for Apache fuselages, produces complex aero-structures for Boeing 737 and 777 models.

#### **52. Govt to combine CGHS with Ayushman Bharat**

The National Health Authority (NHA) is in the process of integrating the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) with Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

This is aimed at creating digital health identification of CGHS beneficiaries and storing their digital health records, thus ensuring quick treatment to the needy, the official said requesting anonymity.

### 53. Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur celebrate 51st Statehood Day | 21<sup>st</sup> January

Meghalaya, Tripura & Manipur separately celebrated their 51st Statehood Day.

The erstwhile princely states of Tripura and Manipur were merged into the Indian Union in October 1949 and became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972. Meghalaya was part of Assam before becoming a full-fledged state on the same day.

All the three northeastern states became full-fledged states under the North Eastern Region (Re-Organisation) Act, 1971.

### 54. Chris Hipkins becomes the 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand

New Zealand's former Covid-19 response minister Chris Hipkins will replace Jacinda Ardern as prime minister after receiving the only nomination from fellow MPs, the ruling Labour Party said.

Hipkins, currently the police and education minister, will take his party into an uphill battle to win general elections in October, as it lags in latest opinion polls.

### 55. Vikram Dev Dutt appointed as next DGCA director general, to take charge on February 28

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on Saturday approved the appointment of Vikram Dev Dutt as the next Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Dutt will take over the charge as the DGCA chief on February 28 after the superannuation of Arun Kumar, the incumbent DGCA chief.

Sh. Dutt was the last government-appointed Chairman & Managing Director of the Air India.

DGCA is a statutory body of the Central government to regulate civil aviation in India. It became a statutory body under the Aircraft (Amendment) Act, 2020.

### 56. ECI hosts 2nd International Conference on 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' in New Delhi

Election Commission of India (ECI) is hosting the 2nd International Conference on the theme 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' at New Delhi on 23-24 January, 2023. ECI is leading the Cohort on Elections Integrity which was established as a follow up to the 'Summit for Democracy'.

'Summit for Democracy', was an initiative of US President and hosted in December 2021.

The two-day international conference is being inaugurated by Chief Election Commissioner of India **Shri Rajiv Kumar**. The concluding session would be chaired by Election Commissioner of India, Shri Anup Chandra Pandey. Shri Arun Goel, Election Commissioner of India will chair the first technical session. ECI, as the lead for the Cohort on Election Integrity took a collaborative approach and invited Greece, Mauritius and IFES to be co-leads for the Cohort. ECI has invited International Foundation for Electoral Systems and International IDEA, apart from EMBs and Government counterparts dealing with the conduct of elections worldwide.

Around 43 Participants from 17 Countries/EMBs including Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Chile, Croatia, Dominica, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Kiribati, Mauritius, Nepal, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines and Suriname and 06 participants from international organisations namely, IFES, International IDEA are expected to join. The representatives from a number of foreign missions located at New Delhi are also expected to attend the conference.

### 57. ParakramDiwas 2023: PM Modi names 21 unnamed islands in Andaman and Nicobar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi named the 21 largest unnamed islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands after 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees on the ParakramDiwas i.e. 23 January.

The Government had declared January 23 as ParakramDiwas in 2021 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

PM Modi also unveiled the model of the National Memorial dedicated to Netaji to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep.

Ross Islands was renamed as **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Dweep** by the Prime Minister during his visit to the Island in 2018. Neil Island and Havelock Island were also renamed as **Shaheed Dweep** and **Swaraj Dweep**.

'PRIME Minister Narendra Modi virtually unveiled the model of a proposed memorial dedicated to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to be set up in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and said it will infuse feelings of patriotism among people. Modi, on the occasion of Netaji's 126th birth anniversary, also named 21 islands of the Union Territory after Param Vir Chakra awardees. Following is the list of the islands: 'Dhan Singh Island after Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Dhan Singh Thapa' Tarapore Island after Lt Col Ardesir Burzorji Tarapore' Karam Singh Island after Lance Naik (Hony. Captain) Karam Singh' Bana Island after Naib Subedar Bana Singh' Ekka Island after Lance Naik Albert Ekka' Khetrapal Island after 2nd Lt Arun Khetrapal' Pandey Island after Lt Manoj Kumar Pandey' Hoshiar Island after Major Hoshiar Singh' Shaitan Island after Major Shaitan Singh' Jadunath Island after Nayak Jadunath Singh' Yogender Island after Subedar Major (Hony. Captain) Yogendra Singh Yadav' Hamid Island after Company Quartermaster Havildar (CQMH) Abdul Hamid' Rane Island after 2nd Lt Rama Raghuba Rane' Ramaswamy Island after Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran' Batra Island after Captain Vikram Batra' Joginder Island after Subedar Joginder Singh' Salaria Island after Captain G S Salaria (then Major)' Piru Island after Company Havildar Major Piru Singh' Somnath Island after Major Somnath

Sharma'Sekhon Island after Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon'Sanjay Island after Subedar Major (then RifleMan) Sanjay Kumar.

#### **58. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to be Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations on 26th January**

President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, will pay a state visit to India from the 24th to the 26th of this month. He will be the Chief Guest at India's 74th Republic Day. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including five Ministers and senior officials. This is for the first time that the President of Egypt has been invited as Chief Guest to Republic Day. India and Egypt are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relation establishment this year.

