

 oliveboard

COMPLETE WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

18th March to 24th March 2024



For Bank, SSC, Railway, Insurance & Other Govt. Exams

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Important Days

Ordnance Factories Day | 18 March

Ordnance Factories Day is celebrated on March 18 to commemorate the day when Ordnance Factory in Cossipore, Kolkata was formed. In 1775, the Board of Ordnance was formed in Fort William, Kolkata. In 1787, a gunpowder factory was formed in Ishapore and a gun carriage factory was formed in Cossipore, Kolkata. Now it's known as Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore.

French Language Day | 20 March

Language Days at the United Nations were introduced in 2010 to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity. Each year, the United Nations celebrates six "Language Days", dedicated to the six official languages of the United Nations, which are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The date of the French Language Day was chosen symbolically in reference to March 20, 1970, which marks the creation of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT), which became the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF).

World Sparrow Day | 20 March

World Sparrow Day is held every year with full intent on spreading awareness about the significance of the presence of sparrows for our ecosystem and biodiversity. World Sparrow Day is observed every year on March 20. In 2024, the theme for World Sparrow Day is "Sparrows: Give them a tweet-chance!", "I Love Sparrows" and "We Love Sparrows". The first World Sparrow Day was celebrated on March 20, 2010.

World Oral Health Day | 20 March

It is observed on March 20 annually to unite the people to help reduce the burden of oral diseases as they affect individuals, health systems, and economies everywhere. The main aim of the day is to empower people with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to secure good oral health. World Oral Health Day's theme for this year is "A happy mouth is a happy body."

World Oral Health Day was first celebrated on Sep 12, 2007, on the birthday of FDI founder Dr Charles Godon. In 2013, the FDI decided to move the date to March 20 in order to avoid conflict with other events and to align with the international calendar.

International Day of Happiness | 20 March

World Happiness Report 2024 lands on 20 March, to mark the UN's International Day of Happiness. Be among the first to read this year's insights, centred around the theme of happiness

The General Assembly of the UN on 12 July 2012 proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness, recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives.

World Forestry Day | 21 March

Every year, World Forestry Day is observed on March 21. This year, the important day falls on a Thursday. World Forestry Day is celebrated

every year to remind people of the significance of forests and trees in our lives

The theme for this year is - Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World.

In 1971, the General Assembly of the European Confederation of Agriculture proposed that we should celebrate a day dedicated to forests.

March 21 was chosen as World Forestry Day by the United Nations as it coincides with Vernal Equinox and Autumn Equinox in northern and southern hemispheres

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination | 21 March

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (IDERD), observed every March 21, brings the world community together to increase its efforts in the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and racism.

The 2024 theme is "A Decade of Recognition, Justice, and Development: Implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination commemorates the victims of the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960, in which peaceful demonstrators against apartheid were senselessly killed. While this tragic event marked a turning point and ultimately ushered in the transition to democracy and equality in South Africa.

World Down Syndrome Day | 21 March

Every year on March 21, World Down Syndrome Day is observed across the globe. The day is designated to promote awareness about Down syndrome and to assist those who live with the

condition. The United Nations (UN) chose March 21 to represent the uniqueness of Down syndrome caused by triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome.

A person with Down Syndrome possesses an extra chromosome. Chromosomes are lengthy DNA strands that hold all of the body's genes. A baby is born with an average of 46 chromosomes (23 pairs). "Babies with Down syndrome have an extra copy of one of these chromosomes, chromosome 21," as per the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

World Poetry Day | 21 March

World Poetry Day falls on March 21. The day aims to honour poets and bring back the practice of poetry readings. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) decided to celebrate World Poetry Day annually during its 30th General Conference in Paris in 1999.

World Water Day | 22 March

World Water Day is observed on 22 March every year. This day is dedicated to highlighting the necessity of water and the need to conserve it. It also serves as a reminder that water is a natural resource that is irreplaceable in our daily lives.

The theme of World Water Day 2024 is 'Water for Peace'.

The history of World Water Day dates back to 1993, when the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution declaring that a day should be set aside to raise awareness about the importance of fresh and clean water in our lives.

World Meteorological Day | 23 March

Each year on March 23rd, World Meteorological Day is celebrated to commemorate the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) which is a specialized agency formed by the United Nations.

The day recognizes the vital role of the organization in advancing global efforts in weather, climate, and water management.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was established in March 1950, becoming a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1951.

