

# **SSC BANKING MANTHAN**

## **Current Affairs Supplement**

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## **Preface**

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**Dear Readers,**

The “Current Affairs” section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfil aspirations.

**Happy Reading!**

**Best Wishes**

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## POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

### National



#### BJP wins 240 seats, Congress 99: EC declares results for all Lok Sabha constituencies

- The Election Commission of India has announced the results for all Lok Sabha constituencies. **The BJP secured 240 out of 543 seats, while the Congress won 99 seats. Though the Lok Sabha has 543 members, counting was conducted for 542 seats as BJP's Surat candidate Mukesh Dalal was elected unopposed. With support from key allies Nara Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Nitish Kumar's JD(U), which won 16 and 12 seats in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, respectively, and other alliance partners, the NDA crossed the halfway mark.**
- As the Samajwadi Party kept the INDIA bloc's morale high in Uttar Pradesh with 37 seats, the Trinamool Congress (TMC), another key member of the opposition alliance, won 29 seats in West Bengal, higher than its 2019 tally of 22. **The INDIA coalition outperformed expectations, securing 234 seats, 99 of which were won by the Congress, garnering the party the Official Opposition status for the first time in 10 years.** Seven independents and ten candidates from non-aligned parties also won seats in the Lok Sabha.
- **Here's the full list of how political parties performed in the Lok Sabha polls.** BJP – 240, Congress – 99, Samajwadi Party – 37, Trinamool Congress – 29, DMK – 22, TDP – 16, JD(U) – 12, Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackrey) – 9, NCP (Sharad Pawar) 7, leading in 1, Shiv Sena – 7, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) – 5, YSRCP – 4, RJD – 4, CPI (M) – 4, Indian Union Muslim League – 3, AAP – 3, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha – 3, Janasena Party – 2, CPI(ML)(L) – 2, JD(S) – 2, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi – 2, CPI – 2, RLD – 2, National Conference – 2, United People's Party, Liberal – 1, Asom Gana Parishad – 1, Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) – 1, Kerala Congress – 1, Revolutionary Socialist Party – 1, NCP – 1, Voice of the People Party – 1, Zoram People's Movement – 1, Shiromani Akali Dal – 1, Rashtriya Loktantrik Party – 1, Bharat Adivasi Party – 1, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha – 1, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam – 1, Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram) – 1, Apna Dal (Soneylal) – 1, AJSU Party – 1, AIMIM – 1 and Independent – 7.

**General elections were held in India from 19 April to 1 June 2024 in seven phases, to elect all 543 members of the Lok Sabha. Votes were counted and the result was declared on 4 June to form the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. On 7 June 2024, Narendra Modi confirmed the support of 293 MPs to Droupadi Murmu, the President of India. This marked Modi's third term as Prime Minister and his first time heading a coalition government, with the Telugu Desam Party of Andhra Pradesh and Janata Dal (United) of Bihar emerging as two main allies. More than 968 million people out of a population of 1.4 billion people were eligible to vote, equivalent to 70 percent of the total population. 642 million voters participated in the election and 312 million of them were women, making it the highest ever participation by women voters. This was the largest-ever election, surpassing the previous election, and lasted 44 days, second only to the 1951–52 Indian general election. Incumbent Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who completed a second term, ran for a third consecutive term after his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had enjoyed an absolute majority—a minimum of 272 seats—in the 2019 and 2014 elections. The primary opposition was the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), a coalition formed by the Indian National Congress (INC) and many regional parties in 2023. The INDIA coalition outperformed expectations, securing 234 seats, 99 of which were won by the Congress, garnering the party the Official Opposition status for the first time in 10 years.**

## Maharashtra: Pench Tiger Reserve Installs India's First AI Forest Fire Detection System

- **The Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra has become the pioneer in India to implement an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based forest fire detection system.** Covering over 350 square kilometres of the reserve, this state-of-the-art technology marks a significant leap forward in forest management and wildlife protection. The AI-powered platform, dubbed Pantera, integrates both camera feeds and satellite-based data to deliver real-time alerts within a mere three minutes of detecting forest fires.
- **The cornerstone of this initiative is the Um-graumeio forest fire early warning detection system, a technology renowned for its effectiveness in combating wildfires in the Amazon rainforest.** The AI-powered platform, dubbed Pantera, integrates both camera feeds and satellite-based data to deliver real-time alerts within a mere three minutes of detecting forest fires. **None of the country's tiger reserves is using AI-based technology to detect forest fires.**

**Pench Tiger Reserve or Pench National Park is one of the premier tiger reserves of India and the first one to straddle across two states - Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.** The reference to Pench is mostly to the tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh. It is the same forest area portrayed in the famous "The Jungle Book" by Rudyard Kipling.

## SKM sweeps Sikkim, BJP bags 3<sup>rd</sup> Arunachal term

- **The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Arunachal Pradesh and the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) in Sikkim secured landslide victories in the assembly elections.** BJP's win was almost certain as the party had bagged 10 seats unopposed. The ruling party was the only one that fielded candidates in all 60 seats.
- The Congress, which was the biggest party till the BJP took that position nearly a decade back, had put up candidates in only 19 seats. **In Sikkim, the SKM won 31 out of the 32 seats that went to polls, while the opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) managed to secure only one seat.**

**Arunachal Pradesh ("land of dawn-lit mountains") is a state in Northeast India. It borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south. It shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east, and a disputed border with China in the north at the McMahon Line. Itanagar is the state capital of Arunachal Pradesh. Lieutenant General Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik is the present Governor. Pema Khandu is the current Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh. He is the son of former Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Dorjee Khandu.** Since assuming the office of the Chief Minister in July 2016, he and his government have twice changed their party affiliation; in September from the Indian National Congress to the Peoples Party of Arunachal, and then in December 2016 to the Bharatiya Janata Party.

## Haryana government to launch Rs. 10,000-crore project to combat air pollution

- **The Haryana state government will soon roll out Rs. 10,000-crore project funded by the World Bank to address air pollution.** The Haryana Clean Air Project for Sustainable Development will be implemented in the state in a phased manner with the first phase being implemented in the districts falling in the National Capital Region (NCR) and replication in entire state later. **The project targets promoting cleaner vehicles on roads by electrifying public transportation fleets for intra-city and inter-city travel.** It aims to incentivise the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) for private use, especially three-wheelers and four-wheeler taxis.

**Haryana is a state in India located in the northern-part of the country. It was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on a linguistic basis. The state capital is Chandigarh and the most populous city is Faridabad, which is a part of the National Capital Region. The city of Gurgaon is among India's largest financial and technology hubs. Bandaru Dattatreya is serving as the current Governor of Haryana since 2021. Nayab Singh Saini is serving as the current Chief Minister of Haryana. According to the 2011 Census, the lowest sex ratio in India is in Haryana, where sex ratio is only 879 whereas the highest sex ratio is in Kerala (1084).**

## India Creates World Record with 64.2 Crore Voters Participating In Lok Sabha Polls

- **Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that India has created a world record with 64.2 crore voters participating in the Lok Sabha Polls.** Mr Kumar said that the number is 1.5 times of the voters of all G7 countries – US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada.



- In this Lok Sabha polls, 31.2 crore women voters cast their votes which is also the highest ever in the world. He also said, only 39 repolling were conducted in this election unlike 540 repolling in 2019 General Election. Mr Kumar said, over 68 thousand monitoring teams and 1.5 crore polling and security personnel were involved in the electoral exercise.

**The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a constitutional body. It was established by the Constitution of India to conduct and regulate elections in the country. Article 324 of the Constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction, and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of the president of India, and the office of vice-president of India shall be vested in the election commission. Thus, the Election Commission is an all-India body in the sense that it is common to both the Central government and the state governments. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, State Legislative Councils and the offices of the President and Vice President of the country. The Election Commission operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324, and subsequently enacted Representation of the People Act. Rajiv Kumar is the current as and the 25<sup>th</sup> Chief Election Commissioner of India.**

### Banaras railway station first in India to get JUSE certification

- Banaras Railway Station of North East Railway (NER) has become the first station of the Indian Railways to receive the certification of international institution JUSE (Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers). Banaras station has been developed as a green station for which the approval of the process for this work (consent to operate) has been obtained from the Pollution Control Board of Uttar Pradesh.
- Banaras railway station has been developed as a green station by controlling water and air quality as per the standards of National Green Tribunal (NGT). The station had received 5S certificate from international organization (Quality Circle of India) QCFI three years ago and is maintaining that level.

**Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18<sup>th</sup> railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.**

### School Education Department Signs MoU with National Book Trust to Create Institutional Framework for Rashtriya E-Pustakalaya

- The Department of School Education signed an MoU with the National Book Trust in New Delhi to create an institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya. Secretary of the Department of Higher Education K. Sanjay Murthy said that the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya will be available round-the-clock, irrespective of the geographic location of the readers, making books more accessible to them. He also added that the problem of last mile presence of a library for many states will be solved with Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya. He hoped that in the coming 2-3 years, there will be over 10 thousand books in more than 100 languages.
- A first-of-its-kind digital library, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya, will seek to instil a lifelong love of reading among Indian children and youth by offering over 1,000 non-academic books to children and adolescents published by over 40 reputed publishers in more than 22 languages besides English. It will be aimed at facilitating the availability of quality books across geographies, languages, genres, and levels and providing device-agnostic accessibility for children and adolescents in the country. The books will be categorized by four age groups, as per NEP 2020, for readers aged 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years. The Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya project will be a big step in bridging the digital divide and creating an inclusive atmosphere for everybody. The books will thus be available to read anytime and anywhere. By signing this MoU, DoSEL and the National Book Trust, India, will commit to collaborating to improve the educational environment.

The Ministry of Education (MoE), previously the Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020), is responsible for the implementation and formulation of the National Policy on Education approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is the **First Minister of Education** in the Indian. He is commonly remembered as Maulana Azad; the word Maulana is an honorific meaning ‘Our Master’ and he had adopted Azad (Free) as his pen name. The current Union Minister for Education is Dharmendra Pradhan since 7 July 2021. Shri Pradhan represents Madhya Pradesh in the Rajya Sabha as Member of Parliament.

## India names two new Wetlands of International Importance

- India has marked World Environment Day by designating Nagi Bird Sanctuary and Nakti Bird Sanctuary as its newest wetlands of international importance. These “Ramsar Sites” are both man-made reservoirs situated in the Jhajha forest range of Jamui District in Bihar, India.
- Nakti Bird Sanctuary was developed primarily for irrigation through the construction of Nakti Dam. In 1984, the wetland was designated as a Bird Sanctuary, highlighting its importance as a wintering habitat for several migratory species, with over 20,000 birds congregating during winter months.
- The Nagi Bird Sanctuary (Site no. 2545) was created following the damming of the Nagi River, which enabled the gradual formation of water bodies with clear water and aquatic vegetation. Due to its importance for migratory bird species, the Site was recognized locally as a Bird Sanctuary in 1984, and internationally as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) by BirdLife International. Threatened migratory species that winter at the Site include the critically endangered Baer’s pochard (*Aythya baeri*) and the endangered steppe eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*).

A Ramsar site is a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, which is also known as the ‘Convention on Wetlands’ — an intergovernmental environmental treaty established by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1971, and named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed that year. Ramsar Sites in India are wetlands or similar sites of international significance to conserve and ensure sustainable use of its resources. India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. India signed it on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 1982. During 1982 to 2013, a total of 26 sites were added to the list of Ramsar sites, however, during 2014 to 2022, the country has added 49 new wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites. There are a total of 82 Ramsar sites in India as of 17 June 2024.

## BMC unveils India’s first climate budget, earmarks Rs. 10,224 cr

- On the occasion of World Environment Day the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) unveiled a climate budget for the year 2024-25. BMC officers said that it was the first urban local body in the country and fourth globally, after Oslo, New York and London, to have launched a climate budget. This isn’t a budget separate from its existing financial budget and instead all the works being done in a climate relevant manner have been incorporated in this budget. A research study in Dibru Saikhowa National Park and Panidehing bird sanctuary in Assam reveals the importance of land use patterns in mitigating climate change effects, focusing on carbon retention through natural forestation.

## India lags behind 150 countries in representation of women in Lok Sabha

- India fared worse than 150 countries in the representation of women in parliament, according to data from IPU-Parline, a global database on national parliaments. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, 74 women MPs were elected, forming 13.6 per cent of the total number of members in parliament.
- 14 parties have women elected as MPs, with BJP leading the list with 31 women MPs. They are followed by Congress with 13 women MPs and TMC with 11 women MPs. India falls short of the global average of 26.5 per cent as well as the South and Central Asian average of 19 per cent women MPs. The country with the highest number of women MPs, Rwanda, also has a 30 per cent reservation for women in elected positions.
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) -Parline, a free resource on national parliaments, published a ranking in May 2024, that shows the representation of women in parliaments. In 2019, 14.7 per cent of MPs were women, taking India’s ranking in the global index to 145. The number of women MPs in 2019, were the highest till date in India. As of May 2024, the number of women MPs has dropped, leading India’s ranking to fall to 150.

- **India falls short of the global average of 26.5 per cent as well as the South and Central Asian average of 19 per cent women MPs.** India is outranked by countries like the UAE, South Africa, USA and the UK. **Rwanda, with women MPs comprising 61.3 per cent of parliament, ranks highest on the index.** India's neighbours in Asia also fare better with Pakistan ranking at 116, China at 89 and Nepal at 55. In 2023, **India passed the Women's Reservation Bill (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam), which will provide 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and assemblies.** The bill will be enacted by 2029 at least due to delimitation and census requirements.

### Mamallapuram set to become India's first Green Destination, adding new feathers to its UNESCO World Heritage cap

- **The fabled Mamallapuram or Mahabalipuram, known for its UNESCO World Heritage site, is all set to become India's first Green Destination.** The final award of Mamallapuram will be formally announced and presented after an audit in a couple of months and this will make it the first World Heritage Site in the Asia Pacific region to achieve this benchmark.
- **Green Destinations based in The Netherlands is a Global Sustainable Tourism Council accredited certification body which supports sustainable destinations, their businesses and their communities.** So far, 122 destinations in the world have been awarded the certification by Global Destinations.

### Himanta Biswa Sarma announces Choraideo Maidam's World Heritage status, seeks UNESCO support

- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced a step towards securing World Heritage recognition for Choraideo Maidam.** Sarma revealed that the Assam Government has decided to engage with the Ambassadors of all member countries of UNESCO through the Ministry of External Affairs to garner support for the prestigious status.
- **Choraideo Maidam, known for its historical and architectural importance, holds immense cultural value in the region.** By engaging with UNESCO member countries through diplomatic channels, Assam aims to showcase the unique heritage of Choraideo Maidam and secure global recognition for its preservation and conservation efforts.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. **Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples.** Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. It is headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France. **Audrey Azoulay is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the UNESCO since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.**

### NDA Leader Narendra Modi Stakes Claim to Form Government

- **Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi met President Droupadi Murmu and staked claim to form the government.** The oath taking ceremony was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan and the President administered the oath to Narendra Modi and his new cabinet.
- **Earlier, an NDA delegation led by BJP President JP Nadda also met the President and submitted a letter stating that Narendra Modi had been elected leader of the BJP Parliamentary Party.** Letters of support from NDA constituent parties were also handed over to the President. **President Droupadi Murmu appointed Narendra Modi to the office of Prime Minister of India exercising powers vested in her under Article 75 (1) of the Constitution.** The President requested Mr Modi to advise her about the names of other persons to be appointed members of the Union Council of Ministers, and indicate the date and time of the swearing-in-ceremony to be held at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

**The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is a centre-right to right-wing conservative Indian political alliance led by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).** It was founded on 15 May 1998 and currently controls the government of India as well as the government of 19 Indian states and one Union territory. **Its first chairman was**



then Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee. L. K. Advani, the former Deputy Prime Minister, took over as chairman in 2004 and served until 2014, and Amit Shah has been the chairman since 2014. The coalition ruled from 1998 to 2004. The alliance returned to power in the 2014 general elections with a combined vote share of 38.5%. Its leader Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister of India on 26 May 2014. In the 2019 general election, the alliance further increased its tally to 353 seats with combined vote share of 45.43%. The alliance lost 60 seats in the 2024 general election, but retained enough to form a coalition government, a first in over 10 years. On 7 June 2024, Modi confirmed the support of 293 MPs to Droupadi Murmu, the President of India. This marked Modi's third term as Prime Minister and his first time heading a coalition government, with the Telugu Desam Party of Andhra Pradesh and Janata Dal (United) of Bihar emerging as two main allies.

## Goa becomes India's first state to launch Regenerative Tourism

- On the occasion of the sixty-second anniversary of the Liberation of Goa, Goa Tourism is thrilled to announce the launch of a ground breaking model for regenerative tourism. Aligning itself to the values and aspirations of the famous Manila Declaration of World Tourism of 1980 and the more recent G20 tourism ministers working group meet in Goa that came up with the Goa roadmap for tourism as a vehicle for achieving the sustainable development goals, the Department of Tourism in Goa promises to transform the state into a model for regenerative tourism in India.
- “With the launch of the Ekadasha Teertha, we are giving Indian tourism a fresh look with an emphasis on spirituality, indigeneity, cultural and civilisational nationalism, and conscious tourism. Through travel and pilgrimage, the Indian people have expanded their geographical knowledge throughout millennia, freeing themselves from the constraints of regionalism and parochialism.

The Annexation of Goa was the process in which the Republic of India annexed the former Portuguese Indian territories of Goa, Daman and Diu, starting with the armed action carried out by the Indian Armed Forces in December 1961. In India, this action is referred to as the “Liberation of Goa”. In Portugal, it is referred to as the “Invasion of Goa”. The “armed action” was code named Operation Vijay (meaning “Victory”) by the Indian Armed Forces. It involved air, sea and land strikes for over 36 hours, and was a decisive victory for India, ending 451 years of rule by Portugal over its remaining exclaves in India. Following the end of Portuguese rule in 1961, Goa was placed under military administration headed by Kunhiraman Palat Candeth as Lieutenant Governor. December 19 is observed as Goa Liberation Day to commemorate the role of India's armed forces in liberating Goa from Portuguese rule. Goa is a state on the southwestern coast of India within the Konkan region, geographically separated from the Deccan highlands by the Western Ghats. It is bound by the Indian states of Maharashtra to the north, and Karnataka to the east and south, with the Arabian Sea in the west. Panaji is the state's capital, while Vasco da Gama is its largest city. It is India's smallest state by area and fourth-smallest by population. Pramod Pandurang Sawant is the current Chief Minister of Goa since 2019. P. S. Sreedharan Pillai is currently serving as the 19<sup>th</sup> and current Governor of Goa since 2021.

## TDP President Nara Chandrababu Naidu sworn-In as Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister

- Telugu Desam Party National President N Chandrababu Naidu took oath as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The swearing-in ceremony takes place near Vijayawada. NDA senior leaders and Chief Ministers of neighboring states were to attend the ceremony.
- This was the second time Mr Nara Chandrababu Naidu takes oath as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh post bifurcation in 2014 and first Telugu person to take oath as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh for the fourth time. NDA allies Telugu Desam Party, Janasena and Bharatiya Janata Party swept the assembly polls winning 164 of the 175 assembly seats.

Nara Chandrababu Naidu commonly known as CBN is currently serving as the 13<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He was democratically elected to this position with a landslide victory in 2024. Naidu has had a distinguished political career, previously serving as Chief Minister from 1995 to 2004 before the state's bifurcation and again from 2014 to 2019 after the bifurcation. Naidu's political career began in the 1970s with the Indian National Congress. In 1978, he was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, and from 1980 to 1982, he served as a minister in the state cabinet. Afterwards, he switched party allegiance and joined TDP, which had been founded by Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao his father in law.

## Navy gets first woman helicopter pilot

- After the IAF and Army, the Navy has now also begun inducting women as helicopter pilots, with Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev becoming the first to get the “golden wings” at the passing-out parade at the naval air station INS Rajali at Arakkonam in Tamil Nadu. In another milestone, Lieutenant Jamyang Tsewang, the first officer from Ladakh to be commissioned into the Navy, also successfully graduated as a qualified helicopter pilot.

The Indian Navy is the maritime branch of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy. The Chief of Naval Staff, a four-star admiral, commands the navy. As a blue-water navy, it operates significantly in the Persian Gulf Region, the Horn of Africa, the Strait of Malacca, and routinely conducts anti-piracy operations and partners with other navies in the region. Admiral Radhakrishnan Hari Kumar is the current Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS). General Anil Chauhan is a four-star general of the Indian Army, who is the current and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces.

## Modi 3.0 Cabinet: Ram Mohan Naidu becomes youngest ever Union Minister

- Srikakulam MP Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu (TDP) becomes the youngest ever member of the Central Cabinet, being headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at age 36. This is his third consecutive victory since 2014. Son of former Union Minister K. Yerran Naidu (the youngest Cabinet Minister in 1996) and with graduation in electrical engineering from Purdue University and a Master’s Degree in Business Administration from Long Island University, Mr. Ram Mohan Naidu was initially drawn to a career in Singapore but fate led him back to his roots after his father’s death in a road accident in 2012.

## Lok Sabha Secretariat Develops “Prerana Sthal” To Showcase Statues Of Great Leaders & Freedom Fighters Of India

- Lok Sabha Secretariat is developing “Prerana Sthal” in the Parliament House Complex and all the statues of great leaders and freedom fighters of the country are being installed in this. Earlier, these statues were installed at different parts of the Complex. After the construction of the new Parliament Building, an action plan has been made for landscaping and beautification of the Parliament Complex so that the Complex could be made grand and attractive.
- The Prerana Sthal is being developed in such a way that the visitors coming to visit the Parliament complex could easily see the statues of these leaders and take inspiration from their lives and philosophy. In this Prerana Sthal, arrangements are also being made to provide detailed information to the visitors through modern technology regarding the lives and contributions of these great freedom fighters.

The Parliament of India is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India. It is a bicameral legislature composed of the president of India and two houses: the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The President in their role as head of the legislature has full powers to summon and prorogue either house of Parliament or to dissolve the Lok Sabha. The president can exercise these powers only upon the advice of the Prime Minister and their Union Council of Ministers. Those elected or nominated (by the president) to either house of Parliament are referred to as members of Parliament (MPs). The members of parliament of the Lok Sabha are directly elected by the Indian public voting in single-member districts and the members of parliament of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the members of all state legislative assemblies by proportional representation. The Parliament has a sanctioned strength of 543 in the Lok Sabha. Between 1952 and 2020, two additional members of the Anglo-Indian community were also nominated by the President of India on the advice of the Indian government, which was abolished in January 2020 by the 104<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 and 245 in the Rajya Sabha including 12 nominees from the expertise of different fields of literature, art, science, and social service. The Parliament meets at Sansad Bhavan in New Delhi.

## Operation Sadbhavana: Indian Army’s Trishakti Corps Demonstrate Unwavering Support For North Sikkim’s Remote Communities In Naga, Rangrang Villages

- In a proactive move to aid the villagers affected by the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) in North Sikkim, the Trishakti Corps of the Indian Army, under the Operation Sadbhavana project, conducted

**relief operations and organized a medical camp.** The Corps demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the locals of Rangrang and Naga villages, reaffirming its solidarity with the affected communities.

- The relief efforts saw the distribution of essential relief materials, providing much-needed assistance to the affected residents. This gesture symbolized the Corps' dedication to supporting the remote villages of Naga and Rang Rang during their time of need. **Additionally, the Trishakti Corps organized a medical camp, offering crucial medical investigations, medicines, and valuable insights on comprehensive health to the villagers.** Over 150 patients from both villages benefitted from this noble endeavor.
- Furthermore, local youths were empowered through an enriching lecture and video demonstration on the Agniveer Scheme, aimed at nurturing their potential and fostering a brighter future. **The Indian Army's initiatives exemplify a spirit of service and compassion, strengthening the bond between the armed forces and the local populace. Operation Sadbhavana, with its emphasis on community development, has played a significant role in positively impacting the lives of residents in border villages.** The Trishakti Corps reiterated its commitment to continuing such community-driven activities in the future, further promoting harmony and solidarity in the border villages of Sikkim.

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. Sam Manekshaw was the first field marshal of India, and was conferred the rank on 1 January 1973. The second was Kodandera M. Cariappa, who was conferred the rank on 15 January 1986. The Indian Army was formed in 1895 alongside the long established presidency armies of the East India Company, which too were absorbed into it in 1903. General Manoj Pande is an Indian Army General serving as the 29<sup>th</sup> and the current Chief of the Army Staff. He is the first officer from the Corps of Engineers to become the Army Chief.

### SKM chief Prem Singh Tamang set to take oath as CM for second consecutive term

- Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) convenor Prem Singh Tamang took oath as the Chief Minister of the Himalayan state for the second consecutive term. Tamang and his Council of Ministers was administered the oath of office at the Paljor stadium in Gangtok.
- The ruling SKM secured a resounding victory in the state, clinching a landslide win by capturing 31 out of 32 seats in the assembly elections. In contrast, the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) only managed to secure a victory in the Shyari constituency.

Sikkim is a state in northeastern India. It borders the Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north and northeast, Bhutan in the east, Nepal in the west, and West Bengal in the south. Sikkim is also close to the Siliguri Corridor, which borders Bangladesh. Sikkim's capital and largest city is Gangtok. Almost 35% of the state is covered by the Khangchendzonga National Park – a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In 1975, after the Indian Army took over the city of Gangtok, a referendum was held that led to the deposition of the monarchy and Sikkim joining India as its 22<sup>nd</sup> state. Prem Singh Tamang is the current Chief Minister of Sikkim. Pawan Kumar Chamling was the former Chief Minister of Sikkim. Chamling's 24.4 year stint (December 1994 to May 2019) is the longest ever by a chief minister of any Indian state, surpassing Jyoti Basu's 23 years in West Bengal. Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharyais currently governor of the state of Sikkim. In 2015, Sikkim became the India's first "organic state".

### Modi's NDA govt starts Term 3; 30 Cabinet posts in 72-member Union Council of Ministers

- Shri Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan, becoming only the second after Jawaharlal Nehru to secure a third consecutive term. The 72-member Union Council of Ministers which was administered the oath of office by President Droupadi Murmu included 30 Cabinet Ministers and 5 Ministers of State (independent charge).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, signalling continuity, has retained key ministers in his new government. Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman, and S Jaishankar will continue to lead the high-profile ministries of home, defence, finance, and external affairs, respectively. These four ministers also form the crucial Cabinet committee on security, chaired by the prime minister.



- Among the new cabinet members, former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has been assigned the agriculture and rural development ministries. Bharatiya Janata Party president JP Nadda returns to the health ministry, a position he previously held during Modi's first term before becoming the party president.
- Nitin Gadkari, known for his work on expanding the national highway network, remains in charge of the road transport and highways ministry. Former Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar has been given the housing and urban affairs and power ministries. Ashwini Vaishnaw, who previously managed the railways and electronics and information technology ministries, retains these portfolios and has also been given the information and broadcasting ministry.
- Dharmendra Pradhan and Piyush Goyal will continue to head the education and commerce and industry ministries, respectively. Hardeep Singh Puri will remain in charge of the petroleum and natural gas ministry but will no longer oversee the housing and urban affairs ministry. President Droupadi Murmu, on the advice of Prime Minister Modi, directed the allocation of portfolios to the 72 members of the Union council of ministers, according to an official statement.
- There are 7 women in the new Council of Ministers, two of them – Nirmala Sitharaman and Annapurna Devi – in the Cabinet. And, five are MoS: Anupriya Patel, Shobha Karandlaje, Raksha Khadse, Savitri Thakur and Nimuben Jayantibhai Bambhaniya. Among the former Cabinet ministers who won their Lok Sabha seats but did not find a place in this government were Anurag Thakur from Himachal Pradesh, Narayan Rane from Maharashtra and Purushottam Rupala from Gujarat. Others who were dropped from the Cabinet included R K Singh, Mahendra Nath Pandey, Smriti Irani and Arjun Munda – all of them lost in the elections.

**Article 74 of the Constitution deals with the status of the council of ministers while Article 75 deals with the appointment, tenure, responsibility, qualification, oath and salaries and allowances of the ministers.** The COM consists of three categories of ministers, namely, cabinet ministers, ministers of state, and deputy ministers. At the top of all these ministers stands the Prime Minister. Article 75 (Other Provisions as to Ministers): The PM shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the PM. **Article 75 (Other Provisions as to Ministers): The PM shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the PM.** The total number of ministers, including the Prime Minister, in the Council of Ministers (COM) shall not exceed 15% of the total strength of the Lok Sabha. This provision was added by the 91<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act of 2003. Article 75 clearly states that the COM is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. This means that all the ministers own joint responsibility to the Lok Sabha for all their acts of omission and commission. **Article 75 also contains the principle of individual responsibility.** It states that the ministers hold office during the pleasure of the President, which means that the President can remove a minister even at a time when the COM enjoys the confidence of the Lok Sabha. However, the President removes a minister only on the advice of the Prime Minister. **Article 78 (Duties of Prime Minister): To communicate to the President all decisions of the COM relating to the administration of the affairs of the Union and proposals for legislation.**

### In a first, a Buddhist to head minority affairs ministry

- In Kiren Rijju, minority affairs ministry has for the first time got a Buddhist as its head. He will be helped by George Kurian, a Christian from Kerala and a surprise inclusion as he is not a member of either House of Parliament. The ministry was led, even under BJP govts, by Muslims, the largest minority community. However, the pattern broke when Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi resigned a day before his term as Rajya Sabha member ended in July 2022 and women and child development minister Smriti Irani got additional charge of the ministry.

**The Ministry of Minority Affairs is the ministry in the Government of India which was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and created on 29 January 2006.** It is the apex body for the central government's regulatory and developmental programmes for the minority religious communities and minority linguistic communities in India. Six religious communities, viz; Muslims, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis) have been notified in Gazette of India as minority communities by the Union Government all over India. **Original notification of 1993 was for five religious communities; Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, Christians and Muslims, later in 2014, Jains community was also added.** As per Census 2001, these six communities consists of 18.8% of the country's population. The Union Government set up the **National Commission for Minorities (NCM)**



under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. The current minister is Kiren Rijiju who has been in office since 10 June 2024, and the Minister of State is George Kurian (since June 2024).

## Centre to help construct 3 crore houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

- **The Union cabinet approved the Centre's assistance for constructing 3 crore more rural and urban houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.** The decision was taken in the first meeting of the Cabinet of the Narendra Modi 3.0 held at his residence on 7 Lok Kalyan Marg. **Under PMAY, a total of 4.21 crore houses have been completed for eligible poor families under the housing schemes in the last 10 years.**

## Indian Army launches integrated generator monitoring, control system 'Vidyut Rakshak'

- **The Indian Army has launched 'Vidyut Rakshak', an integrated generator monitoring, protection, and control system developed by the Army Design Bureau (ADB).** This tech-based innovation, part of the Army's 'Year of Tech Absorption', utilizes Internet of Things (IoT) technology to monitor, predict faults, and automate manual operations of all existing generators, regardless of type or make. The system aims to save manpower and signifies the Army's commitment to leveraging technology for transformative change. **Vidyut Rakshak was showcased during Aero India 2023 and has already been inducted into the Indian Army.**

## Mohan Charan Majhi sworn in as BJP's first CM in Odisha

- **Veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Mohan Charan Majhi was sworn in as the 16<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of Odisha.** In the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, their Cabinet colleagues and Chief Ministers of nine BJP-ruled States, Governor Raghubar Das administered the oath of office to Mr. Majhi, a four-time MLA from the Keonjhar Assembly constituency. **He is the third tribal Chief Minister after late Hemanand Biswal and Giridhar Gamang since Odisha became a separate State in 1936.** K. V. Singh Deo, six-time MLA from the Patnagarh Assembly constituency, and Prabhati Parida, first-time Nimapara MLA, also took oath of office. The two leaders will serve as Deputy Chief Ministers in the State's first BJP government.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13<sup>th</sup>-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE.

## First session of 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha to begin on June 24

- **The first session of the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha will begin on June 24 for oath or affirmation of the newly elected members and will conclude on July 3,** Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju said. The first three days of the session will see the newly elected leaders taking oath or making affirmation of their membership of the Lok Sabha and electing the Speaker of the House. **President Droupadi Murmu will address a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha on June 27 and is likely to outline the new government's roadmap for the next five years.**

The Parliament of India is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India. It is a bicameral legislature composed of the president of India and two houses: the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The President in their role as head of the legislature has full powers to summon and prorogue either house of Parliament or to dissolve the Lok Sabha. The president can exercise these powers only upon the advice of the Prime Minister and their Union Council of Ministers. Those elected or nominated (by the president) to either house of Parliament are referred to as members of Parliament (MPs). The members of parliament of the Lok Sabha are directly elected by the Indian public voting in single-member districts and the members of parliament of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the members of all state legislative assemblies by proportional representation. **The Parliament has a sanctioned strength of 543 in the Lok Sabha. Between 1952 and 2020, two additional members of the Anglo-Indian community were also nominated by the President of India on the advice of the Indian government, which was abolished in January 2020 by the 104<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 and 245 in the Rajya Sabha including 12 nominees from the expertise of different fields of literature, art, science, and social service.** The Parliament meets at Sansad Bhavan in New Delhi.