#### **59. Fifth Scorpene submarine INS Vagir joins the Indian Navy's fleet**

INS Vagir, the fifth of six Scorpene (Scorpion in French) submarines being built by Mazagon Docks, Mumbai, was commissioned into the Indian Navy. Project 75 is Ministry of Defence code-name for the construction of six Scorpene submarines in MDL with technology supplied by French shipbuilder, Naval Group. Project 75 delivered its first submarine, INS Kalvari, in Dec 2017. Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar.

INS Kalvari was followed by four more boats (as the Navy refers to submarines), called the Kalvari-class after the lead vessel. These included INS Khanderi (commissioned in September 2019), INS Karanj (March 2021), INS Vela (November 2021), and INS Vagir (January 2021).

The sixth and last Project 75 submarine, INS Vagsheer, is currently completing her sea trials in order to be delivered in 2024.

That will take up to 18 the number of Indian Navysubmarines. These include eight Russian-origin Kilo-class, four German origin HDW submarines, and six Scorpenes. There is also one Amur class, nuclear-propelled vessel, taken from Russia on lease.

Project 75 was intended to be followed by Project 75-India, which involved the building of six more submarines in India, with air independent propulsion (AIP) technology provided by a chosen global shipbuilder. However, there has been slow progress on Project 75-India and a contract seems years away.

According to the MoD 30-year submarine building programme, the 12 submarines acquired under Project 75 and Project 75-India are to be followed by an indigenous project to build 12 more conventional AIP submarines. There has been no progress on this either.

INS Vagirs submarine has been completely built by MDL having successfully absorbed the technology transfer from Naval Group, in line with government & Make in Indiapolicy

#### **60. After Co-Win, Govt Launches U-WIN To Digitise Universal Immunisation Programme**

Named U-WIN, the programme to digitise India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has been launched in a pilot mode in two districts of each state and Union Territory.

The platform will be used to register and vaccinate every pregnant woman, record her delivery outcome, register every newborn delivery, administer birth doses and all vaccination events thereafter. The platform that replicates Co-WIN, which has served as the digital backbone for India COVID-19 vaccination programme, was launched on January 11 in 65 districts.

#### **61. NARCL acquires first stressed account from IDBI Bank-led lenders**

Lenders led by IDBI Bank, have transferred the first large stressed account to the National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL). The bad loan transferred to NARCL, or bad bank, is Jaypee Infratech, which was among the 12 large accounts referred by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to the National Company Law tribunal (NCLT) in 2017. The bank's recovery in the account is close to 45 per cent.

The National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL) has acquired its first stressed asset **Jaypee Infratech** from lenders. It acquired their exposure aggregating about '9,200 crore at a 55 per cent haircut.

#### **62. 13th National Voters' Day (NVD) celebrated on 25th January 2023**

The theme for this year's NVD, 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure' is dedicated to voters which conveys individual's feeling and aspiration towards participation in the electoral process through power of their vote.

Since 2011, National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year, to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India. Foundation day of the Election Commission of India : 25th January 1950.

#### **63. National Tourism Day 2023 : January 25th**

India is celebrating National Tourism Day on January 25. The day is marked annually in order to raise awareness about the importance that the tourism industry plays in the country.

In 2022, the National Tourism Day was part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75-week grand celebration marking 75 years of Indian Independence. World Tourism Day is celebrated on September 27.



The theme of National Tourism Day 2023 is Rural and Community Centric Tourism.

#### **64. Serum Institute launches country's first HPV vaccine against cervical cancer: Adar Poonawalla**

To commemorate National Girl Child Day and Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, the Serum Institute of India (SII) introduced CERVAVAC, the country's first locally developed quadrivalent Human Papilloma Virus (qHPV) vaccine. CERVAVAC is a vaccine against cervical cancer. In India, cervical cancer is the second most prevalent disease in women between the age of 15 and 44.

The Human Papilloma Virus, which is sexually transmitted, is the main cause of cervical cancer. Despite being mostly avoidable, cervical cancer ranks as the second most common disease in India and is responsible for approximately one-fourth of all cervical cancer fatalities worldwide. Most cervical cancers are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), and the HPV vaccine can prevent most incidences of cervical cancer if given to girls or women before they are exposed to the virus.

HPV vaccinations guard against infection brought on by the Human Papilloma Viruses group of more than 200 closely related viruses. Of these, more than 40 diseases are transferred via sexual contact. Genital warts can be brought on by as many as two HPV types, and roughly a dozen HPV types can cause certain types of cancer, namely cervical, oropharyngeal, vulvar, vaginal, penile, and anal cancers. SII received market authorization from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) in the year 2022 to develop a cervical cancer vaccine that was locally produced.

The collaboration between the Serum Institute, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation led to the creation of the qHPV CERVAVAC.

#### **65. President approves conferment of 106 Padma Awards**

President Droupadi Murmu approved conferment of 106 Padma Awards including three duo cases for 2023.

The list comprises six Padma Vibhushan, nine Padma Bhushan and 91 Padma Shri awardees. A total of 19 awardees are women and the list also includes two persons from category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and seven Posthumous awardees.

The Government of India instituted two civilian awards-Bharat Ratna Padma Vibhushan in **1954**. The latter had three classes namely Pahela Varg, Dusra Varg and Tisra Varg. These were subsequently renamed as Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri vide Presidential Notification issued on **January 8, 1955**.

Padma Awards, which were instituted in the year 1954, is announced every year on the occasion of Republic Day except for brief interruption(s) during the years 1978 and 1979 and 1993 to 1997.