The theme for World Meteorological Day 2024 is “At the Frontline of Climate Action.”

World Tuberculosis Day | 24 March

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is marked annually on 24 March, the anniversary of the discovery of the causative mycobacterium by Dr Robert Koch.

This year’s theme – ‘Yes! We can end TB!’ – conveys the message that there is hope in making this a possibility.

The day aims to raise awareness about the devastating health, social, and economic consequences of the disease, which remains a

global pandemic with 1.8 billion people estimated to be infected with the bacteria, acc. to WHO.

TB is an infectious disease that most commonly affects the lungs, although it can spread to other organs too, including the brain or kidneys.

International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations & for the Dignity of Victims | March 24

Each year, on 24 March, the International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims is observed.

This annual observance pays tribute to the memory of Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero, who was murdered on 24 March 1980.

Monsignor Romero was actively engaged in denouncing violations of the human rights of the most vulnerable individuals in El Salvador. On 21 December 2010, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 March as the day. The day honour the memory of victims of gross and systematic human rights violations and promote the importance of the right to truth and justice.

Banking, Insurance and Fintech

RBI approves re-designation of Manian, Ekambaram of Kotak Mahindra Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the re-designation of K V S Manian and Shanti Ekambaram, Whole-time Directors of Kotak Mahindra Bank, as Joint Managing Director and Deputy Managing Director, respectively.

This was the first major overhaul at the leadership level after Ashok Vaswani came on board as the managing director & chief executive officer of the bank.

RBI imposes Rs 1.31 cr fine on Tamilnad Mercantile Bank for non-compliance

The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday it has imposed penalties on DCB Bank and Tamilnad Mercantile Bank for non-compliance with certain directions related to 'interest rate on advances'.

A monetary penalty of Rs 63.6 lakh has been imposed on DCB Bank, the RBI said in a statement.

Airtel Payments Bank partners with Noise and Mastercard to unveil 'A New Way to Pay' with Airtel Payments Bank Smart Watch

Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Noise, India's premier wristwatch brand, and Mastercard, a worldwide payments technology business, to launch A New Way to Pay. The institutions have collaborated to create the Bank's Airtel Payments Bank Smart Watch, which aims to revolutionise contactless payments by redefining and making them more accessible to a wider user base.

These smartwatches, built by Noise and powered by Airtel Payments Bank, will improve Tap and Pay capabilities and the user experience by introducing the convenience of contactless payments via smart wearables. The new smartwatch is now available for purchase for INR 2,999.

Customers with an Airtel Payments Bank savings account can purchase this smartwatch using the Airtel Thanks App. Customers new to the bank can order the smartwatch immediately by creating an account digitally through the Airtel Thanks App. The Airtel Payments Bank Smart Watch allows customers to make daily payments ranging from INR 1 to INR 25,000.

RBI fines TMB, DCB nearly ₹2 crore for violating norms on lending rates

Reserve Bank of India, on March 13, imposed a penalty of ₹1.3 crore on Tamilnad Mercantile Bank for non-compliance with directions on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) - Revision in Reporting'.

The central bank also fined DCB Bank ₹63.6 lakh for breach of norms on 'Interest Rate on Advances'.

The supervisory inspection for FY22 showed that the bank had failed to benchmark interest rates on certain floating rate loans to MSMEs to an external benchmark lending rate; had adopted multiple benchmarks within the same loan category, and failed to price certain floating rate loans with reference to the actual benchmark rate applicable.

Axis Mutual Fund joins hand with Enparadigm for an on-demand AI-generated experiential learning program

Axis Mutual Fund, a Mumbai-based asset management firm, has collaborated with Enparadigm, an AI-driven experiential learning and talent intelligence solutions company, to create exclusive learning journeys that will improve the performance and productivity of their frontline, mid-level, and, to some extent, senior employees.

As one of India's largest fund companies, with assets under administration worth around INR 2.6 lakh crore, the organisation has been dedicated to providing cutting-edge learning solutions for its employees.

DBS Bank India unveils \$250 mn lending support to start-ups and 'new economy' organisations

DBS Bank India announced a \$250 million loan commitment for new-age entrepreneurs. The project is part of the bank's efforts to promote

innovation and entrepreneurship in the country's vibrant startup environment.

The Indian start-up sector, a key component of the country's development aspirations, has grown significantly, with over 90,000 start-ups and over 100 unicorns.