## India welcomes Egypt, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia joining BRICS

- India wholeheartedly welcomed Egypt, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia joining the BRICS as their representatives attended for the first time a key meeting of the grouping hosted by Russia. The meeting was the first ministerial meeting following BRICS expansion in 2023 when Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE joined Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa as full-fledged BRICS members. **Russia took over the year-long chairmanship of BRICS on January 1, 2024.** Russia's presidency features more than 250 various events, with a BRICS summit in Kazan in October 2024 being the central one.

BRICS is the acronym coined to associate five major emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Since 2009, the governments of the BRICS states have met annually at formal summits. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (or "the BRICs") before the induction of South Africa in 2010. Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates joined the organization on 1 January 2024. The term "BRIC" is believed to be coined in 2001 by then-chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, Jim O'Neill, in his publication Building Better Global Economic BRICs. But, it was actually coined by Roopa Purushothaman who was a Research Assistant in the original report. The BRIC grouping's 1<sup>st</sup> formal summit, also held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, commenced on 16 June 2009.

## and Iran signed 10-year Chabahar Port pact

- Recently, India and Iran signed a 10-year contract for operating the Chabahar port in Iran. This long-term agreement was signed between Indian Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL) and Port and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran, enabling operation of the Shahid-Beheshti terminal. Signing of a long-term contract with Iran is part of India's strategic and economic vision for Central Asia and beyond.
- Chabahar is Iran's oceanic port nearest to India. It is situated in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, on the Makran coast. It lies in the Gulf of Oman. Chabahar Port project has two main ports called the Shahid Kalantari Port and the Shahid Beheshti Port. Iran had offered India the project of developing the Shahid Beheshti port which was well received by India.
- The port, which is seen as India's key connectivity link to Afghanistan, Central Asia and the larger Eurasian space, will help counterbalance Pakistan's Gwadar port as well as China's Belt and Road Initiative. There are plans to link Chabahar with the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) that connects India with Russia via Iran.

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran's only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths. It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar. In December 2018, India took over the operations of the Port. It was being operated by India Ports Global Private Limited (IPGPL). India's first shipment of wheat to Afghanistan was sent through Chabahar Port. India began building a railway line between Chabahar port and Zahedan as part of the North-South Transport Corridor. In 2016, India signed a historic deal to develop the strategic port of Chabahar in Iran and agreed on a three-nation pact to build a transport-and-trade corridor through Afghanistan that could help halve the time and cost of doing business with Central Asia and Europe. The Chabahar port is considered a gateway to golden opportunities for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with central Asian countries. It will make way for India to bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan using a sea-land route. At present; Pakistan does not allow India to transport its territory to Afghanistan. It will provide India with an alternative and reliable access route into Afghanistan and also a reliable and more direct sea-route access into the Central Asian region.

## Assam government introduces monthly monetary support for girl students to combat child marriage

- In a move to curb child marriage in the state, the Assam government approved a scheme to provide monetary benefits to girl students every month. The scheme is expected to cover around one million girl students and cost the exchequer Rs.300 crore in the first year and around Rs.1,500 crore over a five-year period.
- Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that in a push to increase enrolment of girl students in higher education, the Cabinet has accorded approval to provide financial assistance to girl students under the Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina scheme to be offered as Admission Assistance. Girl students enrolled in Higher

Secondary, Degree First Year and PG First Year of Government and Venture Schools, Colleges and Universities irrespective of their economic status is eligible for this scheme.

**Assam is a state in northeastern India**, south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. **Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk**. The state was the **first site for oil drilling in Asia**. **Largest tea producing state in India is Assam**. The state is bordered by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh to the north; Nagaland and Manipur to the east; Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Bangladesh to the south; and West Bengal to the west via the Siliguri Corridor, a 22-kilometre-wide (14 mi) strip of land that connects the state to the rest of India. **Gulab Chand Kataria is serving as the current Governor of Assam** since 15 February 2023.

## Japan – India Maritime Exercise 2024 (JIMEX 24)

- **Indian Navy's indigenous Stealth Frigate INS Shivalik arrived at Yokosuka, Japan to participate in the bilateral Japan – India Maritime Exercise 2024 (JIMEX 24)**. This is the eighth edition of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012. The ship was accorded a warm welcome by VAdm ITO Hiroshi, Commander JMSDF Yokosuka District & Ambassador Sibi George, Ambassador of India to Japan.
- **The exercise includes both harbour and sea phases**. The harbour phase will comprise professional, sports and social interactions, after which the **two navies will jointly hone their war fighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains**. The IN is being represented by INS Shivalik and the JMSDF is being represented by the Guided Missile Destroyer JS Yugiri. **Integral helicopters from both navies will also participate in the joint exercise**. JIMEX 24 provides an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and facilitates operational interactions between IN and JMSDF to foster mutual cooperation and reaffirm their shared commitment towards maritime security in the Indo – Pacific.

**Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan**. He acceded to the **Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019**, beginning the **Reiwa era**, following the **abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito**, on 30 April 2019. He is the **126<sup>th</sup> monarch** according to Japan's traditional order of succession. **Tokyo is the capital city of Japan** and **yen is the official currency of Japan** and it is the **third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market** after the **United States dollar and the euro**. **Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan** since 4 October 2021.

## Tamil Nadu CM inaugurates scheme to preserve soil Fertility

- **Chief Minister M K Stalin launched chief minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom Scheme to preserve soil fertility by distributing green manure seeds to farmers**. The ₹206 crore scheme announced in the state agriculture budget will benefit two lakh farmers. In the first phase in 2024-25, green manure will be cultivated on two lakh acres at ₹20 crore.

**Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent** and is **bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh**. Its **capital and largest city is Chennai**. Its official language is **Tamil**, which is **one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world**. **Ravindra Narayana Ravi is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu**. **M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu**. **Kanyakumari (also known as Cape Comorin) is a town in Kanyakumari District in the state of Tamil Nadu in India**. **Cape Comorin is the southern tip of Indian subcontinent**. **The southernmost town in mainland India, it is sometimes referred to as 'The Land's End'**.

## Madhya Pradesh readies 'first law' in India to prevent borewell deaths

- **Madhya Pradesh government is preparing a law – said to be the first such in India – to prevent deaths caused by open borewells**. Over nine such incidents have been reported in MP in the past seven months. The draft of the bill, named **'Khule Nalkoop Me Insano ke Girne se Hone Wali Durghatanao ki Roktham Evan Suraksha Vidhayak'**, is ready. **"Once it comes into existence, MP will be the first state to have such a law"**. The bill calls for identification of open borewells and heavy penalties on those responsible for leaving it as an open hazard.

**Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India**. Its capital is **Bhopal**, and the largest city is **Indore**. **Madhya Pradesh is the second largest Indian state by area and the fifth largest state by**



**population.** It borders the states of Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the southeast, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west, and Rajasthan to the northwest. **Dr. Mohan Yadav is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.**

### IAF Contingent Participates In Exercise Red Flag 2024 Conducted At Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska

- **An Indian Air Force-IAF contingent participated in the Exercise Red Flag 2024 conducted at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska of the United States Air Force.** This was the second edition of Ex Red Flag 2024, which is an advanced aerial combat training exercise, held four times in a year by the US Air Force.
- **The exercise witnessed participation of the Indian Air Force along with Republic of Singapore Air Force, Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom, Royal Netherlands Air Force, German Luftwaffe, and the US Air Force.** The IAF contingent participated with the Rafale aircraft and personnel comprising of aircrew, technicians, engineers, controllers and subject matter experts. **This was the first time the IAF Rafale aircraft participated in Ex Red Flag.** The Exercise Red Flag 2024 was conducted from 4<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of this month. **Red Flag is an air combat exercise conducted with multiple scenarios designed to provide realistic combat settings.** A demarcation of forces is done for simulating the desired environment, with the Red Force simulating Air Defence elements, and the Blue Force simulating the Offensive Composite elements.

### Delhi L-G allows Arundhati Roy to be prosecuted under UAPA in 2010 case

- **Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena sanctioned the prosecution of novelist Arundhati Roy, for allegedly provocative statements made at a 2010 event propagating Kashmiri separatism, under Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.** The L-G had already sanctioned prosecution under several sections of the Indian Penal Code last year. The L-G also **sanctioned the prosecution under UAPA of Sheikh Showkat Hussain, former Professor of International Law at the Central University of Kashmir,** for his alleged statements at the same event, a conference organised in New Delhi's LTG auditorium in 2010 under the banner of 'Azadi - The Only Way'. Section 13 of the UAPA deals with advocating, abetting or inciting any unlawful activity and is punishable with imprisonment for up to seven years.

**The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act is an Indian law aimed at prevention of unlawful activities associations in India.** Its main objective was to make powers available for dealing with activities directed against the integrity and sovereignty of India. **The most recent amendment of the law, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019 (UAPA 2019) has made it possible for the Union Government to designate individuals as terrorists without following any formal judicial process.** UAPA is also known as the "Anti-terror law".

### Pawan Kalyan is Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM, key portfolios for the 3 women ministers

- **JanaSena Party (JSP) leader Konidela Pawan Kalyan was named Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister with the portfolios of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development and Rural Water Supply with additional charge of Environment and Forests, and Science and Technology.**
- **He was one of the 24 ministers in the N Chandrababu Naidu government who were allocated portfolios. Pawan Kalyan has been elected for the first time to the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, winning the Pithapuram seat.** Dr P Narayana, founder of the Narayana Group of educational institutions who was a minister in the TDP government between 2014 and 2019, has again been allocated the portfolios of Urban Development, Municipal Administration.

**Andhra Pradesh is a state in the southern coastal region of India.** It is the **seventh-largest state.** It shares borders with Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and the Bay of Bengal. It has the second-longest coastline in India at about 974 km (605 mi). **After existence as Andhra State and unified Andhra Pradesh, the state took its present form on 2 June 2014,** when the new state of Telangana was formed through bifurcation. Amaravati is the capital of the state, with the largest city being Visakhapatnam. Telugu, one of the classical languages of India used by the majority of people, is the first official language. **Nara Chandrababu Naidu is currently serving as the 13<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.** **Syed Abdul Nazeer is the 24<sup>th</sup> Governor of Andhra Pradesh.** He is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India and a former judge of the Karnataka High Court. **Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953.** **On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital.**



## PM Narendra Modi Expresses Delight Over Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in Bhuj, Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed delight over the Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in Bhuj, Gujarat making it to World Selection for the UNESCO Prix Versailles Museums 2024. For the first time a museum in India has received global recognition for its expression of local culture and nature conservation. In a social media post, Mr. Modi said that Smritivan in Kutch is a tribute to the lives lost in the tragic Earthquake of 2001. He said that it is a reminder of human resilience and courage as well.
- Meanwhile, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel also expressed pride as the Museum has been placed in the list of the seven most beautiful museums in the world under the prestigious Prix Versailles Award in the field of architecture and design announced annually at UNESCO. The “World’s Most Beautiful” Achievements recognition, granted by the Prix Versailles highlights the primary role of the Laureates in beautifying and improving the living environment. These achievements, awarded each year by the Prix Versailles are examples presented to the world as signs of exceptional architecture and design.

Gujarat is a state on the western coast of India with a longest coastline of India 1,600 km (990 mi). Its capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. Gujarat International Finance Tec-City is a business district promoted by the Government of Gujarat through a joint venture company. GIFT City is India’s first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad and international financial services centre. Acharya Devvrat is Governor of Gujarat and Bhupendra Patel is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat. Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced 10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category and followed by Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

## India to host its first multinational air exercise Tarang Shakti in August

- The Indian Air Force’s first multinational air exercise, Tarang Shakti-2024, will be held in August, 2024, and is likely to see the participation of ten countries, in addition to a few others acting as observers. “Enriched with the Red Flag exercise experience, the IAF keenly looks forward to hosting the participating contingents from other countries during Tarang Shakti-2024, which is the first ever Indian multinational air exercise to be held later this year,” the IAF said on the just concluded Red Flag exercise hosted by the U.S. Air Force.
- It is inspired by the Red Flag exercise hosted by the US. The exercise will be held in 2 phases, with the first phase in southern India and the second in the western sector. Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States are expected to participate.
- Germany will showcase the A-400M aircraft, which will be displayed for the Indian Air Force (IAF) as it is being considered as a potential option for the current open tender seeking medium transport aircraft. Recently, IAF participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of air exercise Red Flag 2024 from 4<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024 in Alaska. Indian Rafales participated in joint exercises with Singaporean and American aircraft. The missions involved beyond-visual range combat exercises in offensive counter-air and air defence roles as part of large force engagements.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the Indian Armed Forces. Its primary mission is to secure Indian airspace and to conduct aerial warfare during armed conflicts. It was officially established on 8 October 1932 as an auxiliary air force of the British Empire which honoured India’s aviation service during World War II with the prefix Royal. After India gained independence from United Kingdom in 1947, the name Royal Indian Air Force was kept and served in the name of the Dominion of India. With the transition to a republic in 1950, the prefix Royal was removed. Since 1950, the IAF has been involved in four wars with neighbouring Pakistan. Other major operations undertaken by the IAF include Operation Vijay, Operation Meghdoot, Operation Cactus and Operation Poomalai. The President of India holds the rank of Supreme Commander of the IAF. Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari is currently serving as the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS).

## Assam: Janata Bhawan solar project inaugurated; becomes first civil secretariat in India to rely fully on solar power

- Adding another chapter to the State’s endeavours at promoting green energy, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the Janata Bhawan Solar Project, a 2.5-Mw power generation capacity grid connected rooftop and ground-mounted solar PV system, at a ceremony held at the Assam Secretariat Complex.

- This project would yield an average of 3 lakh units of electricity monthly and the investment amount of Rs. 12.56 crore is projected to be recovered within a period of 4 years with monthly savings standing at approximately Rs. 30 lakhs. The launch of the solar power project has led to the Assam Secretariat Complex becoming the first-ever civil secretariat in the country that relies entirely on solar generated electricity for daily consumption.

Assam is a state in northeastern India, south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. The state was the first site for oil drilling in Asia. Largest tea producing state in India is Assam. The state is bordered by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh to the north; Nagaland and Manipur to the east; Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Bangladesh to the south; and West Bengal to the west via the Siliguri Corridor, a 22-kilometre-wide (14 mi) strip of land that connects the state to the rest of India. **Gulab Chand Kataria is serving as the current Governor of Assam since 15 February 2023.**

### Railways conduct first trial run of world's highest Chenab rail bridge in Jammu-Kashmir

- The Indian Railway conducted an extensive inspection of the newly constructed world's highest railway bridge built on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir. Northern Railway is set to launch train services on the world's highest rail bridge which is built between Sangaldan in Ramban district and Reasi.
- At present, the trains operate along the railway line from Kanyakumari to Katra, while services run from Baramulla to Sangaldan in the Kashmir Valley. The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project will be completed by year-end. The USBRL project, including the 48.1 km long Banihal-Sangaldan section, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 20, 2024.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18<sup>th</sup> railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

### PM Narendra Modi released Rs. 20,000 crore for farmers, felicitate 'Krishi Sakhis' in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited his Parliamentary constituency Varanasi on June 18 for the first time after assuming office for a third consecutive term, during which he released the 17<sup>th</sup> installment of PM-KISAN scheme amounting to more than Rs. 20,000 crore for 9.26 crore beneficiary farmers across the country. Narendra Modi also conferred certificates to more than 30,000 members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) who have been trained as 'Krishi Sakhis' to work as para-extension workers, supporting fellow farmers with agricultural practices.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PMKISAN: Prime Minister's Farmer's Tribute Fund) is an initiative by the government of India that give farmers up to Rs. 6,000 per year as minimum income support. Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of Rs. 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings. It was launched in February 2019. It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. The scheme was first conceived and implemented by government of Telangana as the Rythu Bandhu scheme, where a certain amount is given directly to eligible farmers.

### Punjab launched 'Mission Nishchay' to gather intelligence about demand and supply of drugs

- Punjab Police in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs) will carry out a one-week drive against drugs in Fazilka district during which they will reach out to residents of as many as 42 villages along the India-Pakistan border to gather actionable intelligence about the demand and supply of drugs.

- **During the drive, named as ‘Mission Nishchay’, police officers will fan out in villages in Fazilka district and interact with residents. “The idea is to instil a sense of community participation among inhabitants of border villages as we make efforts to curb the menace of drugs. Of the 553-km-long Punjab border with Pakistan, 108 km is in Fazilka district.**

**Punjab is a state in northern India. The state is bordered by the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh to the north and northeast, Haryana to the south and southeast, and Rajasthan to the southwest; by the Indian union territories of Chandigarh to the east and Jammu and Kashmir to the north. It shares an international border by Punjab, a province of Pakistan to the west. The state capital is Chandigarh, a union territory and also the capital of the neighbouring state of Haryana. The name Panjnad is derived from Sanskrit words pancha (“five”) and nadi (“river”) which means “five rivers”. The five tributary rivers of the Indus River from which the region took its name are the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum rivers (in order from east to west). After the partition of India in 1947, only 3 of the 5 rivers, the Sutlej, Ravi and Beas rivers flows in Indian Punjab, while other two rivers became part of Punjab, Pakistan. Banwarilal Purohit is the current Governor of Punjab and Administrator of Chandigarh. Bhagwant Singh Mann is the current Chief Minister of Punjab.**

### PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Nalanda University campus in Bihar

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in Bihar to inaugurate the campus of Nalanda University, named after the world-famous ancient seat of learning. Situated less than 20 km from the Nalanda Mahavira, which has been declared a World Heritage site, the university was established in 2010, by an Act of the Parliament.**
- **Earlier, a proposal to set up the international university, on the lines of the seat of learning that functioned till the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, had been endorsed by member countries at the East Asia Summit. The sprawling campus is spread across an area of about 450 acres, and the university offers several courses in Hindu Studies, Buddhist Studies and Comparative Religion, and Ecological and Environmental Studies.**

**Nalanda is recognized as the most ancient university on the Indian Subcontinent. It was founded by Kumargupta of the Gupta dynasty in Bihar in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. It thrived for 600 years, from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Gained prominence during the reigns of Harshavardhan and the Pala monarchs. Served as a centre of learning, culture, and intellectual exchange with a profound impact on Indian civilization and beyond. Primarily a monastic institution where monks and nuns lived and studied. Nalanda University is a central research university located in the ancient city of Rajgir in the state of Bihar, India. Designated as an Institute of National Importance (INI) and excellence, it is the flagship project of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, and the successor of the famed Nalanda monastery. It is an international university supported by 18 member countries of the East Asia Summit, with the initial proposal being placed by the former President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. The first Chancellor of the university was Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, followed by Singapore’s Foreign Affairs Minister George Yeo. Nalanda University is solely a postgraduate institute, offering only Master’s and PhD degrees.**

### Paints made using cow dung get govt lab nod

- **Khadi Prakritik paints, which use cow dung as a “significant” ingredient, have been certified for their quality and eco-friendly attributes by the National Test House (NTH). “Khadi Prakritik paints are devoid of heavy metal. “The paints also “mark the significant utilisation of cow dung as a raw material, contributing to environmental cleanliness”.**

### Air India to start own flying school, in a first in country

- **Tata Group’s airline Air India is going to open its first flying school in India. Anticipating a shortage of pilots, Air India is setting up a school in Maharashtra’s Amravati to train as many as 180 pilots a year. Aspiring pilots with no flying experience will be able to enter the full-time academy and will have a direct pathway to Air India’s cockpit after completing the next stages of training.**

### Indian Army launches first-of-its-kind skin bank for treatment of severe burn injuries

- **The Indian Army has launched a first-of-its-kind skin bank facility that aims to revolutionise the treatment of severe burn injuries and other skin-related conditions for service personnel and their families. The skin bank will be staffed by a team of highly-trained medical professionals, including plastic surgeons, tissue engineers and specialised technicians. By establishing this facility, the armed forces are ensuring that personnel and their**



families have access to the most advanced skin replacement therapies. **The skin bank will serve as a centralised hub for the collection, processing, storage and distribution of skin grafts, providing a “critical resource” for military medical centres across the country.**

## In a first, CDS releases its blueprint for warfare in cyberspace

- Acknowledging that cyberspace has emerged as a crucial and challenging domain in modern warfare, the **Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan released India’s first joint doctrine for cyberspace operations during a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.** The joint doctrine is a keystone publication that will guide commanders of the armed forces in conducting cyberspace operations in complex military operating environment.

**The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) is the principal military authority and senior-most appointment of the Indian Armed Forces. Deemed the overall professional head of India’s three armed services, namely, the Indian Army, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, the CDS is the highest-ranking military officer in service, responsible for overseeing inter-service jointness across all disciplines related to military functioning. Primarily, the office operates on a status of primus inter pares i.e., first among equals with the chiefs of the three services, and functions as the Permanent-Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) – the inter-service syndicate responsible for ensuring the establishment-cum-preservation of military integration. Statutorily, the CDS is the presiding secretary of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), the foremost civil-cum-military entity responsible for fostering professional coordination between the services, and by extension, is also the principal military advisor to the nation’s civilian leadership i.e., the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on affairs privy to inter-service integration; as such, the office exists primarily as an advisor-cum-adjudicator position, endowed with no operational command control. Since its formal creation in 2020, the CDS is officiated on a rotational basis by four-star officers nominated from either of the three services. Domestically, the office ranks 12<sup>th</sup>-overall in the Indian order of precedence. General Bipin Rawat served as the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces from January 2020 until his death in a helicopter crash in December 2021. General Anil Chauhan is the current and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces, since 30 September 2022.**

## PM Narendra Modi launched Multiple Development Projects in Jammu and Kashmir

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir.** He laid the foundation stone and inaugurated **84 major developmental projects valued at more than One Thousand Five Hundred crore rupees** in the Union Territory.
- Mr Modi participated in the **“Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K”** event in Srinagar. The Prime Minister also distributed appointment letters to more than 2,000 individuals appointed to government service. He also **launched the Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project, worth One Thousand Eight Hundred crore rupees.**

**Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north, respectively. A resolution to repeal Article 370 was passed by both the houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are now equally applicable to it. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, ‘Jammu and Kashmir’ and ‘Ladakh’, with effect from 31 October 2019. The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is administered under the provisions of Article 239 of the Constitution of India. The Article 239A, originally formulated for the union territory of Puduchery, will also be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor.**

## Uttar Pradesh tops list of complaints with National Commission for Women

- **The highest number of complaints received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) so far this year has been from Uttar Pradesh followed by Delhi and then Maharashtra.** Strife-torn Manipur has recorded only three complaints of **“crime against women”** with the commission.



- Of the total 12,648 complaints received by the NCW till now in 2024, 6,492 were from Uttar Pradesh. Delhi was a distant second with 1,119 complaints, while the number for Maharashtra was 764.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) is a statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women. It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act. The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik. As of 24 February 2024, Rekha Sharma is the chairperson. The objective of the NCW is to represent the rights of women in India and to provide a voice for their issues and concerns. The subjects of their campaigns have included dowry, politics, religion, equal representation for women in jobs, and the exploitation of women for labour. They have also discussed police abuses against women.

## Uttar Pradesh to establish world's first Asian king vulture conservation & breeding centre

- Uttar Pradesh is set to establish the world's first conservation and breeding centre for Asian king vultures or red-headed vultures in Maharajganj. The facility will improve the population of critically endangered species listed in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list since 2007. The centre is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre.
- Asian king vultures are endangered due to the loss of their habitats and the excessive use of diclofenac, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug, in domestic animals, which becomes poisonous for vultures. The centre aims to ensure the good health of growing vultures and provide them with a pair. Once a female lays an egg, the pair will be left free in their natural environment.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha. Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel is serving as the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She also served as Governor of Madhya Pradesh. She has served as the first female Chief Minister of Gujarat. Yogi Adityanath is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

## President appoints seven-term Lok Sabha member Bhartruhari Mahtab as pro-tem Speaker

- President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab as Speaker Protem under Article 95(1) of the Constitution to perform the duties of Speaker till election of the Speaker. Additionally, the President appointed Suresh Kodikunnil, Thalikkottai Rajuthevar Baalu, Radha Mohan Singh, Faggan Singh Kulaste and Sudip Bandyopadhyay to assist Speaker Protem in Oath/Affirmation to newly elected Members of 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha till election of the Speaker.
- Pro-tem is a Latin phrase which means "for the time being". The pro-tem speaker is appointed to preside over the sittings of the newly elected house. Usually, the senior most member of the house is made the pro-tem speaker. When the new Speaker is elected by the House, the office of the Speaker Pro Tem ceases to exist.
- The Constitution does not mention the post of pro-tem Speaker. However, the official 'Handbook on the Working of Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs' speaks about the 'Appointment and Swearing in of Speaker pro tem'. The handbook states when the Speaker post falls vacant before a new Lok Sabha, "the duties of the Speaker are to be performed by a Member of the House appointed for this purpose by the President as Speaker pro tem". Administering oaths to the new MPs is the pro-tem Speaker's primary duty.
- Under Article 99 of the Constitution, "Every Member of the House shall, before taking his seat, make and subscribe before the President or some person appointed in that behalf by him, an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the Third Schedule of the Constitution."

## Senior BJP leader Surama Padhy elected unopposed Speaker of Odisha Assembly

- Senior BJP leader Surama Padhy was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Odisha Assembly. Padhy, a two-time MLA elected from the Ranpur assembly segment in Nayagarh district was the lone candidate for the post. She was elected unopposed as there was no other candidate in the fray.

- Pro-tem Speaker R P Swain announced her election and handed over the charge to her in the special session of the Assembly. **Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, deputy chief ministers – KV Singh Deo, Pravati Parida, Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik and other members of the House greeted the new Speaker.** Padhy is the second woman to become Speaker of Odisha Assembly after Pramila Mallick of BJD.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13<sup>th</sup>-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Mohan Charan Majhi is the current and 15<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of Odisha. Raghubar Das is serving as the current Governor of Odisha. Das has previously served as the sixth Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

## Cabinet approves development of Rs. 76,200-crore Greenfield major port at Vadhavan

- The Union Cabinet approved the development of a Rs. 76,200-crore all-weather Greenfield deep draft major port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra. The project will be constructed by Vadhavan Port Project Limited (VPPL), an SPV formed by Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), with a shareholding of 74 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively.
- The port will be one of the top 10 ports in the world, it added. “The total project cost, including the land acquisition component, is Rs. 76,220 crore,”. This will include the development of core infrastructure, terminals and other commercial infrastructure in public-private partnerships (PPP) mode.
- According to the statement, the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also approved establishing the road connectivity between the port and national highways by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, and rail linkage to the existing rail network and the upcoming Dedicated Rail Freight Corridor by the Ministry of Railways. The port will comprise nine container terminals, each 1,000 metres long, four multipurpose berths, including the coastal berth, four liquid cargo berths, a Ro-Ro berth, and a Coast Guard berth.

In India, ports are categorised into major ports and non-major ports (informally called minor ports). All the 13 Major Ports are governed under the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 and are owned and managed by the Central Government. All the Minor Ports are governed under the Indian Port Act, 1908 and are owned and managed by the State Governments. Under the National Perspective Plan for Sagarmala, six new mega ports will be developed in the country. The Indian Government plays an important role in supporting the ports sector. It has allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of up to 100% under the automatic route for port and harbour construction and maintenance projects. According to the Ministry of Shipping, around 95% of India’s trading by volume and 70% by value is done through maritime transport. In November 2020, the Prime Minister renamed the Ministry of Shipping as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. India has a coastline of 7517 kilometres, forming one of the largest peninsulas in the world.

## Bhupender Yadav Participates In ‘Ek Pedh Maa Ke Naam’ Plantation Program In Suraj Kund

- Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav participated in a program for the plantation of saplings by officers and staff of the Ministry under the ‘Ek Pedh Maa Ke Naam’ initiative in the Suraj Kund Area. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena mentioned that the temperature in Delhi has soared to as high as 52 degrees Celsius, and the water levels are decreasing day by day, which is alarming for all of us. Mr Saxena appealed to the public to join the campaign and plant saplings.
- Bhupender Yadav is serving as 20<sup>th</sup> Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change since 2024. He also a Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha from Alwar.

## IIT-Delhi project on antimicrobial resistance wins joint second prize in global competition

- A project by the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi (IIIT-Delhi), has won the joint second prize in Trinity Challenge’s second competition, on tackling the escalating threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The Trinity Challenge is a charity supporting the creation of data-driven solutions to help protect against global health threats.

## Amit Shah launches special programme to fast-track immigration services

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a special programme under which the immigration process of pre-verified Indian nationals and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders will be fast-tracked.** The Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) is a “visionary initiative” by the government, thoughtfully designed for Indian nationals and OCI cardholders.
- **Eligible individuals will need to apply online and submit their biometrics (fingerprint and facial image) along with other required information as specified in the application form. The FTI registration will be valid for a maximum of five years or until the validity of the passport, whichever comes first.**
- **Approved applications would receive a message to schedule an appointment to provide their biometrics details. Applicants may provide their biometrics at designated international airports in India or the nearest Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) according to the prior appointment schedule.**
- **Biometrics is compulsory for the completion of the application processing.** The applicants may ensure a **minimum passport validity of at least six months** while applying for the FTI-TTP. The membership of programmer will be co-terminus with passport validity, he said. The applicant needs to provide the current residential address to avoid the rejection of the application.
- **Incorrect or false information, concealing any material facts in the application form shall make the application liable for rejection. Those applicants will not be registered for the FTI-TTP whose biometrics, for any technical reason cannot be captured. The FTI-TTP aims to revolutionise people’s travel experience, making it faster, easier, and more secure.**
- **This initiative showcases the government’s commitment to enhance travel convenience and efficiency for everyone.** Registration under FTI will be completed after necessary verifications and confirmation of eligibility. Applicants will be registered after their identity has been successfully authenticated through mobile OTP and email verification.

The Ministry of Home Affairs is a ministry of the Government of India. It is mainly responsible for the maintenance of internal security and domestic policy. Amit Shah is an Indian politician who is currently serving as the 31<sup>st</sup> Minister of Home Affairs since 2019 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Minister of Co-operation of India since 2021. He became the youngest full-time Home Minister in the country at the age of 54. He served as the 10<sup>th</sup> President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from 2014 to 2020. He has also served as chairman of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) since 2014. He was elected to the lower house of Parliament, Lok Sabha, in the 2019 Indian general elections from Gandhinagar. Earlier, he had been elected as a member of the upper house of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, from Gujarat from 2017 to 2019. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel served as the country’s first Home Minister during the country’s political unification and the 1947 Indo-Pakistani War.

## Ministry of Education notifies seven-member panel to reform process of competitive exams

- **The Ministry of Education has constituted a high-level committee of experts led by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations through the National Testing Agency (NTA). The seven-member committee will make recommendations on reforms in the mechanism of the examination process, improvement in data security protocols and the structure and functioning of the NTA. The committee will submit its report to the ministry within two months. Central University of Hyderabad Vice-Chancellor Professor B J Rao and former director of AIIMS Delhi Randeep Guleria are on the panel.**

The Ministry of Education (MoE), previously the Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020), is responsible for the implementation and formulation of the National Policy on Education approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is the First Minister of Education in the Indian. He is commonly remembered as Maulana Azad; the word Maulana is an honorific meaning ‘Our Master’ and he had adopted Azad (Free) as his pen name. The current Union Minister for Education is Dharmendra Pradhan since 7 July 2021. Shri Pradhan represents Madhya Pradesh in the Rajya Sabha as Member of Parliament.



## Om Birla elected as Speaker of 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha

- **Om Birla, the NDA nominee, was elected as the Lok Sabha Speaker** on June 26, following a motion proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and approved through voice votes. **The Lok Sabha Speaker plays a crucial role in maintaining order, ensuring the orderly conduct of parliamentary proceedings, and upholding democratic principles within the House. Speakers of the last two Lok Sabhas (2014–2019 and 2019–2024), in which the BJP held a majority, were Sumitra Mahajan and Om Birla.** Om Birla would remain the new speaker of Lok Sabha in the Modi Cabinet of 2024. In 2024, **OM Birla, as a BJP candidate from Kota, Rajasthan, won the Lok Sabha Elections.**
- The House of Parliament has its presiding officers: **the Lok Sabha has the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. While the Rajya Sabha has the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.** Originally termed President and Deputy President under the Government of India Act of 1919, these roles were renamed by the Government of India Act of 1935. **Article 93 of the Indian Constitution mandates that the Speaker’s post becomes vacant before the first meeting of the new Lok Sabha.** The President appoints a Pro-tem Speaker to swear in new MPs, after which the Lok Sabha elects its Speaker through a simple majority vote. Currently, Bhartruhari Mahtab serves as the Pro-tem Speaker until the election of the new Speaker is completed.
- **When the newly elected Lok Sabha meets for the first time, the oath of office is administered by the Pro-tem Speaker, appointed by the President of India. The Pro-tem Speaker is a temporary appointment designed to conduct initial proceedings in the House. Currently, Bhartruhari Mahtab serves as the Pro-tem Speaker for the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. This role ceases once the new Speaker is elected.**

The President of India is responsible for appointing the Lok Sabha Speaker based on the election conducted within the House. Article 93 of the Constitution states, “The House of the People shall, as soon as may be, choose two members of the House to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker thereof.” The Speaker is elected by the members of the House through a simple majority vote. There are no specific eligibility criteria other than being a member of the Lok Sabha. Since 1947, the Lok Sabha has had 17 Speakers, with the first being Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, who served from 1952 to 1956. The position of Speaker is pivotal in maintaining the decorum and order of the Lok Sabha. Om Birla, a three-time MP from Kota, Rajasthan, served as the Speaker in the previous Lok Sabha (17<sup>th</sup>) as well. **K. Suresh of the Congress has represented Kerala’s Mavelikara constituency for eight terms, making him the longest-serving parliamentarian in the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. Balram Jakhar the longest serving Speaker of the Lok Sabha, whose tenure lasted 9 years and 329 days. Meira Kumar was elected unopposed as the first woman Speaker of the Lok Sabha on June 3, 2009. The Speaker holds Office from the date of his/her election till immediately before the first meeting of the next Lok Sabha (for 5 years). The speaker once elected is eligible for re-election. Whenever the Lok Sabha is dissolved, the Speaker does not vacate his office and continues till the newly-elected Lok Sabha meets. Usually, the Speaker remains in office during the life of the Lok Sabha. However, under following conditions, the speaker, may have to vacate the office earlier: If he ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha. If he resigns by writing to the Deputy Speaker. If he is removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the members of the Lok Sabha.**

## Rahul Gandhi is the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

- **Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha,** a position that lay vacant for 10 years because no party had numbers equalling a tenth of the strength of the House. The LoP is the parliamentary chairperson of the largest political party/ coalition in the Lok Sabha that is not in government.
- **This term, the Congress secured 99 seats in the Parliament.** With an additional boost from Independent Lok Sabha member Vishal Patil from Maharashtra, their count reached 100, increasing the likelihood of a Congress MP assuming the position of **Leader of Opposition. The Congress Working Committee unanimously passed a resolution urging Rahul Gandhi to assume the role of Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha.**
- In the previous two terms, **the position of Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha was vacant due to the Congress party not having the required 10% seats.** In the Rajya Sabha, the position of **Leader of Opposition** was held by **Mallikarjun Kharge** of the Congress party. The Leader of the Opposition is pivotal in shaping debates and influencing legislation.