##### **Padma Vibhushan: Six Awardees**

The Padma Vibhushan awardees included late SP patron Mulayam Singh Yadav, musician Zakir Hussain, late ORS pioneer Dilip Mahalanabis and S M Krishna.

Mulayam Singh Yadav (Posthumous)

Balkrishna Doshi (Posthumous)

Zakir Hussain

SM Krishna

Dilip Mahalanabis (Posthumous)

Srinivas Varadhan

##### **Padma Bhushan: Nine Awardees**

Noted industrialist Kumara Mangalam Birla, novelist S L Bhyrappa, Sudha Murthy and six other were awarded the Padma Bhushan this year.

SL Bhyrappa

Kumar Mangalam Birla

Deepak Dhar

Vani Jairam

Swami Chinna Jeeyar

Suman Kalyanpur

Kapil Kapoor

Sudha Murty

Kamlesh D Patel

##### **Padma Shri: 91 Awardees**

A total of 91 people including Rakesh Jhunjhunwala (posthumous), Raveena Tandon, Manipur BJP president Thounaojam Chaoba Singh were awarded the Padma Shri.

## **66. Suryakumar Yadav creates history, becomes first Indian men's player to clinch T20I Player of the Year Award**

Suryakumar Yadav has etched his name in the history books and become the 1st-ever Indian cricketer to be bestowed with the ICC Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year award. Suryakumar pipped the likes of Sikandar Raza, Sam Curran and Mohammad Rizwan to bag the top honour.

The right-handed batsman piled up 1164 runs in 31 matches last year. He batted with a strike-rate of 187.43.

'Suryakumar, who was in the 2nd year of his international cricket in 2022, was the only batsman to score more than 1000 runs last year. He also became the first Indian batter to breach the 1000-run mark in a year. He

## **67. Visakhapatnam railway station receives 'Green Railway Station Certification' with highest Platinum rating**

Visakhapatnam railway station of East Coast Railway has been awarded the 'Green Railway Station Certification with highest rating of Platinum' by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for adopting green concepts thereby reducing the adverse environmental impact. Visakhapatnam is one of the few railway stations to get this prestigious certificate. Visakhapatnam secured 82 out of 100 points in six environmental categories.

The Environment Directorate of Indian Railways, with the support of the IGBC, has developed the Green Railway Station rating system. It addresses national priorities such as water conservation, handling of waste, energy efficiency, reduced use of fossil fuel, lesser dependence on usage of virgin materials and health and well-being of occupants.

## **68. RBI Proposes Stressed Assets Securitisation Framework For Quicker Resolution**

RBI released a discussion paper on the securitisation of stressed assets framework as a way to improve the quality of the sale and resolution of such accounts.

Currently, the sale of bad loans takes place under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, or Sarfesi Act, through the asset reconstruction companies.

The regulator proposal comes on the heels of an announcement it made in September 2022. In September 2019, a task force for the development of a secondary market for corporate loans suggested the creation of a similar framework for non-performing assets.

The discussion paper proposes a special-purpose entity approach for the sale of bad loans under the securitisation framework. The SPE, in turn, appoints a servicing entity to manage the stressed assets, typically with a fee structure that incentivises them to maximise recoveries on the underlying loans.

'An asset reconstruction company is a special type of financial institution that buys the debtors of the bank at a mutually agreed value and attempts to recover the debts or associated securities by itself.

## **69. Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya unveils world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine 'iNNOVACC' in New Delhi**

Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya today unveiled world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine, iNNOVACC in New Delhi. It is developed by Bharat Biotech International Limited in collaboration with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance. iNNOVACC is the world's first intranasal Covid vaccine to get approval for the primary 2-dose schedule and as a booster dose.

iNNOVACC does not require syringes, needles, alcohol wipes, bandage, is cost-effective

Utilises a vector-based platform, which can be easily updated with emerging variants leading to large-scale production, within a few months

Has received DCGI's approval last Nov for restricted emergency use among adults as a heterologous booster dose

## **70. England's Ben Stokes and Nat Sciver win ICC annual awards**

England Test captain Ben Stokes and England all-rounder Nat Sciver are among the winners in the International Cricket Council's annual awards.

All-rounder Stokes has been named Men's Test Cricketer of the Year while Sciver won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

Sciver is also named Women's one-day international (ODI) Cricketer of the Year.

Full list of ICC winners:

Men's Test Cricketer of the Year: Ben Stokes, England

Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Babar Azam, Pakistan

Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year: Suryakumar Yadav, India

Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year: Marco Jansen, South Africa

Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy: Babar Azam, Pakistan

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy: Nat Sciver, England

Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Nat Sciver, England

Women's T20 Cricketer of the Year: Tahlia McGrath, Australia

Women's Emerging Cricketer of the Year: Renuka Singh, India

#### **71. South Africa to host 15th BRICS summit at Durban in late August 2023**

15th BRICS summit is all set to take place in South Africa's Durban in late August this year. Foreign ministers of Brazil, Russia, India, and China met for the first time on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in 2006, kicking off BRIC cooperation. In April 2011, South Africa participated, for the first time, in the 3rd BRICS Summit held in Sanya, China. The BRIC leaders met for the first time in Russia in June 2009, elevating BRIC cooperation to Summit status.