Economy, Trade and Business

Gross Direct Tax collections for Financial Year (FY) 2023-24 register a growth of 18.74%

The provisional figures of Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2023-24 (as on 17.03.2024) show that Net collections are at Rs. 18,90,259 crore, compared to Rs. 15,76,776 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding Financial Year (i.e. FY 2022-23), representing an increase of 19.88%.

The provisional figures of Gross collection of Direct Taxes (before adjusting for refunds) for the Financial Year 2023-24 stand at Rs. 22,27,067 crores compared to Rs. 18,75,535 crores in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, showing a growth of 18.74% over the collections of FY 2022-23.

India's outward FDI rises to \$3.47 billion in February, shows RBI data

India's outward FDI commitments rose substantially to \$3.47 billion in February 2024, compared to over \$2.82 billion in February 2023. Sequentially, FDI commitments were also up from \$2.18 billion in January 2024. Outbound FDI comprises three components: equity, loans, and guarantees.

Mineral production in India up by 5.9% in January

The Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) reported a 5.9% hike in the index of mineral production of the mining and quarrying sector for January 2024, with the index reaching 144.1.

This rise comes in contrast to the level in January of the previous year. The cumulative growth from April 2023 to January 2024 also stood at 8.3%.

Production of important minerals in January 2024 displayed significant variance with coal production at 998 lakh tonnes and crude petroleum at 25 lakh tonnes, the ministry added. Lignite production stood at 41 lakh tonnes, and natural gas utilization was reported at 3073 million cu. m.

CCI approves acquisition of certain shareholding of Shriram Investment Holdings Private Limited by Shriram Ownership Trust

The Competition Commission of India has approved the proposed acquisition of certain shareholding of Shriram Investment Holdings Private Limited by Shriram Ownership Trust.

The proposed combination relates to the acquisition by Shriram Ownership Trust (SOT) of

9.44% and 20% stake of Shriram Investment Holdings Private Limited (SIHL) held by APRN Enterprises Private Limited.

SIHL is an unregistered core investment company with a standalone asset size of Rs. 3,976 crore and a turnover of Rs. 1,881 crores as of 31st March 2023.

ICRA forecasts Indian IT service industry growth at 3-5% in FY25

The Indian IT industry is poised to witness a modest revenue growth of 2% in the first three quarters of FY24, and it will maintain a restrained trajectory in the range of 3-5% in FY25, according to a report released by ICRA. This is the second consecutive year when the credit rating agency has forecasted a growth rate in the range of 3-5% for sector. Most of the top IT services firms have reported record levels of total contract value (TCV).

CCI approves acquisition of Kesoram Cement Business from Kesoram Industries Limited by UltraTech Cement Limited

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved acquisition of Kesoram Cement Business from Kesoram Industries Limited by UltraTech Cement Limited. UltraTech is a public listed company in India and is engaged in the business of the manufacture and sale of grey cement, white cement, ready-mix concrete, clinker, and building products in India.

The proposed combination relates to the acquisition of the grey cement business of Kesoram Industries Limited by UltraTech Cement Limited pursuant to a composite scheme of arrangement dated 30th November 2023 under Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 (Scheme) and the Implementation Agreement dated 30th November 2023 (Proposed Combination).

National

EC announces Para Archer & Arjuna Awardee Sheetal Devi as National PwD Icon

Election Commission has announced Para Archer and Arjuna Awardee, Sheetal Devi as its National PwD Icon. Her name was announced at an Exhibition Cricket Match between the Indian Deaf Cricket Association Team and the Delhi and District Cricket Association team held.

She won silver medal in the open women's compound archery event at the World Archery Para Championships 2023 in the Czech Republic in July. She was the first female armless archer to win a medal at the Para World Championships. At Asian Para Games 2023, she

bagged gold medals in the individual compound and mixed double compound and won silver in women's compound.

Petroleum Minister launches Indian Oil's 'ETHANOL 100' fuel

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched 'ETHANOL 100, a revolutionary automotive fuel at Indian Oil Retail Outlet Irwin Road Service Station. ETHANOL 100 stands as a cleaner, greener alternative to gasoline, boasting lower emissions of greenhouse gases and pollutants, thus aiding in combating climate change and enhancing air quality in our communities.

Three-day Startup Mahakumbh begins in New Delhi

The three-day Startup Mahakumbh, one of the biggest events showcasing the startup ecosystem, began at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. This startup event aims at connecting startups with a spectrum of inventors including venture capitalists, investors and potential corporate partners. India has emerged as the 3rd largest ecosystem for startups globally.