In the Lok Sabha until 1969, there was a de facto opposition leader with no formal recognition, status or privilege. Later, the leader of the opposition was given official recognition, and their salary and allowances were extended by the Act of 1977. Since then, the leader in the Lok Sabha should satisfy three conditions, namely, 1. He should be a member of the House, 2. Of the party in opposition to the Government having the greatest numerical strength and 3. Be recognized by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. In December 1969, the Congress Party (O) was recognized as the main opposition party in the parliament while its leader, Ram Subhag Singh played the role of the opposition leader. The Lok Sabha did not officially recognize a Leader of the Opposition until 1969. The leader of opposition is a statutory post and officially recognized in “The salary and allowance of Leader of opposition act, 1977”.

### Kozhikode in Kerala becomes India’s first UNESCO City of Literature

- The city has created history by becoming India’s first city to be designated as a UNESCO City of Literature. The announcement, scheduled at the Kandamkulam Muhammad Abdu Rahiman Memorial Jubilee Hall in Tali, Kozhikode, marked a significant recognition of the city’s rich literary heritage.
- UNESCO conferred this prestigious title on Kozhikode on October 31, 2023, affirming its status as a cultural hub for literature. Over the next four years, Kozhikode will host a series of literary and cultural activities to celebrate and promote its newfound status. Iconic locations such as Mananchira, Tali, and Kuttichira will be transformed into vibrant centers for literary events, fostering a dynamic environment for literary exchange and creativity.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO’s programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples. Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. It is headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France. Audrey Azoulay is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the UNESCO since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.

### Union Cabinet approves offshore wind energy projects in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu with total outlay of Rs. 7,453 cr

- The Union Cabinet approved 1 GW offshore wind energy projects in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu with the total outlay of Rs. 7,453 crore. Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw while announcing the decision said, “Union Cabinet has taken a landmark decision by approving India’s first offshore wind energy project. These will be 1 GW offshore wind projects, 500 MW each (off the coast of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu). This is a big opportunity for India.” The successful commissioning of 1 GW offshore wind projects will produce renewable electricity of about 3.72 billion units annually, which will result in annual reduction of 2.98 million ton of CO2 equivalent emission for a period of 25 years, as per the government.

India stands 4<sup>th</sup> globally in Renewable Energy Installed Capacity (including Large Hydro), 4<sup>th</sup> in Wind Power capacity & 5<sup>th</sup> in Solar Power capacity (as per REN21 Renewables 2024 Global Status Report). The country has set an enhanced target at the COP26 of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy by 2030. In 2016, Paris Agreement’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions targets, India made commitment of producing 50% of its total electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. India is the third-largest producer and consumer of electricity worldwide, with an installed power capacity of 411.64 GW as of January 31, 2023. India’s installed renewable energy capacity (including hydro) stood at 168.4 GW, representing 40.9% of the overall installed power capacity. Solar energy is estimated to contribute 63.3 GW, followed by 41.9 GW from wind power, 10.2 GW from biomass, 4.92 GW from small hydropower, 0.52 from waste to energy, and 46.85 GW from hydropower.

## India achieves an ‘outstanding outcome’ in FATF mutual evaluation 2023-24

- **India has achieved an outstanding outcome in the Mutual Evaluation conducted during 2023-24 by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).** The Mutual Evaluation Report of India, which was adopted in the FATF plenary held in Singapore from June 26 and June 28, places India in the “regular follow-up” category, a distinction shared by only four other G-20 countries.
- FATF said plenary concluded that **India had reached a high level of technical compliance with its requirements.** The country’s anti-money laundering (AML), countering the financing of terrorism (CFT), and counter-proliferation financing (CPF) regime was achieving good results, including international cooperation, access to basic and beneficial ownership information, use of financial intelligence, and depriving criminals of their assets, etc.

The Financial Action Task Force is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 in Paris on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing. The mandate of the organisation was expanded in 2001 to include terrorist financing following the September 11 terror attacks. The FATF holds three Plenary meetings in the course of each of its 12-month rotating presidencies. It currently has 39 members, including two regional organisations — the European Commission and the Gulf Cooperation Council. India is a member of the FATF consultations and its Asia Pacific Group.

## India, Bangladesh decides to boost Himalayan-Bay of Bengal connectivity

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided to boost regional connectivity connecting Himalayan States of Bhutan and Nepal with Bangladesh** that would boost business and investments in the Bay of Bengal region. As part of sub-regional connectivity initiatives, **India will extend transit facilities for movement of Bangladesh goods to Nepal and Bhutan through railway network.**
- The two leaders also focused on **early operationalization of the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement to promote sub-regional connectivity.** In this context, a new India-Bangladesh MoU on railway connectivity will boost regional connectivity. The two leaders welcomed the decision to commence goods-train service from Gede-Darshana through Chilahati-Haldibari up to Hasimara via Dalgaon railhead (as and when operationalized) at the India-Bhutan border.

## Kerala to have a new name, Assembly passes resolution for second time to change state’s name

- After the Home Ministry suggested changes in first resolution, **the Kerala Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to officially change the from Kerala to ‘Keralam’.** The Assembly passed the resolution for the second time because the Union Home Ministry, which reviewed the first resolution, suggested some technical changes.
- **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who moved the resolution, wanted the union government to change the southern state’s name from “Kerala” to “Keralam” in all languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of the country.** The resolution asked the Centre to change the name of the state to ‘Keralam’ in the First Schedule of the Constitution. Similarly, the resolution wanted the Centre to change the name as ‘Keralam’ in all languages under the Eighth Schedule. However, upon detailed verification, it was found that such an amendment required only in the First Schedule of the Constitution.

Kerala is a state on the southwestern, Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956 following the States Reorganisation Act by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91% in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, 77 years; and the highest sex ratio, 1,084 women per 1,000 men. Arif Mohammad Khan is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as “God’s own country” and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India. Pinarayi Vijayan is the current Chief Minister of Kerala, in office since 25 May 2016. As per the census 2011, Haryana has the lowest child sex ratio i.e.834 per thousand males. Kerala is the largest producer of the rubber in the India.



## India is hosting 64<sup>th</sup> ISO Council Meeting

- **India is hosting a global event in sugar sector ‘ISO Council Meeting’ in New Delhi.** Delegates from more than 30 countries and representatives of many international organisations are joining to deliberate on critical issues of sugar and biofuel sector.
- **As India is the world’s largest consumer and second largest producer of sugar,** ISO Council nominated India as the Chair of the organisation for 2024. As part of the meeting, India is starting the series of events with industrial tour of the international delegates to one grain-based distillery at Muzaffarnagar, **Uttar Pradesh to showcase India’s adoption of latest technology in production of biofuels and other by-products.**
- **In its 63<sup>rd</sup> council meeting, International Sugar Organisation (ISO), headquartered in London, has announced India to be the Chair of the organisation for 2024.** This is a huge achievement for the country to lead the global sugar sector and reflection of growing stature of the country in this domain. While attending the ISO Council Meeting, Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Secretary (Food), Government of India remarked that during its period of chairmanship of ISO in 2024, India seeks support and cooperation from all member countries and would like to focus on bringing together all member countries to adopt more sustainable practices in sugarcane cultivation, sugar and ethanol production and better utilisation of by-products.

**Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the largest sugar producing state in India** manufacturing around 107 lakh tonnes of sugar in sugar season 2021-22. **Top Sugarcane Producing States: Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar.** **India has emerged as the largest producer of sugarcane in the world, surpassing Brazil during the 2021-22.** India has consistently been the second-largest exporter of sugar, following Brazil. **The Central Government sets the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane. The FRP is recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). The FRP is based on the recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee report on reorganizing the sugarcane industry.** The State Government of key sugarcane-producing states announces the State Advised Prices (SAP). SAP is generally higher than the FRP set by the Central Government.

## Srinagar Recognized As “World Craft City”, To “Boost” Handicraft Sector

- **Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has been officially recognised as a ‘World Craft City’ by the World Crafts Council.** The recognition would boost the handloom and handicraft sector, which will benefit tourism and infrastructure development.
- **Srinagar has become the fourth Indian city to be recognised as a ‘World Craft City’ by the World Craft Council (WCC),** three years after it was designated as part of the UNESCO Creative City Network (UCCN) for crafts and folk arts. **Jaipur, Malappuram and Mysore are the other Indian cities that have previously been recognised as World Craft Cities.** Tourism in Srinagar is also set to benefit significantly from this recognition.

## Ladakh: Indian Army Opened Khalubar War Memorial to Tourists

- **In Ladakh, as a tribute to the heroes of the Kargil War, the Indian Army has opened the Khalubar War Memorial to tourists.** This opening ceremony was part of the ‘Forever in Operations’ Division’s Pre-Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations as this year, the country will celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas on 26 July.
- **Located in the renowned Aryan Valley this memorial commemorates the bravery and sacrifices of soldiers who fought to reclaim the valley during the war.** Khalubar, a serene valley near the border, became a focal point during the Kargil War when enemy forces captured it. The area was recaptured by the valiant efforts of Indian soldiers, including Captain Manoj Pandey, whose heroic actions are now immortalized at the memorial.

**Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory which constitutes a part of the larger Kashmir region and has been the subject of dispute between India, Pakistan, and China since 1947. The largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil, each of which headquarters a district. The Leh district contains the Indus, Shyok and Nubra river valleys. The Kargil district contains the Suru, Dras and Zaskar river valleys. Ladakh was established as a union territory of India on 31 October, 2019, following the passage of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act. Prior to that, it was part of the Jammu and Kashmir state. Ladakh is both the largest and the second least populous union territory of India. Radha Krishna Mathur served as the 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant**

**Governor of Ladakh** from 2019 to 2023. He retired as the Chief Information Commissioner of India (CIC) in November 2018. **B. D. Mishra** is a former brigadier of the Indian Army. He is the present Lieutenant governor of Ladakh. The eastern end, consisting of the uninhabited Aksai Chin plains, is claimed by the Indian Government as part of Ladakh, and has been under Chinese control since 1962.

### Pakistan delegation allowed access to Ratle power projects on Chenab River in J&K

- A five-member Pakistan delegation and neutral experts of the World Bank toured the Ratle power project, a run-of-the-river hydroelectric power project in the Chenab Valley. The delegation, visited the 850-MW Ratle project on the Chenab river at Drabshalla village and inspected several units of the project.
- The inspection by the 40-odd member team, including delegates from India, was kept away from the media gaze. Pakistan also raised its objection over the Kishanganga project in Kashmir valley in 2006. Officials are tight-lipped on whether the delegates will be given access to the power project set up over the Kishanganga river in north Kashmir's Bandipora district.

Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north, respectively. A resolution to repeal Article 370 was passed by both the houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are now equally applicable to it. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, 'Jammu and Kashmir' and 'Ladakh', with effect from 31 October 2019. The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is administered under the provisions of Article 239 of the Constitution of India. The Article 239A, originally formulated for the union territory of Puduchery, will also be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor.

### Government to partially implement new Telecommunications Act

- "Rules under certain Sections of the Telecommunications Act 2023 has become effective from June 26". The Telecommunications Act 2023 supersedes the existing and archaic regulatory framework for the telecommunication sector, based on the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, the Wireless Telegraphy Act (1933), and the Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act (1950).
- With these new rules in place, the universal service obligation fund will become Digital Bharat Nidhi, which can be used for funding research and development, and pilot projects instead of just supporting the establishment of telecom services in rural areas. The new rules add a mandate of protecting users from spam and malicious communications. The implementation of these Sections paves the way for the enforcement of non-discriminatory and non-exclusive grants of right of way for telecom network roll-out and provides power to the central government to establish common ducts and cable corridors.

### MoHUA rolls out Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao initiative under SBM-U 2.0

- With this increases the prevalence of waterborne and vector-borne diseases. Recognizing the critical importance of proactive measures to mitigate health risks associated with monsoon, the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 under the aegis of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), introduces the Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao (SABB) initiative.
- This initiative seeks to enhance the preparedness of Urban Local Bodies, ensuring they are well-equipped to handle the challenges posed by heavy rainfall and heightened health risks during the months of June to August. Aligning with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's 'STOP Diarrhoea Campaign'- 'Diarrhoea ki Roktham, Safai aur ORS se rakhen apna dhyaan', the initiative seeks a collaborative effort among various line Ministries and Departments and inter-sectoral convergence to deal with the multifaceted challenges associated with cleanliness and diseases during the monsoon season. The need of the hour is to ensure a comprehensive approach through various initiatives around cleanliness and sanitation in the ULBs.

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) was launched on October 2, 2014, by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs as a national campaign to promote cleanliness, sanitation, and proper waste management in urban areas. It aimed to make cities and towns across India clean and free from open defecation. **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 1.0:** The first phase of SBM-U focused on achieving the target of making urban India ODF by providing access to toilets and promoting behavioral change. SBM-U 1.0 was successful in achieving the target and 100% of urban India was declared ODF. **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (2021-2026):** SBM-U 2.0, announced in Budget 2021-22, is the continuation of SBM-U first phase. The second phase of SBM-U aimed to go beyond ODF to ODF+, and ODF++, and focus on making urban India garbage-free. It emphasized sustainable sanitation practices, waste management, and the promotion of a circular economy. **The first state to be declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) under the Swachh Bharat Mission in India was Sikkim.**

### India's first Vande Bharat sleeper train

- **India is likely to get its first Vande Bharat sleeper train this year.** In a significant development, the trial runs of the Vande Bharat sleeper train are expected to start from August 15, 2024. **The train will likely run from Delhi to Mumbai,** as the route is busy and the demand for reservations remains high.

The Vande Bharat Express, previously known as Train 18, is a semi-high-speed, electric multiple unit train operated by Indian Railways. It was designed and manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai. The first train was manufactured in 18 months at the cost of Rs. 97 crore. **The service was named 'Vande Bharat Express' on 27 January 2019.** The train was launched on 15 February 2019. **The first Vande Bharat Express train, between New Delhi and Varanasi, was flagged off on February 15, 2019.** Sudhanshu Mani is the architect and designer of the India's first modern semi-high speed Vande Bharat Express.

### President Murmu addressed joint sitting of Parliament

- **President Droupadi Murmu addressed the joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha** where she unveiled the priorities of the newly-elected government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Murmu's address to the joint sitting of Parliament also the first after the constitution of the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. The first session of the 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha began and the 264<sup>th</sup> session of the Rajya Sabha started on June 27.
- **According to Article 87 of the Constitution, the President is required to address a joint session of Parliament at the beginning of the session after each Lok Sabha election.** The President also addresses a joint sitting of both Houses in the first session of the Parliament every year. Murmu provided an overview of the Modi government's policies over the past 10 years, covering achievements in various sectors such as economy, defence, healthcare, education, and social welfare, among others.

The Parliament of India is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India. It is a bicameral legislature composed of the president of India and two houses: the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The President in their role as head of the legislature has full powers to summon and prorogue either house of Parliament or to dissolve the Lok Sabha. The president can exercise these powers only upon the advice of the Prime Minister and their Union Council of Ministers. Those elected or nominated (by the president) to either house of Parliament are referred to as members of Parliament (MPs). The members of parliament of the Lok Sabha are directly elected by the Indian public voting in single-member districts and the members of parliament of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the members of all state legislative assemblies by proportional representation. **The Parliament has a sanctioned strength of 543 in the Lok Sabha. Between 1952 and 2020, two additional members of the Anglo-Indian community were also nominated by the President of India on the advice of the Indian government, which was abolished in January 2020 by the 104<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 and 245 in the Rajya Sabha including 12 nominees from the expertise of different fields of literature, art, science, and social service.** The Parliament meets at Sansad Bhavan in New Delhi.

### Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, Launches Two New Schemes on World MSME Day

- **Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Jitan Ram Manjhi, launched two new schemes on World MSME Day** in New Delhi. The scheme, 'MSME TEAM', aims to facilitate five lakh micro and small enterprises for Open Network for Digital Commerce. On the other hand, the Yashasvini



campaign focuses on mass awareness to formalize women-owned informal micro enterprises and provide necessary support and assistance.

- Union Minister for MSME, Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi said that the MSMEs will be a key force in the movement towards Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat. Addressing the day long event of International MSME Day, 'Udyami Bharat' he emphasized the need to deepen and broaden the effort through an inclusive and focused approach, especially in the rural areas and hinterland as per vision of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Shri Manjhi said in a fast-changing industrial landscape, the MSMEs need to align themselves to adopting digital and technological solutions. He said as part of the ongoing reforms of the government, legal reforms in the MSME sector will work as a force multiplier.
- Shri Manjhi said six pillars have been identified on which our endeavours would be built – (i) formalization and access to credit (ii) increased access to market and e-commerce adoption (iii) increased productivity through modern technology (iv) enhanced skill levels and digitalization in the service sector (v) support to Khadi, Village, and Coir industry to globalize them (vi) empowerment of women, artisans, through enterprise creation. He said the work before us is clear-cut. There is a great need to build upon these six pillars in a meticulous and yet smart way, he added.

As per the latest classification of MSME: 1. Micro enterprises would be those with investments not exceeding Rs. one crore and turnover of Rs. 5 crore. 2. Small enterprises would be those with investment up to Rs. 10 crore and turnover of up to Rs. 50 crore. 3. Medium enterprises – as those with investments not exceeding Rs. 50 crore and turnover of Rs. 250 crore.

### Railway launches Sangyaan App to provide in-depth info on three new criminal laws

- Railway Protection Force Chief Manoj Yadava has launched Sangyaan App, a mobile application to provide in-depth information on the three new criminal laws which are to come into force from July 1, 2024. Enacted last year, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) are set to replace the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18<sup>th</sup> railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

### YEIDA And Bebu Project LLP Sign Agreement To Develop A Film City In Greater Noida

- In Uttar Pradesh, the state government signed an agreement to develop a film city in Greater Noida. The agreement was signed between the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) and Bebu Project LLP, a company owned by notable film producer Bonnie Kapoor and Ashish Bhootani. This ambitious project, with an estimated cost of 1,510 crore rupees, is planned to be completed within the next eight years. The initial phase will focus on establishing essential film-related facilities and a film institute. The film city is designed to offer world-class film production amenities, including studios, open sets, hospitality services, and office spaces.

### Create a force in India that is first in the field of disaster management in the entire country

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah said dangers like avalanches, landslides, floods, and storms are going to increase everywhere in the future due to climate change. Keeping this in mind, governments and the society at large should move firmly towards the goal of zero casualty by using scientific principles for the development of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) as its budget has increased from Rs. 66,000 crore to Rs. 2 lakh crore in 10 years.

- Mr. Shah, who was speaking at the **successful return of the second mountaineering expedition ‘Vijay’ of NDRF** in New Delhi, said that the government still has to increase its efficiency in many areas by delivering results, such as forest fires. “Saving human lives is not our only objective during forest fires, but we have to bring experiments happening all over the world on how to save forests and what we can do so that there is no fire on the ground. We need to prepare ourselves more for the floods caused by cloudburst.”

**The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is an Indian specialized force constituted “for the purpose of special response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster” under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The “Apex Body for Disaster Management” in India is the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The Chairman of the NDMA is the Prime Minister. The responsibility of managing disasters in India is that of the State Government. The ‘Nodal Ministry’ in the central government for management of natural disasters is the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). When ‘calamities of severe nature’ occur, the Central Government is responsible for providing aid and assistance to the affected state, including deploying, at the State’s request, of Armed Forces, Central Paramilitary Forces, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and such communication, air and other assets, as are available and needed.**

## India’s first AI University appoints award-winning American professor as VC

- **Universal AI University (UAIU), India’s pioneering institution dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, has named Simon Mak, an international strategist and award-winning professor, as its vice chancellor.** This appointment marks a significant milestone, as Mak becomes the first foreign national to helm an Indian university as founding vice chancellor. Mak, who brings experience from Silicon Valley startups and academia, will work closely with Prof Tarundeep Singh Anand, the university’s chancellor. His primary focus will be on elevating UAIU’s global standing through an innovative AI-driven curriculum while maintaining ethical standards in education.

## Uttar Pradesh becomes India’s first state to generate 1 crore tokens through ABHA ID

- In a major achievement, **Uttar Pradesh has set a record by generating one crore tokens through the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID. UP is the first and only state in India to achieve such a feat, having generated a total of 1,43,00,000 tokens to date.**
- Following Uttar Pradesh, **Andhra Pradesh stands second with 60,33,104 tokens generated, while Karnataka holds third place with 42,57,944 tokens.** Other states in the rankings include Jammu and Kashmir (38,87,226), Delhi (22,28,079), Bihar (15,65,332), Madhya Pradesh (12,53,722), Maharashtra (7,96,938), Chhattisgarh (7,34,781), Odisha (5,06,580), and Gujarat (3,83,789).

**Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha. Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel is serving as the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She also served as Governor of Madhya Pradesh. She has served as the first female Chief Minister of Gujarat. Yogi Adityanath is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.**

## International



### US military completes major exercise in Africa and works to deepen partnerships

- **The U.S. and top African allies conducted the African Lion military exercise in Morocco, addressing new challenges in volatile regions.** The exercise showcased joint military operations and emphasized a holistic approach to instability issues beyond military solutions. **High-ranking military officials from the U.S. and its top African allies watched intently as dust and flames shot up from pieces of the Sahara Desert hit by tank and artillery fire.** They looked up as pilots flew F-16s into formation.
- **And they listened intently as Moroccan and American personnel explained how they would set up beachheads to defend the Atlantic coastline in the event of a potential invasion. The practice scenario was among those discussed during African Lion, the United States' largest annual joint military exercise on the continent, which concluded in Morocco.**

**The United States of America (U.S.A. or USA), commonly known as the United States (U.S. or US) or America, is a country primarily located in North America. It consists of 50 states, a federal district. It is the world's third-largest country by both land and total area. The national capital is Washington, D.C., and the most populous city and financial center is New York City. Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. is the 46<sup>th</sup> and current President of the United States. A member of the Democratic Party, he previously served as the 47<sup>th</sup> vice president from 2009 to 2017 under Barack Obama and represented Delaware in the United States Senate from 1973 to 2009. Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris defeated incumbent president Donald Trump and vice president Mike Pence in the 2020 presidential election. He is the oldest president and the first to have a female vice president. The United States dollar is the official currency of the United States and several other countries.**

### Maldives has become the first country to ban Israeli citizens from entering its borders

- **Maldives has become the first country to ban Israeli citizens from entering its borders, citing solidarity with Palestine over the ongoing Gaza conflict.** President Mohamed Muizzu has initiated the process to amend the law, formally announcing the decision. This decision comes amid heightened tensions and global outrage over recent Israeli strikes in Rafah.

**Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the "King's Island" for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Mohamed Muizzu is the President of the Maldives. The Maldives rejoined the Commonwealth on 1 February 2020 after showing evidence of functioning democratic processes and popular support.**

### Claudia Sheinbaum becomes Mexico's first female President

- **Mexico's projected presidential winner Claudia Sheinbaum will become the first woman president in the country's 200-year history.** The National Electoral Institute's president said Sheinbaum had between 58.3% and 60.7% of the vote. This was the first time in Mexico that the two main opponents were women.

**Mexico is a country in the southern portion of North America. Mexico City is the capital. It is bordered to the north by the United States; to the south and west by the Pacific Ocean; to the southeast by Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Sea; and to the east by the Gulf of Mexico. The Mexican peso is the currency of Mexico.**



## India joins U.S.'s Red Flag air and RIMPAC naval exercises

- **Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian Navy are taking part in two mega multinational war games hosted by their U.S. counterparts.** The IAF has deployed Rafale fighter jets for the two-week multinational air exercise Red Flag which commenced in Alaska.
- On the other hand, **the Indian Navy is deploying the indigenous stealth frigate INS Shivalik for Ex RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) scheduled to be held in Hawaii** from June 25 to August 2. “Onwards and Upwards. An IAF contingent arrived at the Eielson AF Base of US airforce, at Alaska, US, to participate in the upcoming edition of the multi-national exercise Red Flag 24.
- **Ably supported by its IL-78 air-to-air refuellers and the C-17 transport aircraft, the IAF Rafale fighters took a transatlantic flight with staging halts at Greece and Portugal**”. Aimed to integrate aircrew in a multinational environment, Ex Red Flag is a two-week advanced aerial combat training exercise.

**The Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) is the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise. RIMPAC is held biennially during June and July of even-numbered years from Honolulu, Hawaii, with the exception of 2020 where it was held in August. It is hosted and administered by the United States Navy's Indo-Pacific Command, headquartered at Pearl Harbor, in conjunction with the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard, and Hawaii National Guard forces under the control of the Governor of Hawaii. The first RIMPAC, held in 1971, involved forces from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US). Australia, Canada, and the US have participated in every RIMPAC since then.**

## South Korea to suspend a military deal with North Korea after tensions over North's balloons

- **South Korea's government approved the suspension of a contentious military agreement with North Korea a step that would allow it to take tougher responses to North Korean provocations.** The development came as animosities between the rival Koreas rose sharply recently after North Korea launched trash-carrying balloons across the border in reaction to previous South Korean civilian leafletting campaigns.
- **South Korea's Cabinet Council passed a proposal aimed at suspending the 2018 inter-Korean agreement on lowering down frontline military tensions.** The proposal will formally take effect when it's signed by President Yoon Suk Yeol. The military agreement — reached during a short-lived era of reconciliation between the Koreas — requires the two countries to cease all hostile acts against each other at their border areas such as live firing drills, aerial drills and psychological warfare.

**South Korea is a country in East Asia, constituting the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and sharing a land border with North Korea. Its western border is formed by the Yellow Sea, while its eastern border is defined by the Sea of Japan. The South Korean won is the official currency of South Korea. Yoon Suk-Yeol is the current President of South Korea. 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, popular name given to latitude 38° N that in East Asia roughly demarcates North Korea and South Korea.**

## India to drag Australia to WTO arbitration on services trade commitments

- **In a first, India has dragged Australia to arbitration at the World Trade Organization (WTO) as Canberra is making changes to its commitments which New Delhi believes could impact its services trade. India has initiated WTO arbitration against Australia over concerns regarding changes in its services trade commitments.** These changes, which address licensing and qualification requirements, are part of new regulations on services domestic regulation aimed at reducing global trade costs.
- These changes address licensing and qualification requirements and are **part of new disciplines on services domestic regulation, expected to lower global trade costs by over US\$125 billion.** India, identifying itself as an “affected member,” argues that these changes might restrict its service providers’ market access. “India and Australia entered into negotiations with a view to reaching an agreement...However, no agreement could be reached,” India informed the WTO. While the new rules are intended to benefit all WTO members on a most-favoured nation (MFN) basis, Australia is adhering to its commitments under a Joint Statement Initiative (JSI). **Under a WTO agreement to facilitate non-goods trade among themselves and extend similar benefits to all other members of the organization, over 70 nations, including the UK and the UAE, have consented to take on additional commitments in the services sector.**

## Australia opens military to non-citizen residents from Five Eyes

- **Australia will allow non-citizens to join its armed forces, as the sparsely populated nation struggles to meet recruitment targets.** Defence Minister Richard Marles said that from July, looser eligibility criteria would allow “permanent residents who have been living in Australia for 12 months” to serve. Citizens from Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are being favoured, he added. Australia has a coastline that would stretch one-and-a-bit times around the Earth, **but a population of just 26 million.**

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world’s sixth-largest country by total area. Australia’s capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Charles III (Charles Philip Arthur George) is King of the United Kingdom and 14 other Commonwealth realms. He acceded to the throne on 8 September 2022 upon the death of his mother, Elizabeth II: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The Australian dollar is the currency of Australia. Anthony Albanese is the current Prime Minister of Australia.

## Spain to join South Africa’s genocide ICJ case over Israel’s actions in Gaza

- **Spain will ask a United Nations court for permission to join South Africa’s case accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza. Spain is the first European country to take the step after South Africa filed its case with the International Court of Justice late last year.**
- **It alleged that Israel was breaching the genocide convention in its military assault that has laid waste to large swaths of Gaza. Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua, Libya and the Palestinians have already requested to join the case. The court has ordered Israel to immediately halt its military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah but stopped short of ordering a cease-fire for the enclave. Israel has not complied.**

Spain is a country located in Southwestern Europe, with parts of its territory in the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea and Africa. Madrid is the capital and most populous city of Spain. Pedro Sanchez has been Prime Minister of Spain since June 2018. Felipe VI is the King of Spain. The Euro is the official currency of it.

## Meloni joins cultural elite celebrating Italian opera’s recognition as a world treasure

- **Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni joined top political and cultural figures at Verona’s ancient Arena amphitheater for an open-air celebration of Italian lyric opera’s recognition by UNESCO as a global cultural treasure.**
- **Conductor Riccardo Muti presided over an orchestra of 170 musicians from Italy’s 14 opera houses, joined by over 314 choral singers and a cast of global star opera stars who delivered a greatest hits of Italian opera from Verdi to Puccini, Donizetti to Bellini for an appreciative crowd. La Scala’s two star dancers, Roberto Bolle and Nicoletta Manni, also performed.**

## Giant step for Somalia with UN Security Council seat

- **Somalia has won a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council - hailed as a significant step for the war-torn nation. It will be the first time the country, which descended into civil war more than 30 years ago, has held the position since the 1970s.** The top table at the UN determines how the organisation should respond to conflicts around the world. Somalia’s battle to bring an end to its turmoil and its fight against Islamist militants will help inform the UN’s decisions. **Somalia was elected along with Denmark, Greece, Pakistan and Panama to serve for two years from January next year.** It bagged the seat allocated to the East Africa region unopposed and went on to win 179 votes in a secret ballot in the 193-member General Assembly.

Somalia is a country in the Horn of Africa. Mogadishu is the capital and most populous city of Somalia. The Somali shilling is the official currency of Somalia. The Horn of Africa (HoA), also known as the Somali Peninsula, is a large peninsula and geopolitical region in East Africa. It is composed of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is the current the President of Somalia since May 2022. Hamza Abdi Barre is currently serving as the Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia. Somalia has the longest coastline on Africa’s mainland.

## Thailand launches the World's First-of-its-kind "Pink Plus" Economy

- **Thailand launches the world's first-of-its-kind "Pink Plus" economy, spearheaded by Borderless.lgbt.** This bold initiative transforms the traditional "Pink" economy into a comprehensive DE&I (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) ecosystem, specifically designed to support LGBTQIA communities in various aspects of life, including living, family planning, and retirement.
- **Borderless.lgbt is leading the evolution and transformation of the "Pink" economy into the "Pink Plus" economy with new developments in inclusive medical tourism, retirement living, family planning support, pink tech incubation and pink film virtual production in Thailand. With the recent legalization of same-sex marriage and upcoming policies to support LGBTQIA family planning in Thailand, the Kingdom is poised to become an important hub for global DE&I initiatives.** Thailand is positioned to support more than 200 million LGBTQIA individuals within its proximity to wed, live, play, innovate, plan a family and retire in the country.

**Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia. Bangkok is the nation's capital and largest city. The baht is the official currency of Thailand. Vajiralongkorn is the King of Thailand. Srettha Thavisin, nicknamed Nid, is a Thai businessman and politician currently serving as the Prime Minister of Thailand since 22 August 2023.**

## Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif, President Xi Jinping agree to upgrade CPEC

- **Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese President Xi Jinping in their meeting have affirmed consensus on the upgradation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and advancing high-quality development of the multi-billion dollar project in the second phase.**
- **The two leaders held an in-depth discussion at the historic Great Hall of the People in Beijing during the official visit of Sharif.** The two leaders were accompanied by the Ministers and senior officials. This was the first meeting of Sharif with President Xi since assuming office in 2024.

**Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the world's fifth-most populous country, with a population of almost 227 million, and has the world's second-largest Muslim population after Indonesia. It has a 1,046-kilometre (650-mile) coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south, and is bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the west, Iran to the southwest, and China to the northeast. It is separated narrowly from Tajikistan by Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor in the north, and also shares a maritime border with Oman. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Asif Ali Zardari is serving as the current President of Pakistan. The Pakistani rupee has been the official currency of Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif is a Pakistani politician and businessman who is currently serving as the 24<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Pakistan since March 2024, having previously served in the post from April 2022 to August 2023. He has also served as the president of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML-N).**

## Belgium PM Alexander De Croo resigns after party suffers defeat in EU elections

- **Alexander De Croo, the Prime Minister of Belgium, has resigned following his party's crushing loss in national and European parliamentary elections.** The EU elections represent the world's second-largest democratic exercise, trailing only behind India's elections in terms of scale. With almost 400 million voters across the EU, the electorate will select 720 members of the European Parliament, spanning from the Arctic Circle to the borders of Africa and Asia.

**Belgium is a country in Northwestern Europe. The country is bordered by the Netherlands to the north, Germany to the east, Luxembourg to the southeast, France to the south, and the North Sea to the west. The capital and largest metropolitan region is Brussels. Philippe is King of the Belgians. He is the eldest child of King Albert II and Queen Paola. Euro is the official currency of it.**

## Giorgia Meloni, Italian PM and far-right leader, wins European Parliament polls, becomes kingmaker in Europe

- **Italy's far-right leader, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, has reinforced her political dominance both at home and within the European Union. Her Brothers of Italy party clinched a notable 28 per cent of the**



**votes** in the European elections, strengthening her leadership and influence. The victory would give her a domestic boost while positioning her as one of the most powerful figures in the European Union.

- **The centre-left opposition PD earned 23% of votes, followed by the populist Five Star Movement**, which received 10% of support, a seven-point decrease from the 2019 election. Meloni's junior partners, Forza Italia and the Lega party led by Eurosceptic politician Matteo Salvini, had a mixed showing. The far-right Lega received about 8% of the votes, a sharp drop from its 2019 result when it won 34.3% for a total of 29 seats.

**Italy is a country that consists of a peninsula delimited by the Alps and several islands surrounding it.** Italy is located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, in Southern Europe. **A unitary parliamentary republic with Rome as its capital. Euro is the currency of it. Sergio Mattarella is the current President of Italy. Giorgia Meloni has been serving as the Prime Minister of Italy since 22 October 2022, the first woman to hold this position.**

### Malawi Vice-President dies in plane crash

- **Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera said that the plane carrying the country's Vice-President Saulos Klaus Chilima had crashed, killing everyone on board, including Chilima.** Chilima, was aboard a military aircraft with nine others, which had left Malawi's capital Lilongwe and was expected to land at Mzuzu Airport.

**Malawi, formerly known as Nyasaland, is a landlocked country in Southeastern Africa. Malawi's capital and largest city is Lilongwe. The kwacha is the currency of Malawi as of 1971, replacing the Malawian pound.**

### Kuwait forms new government headed by Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah

- **Kuwait formed a new cabinet headed by Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah.** Emad al al-Atiqi, Anwar Ali al-Mudhaf and Abdullah Ali al-Yahya retained their posts as oil, finance and foreign ministers respectively, according to the decree from the Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

**Kuwait is a country in Western Asia. It is situated in the northern edge of Eastern Arabia at the tip of the Persian Gulf, bordering Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. Kuwait also shares maritime borders with Iran.** Most of the country's population resides in the urban agglomeration of the capital city Kuwait City. As of 2021, Kuwait has a population of 4.67 million people where 1.45 million are Kuwaitis and 3.2 million are foreign nationals. The Kuwaiti dinar is the currency of Kuwait.

### Venezuela is the first country in the world to lose all glaciers

- Record-high temperatures, deluges, droughts, and wildfires, the impacts of climate change are evident. **Venezuela is believed to be the first nation in modern times to have completely lost all of its glaciers.**

**Venezuela is a country on the northern coast of South America, consisting of a continental landmass and many islands and islets in the Caribbean Sea. Nicolas Maduro has been the President of Venezuela since assuming office in 2013. Venezuela Capital is Caracas and Currency is Venezuelan bolivar.**

### Ukraine, Japan sign 10-year term security agreement

- **Ukraine and Japan signed a 20-year security agreement on the sidelines of the G7 summit.** Ukraine, more than two years since it was invaded by Russia, has signed 15 similar agreements pledging long-term support from its allies including Britain, France and Germany.
- **"In 2024, Japan will provide Ukraine with \$4.5 billion and will continue to support us throughout the agreement's entire 10-year term,".** A similar agreement with the US is expected to be signed later at the summit in Italy.

**Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It is the second-largest country by area in Europe after Russia, which it borders to the east and north-east. Ukraine also shares borders with Belarus to the north; Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west; Romania and Moldova to the south; and has a coastline along the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.** With a population of 43 million, Ukraine is the eighth-most populous country in Europe. The nation's capital and largest city is Kyiv. The hryvnia, hryvna, or sometimes gryvnya, has been the national currency of Ukraine since 2 September 1996. **Volodymyr Zelenskyy is a Ukrainian politician, former actor and comedian, who is the sixth and current President of Ukraine.**

## Global Gender Gap Index

- Recently, the World Economic Forum released the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of its annual Global Gender Gap Report for 2024, comprehensively benchmarking gender parity across 146 economies worldwide. The data highlighted a concerning trend for India, as the nation saw a drop of two positions, now ranking 129<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries in the index. In the South Asian region, Pakistan exhibited the weakest performance, while Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan surpassed India in the rankings.
- The global gender gap score in 2024 is 68.5%, meaning 31.5% of the gap remains unaddressed. Progress has been extremely slow, with only a 0.1% point improvement from 2023. At the current rate, it will take 134 years to reach full gender parity globally far beyond the 2030 SDG target. The gender gaps remain largest in Political Empowerment (77.5% unaddressed) and Economic Participation & Opportunity (39.5% unaddressed).
- Iceland (93.5%) remains the world's most gender-equal society for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. It is followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand and Sweden in the top 5 rankings. 7 out of the top 10 countries are from Europe (Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Ireland, and Spain). Other regions represented are Eastern Asia and the Pacific (New Zealand at 4), Latin America and the Caribbean (Nicaragua at 6), and Sub-Saharan Africa (Namibia at 8). Spain and Ireland made notable jumps into the top 10 in 2024, climbing 8 and 2 ranks respectively compared to 2023.
- A stark statistic emerged indicating that Indian women earn only Rs. 40 for every Rs. 100 earned by men, reflecting a significant gender pay gap. India also joined the group of nations with notably low economic gender parity, with the country's economic parity recorded at 39.8%. While India has made progress in closing 64.1% of its gender gap in 2024, it still falls short of reaching the economic parity level of 46% observed in 2012, requiring a 6.2 percentage point increase. Among countries with the lowest economic gender parity levels, Bangladesh stood out with a mere 31.1%, alongside Sudan with 33.7%, Iran with 34.3%, Pakistan with 36%, and Morocco with 40.6%.
- These nations demonstrated less than 30% gender parity in estimated earned income, underscoring the significant challenge of bridging the economic participation gap between men and women on a global scale. Conversely, countries like Liberia, boasting an economic gender parity of 87.4%, and Botswana with 85.4%, represented the highest levels of economic gender parity, thanks to a strong labor force participation rate among women, exceeding 95%.
- On each of the four sub-indices as well as on the overall index the GGG index provides scores between 0 and 1, where 1 shows full gender parity and 0 is complete imparity. It is the longest-standing index, which tracks progress towards closing these gaps over time since its inception in 2006. To serve as a compass to track progress on relative gaps between women and men in health, education, economy and politics.

## Cyril Ramaphosa Re-Elected South African President

- Cyril Ramaphosa is re-elected as South Africa's president following a landmark coalition deal between his African National Congress (ANC) and opposition parties. The new government of national unity combines Mr Ramaphosa's ANC, the centre-right Democratic Alliance and other smaller parties. Mr. Ramaphosa got 283 votes against Malema's 44 in the 400-member house. The parties will now co-govern South Africa in its first national coalition where no party has a majority.

South Africa, officially the Republic of South Africa (RSA) is the southernmost country in Africa. South Africa has three capital cities, with the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government based in Pretoria, Bloemfontein, and Cape Town respectively. The South African rand is the official currency of it.

## Russian President Putin ratifies plan to jointly build lunar base with China

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has approved a plan to jointly build the International Lunar Research Station with China, an ambitious space project which was announced previously by the two close neighbours. The ILRS will consist of sections on the lunar surface, sections in lunar orbit and sections on Earth, and it will be built in two phases. The first phase of the ILRS construction project will see a basic station built by 2035 in the lunar south pole region. The second phase will see the expansion of the station, set for completion by 2045.

## Philemon Yang of Cameroon elected President of upcoming General Assembly session

- The UN General Assembly elected by acclamation **Philemon Yang, former Prime Minister of Cameroon, President for its seventy-ninth session** which gets underway in September. **President-elect Yang also served as the Chairperson of the Panel of Eminent Africans of the African Union**, demonstrating “unwavering dedication” to the principles of peace, sustainable development and human dignity.

## Canada will host the next year’s G7 Summit in Alberta

- **Italy continues to be the President of this G7 for the rest of this year.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi was invited to the G7 Summit by Italian premier Giorgia Meloni. The event included the seven member countries—the US, UK, Canada, Japan, Italy, Germany, and France—along with the European Union.

**Canada is a country in North America. Its ten provinces and three territories extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific and northward into the Arctic Ocean, covering 9.98 million square kilometres (3.85 million square miles), making it the world’s second-largest country by total area. Its southern and western border with the United States, stretching 8,891 kilometres (5,525 mi), is the world’s longest bi-national land border. Canada’s capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. The Canadian dollar is the currency of Canada. Justin Trudeau is current Prime Minister of Canada since November 2015. Mary Simon has served as the 30<sup>th</sup> governor general of Canada since July 26, 2021.**

## The 50<sup>th</sup> G7 summit was held in Italy

- **The 50<sup>th</sup> G7 summit was held from 13 to 15 June 2024 at Borgo Egnazia in the city of Fasano in Apulia, Italy.** Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni announced in November 2023 that Fasano would be the headquarters of the G7.
- **All G7 member states participated in the summit, including the representatives of the European Union. The President of the European Commission has been a permanently welcome participant at all meetings since 1981. Italy, coinciding with its G7 presidency in 2024, emphasized strategic partnerships with Africa.** This was the first time that a Pope has attended a G7 summit. Representatives from Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, India, Jordan, Kenya, Mauritania (representing the African Union), Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and the Vatican City were invited to the summit.

**The Group of Seven (G7) is an intergovernmental organization consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The heads of government of the member states, as well as the representatives of the European Union, meet at the annual G7 Summit. The Group of Eight (G8) was an inter-governmental political forum from 1997 until 2014. It had formed from incorporating the country of Russia into the Group of Seven, or G7, and returned to its previous name after Russia was disinvented in 2014. The forum originated with a 1975 summit hosted by France that brought together representatives of six governments: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, thus leading to the name Group of Six or G6. The summit came to be known as the Group of Seven, in 1976 with the addition of Canada. Russia was added to the political forum from 1997, which the following year became known as the G8. In March 2014, Russia was suspended indefinitely following the annexation of Crimea, whereupon the political forum name reverted to G7.**

## Ukraine peace summit ends with hope

- **The two day Summit on Peace in Ukraine at the Bürgenstock resort in Switzerland ended with participants hoping for an end to the war between Moscow and Kyiv.** 80 countries and four organisations of the 100 attending delegations supported the final joint communiqué that emerged out of the Path To Peace Summit looking at ways to end the Russia-Ukraine war raging on since February 2022. India was a notable voice among those who did not sign the document. Current G-20 chair Brazil was in the room only as an observer.

**Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It is the second-largest country by area in Europe after Russia, which it borders to the east and north-east. Ukraine also shares borders with Belarus to the north; Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west; Romania and Moldova to the south; and has a coastline along the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. With a population of 43 million, Ukraine is the eighth-most populous country in Europe. The nation’s**



capital and largest city is Kyiv. The hryvnia, hryvna, or sometimes gryvnya, has been the national currency of Ukraine since 2 September 1996. **Volodymyr Zelenskyy is a Ukrainian politician, former actor and comedian, who is the sixth and current President of Ukraine.**

## Thousands of NATO troops join drills in strategically sensitive Baltic Sea region

- **Some 9,000 troops from 20 NATO countries** have been participating this month in military exercises in the **Baltic Sea region**, which has become strategically sensitive following **Russia's invasion of Ukraine**. Sweden, which had joined the drills in the past, **took part in the Baltops exercises for the first time in June as a full NATO member after joining the trans-Atlantic military alliance** earlier this year. The weeks of training include sea mine sweeps, submarine detection and landings. The exercises by navy, air force and ground troops are being held on the Baltic Sea, as well as in Sweden and its strategic island of Gotland, and in Lithuania, Poland and Germany.

**The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also called the North Atlantic Alliance is an intergovernmental military alliance of 32 member states – 30 European and two North American.** Established in the aftermath of World War II, the organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty, **signed in Washington, D.C., on 4 April 1949.** NATO is a collective security system: its independent member states agree to defend each other against attacks by third parties. **The organization's motto is animus in consulendo liber (Latin for 'a mind unfettered in deliberation').** NATO's main headquarters are located in **Brussels, Belgium**, while NATO's military headquarters are near **Mons, Belgium.** NATO formed with twelve founding members and has added new members ten times, **most recently when Sweden joined the alliance on 7 March 2024.** **Jens Stoltenberg is a Norwegian politician who has served as the 13<sup>th</sup> secretary general of NATO since 2014.** A member of the Norwegian Labour Party, he previously served as the 34<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Norway.

## Russia approves draft logistics agreement to be signed with India

- After being held up for several years, **the India-Russia mutual logistics agreement is ready for conclusion, with Russia approving the draft agreement** over the past week. The agreement will simplify military-to-military exchanges for exercises, training, port calls and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts. It is similar to a series of such agreements that India has signed with a number of countries, beginning with the United States in 2016.
- **The conclusion of the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) has been delayed for several years.** Official sources said that this was the same agreement which has now been approved by the Russian side, and has to be signed by both sides before it can become effective. The agreement, as and when concluded, will be valid for five years and will be renewed automatically unless either party notifies the other of its desire to terminate it.

**Russia or the Russian Federation is a transcontinental country spanning Eastern Europe and Northern Asia.** It is the **largest country in the world**; covering over 17,125,191 square kilometres (6,612,073 sq mi), **consisting of more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area, extending to eleven time zones, and has bordering sixteen sovereign nations, the most of any country in the world.** Vladimir Putin is serving as the current **President of Russia since 2012, previously being in the office from 1999 until 2008.** He was also **Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012.** He is the **longest-serving Russian or Soviet leader since Joseph Stalin.** **Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation.** **Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020.**

## Saudi Arabia has launched the world's first self-driving flying taxi

- **Saudi Arabia has launched the world's first self-driving flying taxi.** This groundbreaking innovation is aimed at transforming the transportation of pilgrims during Hajj. The company behind this cool invention is called EHang – and it is gaining some serious traction globally.

**Saudi Arabia is a country on the Arabian Peninsula in Western Asia.** It is bordered by the **Red Sea to the west; Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait to the north;** the Persian Gulf, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the east; Oman to the southeast; and Yemen to the south. Bahrain is an island country off the east coast. **Its capital and largest city is Riyadh.** The Saudi riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia. **Mohammed bin Salman is the Crown Prince and**

**Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia.** Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is **King of Saudi Arabia**, reigning since 2015. **Petroleum was discovered in 1938 and followed up by several other finds in the Eastern Province.** Saudi Arabia has since become the world's second-largest oil producer (behind the US) and the world's largest oil exporter, controlling the world's second-largest oil reserves and the fourth-largest gas reserves.

### Landmark EU nature restoration plan gets final approval as bloc gives the green light

- **European Union countries gave final approval to a major and long-awaited plan to better protect nature in the 27-nation bloc.** After surviving a razor-thin vote by lawmakers last summer, the so-called Nature Restoration Plan faced opposition from several member states for months amid relentless farmers' protests that contributed to leave the bill in a deadlock.
- **The law, which aims at restoring ecosystems, species and habitats in the EU, was finally adopted at a meeting of environment ministers at Luxembourg** after rallying the required support from a qualified majority representing 15 of the 27 member states and 65 per cent of the EU population.
- **The Nature Restoration plan is a part of the EU's European Green Deal that seeks to establish the world's most ambitious climate and biodiversity targets,** and make the bloc the global point of reference on all climate issues. Under the plan, member states will have to **meet restoration targets for specific habitats and species, to cover at least 20 per cent of the region's land and sea areas by 2030.**

**The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 member states which use the euro currency. The union and EU citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original member states of what came to be known as the European Communities were the Inner Six: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council.**

### India possesses more nuclear weapons than Pakistan, China

- **India possesses more nuclear weapons than Pakistan, while China has expanded its nuclear arsenal from 410 warheads in January 2023 to 500 by January 2024,** according to a report by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), a Swedish think tank. **The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said India's "stored" nuclear warheads were 172 in January this year while the number for Pakistan was 170.** According to the report, India slightly expanded its nuclear arsenal in 2023. Both India and Pakistan continued to develop new types of nuclear delivery systems in 2023.
- **The SIPRI said nine nuclear-armed states -the US, Russia, the UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel – continued to modernise their nuclear arsenals and several deployed new nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable weapon systems in 2023. Of the total global inventory of an estimated 12,121 warheads in January 2024, about 9,585 were in military stockpiles for potential use, it said. Russia and the US together possess almost 90 per cent of all nuclear weapons, as per the report. Russia is estimated to have deployed around 36 more warheads with operational forces than in January 2023, the think tank said.**

**Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is an international institute based in Stockholm. It was founded in 1966 in Stockholm, Sweden and provides data, analysis and recommendations for armed conflict, military expenditure and arms trade as well as disarmament and arms control. The research is based on open sources and is directed to decision-makers, researchers, media and the interested public.**

### Thailand becomes first country in Southeast Asia to recognise same-sex marriage

- **Thailand's Senate voted overwhelmingly in support of a marriage equality bill, making it the first Southeast Asian country to enact such a law.** The bill will now need King Maha Vajiralongkorn to sign off on it, followed by its publication in the Royal Government Gazette, which will set a date within 120 days when it becomes effective. Thailand will become the third place in Asia, after Taiwan and Nepal, to allow same-sex marriage.

Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia. Bangkok is the nation's capital and largest city. The baht is the official currency of Thailand. Vajiralongkorn is the King of Thailand. Srettha Thavisin, nicknamed Nid, is a Thai businessman and politician currently serving as the Prime Minister of Thailand since 22 August 2023.

### Activists spray paint UNESCO heritage site 'Stonehenge' in UK

- After environmental activists sprayed an orange substance on Stonehenge, a UNESCO world heritage site in southwest England, police arrested two people. Just Stop Oil protest group demanded that Britain's next government legally commit to phasing out fossil fuels by 2030.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples. Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. It is headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France. Audrey Azoulay is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the UNESCO since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.

### Russia and North Korea sign partnership deal, vowing closer ties as rivalry deepens with West

- Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un signed a partnership deal during a summit in Pyongyang, in a bid to expand their economic and military cooperation and cement a united front against Washington. Mr. Putin's first visit to North Korea in 24 years comes amid growing concerns over an arms arrangement in which the country provides Moscow with badly needed munitions for its war in Ukraine in exchange for economic assistance and technology transfers that could enhance the threat posed by Mr. Kim's nuclear weapons and missile programme.
- The pact between Russia and North Korea talks about cooperation on a wide range of issues, including mutual military support, and unspecified technological assistance. Crucial is the mutual defence provisions. "In case any one of the two sides is put in a state of war by an armed invasion from an individual state or several states, the other side shall provide military and other assistance with all means in its possession without delay in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and the laws of the DPRK [North Korea] and the Russian Federation," Article 4 of the agreement says. This provision echoes the 1961 agreement between the two nations. The more likely consequence of the treaty is simply closer cooperation in weapons production, with North Korea manufacturing more munitions for Russia and Russia providing more high-end help for North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

North Korea is a country in East Asia. It constitutes the northern half of the Korean Peninsula and borders China and Russia to the north at the Yalu (Amnok) and Tumen rivers, and South Korea to the south at the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Pyongyang is the capital and largest city. Kim Jong Un has been supreme leader of North Korea since 2011 and the leader of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) since 2012. He is the third son of Kim Jong Il, who was North Korea's second supreme leader from 1994 to 2011, and Ko Yong-hui. The Korean People's won, more commonly known as the North Korean won is the official currency of North Korea.

### India, Sri Lanka launch Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, deepen ties

- India and Sri Lanka launched a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), reflecting the deepening maritime security cooperation between the two sides, as external affairs minister S Jaishankar met the top leadership in Colombo to bolster ties in a range of areas.
- President Ranil Wickremesinghe and Jaishankar participated in a ceremony to hand over more than 150 houses built under two India-backed housing projects that are among the flagship initiatives of New Delhi's development cooperation. Over the past two years, Sri Lanka has benefited from a range of initiatives aimed at bolstering energy, financial and physical connectivity.



## EAGLE Act: Indian American lawmaker disappointed with Biden's stand

- This year's Tech Immigration Summit that took place at the US Capitol shed light on how the problem is haunting several Indians waiting for Green Cards as well as the burden of a backlog with the H-1B visa. Bipartisan lawmakers stressed the critical importance of resolving these issues to maintain "high-skilled immigrants" eyeing to dwell in America.
- The EAGLE Act, or the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment Act, seeks to overhaul the current immigration system. It will expand employment-based Green Cards by removing the per-country limit and raising family-sponsored Green Cards from 7% to 15%. The Trump administration has endorsed the legislation as it may help address the long-standing backlog that has impacted hundreds of thousands of immigrants, many hailing from India and China.

## Ramaphosa is sworn in for a second term as South Africa's president with help from coalition

- Cyril Ramaphosa was sworn in for a second term as South Africa's President in a ceremony in the administrative capital, Pretoria, with help from a coalition of parties for the first time in its 30-year rule. Mr. Ramaphosa is now set to appoint a Cabinet in a new coalition government after his African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority in an election.
- He was reelected president by lawmakers after the main opposition party and a smaller third party joined the ANC in an agreement to co-govern Africa's most industrialized economy. He will have to guide the first coalition government in which no party has a majority. At least three parties will make up what the ANC is calling a government of national unity, with more invited to join. Mr. Ramaphosa was administered the oath of office in a public ceremony at the Union Buildings, the seat of government, by Chief Justice Raymond Zondo.

South Africa, officially the Republic of South Africa (RSA) is the southernmost country in Africa. South Africa has three capital cities, with the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government based in Pretoria, Bloemfontein, and Cape Town respectively. The South African rand is the official currency of it.

## UNGA President honours India's Hansa Mehta on International Day for Women in Diplomacy

- On the occasion of the International Day for Women in Diplomacy, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) President Dennis Francis paid tribute to Hansa Mehta, a feminist leader, activist and diplomat from India, highlighting her pivotal role in shaping the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) to be more inclusive.
- Mehta is widely credited for successfully arguing against references to "men" as a synonym for humanity, and succeeded in changing the phrase, "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal" in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The introduction of a more inclusive language in UDHR was an important milestone in the fight for women's rights and gender equality.

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States. Its mission and work guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter and implemented by its various organs and specialised agencies. Its activities include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law. The forerunner of the United Nations was the League of Nations, an organization conceived in circumstances of the First World War, and established in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles "to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security." The International Labour Organization (ILO) was also created in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League. The name "United Nations", coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt. A document called The Declaration by United Nations was signed in 1942 by 26 nations, pledging their Governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers (Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis) and bound them against making a separate peace. Conference held in San Francisco (USA), was attended by representatives of 50 countries and signed the United Nations Charter. The UN Charter of 1945 is the foundational treaty of the United Nations, as an inter-governmental organization. The main organs of the UN are six. They are, 1. General Assembly, 2. Security Council, 3. Economic and Social Council, 4. Trusteeship Council, 5. International Court of Justice, and 6. UN Secretariat. All the 6 were established in 1945 when the UN was founded. The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. All 193 Member States of the UN are represented in the General Assembly, making it

the only UN body with universal representation. Each year, in September, the full UN membership meets in the General Assembly Hall in New York for the annual General Assembly session, and general debate, which many heads of state attend and address. Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly. Decisions on other questions are by simple majority. The President of the General Assembly is elected each year by assembly to serve a one-year term of office. **In 1953, the United Nations elected India's Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit as the 8<sup>th</sup> President of the General Assembly, the first woman elected to the role.**

## Pakistan to install Maharaja Ranjit Singh's statue at Kartarpur Sahib

- **Pakistan's Punjab government will install the restored statue of the first ruler of the Sikh Empire, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, at Kartarpur Sahib so that visiting Sikhs from India would get to view it too.** Kartarpur Sahib is also known as Gurdwara Darbar Sahib and is situated about 150 km northeast of Lahore, close to the Indian border. The nine-foot-tall bronze statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was first installed at the Lahore Fort near his Samadhi in 2019. It was twice vandalised by activists of the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a far-right Islamic political party in Pakistan.

**The Kartarpur Corridor is a visa-free border crossing and religious corridor, connecting the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, near Lahore in Pakistan to Gurudwara Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur district, Punjab, India.** The crossing allows devotees from India to visit the gurdwara in Kartarpur, Pakistan, 4.7 kilometres (2.9 miles) from the India–Pakistan border on the Pakistani side without a visa. **On 26 November 2018, the foundation stone was laid down on the Indian side by Prime Minister Narendra Modi; two days later, then Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan did the same for the Pakistani side.** The corridor was completed for the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak, on 12 November 2019.

## North Macedonia parliament approves a new nationalist-dominated government

- **North Macedonia's lawmakers approved a new nationalist-dominated government of Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski, whose party won general elections in May banking on voters' anger at the slow pace of European Union integration.** A third vote due to technical issues made the final tally 77 for and 22 against in the 120-seat parliament, where the ruling coalition is composed of Mickoski's VMRO-DPMNE party, the Albanian alliance VLEN/VREDI and ZNAM, an ethnic Macedonian splinter from the Social Democrats (SDSM).

**North Macedonia is a landlocked country in Southeast Europe. Skopje is the capital and largest city of North Macedonia.** It shares land borders with Greece to the south, Albania to the west, Bulgaria to the east, Kosovo to the northwest and Serbia to the north. **The denar is the currency of North Macedonia. Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova is currently serving as the 6<sup>th</sup> President of North Macedonia since May 2024.**

## Uzbekistan the First Country to Receive World Bank Payment for Emissions Reductions

- **Uzbekistan has become the first country in the world to receive a payment from the World Bank for the results achieved within the framework of the government policy support program for reducing emissions in the energy sector,** as reported by the World Bank of Uzbekistan.
- **This was done within the World Bank's project, "Use of the Innovative Carbon Resource Application for Energy Transition" (iCRAFT),** which helps the country increase energy efficiency, reduce energy subsidies, and transition to clean energy sources. The Bank implemented this type of project for the first time globally.
- **In particular, the iCRAFT project successfully reduced 500,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions, and the World Bank's Innovative Carbon Resource Application for Energy Transition (TCAF) allocated \$7.5 million to Uzbekistan.** A third party independently verified these results.

**Uzbekistan is a doubly landlocked country located in Central Asia. It is surrounded by five landlocked countries:** Kazakhstan to the north; Kyrgyzstan to the northeast; Tajikistan to the southeast; Afghanistan to the south; and Turkmenistan to the southwest. **Its capital and largest city is Tashkent. The sum is the official currency of Uzbekistan. Shavkat Mirziyoyev has been serving as President of Uzbekistan.**

## US Designates Kenya as Major Non-NATO Ally, Enhancing Defence & Security Cooperation

- **The United States of America has designated Kenya as its major non-NATO ally, MNNA.** A memorandum published by the White House stated that the MNNA status is a designation under US law that provides foreign partners with certain benefits in the areas of defence trade and security cooperation. **President Biden had pledged to designate Kenya as a major non-NATO ally during Kenyan President William Ruto’s three-day visit to the US last month.**

**A major non-NATO ally (MNNA) is a designation given by the United States government to countries that have strategic working relationships with the U.S. Armed Forces while not being members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). MNNA status was first created in 1987, when Congress added section 2350a — otherwise known as the Sam Nunn Amendment — to Title 10 of the United States Code. While the status does not automatically constitute a mutual defense pact (as would be the case through NATO membership) with the United States, it does confer a variety of military and financial advantages that are otherwise unobtainable by non-NATO countries. There are currently 20 major non-NATO allies across four continents: 11 in Asia, 4 in Africa, 3 in South America, and 2 in Oceania.**

## Denmark will be first to impose CO<sub>2</sub> tax on farm

- **Denmark, a major pork and dairy exporter, will introduce a tax on livestock carbon dioxide emissions from 2030, making it the first country to do so** and hoping to inspire others to follow. A tax was first proposed in February by government-commissioned experts to help Denmark reach a legally binding 2030 target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 70% from 1990 levels. The centrist government reached a wide-ranging compromise with farmers, industry, labour unions and environmental groups on policy linked to farming, the country’s largest source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**Denmark is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. It is the most populous and politically central constituent of the Kingdom of Denmark, a constitutionally unitary state that includes the autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands and Greenland in the North Atlantic Ocean. The krone is the official currency of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, introduced on 1 January 1875. Copenhagen is the capital city of Denmark.**

## UNESCO says Great Barrier Reef under ‘serious threat,’ urges urgent action

- **UNESCO has warned that Australia’s Great Barrier Reef “remains under serious threat,” directing the country to take immediate action to protect the world’s largest coral system. UNESCO asked Australia to update its protection efforts by early next year, but did not recommend placing the reef on its endangered heritage list.**
- **The organization praised Australia’s steps on water quality and restrictions on gill-net fishing. It nevertheless expressed concern over land clearing and urged more ambitious emission reduction targets. The UN body still asked Canberra for an update on Australia’s actions regarding the reef by next February. The country had requested that UNESCO wait until 2026.**

**The Great Barrier Reef is the world’s largest coral reef system, composed of over 2,900 individual reefs[3] and 900 islands stretching for over 2,300 kilometres (1,400 mi) over an area of approximately 344,400 square kilometres (133,000 sq mi). The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia, separated from the coast by a channel 160 kilometres (100 mi) wide in places and over 61 metres (200 ft) deep. The Great Barrier Reef can be seen from outer space and is the world’s biggest single structure made by living organisms. This reef structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps. It supports a wide diversity of life and was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981.**

## In world’s first, Finland to roll out bird flu vaccinations for humans

- **Finland will start offering preemptive bird flu vaccinations to certain workers exposed to animals making it the first country to do so.** The country has secured vaccines for 10,000 people through a joint EU procurement effort, which included up to 40 million doses for 15 nations from CSL Seqirus, an Australian manufacturer.
- **CSL Seqirus confirmed that Finland would be the first to roll out the vaccine.** The H5N1 strain of bird flu has led to the death or culling of hundreds of millions of poultry worldwide and has increasingly spread to mammals, including cows in the United States, and in some cases, to humans.



**Finland is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. It borders Sweden to the northwest, Norway to the north, and Russia to the east, with the Gulf of Bothnia to the west and the Gulf of Finland to the south, across from Estonia. Helsinki is the capital and largest city. Euro is the official currency of it. Petteri Orpo is serving as the Prime Minister of Finland since 2023 and as the leader of the National Coalition Party since 2016. Finland successfully joined NATO as 31<sup>st</sup> member in April 2023.**

### Kenya's president withdraws finance bill that prompted deadly protests

- **Kenyan President William Ruto said he won't sign into law a finance bill proposing new taxes, a day after protesters stormed parliament and several people were shot dead. It was the biggest assault on Kenya's government in decades.**
- **The government wanted to raise funds to pay off debt, but Kenyans said the bill caused more economic pain as millions struggle to get by. The chaos led the government to deploy the military, and Ruto called protesters' actions "treasonous."**

**Kenya is a country in East Africa. Kenya's capital and largest city is Nairobi. The shilling is the currency of Kenya. William Ruto is serving as the current President of Kenya since 13 September 2022. Kenya is a presidential representative democratic republic, in which elected officials represent the people and the president is the head of state and government. The current constitution was adopted in 2010 and replaced the 1963 independence constitution.**

### NATO appoints outgoing Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte as its next secretary-general

- **NATO appointed Mark Rutte as its next secretary-general, putting the outgoing Dutch prime minister in charge of the world's biggest security organization at a critical time for European security as war rages in Ukraine. Rutte's appointment was sealed by NATO ambassadors during a meeting at the 32-nation alliance's headquarters in Brussels.**
- **U.S. President Joe Biden and his counterparts will formally welcome him to their table at a summit in Washington on July 9-11. The outgoing Dutch premier will take over from the current secretary general, Norway's Jens Stoltenberg, on Oct. 1. Stoltenberg spent more than a decade at the helm.**

**The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also called the North Atlantic Alliance is an intergovernmental military alliance of 32 member states – 30 European and two North American. Established in the aftermath of World War II, the organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington, D.C., on 4 April 1949. NATO is a collective security system: its independent member states agree to defend each other against attacks by third parties. The organization's motto is animus in consulendo liber (Latin for 'a mind unfettered in deliberation'). NATO's main headquarters are located in Brussels, Belgium, while NATO's military headquarters are near Mons, Belgium. NATO formed with twelve founding members and has added new members ten times, most recently when Sweden joined the alliance on 7 March 2024. Jens Stoltenberg is a Norwegian politician who has served as the 13<sup>th</sup> secretary general of NATO since 2014. A member of the Norwegian Labour Party, he previously served as the 34<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Norway.**

### Ursula von der Leyen, António Costa and Kaja Kallas endorsed as EU leaders

- **The EU's heads of state and government nominated Ursula von der Leyen to stay on as European Commission president for a second five-year term, according to three EU diplomats. Von der Leyen, a German politician, is a member of the centre-right European People's party.**
- **Von der Leyen will need to win the approval of the majority of members of the European parliament. The leaders also named António Costa, a socialist former Portuguese prime minister, as the next president of the European Council. They also selected Kaja Kallas, the current Estonian prime minister whose party is a member of the liberal Renew Europe grouping, to replace Josep Borrell as the EU's high representative for foreign affairs.**

**The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 member states which use the euro currency. The union and EU citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community**

(ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original member states of what came to be known as the European Communities were the Inner Six: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council.