#### **72. Novak Djokovic beats Stefanos Tsitsipas to win 10th Australian Open title and record-equaling 22nd grand slam**

Novak Djokovic claimed his 10th Australian Open championship and 22nd Grand Slam title overall by beating Stefanos Tsitsipas.

His 10th trophy in Australia adds to the record he already held. His 22 major championships ' which include 7 from Wimbledon, 3 from the U.S. Open, and 2 from the French Open are tied with Rafael Nadal for the most by a man in the history of tennis. The victory allows Djokovic to return to No. 1 in the ATP rankings.

ArynaSabalenka of Belarus won against Elena Rybakina by 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the Australian Open.

#### **73. India crowned first-ever ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World champions**

The Indian women's Cricket Team created history as they won the first ever Under 19 World Cup defeating England in a one-sided final played at Senews Park, Potchefstroom (in South Africa).

Indian captain Shafali Verma won the toss and decided to field first.

England captain and stellar all-rounder Grace Scrivens has been named Player of the Tournament.

For her figures of 2 for 6 in 4 overs, Titas Sadhu was named the player of the match award

#### **74. Germany beat Belgium 5-4 in penalty shootout to win FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in Bhubaneswar**

In the FIH Hockey World Cup, Germany have lifted the World Cup after 17 years beating Belgium 5-4 in a penalty shootout, after the game ended 3-3 in the final at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

Germany now have won the World Cup three times, first in 2002 and second in 2006. Pakistan, the most successful team at the hockey World Cup, have won the title four times. The Indian men's hockey team is currently ranked sixth.

India crashed out of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup after losing 4-5 via penalty shootout to lower-ranked New Zealand following a 3-3 stalemate after the regulation time in a crossover match in Bhubaneswar. The Indian women's hockey team won the FIH Women's Nations Cup 2022 beating Spain 1-0 India have won the hockey World Cup once. The men's team lifted the trophy in 1975.

#### **75. UNGA President Csaba Korosi arrives in India on 3-day visit**

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) President Csaba Korosi arrived in India on a 3-day visit. It is his first bilateral visit to any country since he assumed Presidency of UNGA in Sep 2022.

Corosi will deliver a public address at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) on his Presidency theme of "Solutions through Solidarity, Sustainability and Science in the UN".

#### **76. Murali Vijay Announces Retirement From All Forms Of International Cricket**

Former India opener Murali Vijay announced his retirement from all forms of international cricket.

Vijay made his Indian squad Test debut in November 2008 after a successful run in the Ranji trophy, South Zone, India Red and India A tournaments.

Vijay represented India in a total of 87 matches, scoring 4490 runs.

#### **77. Student enrolments went up by 7.5% in 2020-21, All India Survey of Higher Education data show**

The Ministry of Education, Government of India has released All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-2021. The Ministry has been conducting All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) since 2011, covering all higher educational institutions located in Indian Territory and imparting higher education in the country.

The survey collects detailed information on different parameters such as student enrollment, teacher's data, infrastructural information, financial information etc. For the first time, in AISHE 2020-21, HEIs have filled data using entirely online data collection platform through the Web Data Capture Format (DCF) developed by Department of Higher Education through the National Informatics Centre (NIC). Following are the key highlights of the survey: **Student Enrollment**

The total enrollment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.14 crore in 2020-21 from 3.85 crore in 2019-20. Since 2014-15, there has been an increase of around 72 Lakh in the enrolment (21%).

The Female enrolment has increased to 2.01 crore from 1.88 crore in 2019-20. There has been an increase of around 44 Lakh (28%) since 2014-15.

The percentage of female enrolment to total enrolment has increased from 45% in 2014-15 to around 49% in 2020-21.



As per 2011 population projections for 18-23 years age group, GER has increased to 27.3 from 25.6 in 2019-20.

Notable increase of 1.9 points is observed in GER of ST students in 2020-21, as compared to 2019-20. Female GER has overtaken Male GER since 2017-18. Gender Parity Index (GPI), the ratio of female GER to male GER, has increased from 1 in 2017-18 to 1.05 in 2020-21.

The enrolment of SC students is 58.95 Lakh as compared to 56.57 Lakh in 2019-20 and 46.06 Lakh in 2014-15.

The enrolment of ST students has increased to 24.1 Lakh in 2020-21 from 21.6 Lakh in 2019-20 and 16.41 Lakh in 2014-15.

The average annual enrolment of ST students has increased to around 1 Lakh during the period 2014-15 to 2020-21, from around 75,000 during the period 2007-08 to 2014-15.

Enrolment of OBC students has also increased by 6 Lakh to 1.48 crore in 2020-21, from 1.42 crore in 2019-20. There is a notable increase in OBC student enrolment since 2014-15 of around 36 Lakh (32%).

The total Student Enrolment in North East States is 12.06 Lakh in 2020-21 as compared to 9.36 Lakh in 2014-15.

The female enrolment in North East States is 6.14 lakh in 2020-21, higher than the male enrolment of 5.92 lakh [For every 100 male students, there are 104 female students in NER]. The female enrolment outnumbered male enrolment for first time in 2018-19, and the trend continues.

The enrolment in Distance Education is 45.71 Lakh (with 20.9 Lakh Female), an increase of around 7% since 2019-20 and 20% since 2014-15.

Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Rajasthan are the top 6 States in terms of number of student enrolled.

As per response in AISHE 2020-21, about 79.06% of the total students are enrolled in undergraduate level courses and 11.5% are enrolled in postgraduate level courses.