GRID-INDIA is now a Miniratna Company

Grid Controller of India Limited (GRID-INDIA) achieved a significant milestone by being conferred with the status of Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE). This recognition, bestowed upon by the Ministry of Power, Government of India, underscores GRID-INDIA's pivotal role in the nation's power landscape.

Established in 2009, GRID-INDIA holds the crucial mandate of overseeing the seamless and uninterrupted operation of the Indian Power System, ensuring the efficient transfer of electric power within and across regions, facilitating trans-national power exchanges with a focus on reliability, economy, and sustainability.

Operation 'Indravati' begins to evacuate Indians from Haiti to Dominican Republic

India has started Operation Indravati to evacuate its nationals from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, and asserted that it was "fully committed" to the security and well-being of Indians abroad.

The move comes days after India had said it was looking at evacuating up to 90 of its nationals from Haiti in view of the deteriorating security situation in the Caribbean nation.

Sports

Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Delhi Capitals by 8 wickets to lift Women's Premier League title

In the Final of the Women's Premier League (WPL) Cricket, Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) beat Delhi Capitals by 8 wickets at Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. RCB received Rs 6 crore as prize money, while runners-up Delhi Capital received Rs 3 crore. RCB's Ellyse Perry won the orange cap for scoring 347 runs in nine matches.

Shreyanka Patil of the champions RCB bagged the purple cap for the highest wicket-taker in the tournament with 13 dismissals to her credit. Smriti Mandhana captained the Royal

Challengers Bangalore side, while Meg Lanning captained the Delhi Capitals

Indian Athlete Gulveer Singh Shatters A 16-Year-Old National Record

Indian Athlete Gulveer Singh shattered a 16-year-old national record by over 20 seconds by clocking 27.41.81 in The Ten event at San Juan Capistrano in California. The 25-year-old finished second in the men's 10000m race. However, the Asian Games Bronze medallist failed to qualify for Paris Olympic Games as he missed the qualification time of 27:00.00 by over 41seconds.

Ace Indian Shuttler Lakshya Sen Climbs Five Places to Become World Number 13 in Men's Singles Category

In Badminton, Ace Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen has climbed five places to become the world number 13 in the men's singles category. The leap in the BWF ranking follows his impressive run at the French Open and the prestigious All England Open. In men's doubles, Star duo of

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty maintained their world number one spot.

In women's doubles, the pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto moved three places up to become world number 20 while another Indian pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand dropped four places to become the world number 26. PV Sindhu is ranked at world number 11 after a round of 16 finish at All England Badminton Open last week.

Defence

Indian Army Contingent Departs for Seychelles to Participate in 10th Edition of Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024"

The Indian Army contingent departed for Seychelles to participate in the Tenth edition of Joint Military Exercise "LAMITIYE-2024" between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces SDF. LAMITIYE' meaning 'Friendship' in the Creole language is a biennial training event and has been conducted in Seychelles since 2001.

The Exercise aims to enhance interoperability in Sub-conventional Operations in Semi-Urban environments under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter on Peace Keeping Operations. The exercise will also build and promote bilateral military relations in addition to exchanging skills, experiences and good practices between both armies.

India and US to participate in bilateral tri-service training exercise: Tiger Triumph-24

The Ministry of Defence announced that the Indian and United States navies have kicked off a bilateral Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise on India's eastern seaboard. Called Tiger Triumph-24, the week-long exercise will involve Indian Navy ships with integral helicopters and landing crafts, Indian Army personnel and vehicles and Indian Air Force aircraft.

The first exercise took place in 2019, for a period of nine days. This year, the exercise will start with the Harbour Phase scheduled from 18 to 25 Mar. The Joint exercise would see an end on the 14th day with the closing ceremony on completion of the sea phase.

Awards and Honours

Prime Minister Modi conferred 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' – Bhutan's highest civilian award

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Bhutan's highest civilian award 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' by country's king Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. With the recognition, the PM became the first foreign Head of the Government to receive the honour

The award has been conferred to Prime Minister Modi in recognition of "his outstanding contribution to the growth of India-Bhutan relations and for his distinguished service to the Bhutanese nation and people.

Pankaj Advani inducted into Billiards Hall of Fame

Legendary Indian cueist Pankaj Advani achieved yet another milestone in his glorious career as he has been inducted into the Hall of Fame at the World Billiards Museum in Shangrao City in China.