## India at 63<sup>rd</sup> rank on Global Energy Transition Index: WEF

- According to the Global Energy Transition Index released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) India has been ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> out of 120 countries surveyed in the index. Last year, India was ranked 67<sup>th</sup>, an improvement of three ranks. Sweden has again topped the Index, just like last year. Last year, India was ranked 67<sup>th</sup>, an improvement of three ranks. Sweden has again topped the Index, just like last year. European nations dominated the top ranks with Sweden topping the index, followed by Denmark, Finland, Switzerland and France in the top five. China was ranked 20<sup>th</sup>.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international non-governmental and lobbying organisation based in Cologny, canton of Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded on 24 January 1971 by German engineer and economist Klaus Schwab. The foundation, which is mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies – typically global enterprises with more than five billion US dollars in turnover – as well as public subsidies, views its own mission as “improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas”. The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.

## 10 most livable cities in the world

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) just released its most recent Global Liveability Index, which once again names Vienna, Austria, as the best place to live in the world. The 2024 index, which came out today, rates towns around the world based on things like education, healthcare, culture the environment, stability, and infrastructure. For the third year in a row, Vienna, the capital of Austria, is the world’s most livable city, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit.
- After Vienna, Copenhagen, Denmark, stays in second place, and Zurich, Switzerland, moves up to third. Melbourne, Australia, fell from third to fourth place, which is an important change. Calgary, Canada tied with Geneva, Switzerland for fifth place. Cities like Osaka, Japan, and Auckland, New Zealand, are also praised on the list, which puts them in the top ten.
- Damascus, Syria, is still at the bottom of the list. Tripoli, Libya; Algiers, Algeria; and Lagos, Nigeria are next. The fact that these towns’ scores haven’t gone up since the last evaluation shows that problems are still there. This knowledgebase gives a summary and in-depth look at the global liveability rankings as of 2024. It does this by helping you understand the factors that affect city ranks around the world.
- Notably, five Indian cities were featured in the report, with Delhi and Mumbai tied at 141<sup>st</sup> rank with a score of 60.2 out of 100, followed by Chennai (59.9), Ahmedabad (58.9), and Bengaluru (58.7), in the 2023 index

## Only 17% of targets to improve global life likely to be reached by 2030: UN

- The United Nations warned that only 17% of its 169 targets to improve life for the world’s more than 7 billion people are on track to be reached by the 2030 deadline. World leaders adopted the 17 wide-ranging development goals from ending global poverty to achieving gender equality in 2015, and set 169 specific targets to be reached by the end of the decade.
- According to the report, nearly half the targets show minimal or moderate progress and over one-third are stalled or regressing — with just 17% are on track to be achieved. On the downside, the U.N. reported that for the first time this century, per-capita GDP growth in half of the world’s most vulnerable nations is slower than that of advanced economies, threatening improvements in equality. And in 2022, it said, nearly 60% of countries faced moderate to abnormally high food prices.

## Estonia looks at Indian partnership to beef up cybersecurity infrastructure

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- **Estonia, one of the world’s most advanced digital countries, is looking to partner with India to collaborate on strengthening the two countries’ cybersecurity infrastructure.** Estonia, courtesy its vicinity to Russia, faces a barrage of cyberattacks from the country, more so because of the former’s stance on the war between Russia and Ukraine. India, meanwhile, faces a similar threat from its neighbour China.

**Baltic states, the northeastern region of Europe, includes the countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. Estonia is a country in Northern Europe. The capital city is Tallinn. Euro is the official currency of Estonia.**

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## ECONOMY AND FINANCE



### Economy News

#### India receives highest FDI from Singapore in 2023-24

- India received the highest foreign direct investment (FDI) from Singapore in 2023-24 even as overseas capital inflows into the country contracted by about 3.5% due to global economic uncertainties, according to the latest government data.
- Though FDI from Singapore has dipped by 31.55% to \$11.77 billion in 2023-24, India has attracted the maximum inflows from that country, the data showed. During the last fiscal, FDI equity inflows decreased from major countries, including Mauritius, Singapore, the U.S., the U.K., UAE, Cayman Islands, Germany, and Cyprus. However, investments increased from the Netherlands and Japan. Since 2018-19, Singapore has been the largest source of such investments for India. In 2017-18, India attracted the maximum FDI from Mauritius. According to experts, after the India-Mauritius tax treaty amendment, Singapore has emerged as the preferred jurisdiction for investment in India.

**FDI stands for Foreign Direct Investment and refers to investment made by a foreign company in another country's company.** The purpose of the investment is to gain long-lasting control or influence over the foreign company. **FII stands for Foreign Institutional Investor. FIIs are a group of investors who pool their money to invest in foreign assets.** FII is a quick way for investors to make money and includes institutions such as banks, mutual funds, insurance companies, and hedge funds. **FDI involves a direct investment in a company with the intention of acquiring management control or influence, while FII involves investment in securities or assets of a foreign company.** FDI results in a long-term interest in the investee company, whereas FII investment is usually short-term and focused on the secondary market. FDI is subject to stricter regulations compared to FII, which allows for a relatively easy entry and exit from investment. FDI brings in not just finance, but also technical knowledge and direct involvement in the day-to-day operations of the foreign company, while FII investment primarily provides financial benefits. FDI is considered a more stable form of foreign investment as compared to FII, which is known as “hot money” due to its quick entry and exit from investments.

#### A 'Bank Clinic' to guide you on complaints

- The Bank Clinic is an initiative by the All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) to help customers address their grievances amid rapid expansion in technology and a series of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines on retail banking. A customer can fill out the details of her/his complaint, create a ticket, and receive a reply in five working days on the remedies available and information on what the RBI guidelines prescribe on that matter.

#### Netherlands emerges as India's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest export destination in 2023-24

- The Netherlands has emerged as India's third largest export destination after the U.S. and UAE during 2023-24, even as the country's merchandise shipments dipped by over 3%. The main commodities which registered healthy exports growth in the Netherlands include petroleum products (\$14.29 billion), electrical goods, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals in the last fiscal.

- **India’s trade surplus with the Netherlands has increased to \$17.4 billion in the last fiscal from \$13 billion in 2022-23.** The Netherlands has taken over major destinations such as the U.K., Hong Kong, Bangladesh and Germany. India’s exports to the Netherlands rose by about 3.5% to \$22.36 billion in 2023-24 as against \$21.61 billion in 2022-23.

### QS World Rankings: IIT Delhi ranked 150; University of Delhi stands at 328

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- **The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi was ranked 150 in the latest edition of the QS World University Rankings 2025 released.** With an improvement of 47 positions from last year’s 197<sup>th</sup> rank, this is the highest rank that IIT Delhi has achieved.
- **Delhi’s Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU) has been recognised with the ‘Rising Star’ award for showing incredible improvement in 12 months** since the university’s debut in the last edition.
- **“Delhi IIT is among the top 100 world universities with respect to employer reputation,** a QS parameter designed to evaluate the perceptions of global employers on which the institutions are providing the most job-ready graduates,” said an IIT official.
- **IIT Delhi has also been featured among the top 150 universities** with respect to academic reputation and citations per faculty as in the average number of citations per faculty which is an estimate of the impact and quality of the scientific work produced by the university.
- Meanwhile, University of Delhi (DU) has been ranked as the top university among central universities from India and 328<sup>th</sup> worldwide, **according to the QS World University Rankings. DU was ranked 407 internationally last year.**

### India to host global airlines in 2025

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- **India will host next year’s annual gathering of the International Air Transport Association (IATA),** which represents over 330 airlines worldwide. Next year’s AGM will be the **third time that the world’s airline leaders gather in India. The country has hosted the AGM in 1983 and 1958.**
- **The IATA also announced that IndiGo’s CEO, Pieter Elbers, has taken charge of the Chair of the IATA Board of Governors (BoG).** His one-year term begins at the conclusion of the 80<sup>th</sup> IATA Annual General Meeting in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 3 June. **Mr. Elbers is the 82<sup>nd</sup> Chair of the IATA BoG.**
- **He served earlier on the BoG between 2016 and 2022** as KLM’s President and CEO and was reappointed to the Board in 2022 shortly after he became IndiGo’s CEO. **He succeeds RwandAir CEO Yvonne Manzi Makolo who will continue to serve on the BoG.**

### Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) offers India’s first biometric-enabled self-bag drop facility

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- **Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) offers India’s first biometric-enabled self-bag drop facility, enhancing the travel experience for domestic flyers of Tata Group Airlines.** The innovative system uses DigiYatra and facial recognition technology to streamline the baggage drop process, reducing check-in queues and providing a convenient solution for passengers.
- **DigiYatra users can drop their bags with the airlines using facial recognition at Bengaluru Airport.** For this, users have to select the “scan your face biometric for baggage drop” option and follow the prompts. After that, users have to look directly into the camera for a quick scan, and the machine will retrieve their flight details.

### Japan announces world’s first green fuel

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- Toyota plans in bringing a new breed of ICEs that can operate on green fuels, such as hydrogen and bioethanol. **Suzuki Motors, the Japanese car maker said that this it refers to as “an engine reborn” technologies can go a long way in providing customers with variety of fuel options.**
- **The new family of ICEs in Toyota will be lighter, compact and will demonstrate efficiency in complimenting the electric motors in hybrid vehicles.** The engines will act ancillary to the eCM, the electric motor being the primary power unit (but not the only one, what makes the difference).

- Through this approach the car manufacturing company intends to create efficient engine for the electrification age with enhanced efficiency, through the creation of cleaner engine functions, yet with the feel and performance of the traditional ICEs (remember that hydrogen is also an internal combustion system).

### Mumbai, Delhi luxury real estate among top 5 globally: Knight Frank

- In the last 12 months, Mumbai witnessed a 11.5% rise in luxury real estate prices, reaching the third spot globally, after Manila and Tokyo. Delhi's prime residential prices soared by 10.5% in the last year, finding fifth spot on property consultant Knight Frank's prime global cities index, which is ranked as per annual percentage change in realty prices.

### India may grow 6.7% on average from FY25-FY27: World Bank

- India will remain the fastest-growing major economy recording a steady growth of 6.7 per cent in the next three years including the current financial year. In India, growth is estimated to have picked up to 8.2 per cent in fiscal year (FY) 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024) – 1.9 percentage points higher than estimated in January, according to the World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report.
- Growth in the South Asia (SAR) region is projected to slow from 6.6 per cent in 2023 to 6.2 per cent in 2024, mainly due to a moderation of growth in India from a high base in recent years. With steady growth in India, regional growth is forecast to stay at 6.2 per cent in 2025-26. Among the region's other economies, growth is expected to remain robust in Bangladesh, though at a slower rate than in the past several years, and to strengthen in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, Ajay Banga is an Indian-born American business executive. He is currently the President of the World Bank Group, and vice chairman at General Atlantic. He was executive chairman of Mastercard, after having previously served as president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the company from July 2010 until December 31, 2020. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries. The International Development Association (IDA) is a multinational financial institution providing aid to poor countries in the form of loans. It is also referred to as soft loan window of the World Bank. IBRD and IDA have 189 and 174 member countries, respectively. The U.S., Japan, China, Germany and the U.K. have the most voting power.

### IPPB Partners With Ria Money Transfer To Enhance Doorstep Financial Services Nationwide

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has partnered with Ria Money Transfer, a global leader in cross-border money transfers to provide convenient and affordable doorstep financial services to customers in remote areas across the country.
- The partnership between IPPB and Ria will enhance access to banking services at customers' doorsteps, allowing them to withdraw only the amounts they need immediately. The Ministry said this initiative aims to mitigate the previous challenges and risks, fostering true financial inclusion. Through this partnership, the International Inward Money Transfer service will initially be available at over 25 thousand Post Office locations, with an expected reach of over One Lakh locations through the Post Offices.

India Post Payments Bank, abbreviated as IPPB, is a division of India Post which is under the ownership of the Department of Post, a department under Ministry of Communications of the Government of India. Opened in 2018, IPPB aims to utilize all of India's 155,015 post offices as access points and 3 lakh postal postmen and Grameen Dak Sewaks to provide doorstep banking services.

### With 6 billion servings, India is the world's largest market for Maggi noodles

- India is the largest market for Nestle's Maggi, with six billion servings in the financial year 2023-24, according to Nestle's annual report. This devastated Maggi's 80% share of the Indian noodles market,



plummeting to zero within a month. Nearly a decade later, it still struggles to reclaim lost ground due to increased competition from new players, the article read. Nestle India also noted that it sold 4.2 billion fingers of the popular chocolate KitKat, making India its second-largest market.

## India's most valued celebrities: Virat Kohli, Ranveer Singh, Shah Rukh Khan in top 5

- **Virat Kohli is India's most valued celebrity with a brand value of USD 227.9 million** marking a significant increase of nearly 29% from USD 176.9 million in 2022. Consultancy firm Kroll shared a list ranking India's most influential celebrity brands in which **Virat Kohli featured on the top followed by Ranveer Singh who slipped to the second spot with a brand value of USD 203.1 million.**
- **The report, titled Kroll's Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2023, features Shah Rukh Khan at the third spot after the success of films like "Jawaan" and "Pathaan"- with a brand value of USD 120.7 million in 2023. Akshay Kumar is at the fourth place with a brand value of USD 111.7 million, down from third in 2022 while Alia Bhatt dropped to fifth from fourth with a valuation of USD 101.1 million. Deepika Padukone is at the sixth place with a brand value of USD 96 million.**

## Hurun India 2024 list: 3 startups turn unicorns this year, 25 including Dunzo, Practo, Rapido drop out of index

- **India has 67 unicorns, 46 gazelles, and 106 cheetahs against 68 unicorns, 51 gazelles, and 96 cheetahs in 2023 as per the ASK Private Wealth Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2024.** There are 38 new entrants- 7 gazelles, 31 new Cheetahs in the list this year. Peak XV partners, which has invested in 47 probable unicorns, is the most active investor followed by Accel with stakes in 25 future unicorns as per the list. India's future unicorns are worth \$58 billion- an increase of 1.8% as compared to the last year. As per the list, Ixigo, a former Cheetah, went public with a 48% premium and is poised for a billion-dollar valuation. **Zepto, Porter, and Incred Finance joined the unicorn club.**
- **"The ASK Private Wealth Hurun India Future Unicorn Index highlights how Indian startups and investors are adapting to a new reality. Despite previous dropouts, India has added 38 new entrants to the index, including 7 Gazelles (companies expected to become unicorns within 3 years) and 31 Cheetahs (projected to reach unicorn status within 5 years).**
- **This year's list is particularly exciting, featuring 1 Gazelle and 2 Cheetahs from SpaceTech, 5 Gazelles and 6 Cheetahs from Artificial Intelligence, and 1 Gazelle and 5 Cheetahs from the EV/Renewable Energy sectors. These companies are poised to shape India's future,"** Anas Rahman Junaid, MD and Chief Researcher, Hurun India, said.

**India has become the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest start-up ecosystem in the world after the US and China. 44 Indian start-ups have achieved unicorn status in 2021** taking the overall tally of unicorns to 83, most of which are in the services sector. India has seen such rapid growth in unicorns due to several strategic as well as conditional reasons. **A unicorn is any privately owned firm with a market capitalization of more than USD 1 billion.** There are several categories like fintech, Edtechs, B2B (Business-to-Business) companies, etc.

## Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Telangana grow FDI in a year of decline

- **Tamil Nadu's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows increased to about \$2.44 billion in the 2023-24 financial year from \$2.17 billion in 2022-23, logging a 12.44% jump,** data from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry reveal. **In 2023-24, Maharashtra's FDI inflows marginally rose to \$15.12 billion from \$14.81 billion in same period the previous year, registering a 2.09% jump.** Even as Foreign Direct Equity Investments (FDI) into India fell to a five-year low in FY24, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu have managed to grow FDI year-on-year in the fiscal year.

## India drops seven notches in global FDI ranking, inflows down 43% in 2023

- **Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into India fell to \$28.1 billion in 2023 from \$49.3 billion in 2022 with the country slipping seven notches to rank 15 in the World Investment Ranking in 2023,** the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said.

- In its World Investment Report 2024, the Geneva-based organisation said FDI in developing Asia fell 8% to \$621 billion. The US remained the top FDI recipient, followed by China. Brazil, Canada, Germany and Mexico moved up the ranks.

**FDI stands for Foreign Direct Investment and refers to investment made by a foreign company in another country's company.** The purpose of the investment is to gain long-lasting control or influence over the foreign company. **FII stands for Foreign Institutional Investor. FIIs are a group of investors who pool their money to invest in foreign assets.** FII is a quick way for investors to make money and includes institutions such as banks, mutual funds, insurance companies, and hedge funds. **FDI involves a direct investment in a company with the intention of acquiring management control or influence, while FII involves investment in securities or assets of a foreign company.** FDI results in a long-term interest in the investee company, whereas FII investment is usually short-term and focused on the secondary market. FDI is subject to stricter regulations compared to FII, which allows for a relatively easy entry and exit from investment. FDI brings in not just finance, but also technical knowledge and direct involvement in the day-to-day operations of the foreign company, while FII investment primarily provides financial benefits. FDI is considered a more stable form of foreign investment as compared to FII, which is known as “hot money” due to its quick entry and exit from investments.

### UP cabinet okays TATA Sons' Rs. 650-cr proposal for 'museum of temples' in Ayodhya

- The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved a proposal from the Tata Sons to build a 'museum of temples' in Ayodhya at a cost of Rs. 650 crore. The tourism department would provide the company land for the international-level museum on a 90-year lease for a token money of Re 1. Three such heritage buildings- Kothi Roshan Dulha in Lucknow, Barsana Jal Mahal in Mathura and Shukla Talab (pond) in Kanpur – were selected for development as tourist spots.

### BIS introduces new safety standards for EVs in India

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) introduced two new guidelines aimed at enhancing the safety of electric vehicles in the L, M, and N categories. L refers to two-wheelers, while the M and N categories correspond to four-wheelers and goods trucks, respectively. These new sets of rules, called IS 18590: 2024 and IS 18606: 2024, focus on the main parts of electric cars, buses, and trucks, especially the powertrain (which includes parts like the motor and transmission).

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is the National Standards Body of India under Department of Consumer affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Government of India. It is established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 which came into effect on 12 October 2017. Its headquarters are in New Delhi, with regional offices in Eastern Region at Kolkata, southern Region at Chennai, Western Region at Mumbai, Northern Region at Chandigarh and Central Region at Delhi and 20 branch offices.

### The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) Launches eSankhyiki Portal for Enhanced User Experience and Ease of Data Access

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is the nodal Ministry for integrated development of the national statistical system in the country in tune with the global statistical practices and data dissemination standards.
- MoSPI is committed to enhancing user experience and data accessibility through use of cutting-edge technologies and the adoption of global best practices. In line with this mandate, the Ministry has developed an eSankhyiki portal (<https://esankhyiki.mospi.gov.in>) to provide real-time inputs for planners, policy-makers, researchers and the public at large. The objective of this portal is to establish a comprehensive data management and sharing system for ease of dissemination of official statistics in the country. The eSankhyiki Portal has two modules namely:
- **Data Catalogue Module:** This module catalogues the major data assets of the Ministry at one place for ease of access. This module allows users to search within datasets, including within tables, and download data of interest to increase its value and re-usability. The module has seven data products, namely National Accounts Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Index of Industrial Production, Annual Survey of Industries, Periodic Labour Force

Survey, Household Consumption Expenditure Survey and Multiple Indicator Survey. The Data Catalogue section already includes over 2291 datasets along with specific metadata and visualization for each dataset for user convenience.

- **Macro Indicators Module:** This module offers time series data of key macro indicators with features for filtering and visualizing data enabling ease of access for the users. The module also allows users to download custom datasets, visualizations and sharing them through APIs, thereby increasing the re-usability of data. The first phase of the module includes four major products of MoSPI: National Accounts Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Index of Industrial Production, and Annual Survey of Industries, encompassing the data of last ten years. The portal currently hosts more than 1.7 million records.

### Ministry of Coal launches India's first pilot project for underground coal gasification in Jharkhand

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- **The Ministry of Coal has initiated India's first-ever pilot project for Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) at the Kasta coal block in Jamtara District, Jharkhand.** This initiative, under the aegis of Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL), **aims to revolutionise the coal industry by converting coal** into valuable gases such as methane, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide through in-situ gasification.
- **These gases have extensive industrial applications, including the production of synthetic natural gas, chemical feedstocks for fuels, fertilisers, and explosives.** This pilot initiative marks a major milestone for Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiaries, positioning India at the forefront of adopting cutting-edge coal gasification technologies. **In December 2015, the Ministry of Coal approved a comprehensive policy framework for UCG in areas rich in coal and lignite.**

### Genesys International launches India's first AI-powered navigation map to revolutionise driving services

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- **Genesys International has introduced India's first AI-powered navigation map designed for cars and mobility services.** This new technology aims to make driving easier and more personalized. The new map covers 8.3 million kilometers of roads and includes over 30 million points of interest (POIs). This means drivers can access accurate and reliable directions almost anywhere in India. **Genesys has launched five new products which it claims will enhance driving experiences: Navigation with Augmented Reality (AR):** This feature uses real-time data from car cameras to show directions directly on the road through augmented reality, making navigation more intuitive.
- **Navigation with GPT AI Solution:** This uses AI to plan routes and make real-time adjustments, with voice-activated assistance for easy interaction. **Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) with Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA):** These systems help drivers stay safe by warning them if they drift out of their lane or exceed speed limits and recognizing traffic signs.

### India received \$120 billion in remittances in 2023, maximum from US: World Bank

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- **India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, which is almost twice of USD 66 billion received by Mexico during the same period,** the World Bank said in a report released. China (USD 50 billion), the Philippines (USD 39 billion), and Pakistan (USD 27 billion) figure in top five countries list of remittances recipients as released by the World Bank, according to which remittances in 2023 after a period of strong growth during 2021-2022, officially recorded remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) moderated in 2023, reaching an estimated USD 656 billion.
- **“Growing at 7.5 per cent, remittance flows to India touched USD 120 billion in 2023,** reflecting the benefits of a deceleration in inflation and strong labour markets in the United States, the largest destination for India's skilled migrants, and other OECD destinations, as well as positive demand for skilled and less-skilled workers in the GCC countries (which, together, are the second largest destination for Indian migrants),” the World Bank said.
- While the same external demand conditions could have favoured remittance flows to Pakistan, **weak internal conditions due to a balance of payments crisis and economic difficulties triggered remittances to plummet 12 per cent to USD 27 billion in 2023 compared with more than USD 30 billion in 2022.**



- According to the World Bank, **remittance flows to India from the United Arab Emirates, which account for 18 per cent and are the second largest source of India’s remittances after the United States**, benefited from the February 2023 agreement. The latter established a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions and cooperation for interlinking payment and messaging systems between India and the United Arab Emirates.
- The use of dirhams and rupees in cross-border transactions is instrumental in channelling more remittances through formal channels. **In addition to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar account for 11 per cent of India’s total remittances**, it said.

**Remittances are usually understood as financial or in-kind transfers made by migrants to friends and relatives back in communities of origin.** These are basically sum of two main components - Personal Transfers in cash or in kind between resident and non-resident households and Compensation of Employees, which refers to the income of workers who work in another country for a limited period of time. **Remittances help in stimulating economic development in recipient countries, but this can also make such countries over-reliant on them.** World Bank’s Migration and Development Brief is prepared by the Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Economics (DEC)- the premier research and data arm of the World Bank.

### Motilal Oswal launches India’s first Defence Index

- With India’s defence sector experiencing explosive growth fueled by government initiatives and a burgeoning order book, **Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company (MOAMC) has launched a timely investment opportunity: the Motilal Oswal Nifty India Defence Index Fund.**
- **This is the second such fund in the country, following HDFC launching their own variant last year.** This open-ended fund marks the second such offering in India, following HDFC’s launch last year. However, the Motilal Oswal fund takes a unique approach - it’s a passive fund that tracks the Nifty India Defence Index.
- **This means the fund’s performance is directly tied to the performance of the index, offering investors a convenient way to gain exposure to the entire Indian defence sector.** The Nifty India Defence Index Fund tracks the performance of the Nifty India Defence Index. This is an index of the top companies in the Indian defence sector. The fund offers investors with an opportunity to gain exposure to the defence sector through a diversified passive portfolio of pure defence stocks.

## Banks in News

### RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for 8<sup>th</sup> time in a row

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to keep the policy rate unchanged for the eighth time in a row, saying it will maintain a tight vigil on inflation. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently concluded its second meeting of FY25, maintaining the repo rate unchanged at 6.5%. This decision comes amidst projections of India's GDP growth at 7.2%. The MPC, comprising six members including RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, plays a crucial role in determining the nation's benchmark interest rate, impacting borrowing costs and loan rates. Historically, the repo rate was last changed in February 2023, rising from 6.25% to 6.5%. This marked a 250 basis point increase between May 2022 and February 2023, influencing borrowing costs for banks and, consequently, interest rates on loans for businesses and individuals.**
- **In terms of inflation and economic growth, CPI inflation for FY25 continues its disinflationary trend, holding steady at 4.5%. However, food inflation remains elevated due to price pressures in key categories. Core inflation, excluding food and fuel, eased to 3.2% in April, the lowest in the current CPI series. The Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) and bank rates also remain at 6.75%, with real GDP growth projected at 7.2%, up from 7% previously. The MPC's decision to maintain the repo rate at 6.5% may disappoint those expecting lower loan EMIs. Despite concerns over food inflation, recent election results have complicated potential rate cuts. The RBI's focus on balancing inflation control with economic growth has led to the repo rate remaining unchanged for the eighth consecutive meeting.**

**The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India. The meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee are held at least 4 times a year (specifically, at least once a QUARTER) and it publishes its decisions after each such meeting. The committee comprises six members - three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India. The Governor of Reserve Bank of India is the chairperson ex officio of the committee. Decisions are taken by majority with the Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie. The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 was amended by Finance Act (India), 2016 to constitute MPC which will bring more transparency and accountability in fixing India's Monetary Policy. The current mandate of the committee is to maintain 4% annual inflation until 31 March 2026 with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%. The committee is answerable to the Government of India if the inflation exceeds the range prescribed for three consecutive quarters.**

### RBI Proposes To Bring Auto-Replenishment Facility For UPI Lite Wallet

- **The Reserve Bank has proposed to bring an auto-replenishment facility for UPI Lite wallet. RBI plans to bring UPI Lite within the e-mandate framework. Accordingly, if the balance in the UPI wallet goes below a threshold amount set by the customer, the fund will move from his/her account to the wallet without additional authentication or pre-debit notification.**
- **RBI has said the move will enable customers to use the UPI Lite seamlessly, adding that the change in rules is based on the feedback received from various stakeholders. The UPI Lite facility currently allows a customer to load his UPI Lite wallet up to Rs. 2,000 and make payments up to Rs. 5,000. UPI Lite was introduced in September 2022 to enable small value payments in a quick and seamless manner through an on-device wallet. RBI has said that related guidelines in this regard will be issued shortly.**

### RBI Forms Committee to Examine Various Aspects For Setting Up Digital Payments Intelligence Platform To Mitigate Payment Fraud Risks

- **The Reserve Bank has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of former MD and CEO of National Payments Corporation of India, Mr. A P Hota to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for Digital Payments Intelligence Platform.**
- **RBI is mulling to set up a Digital Payments Intelligence Platform to mitigate payment fraud risks. The Committee is expected to give its recommendations within two months. RBI has said that even though the payment ecosystem which includes banks, NPCI, card networks, payment aggregators, and payment apps take**

various measures on an ongoing basis to protect customers from digital frauds, there is a need for network-level intelligence and real-time data sharing across payment systems to prevent such frauds in the future.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton–Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi’s return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shaktikanta Das is the current Governor of RBI.

## RBI Governor Addresses Second Edition of Global Conference on Financial Resilience

- RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das delivers inaugural address at the second edition of the Global Conference on Financial Resilience Organized by the College of Supervisors (CoS) of RBI. RBI Governor emphasizes the transformative potential of advanced and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and big data analytics in financial institutions.

## RBI wins ‘Risk Manager of the Year’ award by London’s Central Banking publication

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has won the “Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024” by Central Banking, a leading publication based in London, UK. This accolade recognizes RBI’s exemplary strides in enhancing its risk culture and awareness, affirming its pivotal role in safeguarding the stability of the Indian financial system.
- India’s central bank is on a drive to raise the use of technology in key areas like supervision and risk management but flagged the downside risks and how widespread the challenges could be in the adoption of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. RBI has announced that the Greenfield Data Centre will be in its advanced stages of completion by the end of this year. The data centre will be a primary source for research, and capacity building and cater to the emerging requirements of the financial services sector. As part of its digital mission, the RBI also encouraged the use of AI and ML in key areas like infrastructure, payments, risk management, audit and analytics.

## SBI Mutual Fund becomes the first mutual fund house in India to surpass ₹10 lakh crore

- SBI Mutual Fund, country’s largest Asset Management Company (AMC), has become the first mutual fund house in India to surpass ₹10 lakh crore in Average Asset Under Management (AAUM). The AAUM saw significant growth, increasing from ₹7.17 lakh crore to ₹9.14 lakh crore in the previous financial year, reflecting a 27% rise.
- Over the period from FY19 to FY24, the AAUM recorded a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 26%. This growth has been attributed to a rise in the Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) book, which stood at ₹3,007 crore as of March 31, 2024, and increased penetration in T30 and B30 locations.

State Bank of India (SBI) is an Indian multinational public sector bank and financial services statutory body headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The bank descends from the Bank of Calcutta, founded in 1806 via the Imperial Bank of India, making it the oldest commercial bank in the Indian Subcontinent. The Government of India took control of the Imperial Bank of India in 1955, with Reserve Bank of India (India’s central bank) taking a 60% stake, renaming it State Bank of India. SBI is the 43<sup>rd</sup> largest bank in the world and ranked 221<sup>st</sup> in the Fortune Global 500 list of the world’s biggest corporations of 2020, being the only Indian bank on the list. It is a public sector bank and the largest bank in India with a 23% market share by assets and a 25% share of the total loan and deposits market. On 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022 an attempt to facilitate and support start-ups in the country, the State Bank of India (SBI) announced the launch of its first “state-of-the-art” dedicated branch for start-ups in the country in Bengaluru. YONO (You Only Need One) is an integrated digital banking platform offered by State Bank of India (SBI) to enable users to access a variety of financial and other services such as flight, train, bus and taxi bookings, online shopping, or medical bill payments. Five associates and the Bharatiya Mahila Bank became part of the State Bank of India (SBI), catapulting the country’s largest lender to among the top 50



banks in the world. State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT), besides Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB), merged with SBI with effect from April 1, 2017.

## State Bank of India's market cap crosses Rs. 8 lakh crore, stocks surge to all-time high

- The market capitalisation of the State Bank of India (SBI) crossed the ₹8 lakh crore mark after the bank's shares surged to a record high of ₹907. SBI is now the third-largest bank in India by market cap, very close to ICICI Bank which is second largest.
- The bank's market cap milestone was reached as shares rose over 9% during a rally in the stock market, hitting an all-time high of ₹909. Notably, SBI's shares have increased by more than 50% in the last six months.

## SBI raises ₹10,000 crore through infrastructure bond issuance

- State Bank of India (SBI) said it had raised ₹10,000 crore at a coupon rate of 7.36% through its fifth infrastructure bond issuance. "The issue attracted overwhelming response from investors with bids in excess of ₹19,884 crore and was oversubscribed by around four times against the base issue size of ₹5,000 crore," "The total number of bids received was 143 indicating wider participation with heterogeneity of bids. The investors were across provident funds, pension funds, insurance companies, mutual funds and corporates.