Among Disciplines at undergraduate level, enrollment is highest in Arts (33.5%), followed by Science (15.5%), Commerce (13.9%) and Engineering Technology (11.9%).

Among streams at postgraduate level, maximum students are enrolled in Social Science (20.56%) followed by science (14.83%).

Of the total enrolment, 55.5 Lakh students are enrolled in Science Stream, with female students (29.5 Lakh) out numbering male students (26 Lakh).

Government Universities (59% of total) contribute towards 73.1% of the enrolment. Government Colleges (21.4% of total) contribute towards 34.5% of the enrolment.

The enrolment in Institute of National Importance (INIs) has increased by nearly 61% during the period 2014-15 to 2020-21.

Enrolment has increased in 2020-21 compared to 2014-15 in the Specialized Universities relating to Defence, Sanskrit, Biotechnology, Forensics, Design, Sports etc.

The total number of pass-outs has increased to 95.4 Lakh in 2020-21 as against 94 Lakh in 2019-20.

Availability of different infrastructural facilities in HEIs in 2020-21:

Libraries (97%)

Laboratories (88)

Computer centres (91%, 86% in 2019-20)

Skill Development Centre (61%, 58% in 2019-20)

Connectivity to National Knowledge Network (56%, from 34% in 2019-20)

### **Number of Institutions**

The total number of Universities / University like institutions registered is 1,113, Colleges 43,796 and Standalone Institutions 11,296.

During 2020-21, the number of Universities has increased by 70, and the number of Colleges has increased by 1,453.

Since 2014-15, there has been increase of 353 Universities (46.4%).

The Institutes of National Importance (INIs) have almost doubled from 75 in 2014-15 to 149 in 2020-21.

191 new Higher Education Institutions have been established in North Eastern States since 2014-15.

Highest number of Universities is in Rajasthan (92), Uttar Pradesh (84) and Gujarat (83).

During 2014-15 to 2020-21, on average, 59 Universities have been added annually. This was about 50 during 2007-08 to 2014-15.

17 Universities (of which 14 are State Public) and 4,375 Colleges are exclusively for women.

The College Density, the number of colleges per lakh eligible population (population in the age-group 18-23 years) has been 31. This was 27 in 2014-15.

States with Highest college density: Karnataka (62), Telangana (53), Kerala (50), Himachal Pradesh (50), Andhra Pradesh (49), Uttarakhand (40), Rajasthan (40), Tamilnadu (40).

Top 8 Districts with Highest number of Colleges: Bangalore Urban (1058), Jaipur (671), Hyderabad (488), Pune (466), Prayagraj (374), Rangareddy (345), Bhopal (327) and Nagpur (318).  
Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat are top 8 States in terms of number of colleges.  
43% universities and 61.4% colleges are located in Rural Areas.

#### Faculty

The total number of faculty/teachers are 15,51,070 of which about 57.1% are male and 42.9% are female.  
The female per 100 male faculty has improved to 75 in 2020-21 from 74 in 2019-20 and 63 in 2014-15.



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## Economic Survey 2022-23 : Summary

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 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.

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## Budget 2023 Updates

### 'Saptarishi': Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman lists 7 priorities of Union Budget

- Inclusive development
- Digital infrastructure to aid agriculture sector
- Financial Sector
- Infrastructure & investment
- Green growth
- Youth Power
- Unleashing potential

**UNION  
BUDGET  
2023**



**Image source:** <https://indianexpress.com/>  
**Govt to introduce 5% CBG mandate**

The government plans to introduce a 5 per cent compressed biogas mandate for all entities marketing natural gas in India. This may mean that companies marketing natural gas in India will have to market compressed biogas, or CBG, to the extent of 5 per cent of their volumes. The government has been pushing for increased production of CBG and its blending with natural gas, particularly in the transportation segment that uses compressed natural gas, or CNG, as a fuel.

#### **Credit guarantee for MSMEs: New scheme with allocation of Rs 9,000 crore**

Revamped credit guarantee scheme will take effect from April 1, 2023, through the infusion of Rs 9,000 crore in the corpus. This will enable additional collateral-free credit of Rs 2 lakh crore to MSMEs.

#### **Govt to set up 30 Skill India International Centres: FM**

The government will launch Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, said FM Nirmala Sitharaman. In order to skill the youth for international opportunities, 30 Skill India International Centres will be set up across different States, she added.

#### **Agriculture Credit Target to be raised to Rs 20 lakh crore**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said: "The Agriculture Credit Target will be increased to Rs 20 lakh crore, with focus on animal husbandry, dairy, and fisheries, the minister said, adding that a new sub-scheme of PM Matsya Sampada Yojana will also be launched with a targeted investment of Rs 6,000 crore."

#### **Finance Minister's push for transport infra projects**

50 additional airports, heliports, water aerodromes, and advanced landing zones to be revitalised. 100 critical transport infra projects for steel, ports, fertiliser, coal, foodgrain sectors have been identified with an investment of Rs 75,000 crore including Rs 15,000 crore from private sources, the Finance Minister announced.



**Revised tax slabs under new tax regime**

- Under new tax regime, income of Rs 0-3 lakh is nil.
- Income above Rs 3 lakh and up to Rs 5 lakh to be taxed at 5% under new regime.
- Income of above Rs 6 lakh and up to Rs 9 lakh to be taxed at 10% under new regime.
- Income above Rs 12 lakh and up to Rs 15 lakh to be taxed at 20% under new regime.
- Income above Rs 15 lakh to be taxed at Rs 30%.