Last year, the 38-year-old Indian star won his 26th IBSF (the International Billiards and Snooker Federation) title after beating compatriot Sourav Kothari.

COP28 President receives leadership award at CERAWEEK by S&P Global for securing historic UAE Consensus

Dr. Sultan Al Jaber was recognized with the 'CERAWEEK Leadership Award for Building Global Consensus towards a Sustainable Energy Future' for his role in bringing Parties together to deliver the UAE Consensus.

Dr. Al Jaber was presented the award by Daniel Yergin, Vice Chairman of S&P Global and CERAWEEK conference chair.

Ratan Tata awarded PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award for philanthropy work

Ratan Tata, former chairman of Tata Sons, was bestowed with the prestigious PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award for his outstanding philanthropic contributions. The PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award, named after the former Prime Minister of India, is an award of recognition for individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to social welfare and humanitarian causes.

Tata Sons Chairman emeritus Ratan Tata, 86, has also received two of the highest civilian awards of India -- the Padma Vibhushan (2008) and Padma Bhushan (2000) – for his immeasurable contributions towards nation building.

BPCL secures 5th spot in Business World Real 500: Leading the Change

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) announced that it has continued position as the 5th-ranked company in The Business World Real 500 List of 2024.

This accomplishment underscores BPCL's unwavering commitment to excellence and highlights its consistent and robust financial performance in a dynamic operating environment.

Renowned poet Prabha Varma selected for Saraswati Samman for the year 2023

Renowned poet Prabha Varma has been selected for the Saraswati Samman for the year 2023 for his work in Malayalam language. He has been considered for this award for his Malayalam language poetry work, Roudra Sathwikam and also for his contribution to the literature during the period 2013 to 2022.

The honour carries, apart from a citation, a plaque and an award money of Rs.15 lakhs. Roudra Sathwikam is a poetic work of Prabha Varma in Malayalam language which was published in 2022. The novel in poetic verse probes the conflict between power and politics,

individual and state, art and power in a unique manner.

THDC bags 'The GEEF Global Environment Award 2024' in power industry

THDC India Limited has been awarded in the gold category for the prestigious 'The GEEF Global Environment Award 2024' in the power industry.

The award ceremony was part of the Global Clean Energy Summit-2024 and the Global Environment - Safety Awards 2024 held at JW Marriott Aerocity.

Appointments and Resignations

Navneet Kumar Sehgal appointed as new Prasar Bharati chairman

Navneet Kumar Sehgal, a retired bureaucrat, has been appointed as the new Chairman of Prasar Bharati. An order by the Information & Broadcasting Ministry states that Sehgal's term will last for three years or until he reaches the age of seventy, whichever earlier. The chairperson's post has been vacant since A Surya Prakash reached the mandatory retirement age 70 in 2020.

Prasar Bharati is a statutory autonomous body established under the Prasar Bharati Act and came into existence on 23.11.1997. It is the Public Service Broadcaster of the country. The objectives of public service broadcasting are achieved in terms of the Act through All India Radio and Doordarshan, which earlier were working as media units under the Ministry of Information.

P&G India appoints Kumar Venkatasubramanian as CEO

Leading FMCG maker P&G India announced the appointment of Kumar Venkatasubramanian as CEO, with effect from May 1, 2024.

Kumar is currently leading the P&G business in Australia and New Zealand as CEO.

Before the Australia role, Kumar was leading sales team in P&G India until 2020, it added

Vladimir Putin claims landslide Russian election victory

A landslide victory in the Russian presidential elections has ensured another six-year term for Vladimir Putin. The 71-year-old secured a massive 87.8% votes in an election. Mr Putin will become the longest-serving Russian leader since the reign of Catherine 'the Great', should he complete his next six-year tenure.

The former empress ruled over Russia for 34 years and four months between 1762 and 1796.

Joseph Stalin, the former general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, led the country for 29 years from 1923 to 1954. He has been in power since 1999, first as a prime minister, then president, followed by another four-year term as the prime minister of the country.

HDFC Bank's Arvind Kapil to join Poonawalla Fincorp as MD and CEO

HDFC Bank's head of mortgage portfolio Arvind Kapil is set to join Poonawalla Fincorp as the MD and CEO. He will replace current MD and CEO Abhay Bhutada, who has headed the company since its acquisition in May 2021. Bhutada will continue to serve as a non-executive director on the Board of Poonawalla Fincorp Limited.