## World Bank approves green financing of \$1.5 billion for India

- The World Bank has approved \$1.5 billion in financing to help India accelerate the development of low-carbon energy. The financing is extended for a second operation to promote the development of a vibrant market for green hydrogen, continue to scale up renewable energy, and stimulate finance for low-carbon energy investments, the World Bank said in a statement.
- The second Low-Carbon Energy Programmatic Development Policy Operation will support reforms to boost the production of green hydrogen and electrolyzers, critical technology needed for green hydrogen production. The operation is the second in a series of similar in size.
- In June 2023, the World Bank approved the \$1.5 billion first Low-Carbon Energy Programmatic Development Policy Operation, which supported the waiver of transmission charges for renewable energy in green hydrogen projects, the issuance of a clear path to launch 50 GW of renewable energy tenders annually and creating a legal framework for a national carbon credit market.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, Ajay Banga is an Indian-born American business executive. He is currently the President of the World Bank Group, and vice chairman at General Atlantic. He was executive chairman of Mastercard, after having previously served as president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the company from July 2010 until December 31, 2020. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries. The International Development Association (IDA) is a multinational financial institution providing aid to poor countries in the form of loans. It is also referred to as soft loan window of the World Bank. IBRD and IDA have 189 and 174 member countries, respectively. The U.S., Japan, China, Germany and the U.K. have the most voting power.

## Firms in News

### Adani third Indian business house to cross \$10-b mark in operating profit

- The Adani Group has become only the third Indian conglomerate after the Tata Group and Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Group to log \$10 billion in annual operating profit, having reached that milestone in FY24 despite higher policy rates, global business volatility, and a stock rout spawned by misgovernance allegations.
- The infrastructure conglomerate's Ebitda, or profit from regular business operations excluding costs such as interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation, climbed 45% year-on-year in FY24, showed a group presentation shared with top investors.

Gautam Shantilal Adani is an Indian billionaire industrialist. He is the chairman and founder of Adani Group, an Ahmedabad-based multinational conglomerate involved in port development and operations in India. Adani is also the president of Adani Foundation, which is primarily led by his wife, Priti Adani. As of 7 September 2022, according to Forbes, with a net worth of US\$148.4 billion, he is the richest person in India and Asia, and the fourth richest person in the world. Adani subsequently lost more than \$104 billion of market capitalization after fraud and market manipulation allegations by short-seller firm Hindenburg Research.

### BSE all listed firms' mcap now fourth-highest globally, surpasses Hong Kong again

- The total market cap of all BSE-listed companies is now more than that of Hong Kong again making it the fourth-highest equity market globally. At present, BSE all listed mcap stood at \$5.18 trillion against \$5.17 trillion for Hong Kong, as per data from Bloomberg.
- The United States is the world's biggest market with a mcap of \$56.49 trillion, China is second with a mcap of \$8.84 trillion and Japan is third with \$6.30 trillion. Indian markets had surpassed Hong Kong but later regained its fourth position as Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index surged over 12%, entering a bull market with a nearly 20% rise since January.

BSE Limited, also known as the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), is an Indian stock exchange which is located on Dalal Street, known as the Wall Street of Mumbai, in turn described as the New York of India. Bombay Stock Exchange was founded by Premchand Roychand in 1875. It is the oldest stock exchange in Asia, and also the tenth oldest in the world. The BSE is the world's 7<sup>th</sup> largest stock exchange with a market capitalization exceeding US\$5 trillion as of May 2024.

### ONGC building India's first geothermal power project in Ladakh

- The first of its kind in India, a geothermal power project of 1 megawatt is being built on a pilot basis by ONGC's Energy Centre at Puga in Changthang area of Ladakh. The geothermal project at Puga is the first of its kind in India. Geothermal is green and clean energy which is not affected by the weather.

### NCLT gives nod for Vistara-Air India merger

- The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) granted its approval for the merger of Vistara with Air India allowing a period of nine months for the dissolution of the former. Tata Sons Private Limited will hold 73.38% stake in the merged entity, and Singapore Airlines 25.1%.
- The remaining 1.52% will be held by SBICAP Trustee Limited on behalf of Air India Employee Settlement Trust. The anti-competition trusts of India and Singapore have already granted their nod for the integration. Next, the DGCA will have to approve the transfer of Vistara's crew, operations and aircraft to Air India. Vistara's CEO Vinod Kannan has said that the airline aims to complete the merger by December 2024.
- The Tata Sons also fully own Air India Express which was merged with erstwhile AirAsia India, rechristened as Air India Connect after Malaysian airline group AirAsia sold its entire stake of 16.33% in 2022. While Air India is a full-service carrier under the Tata Group, Air India Express is its low-cost arm that will compete with IndiGo. The Tata Sons bought Air India and Air India Express from the government and took its ownership in January 2022.

## Sebi launches Saa᳚thi 2.0 mobile app on personal finance

- Market regulator the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) launched ‘Saa᳚thi 2.0’ mobile app in Mumbai. The updated Saa᳚thi app has introduced a user-friendly interface with comprehensive tools aimed at simplifying complex financial concepts.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the regulatory body for securities and commodity market in India under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It was established on 12 April 1988 and given Statutory Powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992. SEBI has its headquarters at the business district of Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. Madhabi Puri Buch is the chairperson of the securities regulatory body Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). She is the first woman chairperson to lead SEBI.

## Volvo to issue world’s first EV battery passport ahead of EU rules

- Volvo Cars is launching the world’s first EV battery passport recording the origins of raw materials, components, recycled content and carbon footprint for its flagship EX90 SUV, which is about to start production. The passport was developed by Volvo, which is owned by China’s Geely, in partnership with U.K. startup Circular, which uses blockchain technology to map supply chains for companies, and took over five years to develop. Battery passports will be mandatory for electric vehicles (EVs) sold in the European Union from February 2027 showing the composition of batteries, including the origin of key materials, their carbon footprint and recycled content.

## Peru to develop UPI-like payments system, first South American nation to do so

- In a significant development, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international division of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has entered into an agreement with the central bank of Peru to establish a fast instant payments system similar to India’s Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- This collaboration marks NIPL’s second initiative with a central bank to introduce the UPI stack in global markets. Earlier in May, NIPL had partnered with the Bank of Namibia (BoN) to pioneer an instant payment system akin to UPI in the African nation.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an advanced version of Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)- round-the-clock funds transfer service to make cashless payments faster, easier and smoother. UPI is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood. UPI is currently the biggest among the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) operated systems including National Automated Clearing House (NACH), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS), Aadhaar enabled Payment System (AePS), Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), RuPay etc. The top UPI apps today include PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Amazon Pay and BHIM, the latter being the Government offering. As part of an agreement, India’s UPI will be linked to Singapore’s PayNow. NPCI launched UPI with 21 member banks in 2016.

## India to remain fastest growing Asia-Pacific economy: Moody’s

- Moody’s Ratings said India will remain the Asia-Pacific region’s fastest-growing economy in 2024, sustaining last year’s domestically driven momentum. In a report titled Credit Conditions – Asia-Pacific H2 2024 Credit Outlook, Moody’s Ratings said Indonesia, the Philippines and India led the way in terms of growth in first half of 2024 and should continue to outperform pre-COVID growth numbers on the back of rising exports, local demand and government spending on infrastructure. “India will remain the region’s fastest-growing economy, sustaining last year’s domestically driven momentum.

A credit rating agency (CRA) assesses an entity’s (group, company, government, etc.) creditworthiness in general terms or relating to particular debt or financial obligation. These agencies help lenders and investors determine the potential risk involved in lending money to a particular borrowing entity and gauge the entity’s repayment ability based on its past credit behaviour. SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) authorizes and regulates all credit rating agencies in India as per SEBI Regulations, 1999 of the Securities and



Exchange Board of India Act, 1992. There are seven credit rating agencies in India including CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, India Ratings and Research Pvt Ltd, Acuite Ratings & Research, Brickwork Ratings India Pvt. Ltd. and Infomerics Valuation and Rating Pvt. Ltd. that are authorised by SEBI to assess credit ratings.

## Gautam Adani meets Bhutan PM, signs MoU for 570 MW green hydro plant

- Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani met Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the country's Druk Green Power Corporation for a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in Chukha province. Inspired by his vision for Bhutan and the ambitious eco-friendly masterplan for Gelephu Mindfulness City, including large computing centres and data facilities. Excited to collaborate on these transformative initiatives as also on green energy management for a carbon negative nation!"

Gautam Shantilal Adani is an Indian billionaire industrialist. He is the chairman and founder of Adani Group, an Ahmedabad-based multinational conglomerate involved in port development and operations in India. Adani is also the president of Adani Foundation, which is primarily led by his wife, Priti Adani. As of 7 September 2022, according to Forbes, with a net worth of US\$148.4 billion, he is the richest person in India and Asia, and the fourth richest person in the world. Adani subsequently lost more than \$104 billion of market capitalization after fraud and market manipulation allegations by short-seller firm Hindenburg Research.

## India's First Electric Vehicle Index Launched by NSE

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has unveiled India's first Nifty EV & New Age Automotive Index, marking a significant step in the fast-paced growth of the country's stock market. This innovative index tracks the performance of companies involved in the electric vehicle (EV) and new-age automotive sector, including hybrid and hydrogen fuel-based vehicles.
- The Nifty EV & New Age Automotive Index is designed to monitor companies engaged in EV manufacturing, charging infrastructure, battery production, and other crucial areas of the EV ecosystem. This index reflects India's commitment to clean and sustainable energy solutions and positions the country as a leader in the global shift towards electric mobility.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) is the leading stock exchange in India located in Mumbai and the fourth largest in the world by equity trading volume in 2015, according to World Federation of Exchanges (WFE). It began operations in 1994 and is ranked as the largest stock exchange in India in terms of total and average daily turnover for equity shares every year since 1995, based on annual reports of SEBI. NSE launched electronic screen-based trading in 1994, derivatives trading (in the form of index futures) and internet trading in 2000, which were each the first of its kind in India. Ashishkumar Chauhan is the current managing director and chief executive officer of National Stock Exchange (NSE).

## NSE launches Nifty India Tourism Index

- NSE's index services subsidiary, NSE Indices has launched a new thematic index called Nifty India Tourism which will track the performance of stocks in Nifty 500 index representing the travel and tourism theme. The base date for the index is April 1, 2005 and the base value is 1,000. The index will be reconstituted semi-annually and rebalanced on a quarterly basis. The index comprises 17 stocks.

## Reliance's market capitalisation crosses Rs. 21 lakh crore for first time

- Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has become the first Indian company to surpass a market capitalization of Rs. 21 lakh crore. The market cap of the oil-to-telecom conglomerate crossed Rs. 21 lakh. The market cap of the oil-to-telecom conglomerate crossed Rs. 21 lakh after shares hit a record high of Rs. 3,129 in early trade. RIL's stock has surged more than 20% this year so far.

## Yotta becomes first Indian data centre startup to go public on Nasdaq

- India's Nidar Infrastructure Limited announced it would go public through a definitive merger with special-purpose acquisition company Cartica Acquisition Corp. The transaction values Nidar at approximately \$2.75 billion in pre-transaction equity and is expected to provide the combined entity with increased capital market access to fuel its growth strategy.

- **The merger will position Hiranandani-backed Nidar as a publicly traded entity on the US-based Nasdaq exchange. Through its Yotta data centres, Nidar provides for artificial intelligence (AI) and high-performance compute. Mumbai-headquartered Yotta designs, builds, and operates Tier III and IV data centres, which offer both colocation and hyperscale services and cloud and managed services.**

### **‘Mini RATNA’ status (Category-1) for Central Electronics Limited (CEL)**

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- **Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh announced the grant of “Mini RATNA” status (Category-1) for Central Electronics Limited (CEL). CEL has transformed from a loss-making PSU to a dividend paying PSU and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year that CEL has paid dividends, that too at increasing rate, to the Government of India. He also highlighted that Celebrating 50 years with attaining Net profit of approx. Rs. 58 crore is commendable.**

### **Nvidia becomes world’s most valuable company**

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- **Nvidia edged ahead of other tech companies to become the world’s most valuable publicly traded company in the latest sign of the might of artificial intelligence. The chip company, which has enjoyed a monumental ascent over the last 18 months amid enthusiasm over generative AI, jumped 3.4%, giving it a market capitalisation of about \$3.3 trillion, slightly ahead of Microsoft and Apple.**
- **Nvidia Corporation is an American multinational corporation and technology company headquartered in Santa Clara, California, and incorporated in Delaware. It is a software and fabless company which designs and supplies graphics processing units (GPUs), application programming interfaces (APIs) for data science and high-performance computing, as well as system on a chip units (SoCs) for the mobile computing and automotive market. Nvidia is also a dominant supplier of artificial intelligence (AI) hardware and software.**

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## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



### ISRO develops PraVaHa software for aerodynamic design and analysis

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software named Parallel RANS Solver for Aerospace Vehicle Aero-thermo-dynamic Analysis (PraVaHa). This software was developed in ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC). It can simulate external and internal flows on launch vehicles, winged and non-winged re-entry vehicles.
- According to ISRO, initial aerodynamic design studies for launch vehicles demand evaluation of a large number of configurations. Any aerospace vehicle while moving through the Earth's atmosphere during launch or re-entry is subjected to severe aerodynamic and aerothermal loads in terms of external pressure and heat flux.
- Understanding the airflow around aircraft, rocket bodies, or Crew Module (CM) during earth re-entry is essential to design the shape, structure, and Thermal Protection System (TPS) required for these bodies. The unsteady part of aerodynamics contributes to serious flow issues around such rocket bodies and creates significant acoustic noise during the mission.
- Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) is one such tool to predict the aerodynamic and aerothermal loads which solve numerically the equations of conservation of mass, momentum, and energy along with the equation of state. PraVaHa has been used extensively in the Gaganyaan program for aerodynamic analysis of human-rated launch vehicles, viz, HLV M3, Crew Escape System (CES), and CM.

ISRO is the space agency of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. S Somanath is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. Sreedhara Panicker Somanath from Kerala is an Indian aerospace engineer serving as the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Under his chairmanship, ISRO carried out the third Indian lunar exploration mission named Chandrayaan-3. Somanath served as the director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram and director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre, Thiruvananthapuram.

### Proposal for IIM in Assam's Kamrup gets Centre nod

- The union government has given the go-ahead for setting up an Indian Institute of Management at Marabhita in Assam's Kamrup district following a proposal submitted by the state government. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that the Ministry of Education has given "in-principle approval" to the proposal and appointed IIM Ahmedabad as the mentor institute for the new IIM.

### Lunar Timekeeping: How Nasa plans to synchronize moon missions

- NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are collaborating to develop a standardized time system for the moon as part of the Artemis program, which aims to return humans to the lunar surface. The initiative addresses the need for a unified timekeeping system to coordinate missions from different countries and private entities. The moon's day-night cycle, lasting about 29.5 Earth days, complicates timekeeping. Unlike Earth's 24-hour day, this prolonged cycle necessitates a different approach to maintaining a consistent time reference. NASA and ESA are working on technologies to ensure accurate timekeeping and synchronization for lunar missions.



- **These efforts are crucial for the success of the Artemis program and future lunar exploration.** “The synchronization of time will be vital for various aspects of lunar operations, including navigation, communication, and scientific experiments”. **The Artemis program, led by NASA, aims to land the first woman and the next man on the moon by 2024.** Establishing a lunar time zone is a significant step towards fostering international collaboration and ensuring the success of multi-national lunar missions.

### India launches nation’s 1<sup>st</sup> 3D-printed rocket engine

- **Indian space startup Agnikul Cosmos successfully launched the nation’s first 3D-printed rocket engine, paving the way for reduced time and costs associated with building rockets and boosting the country’s spacefaring capabilities.** The maiden flight was also the country’s second private rocket launch and the first to demonstrate the use of a semi-cryogenic engine.
- **Unlike cryogenic engines that require heavy tanks to hold pressurized liquid hydrogen and oxygen at very low temperatures, semi-cryogenic engines replace the liquid hydrogen with refined kerosene.** As a result, such engines require lesser storage space and normal temperatures, allowing for increased payload capacity as well as higher thrust.

### Boeing launches NASA astronauts for the first time after years of delays

- **Boeing launched astronauts for the first time belatedly joining SpaceX as a second taxi service for NASA.** A pair of NASA test pilots blasted off aboard Boeing’s Starliner capsule for the International Space Station, the first to fly the new spacecraft.
- **The trip by Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams was expected to take 25 hours.** They will spend just over a week at the orbiting lab before climbing back into Starliner for a remote desert touchdown in the western U.S.

### ISRO all set for third reusable launch vehicle landing experiment

- Taking its Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) programme one more step closer to reality, **the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is all set to carry out the third and final RLV landing experiment (RLV LEX).** Mission Readiness Review (MRR) cleared the mission for the first half of June, subject to weather conditions, at the Aeronautical Test Range at Chitradurga, Karnataka.
- **RLV-LEX missions involve taking an unmanned winged prototype, christened Pushpak, to a designated height and releasing it to land safely under varying conditions.** In LEX-03, Pushpak will be carried to a height of 4.5 km and 500 metres to one side of the runway using an IAF Chinook helicopter. In LEX-02, the second mission, the altitude was the same but the lateral distance from the runway was 150 metres.

### NASA Welcomes Peru as 41<sup>st</sup> Artemis Accords Signatory

- **NASA Administrator Bill Nelson welcomed Peru as the newest nation to sign the Artemis Accords during a ceremony with the U.S. State Department at NASA Headquarters in Washington.** Peru joins 40 other countries in a commitment to advancing principles for the safe, transparent, and responsible exploration of the Moon, Mars and beyond.

The Artemis Accords is a series of non-binding multilateral arrangements between the United States government and other world governments that elaborates on the norms expected to be followed in outer space. The accords are related to the Artemis program, an American-led effort to return humans to the Moon by 2026, with the ultimate goal of expanding space exploration to Mars and beyond. The Artemis program aims to land the first woman and first person of color on the Moon. As of 12 June 2024 (11 days ago), with the accession of Armenia, 43 countries have signed the accords, including twenty-one in Europe, eight in Asia, six in South America, three in North America, three in Africa, and two in Oceania. **Drafted by NASA and the U.S. Department of State, the Accords establish a framework for cooperation in the civil exploration and peaceful use of the Moon, Mars, and other astronomical objects.** They are explicitly grounded in the United Nations Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which signatories are obliged to uphold, and cite most major U.N.-brokered conventions constituting space law. **The Accords were originally signed on 13 October 2020 by representatives of the national space agencies of eight countries: Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.** The Accords remain open for signature indefinitely, as NASA anticipates more nations joining. Additional signatories can choose to directly participate in Artemis program activities, or may

agree simply to commit to the principles for responsible exploration of the Moon as set out in the Accords. **India's signing of the Artemis Accords shows its commitment to international space cooperation** and eagerness to participate in lunar exploration missions, advancing scientific inquiry, technological innovation, and the expansion of humanity's presence in space.

### ISRO gears up for TRISHNA mission

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) shared more details on the **Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment (TRISHNA) mission, a joint endeavour with the French national space agency, National Centre for Space Studies (CNES)**. The satellite will aid in a comprehensive assessment of urban heat islands and also address critical water and food security challenges, focusing on the impacts of human-induced climate change and efficient water resource management through evapotranspiration monitoring.
- **The TRISHNA satellite will be on similar lines as the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar Satellite (NISAR) which will also help monitor deformations on Earth and help monitor climate change.** TRISHNA is expected to go live in 2025, but no date has been announced. The satellite will track the water stress and water use and high-resolution observation of water quality and dynamics in coastal and inland waters. "The TRISHNA mission will also help in a comprehensive assessment of urban heat islands and provide valuable data on aerosol optical depth, atmospheric water vapour, and cloud cover".

ISRO is the space agency of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. S Somanath is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. Sreedhara Panicker Somanath from Kerala is an Indian aerospace engineer serving as the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Under his chairmanship, ISRO carried out the third Indian lunar exploration mission named Chandrayaan-3. Somanath served as the director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram and director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre, Thiruvananthapuram.

### DRDO plans India's first underwater-launched UAV, awards contract to Pune startup Sagar Defence

- To boost India's underwater military capabilities, **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has decided to develop a first-of-its-kind underwater-launched unmanned aerial vehicles (ULUAVs), with help from a Pune-based defence startup, that will be launched from a submarine.** DRDO's Technology Development Fund (TDF) has awarded the technology development contract for ULUAVs to Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt Ltd after selecting it out of the 17 firms through a competitive bidding process. DRDO's Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL) will assist Sagar Defence, which had earlier developed a maritime spotter drone for the Indian Navy, in ULUAV technology development.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. **Dr. Samir V Kamat is the current Chairman of DRDO.**

### Kendric Cromer: Washington boy becomes world's first person to receive newly approved sickle cell therapy

- **Kendric Cromer, a 12-year-old kid from a suburb of Washington, has become the first person in the world to receive commercially licensed gene therapy for sickle cell disease.** Kendric's successful therapy provides hope to around 20,000 people in the United States who suffer from sickle cell disease.
- However, it also emphasises the difficulties patients confront in obtaining novel sickle cell medications. "Sickle cell always steals my dreams and interrupts all the things I want to do." He believes that now he has a chance to live a normal life like other kids.

Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a chronic single gene disorder causing a debilitating systemic syndrome characterized by chronic anaemia, acute painful episodes, organ infarction and chronic organ damage and by a significant reduction in life expectancy. Symptoms of sickle cell disease can vary, but some common symptoms include: **Chronic Anaemia: leading to fatigue, weakness, and paleness.** Painful episodes (also known as sickle cell crisis): these can cause sudden and intense pain in the bones, chest, back, arms, and legs. Delayed growth and puberty.

### IAU honours research of India solar physicist

- The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has recognised exemplary research contributions of heliophysicist Devojiyoti Kansabanik. He had recently completed a PhD from Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA). Since December last year, **Kansabanik has been a NASA Jack Eddy Postdoctoral fellow at the Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins University, USA.**
- The honour comes from IAU's Sun and Heliosphere group for the work titled 'Deciphering Radio Emission from Solar Coronal Mass Ejections Using High-fidelity Spectropolarimetric Radio Imaging'. The IAU had announced eight PhD prizes and honorary mentions, each. **The IUA will meet for its XXXII General Assembly scheduled to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in August this year.**

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) is a nongovernmental organisation with the objective of advancing astronomy in all aspects, including promoting astronomical research, outreach, education, and development through global cooperation. **It was founded in 1919 and is based in Paris, France. The IAU is a member of the International Science Council (ISC), which is composed of international scholarly and scientific institutions and national academies of sciences.**

### 300 women scientists to get research grants

- Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said **300 women scientists were set to get research grants for three years under the CSIR- ASPIRE scheme.**
- Chairing a review meeting of the Department of Scientific and Industrial research (DSIR), Singh said **innovations in science and technology should be to empower citizens in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to promote ease of living.** Singh said around 3,000 proposals were received under the CSIR- ASPIRE scheme which is a testimony of the government's efforts to support women scientists.

### Three craters on Mars named for physicist Devendra Lal, towns in UP, Bihar

- **Three recently discovered craters on the surface of Mars have been named for renowned cosmic ray physicist late Devendra Lal and the towns of Mursan and Hilsa in northern India.** While the discovery was made by a team of scientists which included researchers working at the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) here in 2021, the naming was approved by an international body earlier this month.
- **The three craters are situated in the Tharsis volcanic region of the Red Planet,** said the Ahmedabad-based PRL, a unit of the Department of Space of the Government of India. Tharsis is a vast volcanic plateau centered near the equator in the western hemisphere of Mars. The region is home to the largest volcanoes in the Solar System. On the recommendation of the PRL, **the International Astronomical Union (IAU) Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature approved naming the craters as "Lal" crater, "Mursan" crater and "Hilsa" crater.** Mursan and Hilsa are the names of towns located in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, respectively.

**Mars is the fourth planet and the furthest terrestrial planet from the Sun. The reddish color of its surface is due to finely grained iron(III) oxide dust in the soil, giving it the nickname "the Red Planet".** Mars's radius is second smallest among the planets in the Solar System at 3,389.5 km. Mars has a thin atmosphere made primarily of carbon dioxide, and two irregularly shaped natural satellites: Phobos and Deimos. Like the other planets in the Solar System, Mars was formed approximately 4.5 billion years ago. **The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), unofficially known as Mangalyaan was a space probe orbiting Mars since 24 September 2014. It was launched on 5 November 2013 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It was India's first interplanetary mission and it made ISRO the fourth space agency to achieve Mars orbit, after Roscosmos, NASA, and the European Space Agency. It made India the first Asian nation to reach the Martian orbit and the first nation in the world to do so on its maiden attempt.**



## Army gets Nagastra-1, India's first indigenous suicide drone

- In a significant stride towards achieving 'atmanirbharta' (self-reliance) in ammunition and defence systems, the Indian Army is set to induct its first indigenous loiter munition, Nagastra-1. Developed by Solar Industries, Nagpur, the Army has placed a supply order for Economics Explosives Ltd (EEL), a 100 per cent subsidiary of Solar Industries, to supply 480 loiter munitions.
- Weighing 9 kg, this man-portable fixed-wing electric UAV has an endurance of 30 minutes. It offers a 15 km range with man-in-loop control and extends up to 30 km in autonomous mode. Due to its electric propulsion system, Nagastra-1 provides a low acoustic signature, making it almost undetectable at altitudes over 200 metres.

## ISRO completes Reusable Launch Vehicle technology demonstrations under challenging conditions

- Recently, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully completed the third and final Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment (RLV LEX-03) for the Pushpak vehicle. This demonstrated the autonomous landing capability of the RLV under more challenging release conditions and severe wind conditions. The third and final test in the series of Landing Experiment (LEX-03) was conducted at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) in Chitradurga, Karnataka.
- During the RLV LEX-03 mission, the Pushpak vehicle was released from an Indian Air Force Chinook helicopter at an altitude of 4.5 km. From this point, the winged vehicle autonomously executed cross-range correction manoeuvres approached the runway and performed a precise horizontal landing at the runway centerline. The high-speed landing, exceeding 320 km/h, was successfully slowed to around 100 km/h using the vehicle's brake parachute and landing gear brakes.

Reusable launch vehicles (RLVs) are rockets that can be used multiple times for space missions, unlike traditional expendable rockets where each stage is discarded after use. In a typical multi-stage rocket, the first stage is jettisoned (discarded to lighten the load) after its fuel is consumed, while the remaining stages continue to propel the payload into orbit. RLVs recover and reuse the first stage. After detaching from the upper stages, the first stage uses engines or parachutes to descend and land back on Earth. It can then be refurbished for future launches, significantly reducing costs. **Space Agencies Currently Using or Developing RLVs: SpaceX (USA): Falcon 9**, with over 220 launches, 178 landings, and 155 re-flights as of May 2023. **Blue Origin (USA): New Shepard performs suborbital flights and lands vertically.** **JAXA (Japan) and ESA (Europe): Researching reusable launch systems to reduce space access costs.** **ISRO (India): Developed the Reusable Launch Vehicle-Technology Demonstration (RLV-TD) and conducted a successful landing.**

## India, US working for training ISRO astronauts at NASA's Johnson Space Center

- India and the US said they concluded the Strategic Framework for Human Spaceflight Cooperation to deepen interoperability in space and are working toward commencing advanced training for ISRO astronauts at the NASA Johnson Space Center. A fact-sheet issued by the US and India after the iCET Dialogue between US National Security Adviser (NSA) Jake Sullivan and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said the two sides are also exploring opportunities to participate in the Lunar Gateway Programme.
- The Lunar Gateway Programme aims to build a space station around the moon as part of the collaborative Artemis programme spearheaded by the US. The fact-sheet said the talks between the two NSAs explored opportunities for India's participation in the Lunar Gateway Programme, as well as joint avenues for collaboration in other space technologies.
- The two leaders also exchanged views on securing a carrier for the first-ever joint effort between NASA and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) astronauts at the International Space Station, which will mark a significant milestone in the India-US space partnership and space exploration.
- They noted the strengthening defence space cooperation through the second Advanced Domains Defense Dialogue held at the Pentagon in May that featured an India-US space table-top exercise and included bilateral expert exchanges on emerging domains including artificial intelligence.
- They also noted that the space agency's of the two countries are preparing for the launch of the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar, a jointly developed satellite that will map the entirety of the Earth's surface twice every 12 days as part of efforts to combat climate change and other global challenges together.

- The iCET talks also saw the launch of a new partnership between the US Space Force and the Indian startups — 114ai and 3<sup>rd</sup> iTech — including on advancing space situational awareness, data fusion technologies, and infra-red sensor semiconductor manufacturing.

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** established NASA in 1958. It succeeded the **National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA)** to give the U.S. space development effort a distinct civilian orientation, emphasizing peaceful applications in space science. It has since led most of America's space exploration programs, including Project Mercury, Project Gemini, the 1968–1972 Apollo Moon landing missions, the Skylab space station, and the Space Shuttle. Currently, NASA supports the International Space Station (ISS) along with the Commercial Crew Program, and oversees the development of the Orion spacecraft and the Space Launch System for the lunar Artemis program. **Bill Nelson** was sworn in as the 14<sup>th</sup> NASA administrator on May 3, 2021, tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration's vision for the agency.

### Earth's inner core 'unambiguously' slowing down, could change day's length

- A new study has provided "unambiguous evidence" that the Earth's inner core began to slow down its rotation in 2010, compared to the planet's surface. Researchers said that the slowing down could change the length of one day on the Earth by fractions of a second.
- The Earth's inner core, a solid sphere made of iron and nickel, is suspended within the liquid outer core (made of molten metals) and anchored in its place by gravity. Together, the inner and the outer core, form one of the planet's three layers – the other two being mantle and crust.

### IISc physicists find a new way to represent 'pi'

- Scientists at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have stumbled upon a new series representation for the irrational number pi during their research on how string theory can be used to explain certain physical phenomena. The representation provides an easier way to extract pi from calculations involved in deciphering processes like the quantum scattering of high-energy particles, IISc said.

### Shanghai performs world's first innovative liver transplant surgery, saving patient with advanced liver cancer

- A surgical team at a Shanghai hospital successfully performed the world's first innovative liver surgery on a 36-year-old patient with multiple colorectal cancer liver metastases, this is one of the most complicated surgeries, creating opportunities and hope for more patients.
- The team at Zhongshan Hospital affiliated to Fudan University used the waste liver for transplantation combined with a two-stage procedure, called associating liver partition and portal vein ligation for staged hepatectomy (ALPPS), which is developed for patients with an excessive number or volume of liver tumors and insufficient volume of liver remaining after tumor resection.

### First Nigerian set to fly to space for free

- Expensive, risky and elite - that's space travel in a nutshell ever since Yuri Gagarin became the first human to be sent to space 63 years ago. Till now, less than 700 astronauts have reached space altitude and a majority among them have been from just three countries. Even commercial space flights remain exclusive to the few who can afford them.
- In line with this mission to make space accessible, SERA has just signed an agreement to send the first Nigerian to space. In June 2022, Victor Hespánha, a 28-year-old civil engineer from Brazil, was selected to travel to space onboard Blue Origin's New Shepard Rocket (NS-22). He was only the second Brazilian astronaut, and soon became a national hero. SERA had commercially purchased a seat from Blue Origin for Hespánha, but the mission's success has now opened the door to a partnership with Bezos' firm, and launch of a new human spaceflight programme. For their next mission, SERA has reserved six seats on an upcoming launch of New Shepard, Blue Origin's rocket.

**Blue Origin Enterprises, L.P., commonly referred to as Blue Origin is an American aerospace manufacturer, government contractor, launch service provider, and space technologies company headquartered in Kent, Washington, United States. The company was founded in 2000 by Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon. Rob Meyerson joined the company in 2003 and served as the CEO before leaving the company in 2018. Bob Smith served as CEO from 2018 to 2023. The current CEO is Dave Limp. The company makes rocket engines for United Launch Alliance (ULA)'s Vulcan rocket and manufactures their own rockets, spacecraft, satellites, and heavy-lift launch vehicles. The company is the second provider of lunar lander services for NASA's Artemis program and was awarded a \$3.4 billion contract. The four rocket engines the company has in production are the BE-3U, BE-3PM, BE-4 and the BE-7.**

### Indian Army signs Mou for 'next generation wireless technologies'

- In a landmark event, **Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Indian Army and Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER)**, an autonomous R&D laboratory under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to **advance collaboration in 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies for Indian Army.**
- This initiative marks a significant milestone in strengthening the Indian Army's technological capabilities which are **aligned towards a declared vision for 2024 as 'Year of Technological Absorption for Indian Army' by Chief of Army Staff.**

### World first epilepsy device fitted in UK boy's skull

- **A boy with severe epilepsy has become the first patient in the world to trial a new device fitted in their skull to control seizures.** The neurostimulator, which sends electrical signals deep into his brain, has **reduced Oran Knowlson's daytime seizures by 80%.**
- Oran, from Somerset, has Lennox-Gastaut syndrome, a treatment-resistant form of epilepsy which he developed at the age of three. Since then he has suffered several daily seizures ranging from two dozen to hundreds.