**Income rebate limit increased to Rs 7 lakh from Rs 5 lakh in new tax regime****Average processing time for income tax returns reduced from 93 days to 16 days**

- The government intends to roll out next-gen common IT Return forms and strengthen grievance redressal mechanism: FM Sitharaman

**Cigarettes to get costlier as Budget proposes 16% hike in duty**

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced a 16% increase in NCCD on certain cigarettes.

- The govt proposed Customs duty exemptions on the import of capital goods and machinery required for lithium-ion batteries. The government also proposes to increase customs duty on silver to align with duty on gold and platinum.

**100 labs for developing apps using 5G services**

- 100 labs for developing apps using 5G services will be set up in engineering institutions. To realise new range of opportunities, business models & employment potential, labs will cover among others, apps like Smart Classrooms, Precision Farming, Intelligent Transports Systems & Healthcare: FM

**FM Sitharaman fixes fiscal deficit for 2023-24 at 5.9%**

- The revised fiscal deficit is at 6.4% of GDP: FM Sitharaman

**National Financial Information Registry**

- The government will set up a National Financial Information Registry to serve as a central repository of financial and ancillary information, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

**Bio input resource centres**

- Over the next 3 years, one crore farmers will get assistance to adopt natural farming. 10,000 bio input resource centres will be set up: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**National Data Governance Policy**

- To unleash Innovation and research by Startups and Academia, a National Data Governance Policy will be brought out. This will enable access to anonymized data: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**Revamped credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs**

- Revamped credit guarantee scheme will take effect from April 1, 2023, through the infusion of Rs 9,000 crore in the corpus. This will enable additional collateral-free credit of Rs 2 lakh crore to MSMEs.

**Push for tourism**

- 50 tourist destinations will be selected through challenge mode to be developed as a whole package for domestic and international tourism: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0**

- The government will launch Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, said FM Nirmala Sitharaman. In order to skill the youth for international opportunities, 30 Skill India International Centres will be set up across different States, she added.

**National Hydrogen Mission**

- FM allocated Rs 19,700 crore to the National Hydrogen Mission. The objective is to reach hydrogen production capacity of 5 metric million tonnes by 2030.

**Rs 35,000 crores priority capital for energy transition**

- Battery storage to get viability gap funding: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**Digilocker- One stop KYC maintenance system**

- For business establishments required to have Permanent Account Number, the PAN will be used as a common identifier for all Digital Systems of specified government agencies: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**Pushing for transport infra projects**

- 50 additional airports, heliports, water aerodromes, and advanced landing zones to be revitalised. 100 critical transport infra projects for steel, ports, fertiliser, coal, foodgrain sectors have been identified with an investment of Rs75,000 crore including Rs 15,000 crore from private sources.

50-year interest free loan to State governments extended for one more year.

**Booster for Railways**

- Capital outlay of Rs 2.40 lakh crore will be provided for railways; 9x over FY14

**Capital investment outlay increased by 33%**

- Capital investment outlay being increased by 33% to Rs 10 lakh crores, which would be 3.3% of GDP, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech.

- The outlay for PM Awaas Yojana being enhanced by 66% to over Rs 79,000 crores, says FM

**Focus on education**

- Eklayaya Model Residential Schools -in the next 3 years the Centre will recruit 38,800 teachers and support staff for 740 schools serving 3.5 lakh tribal students: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**PM Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups Mission**

- To improve social-economic condition of the Particularly Tribal Groups, PMPBTG Development mission will be launched, to saturate PBTG habitations with basic facilities. Rs 15,000 cr to be made available to implement scheme in next 3 years: FM Nirmala Sitharaman

**National Digital Library**

- The government proposes to set up a national digital library for children and adolescents to make up for the learning loss during the pandemic, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

**Push for fisheries**

- The government will launch a sub-scheme under PM Matsya Sampada Yojana with an outlay of Rs 6,000 crore to further enable those involved in fisheries, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

**Agri push**

- The government has also initiated computerisation for 63,000 primary agricultural credit societies with an investment of Rs 2,516 crore.

**Assistance for traditional artisans and craftspeople**

- PM Vishwa Karma Kaushal Samman - package of assistance for traditional artisans and craftspeople has been conceptualized, will enable them to improve quality, scale and reach of their products, integrating with MSME value chain

**Encouraging agritech startups**

- An agriculture accelerator fund to encourage agritech startups by young entrepreneurs in rural areas. Fund will focus on bringing innovative solutions for challenges faced by farmers.

**Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme**

- The government will launch the Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme to improve availability of disease-free quality planting material for high-value horticultural crops at an outlay of Rs 2,200 crore: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

## QUICK LEARNERS

### BANKING

Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)	4.50%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	18.00%

POLICY/EXCHANGE RATE & RESERVE RATIO	PERCENTAGE
Repo Rate	6.25%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF)	6.50%
Bank Rate	6.50%

### APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT	POST
Sujoy Lal Thaosen	Border Security Force (BSF) Director General (DG)
Ajay Kumar Srivastava	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Indian Overseas Bank
Nalin Negi	Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BharatPe
Sanjiv Kapoor	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) designate of Jet Airways
Prasanna Kumar Motupalli	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of NLC India Ltd (NLCIL)
Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh	Secretary General of Asia Pacific Postal Union (APPU)
Surinder Chawla	Chief Executive Officer of Paytm Payments Bank
Vikas Purohit	Meta's global business group in India
Anurag Kumar	Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL)
AC Charania	NASA's chief technologist
Ravi Kumar S	Chief Executive Officer of Cognizant
Clare Lombardelli	Chief economist of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Manasi Tata	Vice Chairperson of Toyota Kirloskar Auto parts (TKAP)
Praveen Sharma	Director of the National Health Authority (Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission)
Nick Walker	Chief Executive Officer of Vedanta Cairn Oil & Gas
Siddharth Sharm	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Tata Trusts
Aparna Uppaluri	Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Tata Trusts
Chris Hipkins	Prime Minister of New Zealand
Shamalbhair B Patel	Chairman of Amul
ValamjibhaiHumbal	Vice Chairman of Amul
Koji Sato	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Toyota
Akio Toyoda	Chairman of Toyota
Prabdev Singh	India Head of JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Hein Schumacher	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unilever
Air Marshal A P Singh	Vice Chief of the Indian Air Force
Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi	Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)
Petr Pavel	President of Czech Republic
Sanjay Mohan	Chairman of Internet and Mobile Association of India
Sundararaman Ramamurthy	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)
Pankaj Singh	Deputy National Security Adviser
Vikram Dev Dutt	Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)



## AWARDS

WINNER	AWARD
<b>Dr Aleida Guevara</b>	KR Gouri Amma National Award
<b>Dr. DY Chandrachud</b>	Award for Global Leadership
<b>Adar Poonwalla</b>	Dr Patangrao Kadam Memorial Award
<b>e-NAM</b>	Platinum Award in the Digital Empowerment of Citizens Category in Digital India Awards 2022
<b>Transport Mission Mode Project (eTransport)</b>	Gold in the Digital Empowerment of Citizens Category in Digital India Awards 2022
<b>Judgment Search Portal</b>	Silver in the Digital Empowerment of Citizens Category in Digital India Awards 2022
<b>Harry Brook</b>	ICC Men's Player of December 2022
<b>Ashleigh Gardner</b>	ICC Women's Player of December 2022
<b>GMR Goa International Airport (GGIAL)</b>	Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport
<b>R Vishnu Prasad</b>	The most distinguished scientist of the year 2022 at India Achievers Award
<b>Odisha State Disaster Management Authority</b>	Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhan Puraskar-2023
<b>Lunglei Fire Station (LFS), Mizoram</b>	Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhan Puraskar-2023
<b>Dr Prabha Atre</b>	Pandit HariprasadChaurasia Lifetime Achievement Award
<b>Sunil Krishnan</b>	Dr Ambedkar Award for Contribution to India
<b>Suryakumar Yadav</b>	ICC Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year award
<b>Babar Azam</b>	Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy
<b>Nat Sciver</b>	Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy
<b>Ben Stokes</b>	Men's Test Cricketer of the Year
<b>Gerhard Erasmus</b>	Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year
<b>Renuka Singh</b>	Women's Emerging Cricketer of the Year
<b>Marco Jansen</b>	Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year
<b>Tahlia McGrath</b>	Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year
<b>Nat Sciver</b>	Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year
<b>Babar Azam</b>	Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year
<b>Esha Oza</b>	Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year:
<b>Richard Illingworth</b>	David Shepherd Trophy
<b>Aasif Sheikh</b>	Spirit of Cricket Award
<b>Shri Balkrishna Doshi (Posthumous)</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav (Posthumous)</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri Srinivas Varadhan</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri Dilip Mahalanabis (Posthumous)</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri S M Krishna</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri Zakir Hussain</b>	Padma Vibhushan
<b>Shri S L Bharyappa</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Shri Kamlesh D Patel</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Ms. Sudha Murty</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Shri Kapil Kapoor</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Ms. Suman Kalyanpur</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Swami ChinnaJeeyar</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Ms. Vani Jairam</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Shri Deepak Dhar</b>	Padma Bhushan
<b>Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla</b>	Padma Bhushan

### IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	DAY	THEME
January 4 <sup>th</sup>	World Braille Day	
January 6 <sup>th</sup>	World Day of War Orphans	
January 9 <sup>th</sup>	PravasiBharatiya Divas	Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal
January 10 <sup>th</sup>	World Hindi Diwas	
January 12 <sup>th</sup>	National Youth Day	ViksitYuvaViksit Bharat
January 11 <sup>th</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup>	National Road Safety Week	
January 16 <sup>th</sup>	National Startup Day	
January 19 <sup>th</sup>	National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) rising day	
January 24 <sup>th</sup>	International Day of Education	To Invest in People, Prioritize Education
January 24 <sup>th</sup>	National Girl Child Day	
January 25 <sup>th</sup>	National Voters' Day	Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure
January 25 <sup>th</sup>	National Tourism Day	
January 26 <sup>th</sup>	74th Republic day	
January 26 <sup>th</sup>	International Customs Day	Nurturing the next generation: promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs
January 27 <sup>th</sup>	International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust	Home and belonging
January 28 <sup>th</sup>	Data Privacy Day (DPD)	
Last Sunday of January	World Leprosy Day	Act Now. End Leprosy
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	Shaheed Diwas	
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	World Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) Day	Act Now. Act Together. Invest in Neglected Tropical Diseases
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	National Anti-Leprosy Day	