Jharkhand Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan Takes Charge as Telangana Governor

Jharkhand Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan took charge as Telangana governor this morning at a function at Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad. Telangana high court Chief Justice Alok Aradhe administered the oath of office on the occasion.

Earlier, State Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari read out the warrant of appointment on the occasion.

Central Bank of India chief executive M V Rao elected as Indian Banks' Association Chairman

Indian Banks Association (IBA) has a new Chairman in M V Rao, Managing Director and CEO, Central Bank of India.

Rao has been elected as IBA Chairman for the term 2023-24 at a meeting of the Managing Committee of IBA.

Madhav Nair, Country Head and CEO, Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, would be Honorary Secretary of the Association.

Naveen Jindal takes charge as president of the Indian Steel Association

Naveen Jindal, chairman, Jindal Steel and Power, took charge as president of Indian Steel Association (ISA), the apex body for steel producers.

In a statement, the association said Naveen Jindal has been unanimously elected as the president of ISA by the apex committee, the governing body of ISA. He succeeds Dilip Oommen, CEO of ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India.

Mariam Mammen Mathew to chair DNPA

Mariam Mammen Mathew, Chief Executive Officer, Manorama Online, has been appointed chairperson of Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) for two years from April 1. She would succeed Tanmay Maheshwari, Managing Director, Amar Ujala.

Reports, Indexes and Rankings

New Delhi ranked world's most polluted capital city for 4th consecutive year

New Delhi is ranked the world's most polluted capital city for the fourth consecutive year since 2018. According to Air Quality Report 2023 conducted by Swiss organisation IQAir, Delhi's PM2.5 levels worsened from 89.1 micrograms per cubic metre in 2022 to 92.7 micrograms per cubic metre in 2023. Bihar's Begusarai has emerged as the world's most polluted metropolitan area.

With an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 54.4 micrograms per cubic metre, India had the third worst air quality after Bangladesh and Pakistan. The report estimated that more than one billion people in India experience PM2.5 concentrations exceeding the World Health Organisation's recommended annual guideline level of 5 micrograms per cubic metre.

DHL Express report says globalisation resilient but geopolitical threats rising

According to the recently published DHL Global Connectedness Report 2024, India stands poised to play an increasingly central role in the development of globalisation over the coming decades. **It ranks India 62nd out of 181 economies, based on 2022 data tracking global flows of trade, capital, information and people.**

This Report, put together by DHL and New York University's Stern School of Business analysed around nine million data points & ranked the connectedness of 181 countries (~99.7% of world's GDP).

According to the researchers, this overall rank reflects both the geographic reach of India's international flows (the "breadth" dimension of the index, on which India ranks 16th) and the size of India's international flows relative to its domestic activity (the "depth" dimension, on which India ranks 161st). India ranks 9th worldwide on breadth of its merchandise trade.

Finland Is World's Happiest Country For 7th Time Straight

India was ranked 126th out of 143 nations in a global happiness index which noted that older age is associated with higher life satisfaction in the world's most populous country. Finland emerged as the happiest country in the world, topping the World Happiness Report 2024, the seventh successive year that the country has occupied the top spot on the list.

The other of the top 10 countries are Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Australia. The World Happiness Report is a partnership of Gallup, the Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre, the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and the WHR's Editorial Board.

The US (23rd) has fallen out of the top 20 for the first time since the World Happiness Report was first published in 2012, driven by a large drop in the well-being of Americans under 30.

Afghanistan remains bottom of the overall rankings as the world's 'unhappiest' nation. Pakistan is ranked 108th on the list.

Meetings, Summits and Conferences

47th Meeting of National Committee of Archivists held in Srinagar

The two-days' 47th Meeting of the National Committee of Archivists (NCA) was concluded at the Sher-e Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), Srinagar. Delegates from Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh participated in the meeting.

The two-day meeting held with an aim to revitalise the archives administration and records management system across states and Union Territories.

The next meeting of the NCA is likely to be held in Gujarat later in the year.

4th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Startup Forum organized in New Delhi

The fourth edition of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Startup Forum was organized in New Delhi.

The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States, fostering an environment conducive to innovation, promoting job creation, and inspiring young talent to develop innovative solutions.