### China becomes 1<sup>st</sup> country to bring soil samples from far side of the moon

- **China became the first country to successfully bring rock and soil samples from the far side of the moon as its Chang'e 6 probe returned on Earth.** The probe landed in **northern China in the Inner Mongolian region.**
- **The near side of the moon is visible from the Earth and the far side faces outer space.** The far side of the moon is known to have mountains and impact craters, contrasting with the relatively flat expanses visible on the near side. In recent years, with the launch of missions by India, Japan etc., moon exploration has taken centre stage. **Earlier, countries like US and Russia (erstwhile Soviet Union) collected samples from the moon's near side.**
- **Wrapping up Chang'e 6's 53-day mission, the spacecraft's sample-return capsule parachuted down to a preselected site in the rolling grasslands of China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on June 25.** Packed inside the capsule are approximately **two kilograms of rock and soil that were scooped or drilled from the surface and subsurface of Chang'e 6's lunar landing site in the northeastern quadrant of the moon's South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin.** Thought to have been gouged from the moon's crust and underlying mantle by a giant impact more than four billion years ago, **the 2,500-kilometer-wide SPA Basin is one of the largest and oldest craters in the solar system.** Samples from its depths could help solve numerous lunar mysteries-chief among them the enigma of why the moon's far side is so relatively bereft of the craters and vast plains of frozen lava that are strewn across the Earth-facing near side.
- **Chang'e 6 was China's second lunar sample-return mission, as well as its second landing on the far side, following the far-side touchdown of Chang'e 4 in 2019 and the retrieval of near-side samples by Chang'e 5 in 2020.** No other nation has landed on the far side, let alone gathered specimens there.

### SSLV's first dedicated commercial launch to put Australia-built satellite into orbit in 2026

- **ISRO's commercial arm NSIL said that its newest rocket the SSLV will have its first dedicated commercial launch when it puts into orbit the Optimus – a satellite built by Australia-based Space Machines Company.**



- The announcement was made jointly by **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)** and **Space Machines Company** at the **India Space Congress, organised by the Satcom Industry Association-India**. This pioneering collaboration sets the stage for the launch of Space Machines Company’s second Optimus spacecraft, weighing 450 kilogrammes, the largest Australian-designed and built spacecraft so far. “This will be the first dedicated commercial launch for SSLV (Small Satellite Launch Vehicle). **The first commercial launch was Janus, a 10-kilogramme nanosatellite on board the SSLV-D2 mission**”.

**NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)** is a **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** of Government of India and **commercial arm of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**. **NSIL is responsible for producing, assembling and integrating the launch vehicle with the help of industry consortium**. It was established on **6 March 2019** under the administrative control of **Department of Space (DoS)** and the **Company Act 2013**. The main objective of NSIL is to **scale up private sector participation in Indian space programmes**.

### **Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launches two Geoportals namely ‘Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)’ portal for rural land record and “National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)” developed by Indian Space research Organization (ISRO)**

- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launched two **Geoportals** namely **‘Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)’ portal for rural land record** and **“National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)”** developed by Indian Space research Organization (ISRO), at Prithvi Bhavan. These latest geospatial tools are meant for for visualisation and planning to provide high resolution satellite imagery of 1:10K scale for different locations across the entire country.
- Dr. Jitendra Singh reiterated that the priority of the government is to integrate various services and allow common citizens to take benefit from it. **He mentioned that the outcome of policy decisions under Modi Govt. in the last few years opened the space sector for Private participation having a positive impact from one startup in 2022 to more than 200 startups in 2024.**
- Dr. Singh also highlighted that it was this government which **opened the gates of Sriharikota during the launch of Chandrayaan for the masses to come and witness India Prowess in Space Sector**. He also shared that nearly 1000 crore rupees of private investment has come in the space sector.

### **Agricultural research station at Bhavanisagar bags award for seed production**

- **The Agricultural Research Station of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University at Bhavanisagar bagged the best seed production centre award during the 54<sup>th</sup> foundation day of TNAU, Coimbatore, recently**. The award signifies the station’s unwavering commitment to maintain the highest standards in quality seed production and has emerged as a front runner setting an example for excellence in the field of seed production.
- **The station, started in 1955, to serve the agricultural requirements of the farmers in the district was involved in breeding and assessing the release of novel crop varieties** for the western zone, including sorghum, redgram, groundnut, amla, and turmeric.
- The release said the research station has developed many innovative agro-technologies for cropping systems, research on drip irrigation and operational research programs for agricultural and horticulture crops on water and fertilizer management, surveillance for pests and diseases, suggestions for different crops, production of superior seeds, grafts and seedlings, as well as breeder, **foundation, and TNAU — labelled seeds in crops**. **Recently, a direct agro input sales counter was opened to cater the needs of the farmers.**

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## Inventions/Discoveries/Health

### World's first bird flu human death recorded in Mexico

- **The World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed the first human death from bird flu after an alarming increase in cases.** The victim, a resident of Mexico, succumbed to the illness after suffering from symptoms of avian influenza A (H5N2). The specific strain and details surrounding the case and its impact on humans are still being investigated; however, the incident has now alerted the global health organisation.
- **It's important to highlight that the strain responsible for the first reported death differs from the bird flu strain currently circulating in livestock in the US.** In the United States, the H5N1 strain was detected in dairy herds in March, leading to confirmed cases in three dairy workers. Although all three workers at farms with infected cows have been diagnosed with bird flu, the illnesses were considered mild. Reports indicate instances of avian influenza subtype A(H5N2) in poultry across Mexico.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The WHO Constitution states its main objective as “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has six regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide. The WHO was established on 7 April 1948. The first meeting of the World Health Assembly (WHA), the agency's governing body, took place on 24 July of that year. The current director-general is Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia.

### Mysterious 'hole' on Mars excites enthusiasts, could shelter humans during expeditions

- **Dust storms and temperature swings are said to be common on Mars.** As humans aim to explore the planet, a mysterious pit on the side of an ancient volcano on Mars has generated excitement amongst space enthusiasts. Captured by the High-Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO), the pit, located on the side of the now-extinct Arsia Mons volcano and only a few metres wide, was found in August of 2022.

Mars is the fourth planet and the furthest terrestrial planet from the Sun. The reddish color of its surface is due to finely grained iron(III) oxide dust in the soil, giving it the nickname “the Red Planet”. Mars's radius is second smallest among the planets in the Solar System at 3,389.5 km. The Martian dichotomy is visible on the surface: on average, the terrain on Mars's northern hemisphere is flatter and lower than its southern hemisphere. Mars has a thin atmosphere made primarily of carbon dioxide, and two irregularly shaped natural satellites: Phobos and Deimos. Like the other planets in the Solar System, Mars was formed approximately 4.5 billion years ago. The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), unofficially known as Mangalyaan was a space probe orbiting Mars since 24 September 2014. It was launched on 5 November 2013 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It was India's first interplanetary mission and it made ISRO the fourth space agency to achieve Mars orbit, after Roscosmos, NASA, and the European Space Agency. It made India the first Asian nation to reach the Martian orbit and the first nation in the world to do so on its maiden attempt.

### Giant viruses feeding on algae could slow ice melting

- **Researchers have discovered giant viruses living on algae-blackened ice in the Arctic, which could be harnessed to reduce ice melting.** Ice in the Arctic is melting at an alarming rate. Now, researchers from Aarhus University (Denmark) have found a potential biocontrol: giant viruses. The researchers suspect that giant viruses feed on the algae found on ice sheets, which increase the rate of ice melting. While more research is needed, the researchers hope the viruses could be used to reduce the rate at which ice melts. During spring in the Arctic, the days lengthen, and the sun rises higher in the sky, bringing life back to the area.
- This includes algae, which begin to bloom and blacken large areas of the ice. When the ice blackens, its ability to reflect the sun is limited, accelerating the ice's melting. This increased melting contributes to the worsening of global warming. To investigate the phenomenon, the researchers used metagenomic and metatranscriptomic techniques to analyze samples from dark ice, red snow and melting holes (cryoconite). They found signatures of active giant viruses, which is the first time they've been found on surface ice and snow that contains a high concentration of pigmented microalgae.

Viruses are non-cellular entities with genetic material enclosed in a protein coat called capsid. The viral genome is usually either RNA or DNA. Outside the host, viruses remain inert. But once inside host cells, they utilise the cell machinery to make copies of themselves, often destroying the host cell. Viruses are parasitic entities lacking cells, making them unclassifiable within any specific kingdom. **They are sub-microscopic infectious agents that can only replicate inside host cells of living organisms. They range from 20 to 400 nm and can infect all life forms - humans, animals, plants, bacteria.** They are found in almost every ecosystem and environment on Earth. **Though not classified as living organisms,** viruses exhibit biological properties when inside a host cell. Many fatal epidemics throughout history like smallpox, influenza, HIV/AIDS, Coronavirus, etc. have been caused by viruses.

## Massive 5 star clusters discovered from the era when Universe was infant

- **Astronomers have discovered five young star clusters, and possibly the oldest star clusters ever, born from the time when the Universe was an infant.** Moreover, these gravitationally-bound massive clusters could hold some vital clues about the reionization era of the Universe, **the international team led by Stockholm University and collaborators from select European countries, US and Japan, have claimed.**
- **“This is the first discovery of star clusters in an infant galaxy less than 500 million years after the Big Bang”.** Our universe is 13.6 billion years old whereas the Earth is 4.5 billion years old; and the newly discovered star clusters are believed to have been born when the Universe was 460 million years old.
- **For several centuries now, scientists world over have been trying to look back in time and understand how the early stars were born and what these baby stars looked like.** But the cosmological distances have prevented any direct study or observations of these stellar objects.
- The newest star clusters were discovered in the Cosmic Gems arc — a galaxy emitting light and looking back 97 per cent across the cosmic time. **The Cosmic Gems arc was initially discovered in the images obtained from the Hubble Space Telescope during the Reionization Lensing Cluster Survey programme of the lensing galaxy cluster SPT-CL J0615–5746.**

## Swedish Scientists Make World’s First ‘Living’ Computer Using Human Brain Tissue

- **The fear of robots replacing humans is high, especially with the advent of AI.** But maybe it should be the machines that worry about us. **Swedish scientists have created the world’s first “living computer” made from human brain tissue.** It consists of 16 organoids, which are clumps of brain cells grown in a lab that exchange information with each other. They work similarly to a conventional computer chip- they send and receive signals through their neurons, which function like circuits.
- What makes them special, however, is that the living machine uses less energy, because living neurons can use over a million times less energy than the digital processors currently in use. **When comparing them with the best computers in the world, such as the Hewlett Packard Enterprise Frontier, scientists found that the human brain, at the same speed and with 1,000 times more memory, uses 10 to 20 watts- compared to a computer with 21 megawatts.**
- One megawatt is equal to one million watts. The living machine was developed by scientists at FinalSpark, a company that focuses on developing solutions using biological neural networks. **Dr Fred Jordan, co-CEO of FinalSpark, a startup focused on developing solutions using biological neural networks,** “This idea is common in science fiction, but there isn’t a huge amount of real research on it.”
- **Organoids are tiny, self-organising three-dimensional tissue cultures made from stem cells.** Such cultures can be engineered to replicate much of the complexity of an organ or to express selected aspects of the organ, such as producing only certain types of cells. The scientists take the stem cells and culture them for about a month until they form features such as neurons. **The FinalSpark mini-brains were built from an estimated 10,000 living neurons, each about 0.5 mm in diameter.**



## ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### India, S. Korea, US, Japan, EU launch Biopharmaceutical Alliance

- **South Korea, India, the United States, Japan, and the European Union (EU) have come together to launch an alliance to put joint efforts into building a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector**, the South Korean presidential office said in Seoul.
- **The inaugural meeting of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance, held in San Diego** during the Bio International Convention 2024, had representatives from government officials and bio and pharmaceutical companies from the participating countries. **The participants emphasised the importance of a reliable and sustainable supply chain and agreed to coordinate the respective countries' bio policies**, regulations, and research and development support measures.
- They acknowledged that the production of essential raw materials and ingredients is concentrated in a few countries and agreed to work together to build a detailed pharmaceutical supply chain map. **The alliance was launched in response to the drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic**. South Korea and the U.S. agreed to form the alliance during their dialogue on core emerging technologies in December and expanded it to include Japan, India and the EU.

**The Indian pharmaceutical industry is among the largest in the world. It is the largest producer of vaccines and the largest manufacturer and exporter, by volume, of generic drugs. India is known for providing quality-assured affordable medicines worldwide.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry demonstrated resilience and is now known as the pharmacy of the world.

### South India's first leopard safari opens at Bannerghatta Biological Park

- **South India's first and the country's largest leopard safari was inaugurated by Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre at the Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP).** As per Central Zoo Authority guidelines for safaris, an area of 20 hectares has been demarcated and fenced for the safari.
- **Currently eight leopards have been released for the safari in the open forest area.** Bannerghatta is home to a good population of free ranging leopards (*Panthera pardus*), and highlighting these top predators is vital. **The facility has been created at a cost of ₹4.5 crore. The leopard safari area is made up of undulating terrain with natural rocky outcrops** and semi-deciduous forest. This whole area is covered with a vertical chain-link mesh which is 4.5 metres high, and MS sheets have been placed at a 30° inclined angle of 1.5 metres.

### India, US, 12 others inked pact to meet climate financing goal

- **The US and 13 other nations in Asia and the Pacific signed agreements on an economic pact key to Washington's strategy to build clout in the region.** Partners of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework signed the **clean economy and fair economy agreements**, US Secretary for Commerce Gina Raimondo told reporters in a briefing in Singapore at the end of the two-day forum. The agreements represent two of the so-called "four pillars" that the pact rests on. The agreement signed at a Singapore meet, focuses on improving market conditions and reducing barriers for low-carbon projects. While the pact is in its final stages of approval, experts caution against allowing imports of genetically modified seeds and foods under the guise of food security.
- **In the world of climate finance, it is not just about dollars but the value that is placed on saving our planet.** At global climate summits—from the Ad Hoc Work Programme (AHWP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that was recently discussed in Colombia to the annual Conference of Parties (COP)—'climate finance' is a recurring topic of discussion. **In line with the needs of developing countries, India has called for developed countries to provide at least USD 1 trillion per year from 2025, composed primarily of grants and concessional finance, urging them to take a proactive stance towards fulfilling their climate finance commitments.** As COP28 last year deferred most finance issues to COP29, the agreement on a New Collective Quantified Goal—a new global climate finance goal—replacing the USD 100 billion commitment will serve as the guiding star for future climate action.

## Climate change funding talks stuck ahead of COP29 summit

- With just five months to go before this year's U.N. climate summit, countries cannot agree on the size of a global funding bill to help the developing world fight climate change - let alone how to split it. **The decision is set to dominate the COP29 climate talks in Azerbaijan in November, where nearly 200 countries need to agree on a new annual financing target for helping poorer countries cut their emissions and protect their societies in a harsher, hotter world. The new target will replace the yearly \$100 billion that rich countries had pledged in climate finance from 2020.** That goal was met two years late. But preliminary talks this week in Bonn, Germany, have yielded no major breakthroughs. Instead, the talks ending have again exposed the unyielding rifts among the world's biggest economies over who should be paying most to fight climate change – and how much.

The **2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference** or **Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC**, more commonly known as **COP29**, will be the **29<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change conference**. COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Mukhtar Babayev will **preside COP29**. Azerbaijan appointed Mukhtar Babayev as **COP29 president in March 2024**.

## India highlights Forest Conservation and Sustainable Forest Management initiatives at the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

- **India participated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), held at the UN Headquarters in New York.** During the session, India highlighted the Country's significant advancements in forest conservation and **sustainable forest management which led to consistent increase in forest cover over the past fifteen years.**
- **Globally, India ranks third in the net gain, in average annual forest area, between 2010 and 2020.** India shared the high priority the Country provides towards biodiversity and wildlife conservation, having expanded the network of protected areas to over a thousand wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, tiger reserves, biosphere reserves, and other wildlife habitats.
- **The recent celebrations marking 50 years of Project Tiger and 30 years of Project Elephant underscore India's commitment to species conservation and habitat protection.** India also highlighted the creation of the International Big Cat Alliance, another important step aimed to protect and conserve the seven big cat species around the world through collaborative international efforts.
- **India also shared the introduction of the 'Green Credit Program', designed to incentivize entities to take up tree plantation and restoration of degraded forest lands, which aims to further strengthen climate action initiatives.** Previously, India hosted the **Country Led Initiative under UNFF at Dehradun, attended by representatives from 40 countries and 20 international organizations** and held discussions on forest fire management and forest certification. The recommendations from this initiative were presented by India during UNFF 19.

## India at 176 among 180 countries in Environment Performance Index 2024

- **India, the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, was placed among the lowest-rung countries in air quality, projected emissions, and biodiversity and habitat in the 2024 Environment Performance Index (EPI).** India ranked 176<sup>th</sup> among 180 countries, above Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar only, in the overall index released by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network. This is a mild improvement to the last EPI in which India came at the bottom.
- **The 2024 EPI has 58 indicators, including biodiversity, air pollution, air and water quality, waste management, emission growth rates, projected emissions, etc., under the three main heads of ecosystem vitality, environmental health and climate change.** Among these three heads, India does not rank among the bottom ten countries only in climate change. **In air quality, India ranks 177<sup>th</sup>, above Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal only, and in projected emissions by 2025, it ranks 172<sup>nd</sup>.**
- **Estonia leads the index by reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 59% from 1990 levels.** The report shows that only five countries — Estonia, Finland, Greece, Timor-Leste, and the United Kingdom — cut their GHG emissions at the rate needed to reach net zero by 2050. **In South Asia, India is identified as the largest emitter of transboundary pollution, impacting neighbouring Bangladesh and affecting residents' well-being.**

## India to host first Solar Festival, aim to enhance renewable energy sector

- **India is all set to host the first ever International Solar Festival in September this year.** The announcement was made by the International Solar Alliance in New Delhi. Emphasising the solarisation of public infrastructure and India's transition to renewable green energy from fossil fuels, the Solar Festival is expected to boost India's leadership in the global south in the renewable energy sector.
- The International Solar Festival will begin in September in New Delhi where **the global forum will participate, including countries from the African continent and the West along with institutions like the Asian Development Bank, United Nations, World Bank and several others,** who will offer financial support to enhance the renewable energy sector to meet the global demand and reduce dependency on the fossil-fuels globally.

The International Solar Alliance is a common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The initiative was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015 by the then, President of France and the Prime Minister of India. In January 2016, Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance headquarters and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India. Ajay Mathuri is the current Director General of ISA.

## 3 states seek shrinking of eco-sensitive areas in Western Ghats

- **Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa, three of the six states where the Centre has proposed eco-sensitive areas (ESA) to protect the Western Ghats,** have sought a reduction in the extent of these ESAs to allow development works. The states flagged the need for rationalisation of these ESAs, spread over 56,825 sq km in the Ghats in their discussions with an expert panel appointed by the Centre to finalise a draft notification.
- **The current draft is in the fifth iteration, with its first version issued in March 2014. And with a consensus elusive so far,** the latest draft notification, published in July 2022, is set to expire, too. **The panel, headed by Sanjay Kumar, former Director General of Forests, and comprising members from the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, and the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing,** was appointed in July 2022. It has since held multiple meetings with officials from the six Western Ghat states — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu — besides seeking inputs from Geological Survey of India, National Institute of Hydrology, Forest Survey of India and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

## Chile to install world's largest astronomy camera on the edge of Atacama desert

- **With a resolution above 3.2 gigapixels,** a nearly three-ton weight and the ambitious task of carrying out an unprecedented decade-long exploration, **the largest digital camera ever built for optical astronomy is ready to be installed under the clear skies of northern Chile.**
- **The pieces required to assemble the Vera C. Rubin Observatory - which includes a ground-based telescope and the camera - traveled in several vehicles to the summit of Cerro Pachón in the Coquimbo region, on the edge of the Atacama desert, some 565 kilometers north of Santiago.**
- According to its website, **the Rubin Observatory is a complex, integrated system consisting of an eight-meter wide-field ground-based telescope, the camera, and an automated data processing system.** It will generate approximately 20 terabytes of data per night and its ten-year exploration will produce a catalog database of 15 petabytes. **The goal of the exploration will be to understand the nature of dark energy and dark matter in the universe - of which only a small part is known - as well as studying the possibility of Earth colliding with asteroids, or stars and planets close to the sun. AURA is a consortium of 47 U.S. institutions and three international affiliates** that operate astronomical observatories for the National Science Foundation and NASA. It is responsible for managing, among others, the NOIRLab center.



## SPORTS



### Sports Personalities in News

#### T20 World Cup: Rohit Sharma becomes first batter to hit 600 sixes in international cricket

- **India captain Rohit Sharma hit another milestone during India's 2024 World Cup opener against Ireland in New York.** Finishing with four fours and three sixes in his innings of 52, **Rohit became the first batter to hit 600 sixes in international cricket.** Rohit's tally has been constructed from a total of 499 games across formats. Behind him in the all-time list are Chris Gayle (553 maximums), Shahid Afridi (553), Brendon McCullum (478), and Martin Guptill (398).

#### Sarabjot Singh shoots gold at Munich World Cup

- **Sarabjot Singh secured India's first gold at the ISSF World Cup in the men's 10m air pistol event,** outshooting top competitors with a score of 242.7 in the final. He narrowly edged out Bu Shuaihang of China. The 22-year-old's stellar performance, marked by consistent shooting and nerve under pressure, earned him his second individual ISSF World Cup medal.

#### French Open: Iga Świątek Wins Women's Singles Title, 3<sup>rd</sup> Time in A Row

- In the French Open Tennis Women's singles final, **World No. 1 Iga Swiatek of Poland overcame an early wobble to beat first-time Italy's Jasmine Paolini 6-2, 6-1 at Roland Garros.** She became only the third woman in the Open era to clinch three straight French Open titles. **In her first appearance in the final of a Grand Slam, 12<sup>th</sup> seed Jasmine Paolini, on her way defeated Bianca Andreescu, Elena Rybakina and the starlet Mirra Andreeva.**

#### Sift Kaur Samra Bags Bronze Medal in Women's 50m Rifle 3-Position in ISSF Rifle Pistol World Cup

- **Women's 50m rifle 3-positions specialist Sift Kaur Samra won a bronze medal** on the concluding day of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol in Munich, as India ended the competition with two medals. **Sarabjot Singh had won gold in the Men's 10m Air Pistol.** Sift shot 452.9, to give up silver by an agonizing 0.1 to China's Han Jiayu, the reigning Air Rifle Women's World Champion. World No. 1 Seonaid Mcintosh of Great Britain won gold with a score of 466.7.

#### Puja Tomar is India's first MMA fighter to win a bout in UFC

- **Puja Tomar, scripted history as she became the first-ever Indian to win a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in UFC Louisville 2024.** Tomar won by the split decision of 30-27, 27-30, 29-28, beating Rayanne Amanda dos Santos.

#### French Open: Carlos Alcaraz wins his third Slam at age of 21

- The 21-year-old **Carlos Alcaraz defeated the German fourth seed Alexander Zverev 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 to lift his first French Open title.** He becomes the seventh Spaniard in the Open Era to lift the Roland Garros trophy. 21-year-old Carlos Alcaraz wins his third Grand Slam, defeating Alexander Zverev 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4.

## Magnus Carlsen claims victory in Norway Chess 2024; Ju Wenjun wins women's event

- **Magnus Carlsen won the Norway Chess 2024 tournament after defeating Fabiano Caruana** in the Armageddon with white pieces. The duo had played out 52 moves in the Armageddon format before Caruana threw in the towel. Their classical game had meandered into a draw after 25 moves with a three-fold repetition on the board. **Carlsen's victory was confirmed by Praggnanandhaa holding World No 2 Hikaru Nakamura to a draw in the classical portion.** Meanwhile, in the women's section of Norway Chess, Ju Wenjun claimed the title with 19 points ahead of Anna Muzychuk who was three points behind her in second place.

## Tennis: India's Sumit Nagal Clinches Heilbronn Neckarcup Challenger In Germany

- In tennis, **India's Sumit Nagal clinched the Heilbronn Neckarcup Challenger in Germany.** He defeated Alexander Ritschard of Switzerland in the men's singles title clash. **This is his 6<sup>th</sup> ATP Challenger title.** With this victory, Sumit virtually qualified for the upcoming Paris Olympics.

## Sai Sudharsan becomes fastest Indian to reach 1000 runs, breaks Sachin Tendulkar's record

- **Gujarat Titans batter Sai Sudharsan became the quickest Indian to reach 1000 runs** in the Indian Premier League, eclipsing Sachin Tendulkar and Ruturaj Gaikwad during the IPL 2024 match against Chennai Super Kings at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. **The left-handed Sudharsan reached the 1000-run mark in his 25<sup>th</sup> innings in the IPL,** surpassing the joint-Indian record held by the legendary Tendulkar and Gaikwad who scaled the feat in 31 innings apiece.

## Neeraj Chopra finishes second in Doha Diamond League

- **Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra finished second at the Doha Diamond League meeting javelin throw event as his big final effort of 88.36m fell short by two centimeters of Jakub Vadlejch's winning effort.** Chopra trailed Czech Republic veteran Vadlejch – who won the title with his third round throw of 88.38m – all through the competition. Chopra made a last ditch effort but his final round throw fell 2 cm short of Vadlejch's mark as the Indian superstar failed to defend the title he had won last year.

## Lauren Price becomes Wales' first female world champion boxer

- **Lauren Price claimed the WBA, IBO and Ring Magazine welterweight world titles with a comprehensive victory over Jessica McCaskill in Cardiff.** Price was competing in only her seventh professional fight after a stellar amateur career that brought Olympic gold in Tokyo three years ago. **The former international footballer's target was to become Wales' 14<sup>th</sup> world champion – and the first female –** on a night when home fans turned out in force to fill Cardiff's Utilita Arena.

## Shruti Vora become first Indian to win 3-star Grand Prix event

- **Shruti Vora rewrote the history books after she became the first Indian rider to claim a three-star Grand Prix event by winning in Lipica, Slovenia with a scoreline of 67.761 points.** Notably, India had also performed really well at the Hangzhou Asian Games in the equestrian dressage team event. The team of Sudipti Hajela, Divyakriit Singh, Hriday Chheda and Anush Agarwalla had bagged a gold at the prestigious event.

## Divya Deshmukh Wins World Junior Girls' Chess Championship

- **In chess, India's Divya Deshmukh won the World Junior Girls' Chess Championship after beating Bulgaria's Beloslava Krasteva** in the final round at the Gift City Club in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Top-seeded Divya beat Krasteva in the 10<sup>th</sup> round with just 26 moves to claim her maiden U-20 title. She finished unbeaten in the championship by winning nine of her games while drawing the other two.

## India Clinches Their First Medal At BRICS Games In Kazan, Russia

- **India clinched their first medal at the ongoing BRICS Games in Kazan, Russia with the women's table tennis team** comprising Poymantee Baisya, Moumita Dutta and Yashini Sivasankar clinching a bronze medal. Indian women's TT team lost to China 1-3 in the semi-final to settle for a bronze in the Russian city.

## Celtics rout Mavericks to win record 18<sup>th</sup> NBA championship

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- **Jayson Tatum produced a dazzling 31-point display as the Boston Celtics dominated the Dallas Mavericks 106-88 to clinch a record-breaking 18<sup>th</sup> NBA championship crown.** Tatum spearheaded a superb performance at both ends of the floor as Boston pulled clear of their arch-rival Los Angeles Lakers to stand alone with 18 NBA titles. The emphatic win came 16 years to the day after Boston's last NBA Finals win – over the Lakers – in 2008.

## Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi Wins Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 Crown

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- **India's highest-rated chess player Grandmaster (GM) Arjun Erigasi, has won the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 crown in Jermuk, Armenia, with a round to spare.**

## Neeraj Chopra wins gold in javelin throw at world athletics continental gold tour in Finland

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- **Olympic and World Champion Neeraj Chopra has won the Gold medal in the men's javelin throw competition at the World Athletics Continental Gold Tour at the Paavo Nurmi Stadium in Turku, Finland.** However, Chopra responded with his best throw of the day, a soaring 85.97-meter effort in his third attempt.

## Shakib Al Hasan becomes first bowler to pick 50 wickets in T20 World Cup history

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- **Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib al Hasan became the first bowler to pick 50 wickets in T20 World Cup history at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, North Sound, Antigua.**

## Formula One Grand Prix: Verstappen beats Norris for third Spanish win in a row

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- **Max Verstappen won the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix for the third year in a row while McLaren's pole-sitter Lando Norris rued a poor start that he said had cost him victory.** Max Verstappen won the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix for the third consecutive year; beating Lando Norris by 2.2 seconds, while Lewis Hamilton finished third and George Russell fourth.

## Table tennis | Sreeja Akula does the double: Wins singles and doubles WTT titles in Lagos

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- **Sreeja Akula created history at the WTT Contender in Lagos by becoming the first Indian to clinch a singles title at a Contender level.** Impressively, she also won the women's doubles title, becoming the first Indian to win two titles at the same event at this level of World Table Tennis events.
- **With her singles triumph, Sreeja is set to reach a career-high ranking of World No. 25, becoming the highest-ranked Indian, leapfrogging Manika Batra, who has been India's top female paddler for the majority of the last few years.** Sreeja had already once gone past Batra earlier this year.

## Kapil Dev takes over as president of Professional Golf Tour of India

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- **World Cup-winning former India cricket captain Kapil Dev has taken over as the new President of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI), an elevation that marks a fresh beginning for the iconic player who also excelled as an amateur golfer.** The 65-year-old, who was already a member of the PGTI Board as its Vice President, was chosen unanimously and would be taking over from incumbent H R Srinivasan, whose tenure has come to an end.

## Shafali Verma becomes fastest woman double-centurion in Test cricket

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- **Dashing India opener Shafali Verma smashed the fastest double-century in the history of women's Test cricket, eclipsing Annabel Sutherland of Australia during the one-off Test against South Africa.** Shafali, scored her double ton off just 194 balls, bettering Sutherland's feat, which came off 248 balls against South Africa earlier this year.
- **Shafali also became the second Indian after former skipper Mithali Raj to hit a double century in Test cricket after almost 22 long years here. Mithali's 214 had come off 407 balls and the former India skipper achieved during the drawn second Test against England at Taunton in August, 2002.** Shafali struck 23 fours and eight maximums during her attacking knock. She brought up her twin ton with consecutive sixes of off-spinner Delmi Tucker, followed by a single. Shafali was finally run out at 205 off 197 balls.



## Sport Events

### ICC announce record prize money for 2024 T20 World Cup, winners to receive \$2.45 million

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has revealed the record-breaking prize money for the ongoing T20 World Cup in the United States and the West Indies. The world cricket governing body shared that the total prize fund for the marquee tournament is \$11.25 million (93.5 Cr INR), out of which the winning side will receive \$2.45 million (20.3 Cr INR).
- This is a jump of close to \$850,000 from the last T20 World Cup, in 2022 in Australia, where the winners, England, pocketed \$1.6 million. The total prize money for the tournament has more than doubled: from \$5.6 million in 2022 to \$11.25 million dollars in this year's 20-team tournament.

### UEFA Champions League Final: Real Madrid Clinch Record-Extending 15<sup>th</sup> Title

- Real Madrid withstood a Borussia Dortmund barrage to win the Champions League for the 15<sup>th</sup> time as Dani Carvajal and Vinicius Junior struck late in a 2-0 win at Wembley. Madrid have now won their last nine European Cup finals and won the competition six times in the last 11 seasons. However, not for the first time in that run, they had to rely on some good fortune as underdogs Dortmund were left to bitterly regret not making the most of their first-half chances.

### Canadian Grand Prix 2024

- Red Bull's Max Verstappen won a gripping wet-dry Canadian Grand Prix that developed into a five-car battle for the lead over the final 10 laps. Verstappen expertly managed a restart after a safety-car period with 11 laps to go to bolt into a decisive lead while McLaren's Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri fought with the Mercedes of George Russell and Lewis Hamilton behind him.

### Indian women's compound archery team wins hat-trick of World Cup gold medals

- Indian compound women's archery team of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Aditi Swami and Parneet Kaur continued their imperious form this season, securing a hat-trick of World Cup gold medals with a win over Estonia in the third stage of the event in Antalya. The women's compound team thus has been unbeatable this season, having won the World Cup Stage 1 and Stage 2 gold medals in Shanghai and Yecheon in April and May respectively.

### India become first team to breach 600 mark in women's Tests

- 603 for 6 India's total against South Africa in Chennai. It is the highest team total in women's Test cricket, bettering the 575 for 9 dec by Australia against South Africa earlier this year. India also became the first team to breach the 600-run mark in first-class cricket. The previous highest was 595 all out by Australia against England A in 1998.

### Indian Olympic Association Announce First-Ever 'India House' at Paris Olympics 2024

- The Paris 2024 Olympics, which is exactly a month away, will see plenty of historic firsts but the one that holds immense significance for India will be the first-ever country House at the Olympic Games – the India House. Conceptualised by Reliance Foundation as part of their partnership with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), the India House will be a celebration of the nation's rich cultural and sporting heritage, showcasing India's storied past, vibrant present, and exciting future alongside advances in technology and digitalisation. As India House prepares to open its doors to athletes, dignitaries, and sports enthusiasts from around the world, it will embody the spirit of unity, diversity, and excellence that defines the Indian ethos.

### Indian Contingent Clinches 11 Medals, At Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman

- India concluded their campaign at the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman, Jordan, on a resounding note. The young Indian contingent clinched a total of 11 medals, including four gold, two silver, and five bronze medals. Women wrestlers grabbed all four gold medals.
- Dipanshi in 46 kg, Muskan in 53 kg, Rajnita in 61 kg, and Mansi Lather in 69 kg delivered stellar performances in their respective weight categories to clinch the yellow metal. Raja Bala had to settle for a silver in the 40 kg category, despite her valiant efforts.