### SUMMITS & CONFERENCE

SUMMITS	LOCATION	THEME
Indian Library Congress	Kannur Kerala	
1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	Water Vision@2047
G20 Financial Inclusion Indicators (GPFI) meeting	Kolkata, West Bengal	
Voice of the Global South Summit		Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose
83rd All India Presiding Officers Conference	Jaipur, Rajasthan	
G-20 Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) meeting	Pune, Maharashtra	
Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum (WEF)	Davos, Switzerland	Cooperation in a Fragmented World
G20 Health Working Group meeting	Thiruvananthapuram	
International Craft Summit	Jaipur, Rajasthan	
Business 20 meeting	Gandhinagar, Gujarat	
India Stack Developer Conference	New Delhi	
30th National Child Science Congress	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	
National Summit on Quality of Biologicals	New Delhi	
3rd INTERPOL Young Global Police Leaders Programme	New Delhi	
2nd International Conference of Election Commission	New Delhi	Use of Technology and Elections Integrity

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

BOOKS	AUTHORS
Fit At Any Age: A Practitioner's Guide	Retired Air Marshal PV Iyer
<b>Ambedkar: A Life</b>	Shashi Tharoor
Roller Coaster: An Affair with Banking	Tamal Bandyopadhyay
<b>Jadunama</b>	Arvind Mandloi
COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team	R. Kaushik, R. Sridhar
India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn	Dr Ashwin Fernandes

## OBITUARY

OBITUARY	RELATED FIELD
<b>R.K. Krishnakumar</b>	Tata Group veteran
<b>Keshari Nath Tripathi</b>	Former West Bengal governor
<b>Rehman Rahi</b>	Kashmir's first Jnanpith awardee
<b>Nilmani Phookan</b>	Assamese Poet
<b>Prabhaben Shah</b>	Social worker and Padma Shri awardee
<b>Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi</b>	Indian Architect
<b>Naba Kishore Das</b>	Odisha's Health Minister

## IMPORTANT STATIC & CURRENT INFO

### INDIAN STATES, CAPITALS, CHIEF MINISTERS & GOVERNORS

STATE	CAPITAL	CHIEF MINISTER	GOVERNOR
Andhra Pradesh	Amaravati	Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy	BiswaBhusanHarichandn
Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	Pema Khandu	Brigadier B.D. Mishra (retd)
Assam	Dispur	HimantaBiswaSarma	Prof. Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Patna	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Bhupesh Baghel	AnusuiyaUikey
Goa	Panaji	Pramod Sawant	P.S. Sreedharan Pillai
Gujarat	Gandhi Nagar	Bhupendra Patel	Acharya Dev Vrat
Haryana	Chandigarh	Manohar Lal Khattar	BandaruDattatraya
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Hemant Soren	Ramesh Bais
Karnataka	Bengaluru	Basavaraj Bommai	Thaawarchand Gehlot
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Shivraj Singh Chauhan	MangubhaiChhaganbhai Patel
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Eknath Shinde	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	La. Ganesan
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Kongkal Sangma	Brigadier B.D. Mishra (retd)
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	Dr KambhampatiHaribabu
Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	Jagdish Mukhi
Odisha	Bhubaneswar	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal
Punjab	Chandigarh	Bhagwant Mann	Banwarilal Purohit
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	Gangtok	PS Golay	Ganga Prasad
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	M. K. Stalin	R. N. Ravi
Telangana	Hyderabad	K. Chandrasekhar Rao	TamilisaiSoundararajan
Tripura	Agartala	Dr.ManikSaha	SatyadeoNarain 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)	Radha Krishna Mathur (Lieutenant Governor)

### UNION MINISTERS & PORTFOLIO

UNION MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
<b>Narendra Modi</b>	Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions Department of Atomic Energy Department of Space
<b>Rajnath Singh</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>Amit Shah</b>	Ministry of Home Affairs Ministry of Cooperation
<b>Nitin Gadkari</b>	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
<b>Nirmala Sitharaman</b>	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Corporate Affairs
<b>Piyush Goyal</b>	Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Textiles Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution
<b>Narendra Singh Tomar</b>	Ministry of agriculture and Farmers welfare
<b>Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar</b>	Ministry of External Affairs
<b>Arjun Munda</b>	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
<b>Smriti Zubin Irani</b>	Ministry of Women and child Development Ministry of Minority Affairs
<b>Dharmendra Pradhan</b>	Ministry of Education Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
<b>Pralhad Joshi</b>	Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry of coal Ministry of Mines
<b>Narayan Tatu Rane</b>	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>Sarbananda Sonowal</b>	Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)
<b>Dr. Virendra Kumar</b>	Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
<b>Giriraj Singh</b>	Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj
<b>Jyotiraditya M. Scindia</b>	Ministry of Civil Aviation Ministry of Steel
<b>Ashwini Vaishnaw</b>	Ministry of Railways Ministry of Communications Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
<b>Pashu Pati Kumar Paras</b>	Ministry of Food Processing Industries
<b>Gajendra Singh Shekhawat</b>	Ministry of Jal Shakti
<b>Kiren Rijiju</b>	Ministry of Law and Justice
<b>Raj Kumar Singh</b>	Ministry of Power Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
<b>Hardeep Singh Puri</b>	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
<b>Mansukh L. Mandaviya</b>	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
<b>Bhupender Yadav</b>	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

	Ministry of Labour and Employment
<b>Mahendra Nath Pandey</b>	Ministry of Heavy Industries
<b>Parshottam Rupala</b>	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
<b>G. Kishan Reddy</b>	Ministry of Culture Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
<b>Anurag Singh Thakur</b>	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports



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