MoUs and Agreements

Axis Bank to support Tata Memorial-supported National Cancer Grid with ₹100 crore contribution

A national tumour biobank and cancer teleconsultation network are among the projects that will be supported by a ₹100 crore contribution towards the National Cancer Grid (NCG), from Axis Bank. The five-year partnership, which was signed between the premier cancer care centre and the private bank, will focus on improving access to cancer care, promoting cancer research.

The National Tumour Biobank, a repository of tumour tissues, blood, radiology and pathology images from all over the country, will receive a part of the funding.

Norway will invest half of \$100 billion under EFTA: Norwegian envoy May-Elin Stener

India has signed a trade pact with EFTA countries — Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein — aiming to attract \$100 billion and to create one million jobs in 15 years in exchange for tariff concessions for their pharma, chemical and minerals.

Switzerland being the largest player is likely to contribute more than half of the \$100 billion free trade pact India recently signed with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), while Norway will bring in the rest, with Iceland and Liechtenstein contributing as well, Norwegian Ambassador to India.

ICAR and Krishi Jagran signs a MoU for the dissemination & promotion of ICAR's initiatives for the growth of Indian Agriculture

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Krishi Jagran Pvt Ltd signed a MoU for the dissemination & promotion of ICAR's initiatives for the growth of Indian Agriculture and farmers' welfare. Dr. U.S. Gautam, Deputy Director General (Agril. Extension) ICAR and Shri. M.C Dominic, Founder & Editor-In-Chief, Krishi Jagran Pvt Ltd, signed the MoU for their respective org.

YES Bank partners with Indian Olympic Association for Paris Olympics 2024

YES Bank has announced its partnership with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as the Official Banking Partner for Team India at the Paris Olympics 2024.

As part of the collaboration, the bank launched the campaign 'Milkar Jitayengey' and introduced the 'YES Glory Debit Card,' specially designed for India's Olympic athletes.

MoU Signed Between Indian Navy and IIT Kharagpur

Indian Navy and Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), at Naval Headquarters, New Delhi, symbolising their commitment to promote technology development, innovative solutions and joint R&D. The strategic collaboration focuses on joint research and development initiatives involving teams from Indian Navy and IIT Kharagpur.

NCC & NPCIL ink MoU to raise awareness on peaceful use of nuclear power through various programmes pan India

National Cadet Corps (NCC) and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in New Delhi to conduct various awareness programmes throughout the country to enhance public perceptions on peaceful use of nuclear power and disseminate scientific & authentic information.

The NPCIL will be providing resource persons in this initiative for field engagements with the NCC during the camps and various activities by educating the cadets. The MoU also facilitates a unique opportunity to the cadets to visit various facilities of NPCIL across the country, thereby giving a first-hand experience on peaceful use of nuclear energy, its technical aspects.

Tech Mahindra, IBM collaborate to drive digital adoption

IT services and consultation company Tech Mahindra on Friday said it has collaborated with American technology firm IBM to set up a 'Synergy Lounge' in its Sinin its Singapore campus, to assist enterprises in operationalising and deriving value from next-gen technologies.

Built on the Hex-I concept, the Lounge will feature different experience zones fzones focusing on various technologies that will help enterprises solve complex business problems, improve customer experiences, reduce operational costs, and eenhance workforce efficiency.

Science and Technology

MeitY issues advisory on AI for intermediaries

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued an advisory on due diligence by Intermediaries and Platforms under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

In its latest advisory, the Ministry said that every intermediary and platform should ensure that use of Artificial Intelligence models, Generative AI, Software or algorithms on or through its computer resource does not permit its users to host, display, upload, modify, publish, or share any unlawful content as outlined in the IT Rules or violate any other provision.

It added that every intermediary and platform should ensure that its computer resource in itself or through the use of AI models and others does not permit any bias or discrimination or threaten the integrity of the electoral process. It added that every intermediary and platform should inform its users through the terms of service and user agreements.

ISRO launches for third Pushpak mission: A giant leap towards affordable space access

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted its third mission involving the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV), named "Pushpak" after the legendary spaceship from the Ramayan.

The Pushpak RLV will be carried to an altitude of approximately 4.5 km by an Indian Air Force helicopter and released after achieving predetermined conditions.

According to reports, the Pushpak RLV is designed as an all-rocket, fully reusable single-stage-to-orbit (SSTO) vehicle, incorporating advanced elements from previous demonstrators like the X-33, X-34, and the upgraded DC-XA. The vehicle features a fuselage, a nose cap, double delta wings, twin vertical tails, and active control surfaces called Elevons and Rudder.

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