## Odisha to sponsor Hockey India till 2036

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- **The Odisha government announced the extension of its sponsorship for Hockey India until 2036 – a year that marks the centenary of the state’s formation in 1936.** The decision was taken after a Hockey India delegation met new Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the state guest house in Bhubaneswar. “During the meeting, we discussed the advancement of sports and strategies to elevate our beloved sport to new heights.

## India to host Junior Hockey World Cup in 2025

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- **India will host next year’s men’s Junior Hockey World Cup,** the Executive Board of the International Hockey Federation announced. The tournament will be held in December and it will be the first time ever that a Hockey Junior World Cup will include as many as 24 teams.

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## AWARDS



### Sonu Nigam honoured with prestigious UK Fellowship for musical achievements

- **Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam, who was in the UK for a concert series, has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by a leading Indian diaspora students' organisation for his worldwide impact in the field of music. The National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK conferred Nigam with the Fellowship during his packed performance at Wembley Arena in London. It was presented on stage by veteran British Indian Labour MP Virendra Sharma and Professor Rachel Dwyer, Emeritus Professor of Indian Culture at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).**

### Ashutosh Gowariker becomes first Indian producer to receive 'Saint Tropez Medal'

- **Producer Ashutosh Gowariker has become the first Indian filmmaker to be honoured with the 'Saint Tropez Medal'. A ceremony was organised in the city of Saint Tropez, France for excellence in cinema. Where Ashutosh was honoured with the prestigious 'Saint Tropez Medal' at the Nirvana Indian Culture and Cinema Festival. Indian filmmaker Leena Yadav's 'Parched' and Jude Anthony Joseph's '2018 - Everyone is a Hero' were also screened at the event. Gowariker's 'Swades' was also shown in St. Tropez. During this time, along with the screening of films, many cultural programs related to Indian food, fashion, music, dance and yoga were also held.**

### Vellayan Subbiah, chairman of Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co, wins EY World Entrepreneur of the Year award

- **Vellayan Subbiah, executive vice-chairman of Tube Investments of India and chairman of Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co, has won the EY World Entrepreneur of The Year 2024 title. Subbiah was chosen from nearly 5,000 businesspeople worldwide. India's fourth win in 24 years solidifies its status as the only country across EY regions to achieve this feat. Subbiah's leadership in his family's business and his transformation of TII, a 70-year-old manufacturing company, demonstrate his humble and personable approach to leadership.**

### Sebi Wins 'Best Business Regulator' Award in Asia Pacific

- **Sebi has been given 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' award in Asia Pacific by The Asian Banker for its role in enhancing the regulatory framework for securities markets in India. The award was received by Sebi's Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney in a ceremony held in Hong Kong.**
- **"This authority (Sebi) has been actively working towards instantaneous settlement. In 2021, T+1 settlement was introduced in a phased manner, which was fully implemented from January 2023. This move has provided investors with faster access to their funds following trade execution and settlement, enhancing market efficiency and liquidity".**

### Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais Presents 'Plastic Export Excellence Award'

- **Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais highlighted the global success of the Indian plastic industry and urged the sector to establish "Brand India" through research, innovation, and excellence. He presented the**



‘Plastic Export Excellence Award’ given by the Plastics Export Promotion Council under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Government of India in Mumbai. P. Tapadia received the Lifetime Achievement Award, and Arvind Goenka, former president of the council, was given a special honour. In total, 75 plastic exporters were awarded

### K-Pop boy group Seventeen to become UNESCO ambassadors

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- **K-pop megastars Seventeen will become UNESCO “goodwill ambassadors”.** Seventeen, the 13-strong South Korean band founded in 2015, were **second only to Taylor Swift for global revenue last year**, according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI).
- **They also topped the IFPI album charts in 2023 with “FML”** and have racked up billions of streams online. They will officially take on their UNESCO functions – which involve promoting youth-focused projects around the world – in a ceremony at its Paris headquarters on June 26.
- **The group has already been working with the organisation less formally and performed at the UNESCO Paris office** in November. Other current ambassadors include Brazilian footballer Vinicius, actors Rossi de Palma and Forest Whitaker, and Italian-Argentinian chef Mauro Colagreco.

### Indian-origin Tinessa Kaur is first Sikh woman to win top barrister award in UK

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- A 32-year-old Indian-origin barrister, **Tinessa Kaur was once a homeless teenager, has made history by becoming the first Sikh woman to win the prestigious Young Pro-Bono Barrister of the Year award in the UK.** At 17, Tinessa Kaur moved from Leicester to Greenford, West London, relying on the Sikh community’s support to transition from homelessness to education. Now 32, she has achieved success in her legal career.

### Shantaram, Lifetime Achievement Award for 2024 Will Be Given To Subbiah Nallamuthu

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- Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting **L Murugan announced at Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF 2024) that the most coveted, V. Shantaram, Lifetime Achievement Award** for this year will **be given to Subbiah Nallamuthu**, a renowned, award-winning Wildlife filmmaker from Chennai. He filmed “Living on the Edge”, the longest running wildlife series.
- Mr. Murugan said that a documentary Film Bazaar is being **organized for the first time this year. He said that this will help boost the film production by providing a platform to filmmakers to find buyers, sponsors and collaborators** for their projects. Mr. Murugan also attended the Opening Film at MIFF National Geographic’s documentary, ‘Billy and Molly: An Otter Love Story’.

### The Golden Thread’ Awarded As Best Documentary In International Category With Golden Conch Award

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- **Indian Documentary ‘The Golden Thread’ is awarded as Best Documentary in international category with Golden Conch Award in Closing** ceremony of 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival. In the special category of ‘India in Amrit Kaal’, director **Edmond Ranson was conferred with the Best Short Film award for ‘Life In Loom’.** Sreemoyi Singh grabbed the Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranagari Award for Best Debut Director for her film ‘And, Towards Happy Alleys’.
- In the National Competition category, **‘6-A Akash Ganga’ won the Silver Conch Award best documentary, ‘Salt’ grabbed the Best Short Fiction Silver Conch, whereas ‘Nirjara’ of NID Ahmedabad was conferred with the Silver Conch for Best Animation. In international competition category, ‘Zima’ from Poland won the Silver Conch for Best Animation and ‘Sour Milk’ from Estonia grabbed the Silver Conch for Best Short Fiction.** The curtain closer ceremony of the 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival MIFF is underway in Mumbai.

### Sahitya Akademi announces Yuva Puraskar, Bal Sahitya Puraskar winners for 2024

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- **The Sahitya Akademi announced the names of 23 writers, including English writer K. Vaishali and Hindi author Gaurav Pandey, who will receive the prestigious Yuva Puraskar across as many languages.** The National Academy of Letters also announced the names of 24 winners of the Bal Sahitya Puraskar for 2024. Gaurav Pandey won the prestigious award for his poetry collection “Smritiyon Ke Beech Ghiri Hai Prithvi”.

- The Yuva Puraskar has been awarded for 10 poetry books, seven collections of short stories, two collections of articles and one of essays, one novel, one book of ghazals and one memoir. The other winners of the Yuva Puraskar are Nayanjyoti Sarma (Assamese), Sutapa Chakraborty (Bengali), Self Made Rani Baro (Bodo) and Heena Choudhary (Dogri).

### India bags two more Lions at Cannes, total tally at 14

- The 71<sup>st</sup> edition of the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity commenced on June 17 in the French riviera. Leo Burnett Mumbai win a silver Lion for their Oreo #BringBack2011 campaign in the ‘creative effectiveness’ Lions category while Ogilvy Mumbai won a bronze in the ‘creative strategy’ Lions category for their work on Vi’s ‘Human Network Testing Network’ campaign.
- In the Creative Effectiveness Lions category, Leo Burnett (Mumbai) picked up a Silver Lion for its ‘Bring Back 2011’ campaign for Oreo. In the Creative Strategy Lions category, Ogilvy (Mumbai) won a Bronze Lion for their ‘VI Human Network Testing Network’ campaign for Vodafone Idea. On June 19, Leo Burnett (Mumbai) picked up a Gold Lion for their ‘Turf Finder’ campaign for Gatorade in the Creative Data Lions category. In the PR Lions category, FCB Kinnect (Mumbai) won a Silver Lion for their ‘Lulumelon Eoss’ campaign for HDFC Bank. The media agency for the campaign is FCB/SIX India.

### Dr Usha Thakur Awarded 12<sup>th</sup> Vishwa Hindi Samman In Hindi Samvad Event

- Dr Usha Thakur was awarded 12<sup>th</sup> Vishwa Hindi Samman in an Hindi Samvad event organised by Embassy of India in Nepal recognising her contribution in development of Hindi literature. She has translated more than 40 literatures in Hindi and Nepali and strengthened Hindi language.
- This award is given by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 12<sup>th</sup> World Hindi Conference was held in Fiji in 2023. As Dr Thakur could not attend the event in Fiji, she was given the award in an event organised in Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu. She emphasised that Hindi is a widespread contact language for tourists and locals in Nepal.

### Arundhati Roy Honored with Prestigious Pen Pinter Prize 2024

- In a significant recognition of her literary contributions, Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy has been awarded the esteemed Pen Pinter Prize for 2024. This honour comes at a time when Roy faces potential legal challenges, highlighting the importance of her work and the ongoing struggle for freedom of expression.
- The Pen Pinter Prize, established in 2009 by the charity English PEN, stands as a beacon for: Defending freedom of expression, Celebrating impactful literature and Honoring the memory of Nobel-Laureate playwright Harold Pinter.

### Sanjana Thakur Wins 2024 Commonwealth Short Story Prize

- Sanjana Thakur 26 years old, writer from Mumbai, beat competition from over 7,359 entrants worldwide to be named the winner of the GBP 5,000 Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2024 in London on June 27. Sanjana’s story entitled Aishwarya Rai takes its name from the famed Bollywood actress to reimagine and reverse the traditional adoption story.
- The Commonwealth Short Story Prize is an annual award for unpublished short fiction administered and funded by the Commonwealth Foundation. The overall winner of the Commonwealth Short Story Prize will receive £5,000 and the remaining four regional winners £2,500. If the winning short story is a translation into English, the translator will receive additional prize money.

### GRSE Wins Sustainable Governance Champion Award

- Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd. has been honoured with the “Sustainable Governance Champion Award” at the Outlook Planet Sustainability Summit & Awards 2024. This recognition highlights GRSE’s unwavering commitment to sustainable practices and governance excellence.
- Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd, abbreviated as GRSE, is one of India’s leading shipyards, located in Kolkata. It builds and repairs commercial and naval vessels. GRSE also exports the ships that the company builds. Founded in 1884 as a small privately-owned company on the eastern bank of the Hooghly River,

it was renamed as Garden Reach Workshop in 1916. GRSE was nationalised by the Government of India in 1960. The company was awarded the Miniratna public sector undertaking status, with accompanying financial and operational autonomy in September 2006. GRSE is the first Indian shipyard to build 100 warships.

### Subbiah Nallamuthu Honored with V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award

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- **The renowned wildlife filmmaker Subbiah Nallamuthu has been conferred with the prestigious 18<sup>th</sup> V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contributions to the field of non-feature and wildlife documentary filmmaking.** The award was presented to him by the Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, L. Murugan, at the inaugural ceremony of the 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- **The V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award is a prestigious honor instituted in 1990 by the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in memory of the legendary filmmaker V. Shantaram.** It is awarded at the Mumbai International Film Festival to filmmakers who have made significant contributions to documentary films. **The first recipient of the award was Ezra Mir in 1990.**

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## PERSONS IN NEWS

### Arjun Rampal Becomes The First Indian Celebrity To Raise \$1.5 Million USD For CRY India

- Arjun Rampal has always been known for his captivating screen presence and remarkable acting talent. However, beyond the glitz and glamour of the film industry, Arjun is also known for his philanthropic deeds.
- He recently emerged as a passionate advocate for children's rights, championing the cause with unwavering dedication. In 2024, his commitment to making a difference reached new heights as he became the first Indian celebrity to raise an astounding \$1.5 million for CRY America, a non-profit organisation dedicated to ensuring every child's right to a happy, healthy, and educated life.
- His involvement in the galas hosted in various parts of America significantly elevated the events, drawing high-net-worth individuals and generous donors who contributed to this remarkable fundraising feat.

### Chandrika Ravi becomes first Indian woman to host American radio show

- India-origin Australian actress Chandrika Ravi will soon be seen on an American talk show. She will host an American talk show called 'The Chandrika Ravi Show'. In this show, she will be seen sharing her experiences and struggles. Inspired by her struggle, Rooks Avenue Radio founder Sammy Chand has given her this opportunity. Being behind the camera is a new experience compared to my years of acting. People will be able to see me in my real form".

### Ayesha Hazarika becomes first British-Indian of Assamese descent to join House of Lords

- Ayesha Hazarika became the first British-Indian of Assamese descent to be appointed to the House of Lords, the upper chamber of the country's parliament. She took her seat as 'Baroness Hazarika of Coatbridge'. Apart from being a broadcaster, Hazarika has previously worked as a special adviser to prominent Labour leaders like Gordon Brown and Ed Miliband.

### Indian Jain leader Lokesh Muni to establish world peace centre in US

- A prominent Jain spiritual leader Lokesh Muni has announced the establishment of the World Peace Center in New Jersey, aimed at promoting global peace through various means, including the training of peace ambassadors. "The establishment of the World Peace Center in New Jersey is a significant step towards creating a platform where global conflicts can be addressed.

### Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi, the next Army chief

- The government announced that Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi will be the next chief of the Army Staff succeeding incumbent Gen Manoj Pande. Dwivedi is presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff. The tenure of the present Chief of the Army Staff, General Manoj C Pande, ends on June 30.

### Govt approves re-appointment of NSA Ajit Doval, PM's Principal Secy P K Mishra

- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of P K Mishra as the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister and Ajit Doval as the National Security Advisor (NSA). During the term of their office, they will be assigned the rank of Cabinet Minister in the Table of Precedence.

### R Ashwin to reveal cricketing journey in his autobiography

- Veteran India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin is all set to reveal his long and experience-filled cricketing journey in his autobiography. Titled "I Have the Streets: A Kutti Cricket Story", and written by the veteran cricketer with author Sidharth Monga, the autobiography is said to be a candid reflection of Ashwin's life from before he became a cricket star.

### Iran's imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi sentenced to another year in prison

- Iran's imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Narges Mohammadi, has been sentenced to another year in prison over her activism, her lawyer said. Mostafa Nili, Mohammadi's lawyer, said that his client was convicted on a charge of making propaganda against the system.

- Nili said the sentence came **after Ms. Mohammadi urged voters to boycott Iran’s recent parliamentary election**, sent letters to lawmakers in Europe and made comments regarding torture and sexual assault suffered by another Iranian journalist and political activist.

## Suhas Subramanyam is first Indian-American to win Democratic primary in Virginia

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- **Suhas Subramanyam has won the Democratic primary in Virginia’s 10<sup>th</sup> congressional district, becoming the first Indian-American to succeed in the crowded race.** Subramanyam defeated 11 other candidates in the race, including fellow Indian-American Krystle Kaul.

## Alia Bhatt Debuts As Author With Children’s Book Ed Finds A Home

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- **Alia Bhatt, the acclaimed Bollywood actress, has added a new feather to her cap by stepping into the world of children’s literature.** Alia shared on Instagram that she has turned author with the release of her debut book, ‘The Adventures of Ed-a-Mamma: Ed Finds A Home.’ ‘Ed Finds A Home’ is the inaugural instalment in a series inspired by her kidswear brand, ‘Ed-a-Mamma,’ launched in 2020.

## King Charles honours India-born brain trauma expert Prof. David Krishna Menon

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- **An India-born brain trauma expert and Professor of Anaesthesia at the University of Cambridge has been conferred with one of the high honours by Britain’s King Charles III for “services to neurocritical care”.** According to the Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) NHS Foundation Trust, as the first director of NCCU, he pioneered the first recognised training programme for specialist neurocritical care in the UK. Protocols developed improved clinical outcomes in severe head injury and the management of acute intracranial haemorrhage.
- **Menon has been an intensive care consultant on the NCCU since 1993, and remains active as a full member of the neurocritical care clinical team.** He is also a director of research, principal investigator in the Wolfson Brain Imaging Centre, and principal investigator in the van Geest Centre for Brain Repair, at the University of Cambridge.

## Zara Shatavari, India’s entry to the world’s first Miss AI beauty pageant

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- **Zara Shatavari, an AI-generated model, has surged to the forefront, earning a spot among the top 10 finalists in the inaugural Miss AI Competition.** This unprecedented contest, organised by Fanvue, has captivated global attention by showcasing the fusion of beauty, technology, and social influence.
- **Zara, representing India, was selected from over 1,500 international entries. Zara Shatavari was created by Rahul Choudhry, co-founder of an Indian mobile ad agency, and epitomises the blend of advanced technology and cultural authenticity.** “Zara’s mission is to empower individuals to live their best lives by sharing valuable insights and tips on health, career development, and the latest fashion trends.”

## J.P. Nadda named Leader of House in Rajya Sabha

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- **BJP president and Union Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda has been named Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha, replacing Union Minister Piyush Goyal,** who won from the Mumbai North constituency in the Lok Sabha elections and took oath as a member of the Lower House. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

## Ravi Agrawal appointed CBDT chairman

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- **Ravi Agrawal, a 1988-batch IRS officer, has been appointed as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT),** the administrative body for the Income Tax Department. He takes over from Nitin Gupta, a 1986-batch Indian Revenue Service officer, whose extended tenure as the chairman ends on June 30. The new CBDT chief is currently working as Member (Administration) in the Board at present.

## Sujata Saunik, Maharashtra’s first woman chief secretary

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- **IAS officer Sujata Saunik took charge of chief secretary of Maharashtra becoming the first woman** in the state’s 64-year-old history to hold the position. Saunik is set to serve a one-year term before retiring in June next year.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Gujarat's First Blue Flag Beach

- **Shivrajpur Beach, the first in Gujarat to receive the Blue Flag certification**, offers clear water, serene sunset views, and boating activities. This certification marks a significant achievement for the region, enhancing its appeal as a tourist destination.

### Karnataka gets first-of-its-kind WhatsApp chatbot for snakebite awareness

- **To bring more awareness about snakebite prevention as well as to prevent snake persecution, a first-of-its-kind WhatsApp chatbot has been launched in Mysuru.** Karnataka also became the first state in India to declare snakebite as a notifiable disease.
- **The chatbot, launched by Humane Society International (HSI) India in collaboration with The Liana Trust, an organisation** that engages in conservation efforts by educating people, provides easily accessible information about snake species found in Mysuru. They also provide lifesaving snakebite first-aid, snakebite prevention tips, and myth-busting around misinformation about snakes that can lead to acts of cruelty.

### Bengaluru's Namma Metro Goes Driverless, First in India

- A new chapter in the history of Bengaluru Metro Rail is ready to be unveiled. **The first Driverless Metro Train services will be made available** in a few months. **Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) announced that the first six-coach train has reached Bangalore from China.** It stated that these coaches have been moved to Hebbagodi depot in Electronic City. This train will run from RV Road on Yellow Line to Electronic City via Silk Board. A Chinese firm has manufactured these driverless metro train and coaches. BMRCL has signed an agreement with the company to manufacture 216 coaches. **For the first time, the Bengaluru Metro will be using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to monitor the tracks for safety purposes.**

### Joshimath renamed as Jyotirmath, Kosiyakutoli is now Kainchi Dham

- **The Centre has approved the Uttarakhand government's proposal to rename Joshimath tehsil** in Chamoli district as Jyotirmath, and Kosiyakutoli tehsil in Nainital district as Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami had announced the renaming last year. It was a long-standing demand of local residents, who had raised the issue with the CM, citing Joshimath's historical and spiritual significance.

### Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated Newly Constructed 'Prerna Sthal' in Parliament House Complex

- **Vice President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated the newly constructed 'Prerna Sthal' in the Parliament House complex.** The 'Prerna Sthal' has been built in a way to ensure convenience of dignitaries and other visitors who will be able to see and pay tributes to the statues of great leaders and freedom fighters at one place inside the Parliament House Complex. An action plan has been made to make the life stories and messages of these great personalities available to the visitors through new technology so that they could get inspiration from them. Lawns and gardens have been laid around the Statues at 'Prerna Sthal'.

### Nepal: Mahalaxmi Jatra Organized In Various Parts of Kathmandu Valley

- **The Mahalaxmi Jatra in Kathmandu Valley started on Akshaya Tritiya day of Baisakh month** and continues for three days culminating in several localities as Banepa Nala and Panauti of Nepal. It is a **traditional festival celebrated in honour of the goddess Mahalaxmi.**
- In Banepa in the Kavre District, **the Jatra starts by making Chariots for Goddess Mahalaxmi, Lord Ganesh and Shivling in the Ugrachandi temple premise in Nala.** During this Jatra, devotees gather to worship the goddess, take her in a chariot to take a round of the village and play with vermilion, completely colouring the streets red, through which the chariot moves.
- Devotees push the chariots and take over every lane in the town seeking goddess blessings. It is a significant event in the local community, blending religious traditions with cultural festivities. **Nala Bhagwati is a temple**



situated in the Banepa Municipality of Kavrepalanchok district. The temple was built in the pagoda style whose foundations were laid by Jagajyoti Malla, the king of Bhaktapur in 1677 B.S.

### Central India's first gamma irradiation centre to help export orange, agri produce

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- Nagpur is set to get central India's first commercial gamma irradiation centre for sterilisation of food and other products. This facility, developed by 2021 start-up Vishwesh Agromed, is currently under construction at SEZ Mihan, and is scheduled to be operational from November this year.
- With only 20 such centres across India, eight of which are for commercial use, this new centre marks a significant milestone for the region. "The introduction of gamma irradiation can be a boon for farmers in Vidarbha, a region where a lot of produce goes waste due to high heat and pests".

### NHAI Signs MoU With IIT Delhi To Enhance Road Safety Through AI

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- The Government has said that an agreement aimed at enhancing road safety through the deployment of Artificial Intelligence was signed between the National Highways Authority of India and Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said that this initiative will leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) based solutions for improvement in the availability of road signs on National Highways.
- As a part of the agreement, IIT Delhi will conduct surveys to collect imagery and other related data related to the availability and condition of road signs on selected National Highway stretches. Around 25,000 km of tentative length of Highways stretches will be covered under this project. The data collected through surveys will be processed by IIT Delhi through the deployment of Artificial Intelligence for accurate identification and classification of road signs. The survey report based on the results will include geo-stamped inventory of existing road signs with the categorisation, broad structural condition of the road signs, and other ancillary data.

### NHAI to begin work on J&K's Chattergala tunnel

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- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will begin work on the Rs. 4,000-crore Chattergala tunnel at the earliest to ensure all-weather road connectivity between Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Union Minister of State Jitendera Singh, who accompanied Gadkari, said the proposal for the Chattergala tunnel was initiated six years ago and a detailed project report was also prepared by the Border Roads Organisation agency Beacons. Work on it could not be undertaken due to lack of funds. NHAI will now carry out the construction of the tunnel as well as the new national highway from Kathua's Lakhanpur, which will pass through the tourist spots of Basohli and Bani to Bhaderwah and Doda.

### In a first in India, Delhi airport expands self-drop baggage and check-in kiosks to all terminals

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- The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) expanded the Self Service Bag Drop (SSBD) facility to Terminals 1 and 2, making the Indira Gandhi International Airport the first in India and the second globally, after Toronto Airport, to implement the initiative. Last year in June, the Delhi airport had launched the facility for Terminal 3. Approximately 50 SSBD units across Terminals 1 and 3 will now enable travellers to bypass check-in desks by printing their boarding passes and baggage tags at the Common Use Self Service (CUSS) kiosks. Upon reaching the SSBD unit, passengers can scan their boarding passes or use the biometric cameras, then drop their bags on the conveyor belt by completing the process in about a few minutes.

### 2025 to be International Year of Quantum Science and Tech, UN says

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- The United Nations has said 2025 will be designated the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology'. The proclamation is the result of a resolution led by Mexico in May 2023 and which was soon joined by other countries.
- By November that year, almost 60 countries had co-sponsored the resolution and the UNESCO General Conference adopted it. In May this year, Ghana submitted a draft resolution to the U.N. General Assembly asking for an official proclamation, with the support of over 70 other countries.

### Four AFMS Officers create history in 43<sup>rd</sup> World Medical & Health Games in Saint-Tropez, France

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- **Four Armed Forces Medical Service (AFMS) Officers have brought laurels to India by clinching a record 32 Medals in the 43<sup>rd</sup> World Medical and Health Games held in Saint-Tropez, France.** These Officers, namely Lt Col Sanjeev Malik, Maj Anish George, Capt Stephen Sebastian, and Capt Dania James, made history by winning 19 Gold Medals, 09 Silver Medals and 04 Bronze Medals in the in World’s largest sports event for health professionals.

### Maharashtra Governor releases book titled ‘Gateways to the Sea: Historic Ports and Docks of Mumbai Region’ brought out by Publications Division and compiled by Maritime Mumbai Museum Society

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- **The Governor of Maharashtra Shri Ramesh Bais released a book titled ‘Gateways to the Sea: Historic Ports and Docks of Mumbai Region’** at Raj Bhavan Mumbai. The book has been published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
- **It comprises of 18 articles by renowned authors, compiled by the Maritime Mumbai Museum Society (MMMS).** On the occasion, Governor of Maharashtra Shri Ramesh Bais felicitated MMMS and the 17 authors and two editor. He also encouraged the citizens of Mumbai to learn about their ancient maritime history.

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## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Milk Day

- **World Milk Day is an international day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization** of the United Nations to recognize the importance of milk as a global food. It has been **observed on June 1 each year since 2001**. World Milk Day was first designated by the FAO in 2001. June 1 was chosen as the date because many countries were already celebrating a milk day during that time of year.
- **The theme for this year's World Milk Day focuses on the significance of dairy in providing nutrition and nourishing the world.** The best way to spend the day is by attending a World Milk Day event and learning more about milk and other dairy products.
- **National Milk Day is observed on 26 November** to highlight the importance of milk and its benefits. **On 1<sup>st</sup> June every year, World Milk Day is also celebrated which was established by the Food and Agricultural Organisation.** India is the largest producer of milk.
- **Vergheese Kurien is known as the “Father of the White Revolution”** in India. He was a social entrepreneur whose vision of the **“Billion-Litre Idea”, Operation flood, made dairy farming India’s largest self-sustaining industry and the largest rural employment sector** providing a third of all rural income. **This made India the largest producer of milk in the world.**

### World Bicycle Day 3 June

- In April 2018, the United Nations General Assembly **declared June 3 as World Bicycle Day.** This year's theme is **“Promoting Health, Equity, and Sustainability through Cycling,”** emphasizing the broad benefits of cycling.

### World Environment Day 2024

- **On June 5 each year, World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated.** The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) founded the WED in 1972. Environment Day is one of the greatest global events for the environment. This day acts as a platform to bring issues to light about the ecological issues faced by our planet. **his year (2024), the theme of the World Environment Day says, “Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience.”** It's tied in with bringing back healthy land, keeping deserts from developing, and managing water shortages. Trees, healthy soil, and clean water are imperative for a solid planet.

### UN Russian Language Day

- **UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on June 6.** The event was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2010. UN Russian Language Day coincides with the birthday of Alexander Pushkin, a Russian poet who is considered the father of modern Russian language.

### World Food Safety Day

- **World Food Safety Day on 7 June 2024 will draw attention to food safety incidents.** This year's theme is **“Food Safety: Prepare for the Unexpected.”** As per the WHO, **“This year's theme underlines the importance of being prepared for food safety incidents, no matter how mild or severe they can be”.**

### World Oceans Day 8 June

- **World Ocean Day is an international day that takes place annually on 8 June.** The concept was **originally proposed in 1992 by Canada's International Centre for Ocean Development and the Ocean Institute of Canada at the Earth Summit – UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.** **“Awaken New Depths”** is the theme for World Oceans Day 2024.

### International Day of Play 11 June

- **The first-ever International Day of Play, to be observed on 11 June 2024,** marks a significant milestone in efforts to preserve, promote, and prioritize playing so that all people, especially children, can reap the rewards and thrive to their full potential.



- Beyond mere recreation, it is a universal language spoken by people of all ages, transcending national, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries. This shared passion fosters a sense of community and national pride. **The first-ever International Day of Play on June 11 is seen as a big step in promoting and prioritising play for everyone, especially for children, so they reap the rewards and thrive to their full potential.**

### World Blood Donor Day

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- **World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) is held on June 14 each year.** The event was **organised for the first time in 2004, by four core international organizations: the World Health Organization, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations (IFBDO) and the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT)** to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products, and to thank blood donors for their voluntary, life-saving gifts of blood.
- **The theme for World Blood Donor Day 2024 is: “20 years of celebrating giving: thank you blood donors!”** The theme highlights two important aspects. First, it is an opportunity to express gratitude for those who voluntarily choose to donate blood.

### World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, 17 June

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- **The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on 17 June.** Its purpose is to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought. Each year’s global celebration has a unique, novel emphasis that had not been developed previously. **The theme of this year’s World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is - ‘United for Land. Our Legacy. Our Future’.**

### World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 15 June

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- **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day takes place on 15 June and unites the world in opposition to the abuse & suffering inflicted on older people.** This year’s World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), with the theme **“Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies,”** emphasizes the urgent need to protect and support older individuals during crises.
- It calls on governments, international donors, organizations, and communities to prioritize the safety and well-being of older persons in their emergency preparedness and response strategies. It encourages the development of inclusive policies that ensure older persons are not overlooked during crises. **WEAAD 2024 also highlights the importance of education and training for emergency responders, caregivers, and the public.** By raising awareness about the specific challenges faced by older persons in emergencies, we can foster a more inclusive and protective environment.

### Global Wind Day 2024

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- Recently, **the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) organised ‘Global Wind Day’ on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with the theme of “Pawan Urja: Powering the Future of India”.** The event aimed at celebrating the success of the Indian Wind Sector and discussing ways to accelerate wind energy adoption in India.

### World Crocodile Day 2024

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- **World Crocodile Day is celebrated on June 17<sup>th</sup>.** The recurrence is a global awareness crusade to highlight the problematic situation of endangered crocodiles and alligators worldwide. This year commemorates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Crocodile Conservation Project initiated in 1975 in Odisha’s Bhitarkanika National Park.

### Sustainable Gastronomy Day 18 June

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- The UN General Assembly adopted and designated 18 June as an **international observance, Sustainable Gastronomy Day.** The decision acknowledges gastronomy as a cultural expression related to the natural and cultural diversity of the world.
- **In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as the Earth is facing a triple planetary crisis of climate disruption, nature loss and pollution,** sustainable gastronomy - celebrating seasonal ingredients and producers, preserving wildlife as well as our culinary traditions - is today more relevant than ever.

## World Music Day

- **The Fête de la Musique, also known in English as Music Day, Make Music Day, or World Music Day, is an annual music celebration that takes place on 21 June.** On Music Day, citizens and residents are urged to play music outside in their neighborhoods or in public spaces and parks. The theme for World Music Day 2024 is yet to be disclosed. However, last year's theme was 'Music on the intersections'.

## World Hydrography Day

- **On 21 June every year, the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) celebrates the World Hydrography Day** to raise awareness about hydrography and how it plays a vital role in improved knowledge of the seas and oceans.
- **The theme for 2024 is “Hydrographic Information - Enhancing Safety, Efficiency and Sustainability in Marine Activities”** in consideration of the on-going transformation in navigation, such as e-navigation, autonomous shipping and reduction of emissions leading to a profound evolution of hydrographic services.
- **The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD) functions under the Indian Navy as the nodal agency for Hydrographic surveys and nautical charting in India.** The department has the mandate to undertake hydrographic surveys and publish navigational charts.

## PM Modi Leads 10<sup>th</sup> International Yoga Day Celebrations in J&K's Srinagar

- **The 10<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga is being celebrated across the globe on 21 June, 2024.** The main function was held at Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the celebrations from Srinagar. J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Union Minister Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav and many other dignitaries joined the programme.
- **Regarding the theme of this year's IYD -'Yoga for Self and Society',** PM Modi said that the world is looking at yoga as a powerful agent of global good and enables us to live in the present without the baggage of the past. To maximize the inclusiveness of Yoga benefits, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also written a letter to all Gram Pradhans, encouraging grassroots participation and the spread of yoga in rural areas

## International Day of Yoga 21 June

- **The International Day of Yoga is a day in recognition of Yoga, that is celebrated across the world annually on 21 June,** following its adoption by the United Nations in 2014. **This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga with the theme “Yoga for Self and Society.”** Yoga, a transformative practice, represents the harmony of mind and body, the balance between thought and action, and the unity of restraint and fulfillment.

## International Day of Women in Diplomacy 24 June

- **At the UNGA's 76<sup>th</sup> Session, the General Assembly by consensus declared the 24<sup>th</sup> of June each year to be the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.** By the resolution the Assembly invited all Member States, United Nations organizations, non-governmental groups, academic institutions and associations of women diplomats — where they exist — to observe the Day in a manner that each considers most appropriate, including through education and public awareness-raising. **The theme of 2024 is “Women's Leadership in Multilateral Diplomacy.”**

## International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, 26 June

- **The United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is an international observance held annually on 26 June** to speak out against the crime of torture and to honor and support victims and survivors throughout the world. The first 26 June events were launched in 1998.

## Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, 27 June

- **The United Nations General Assembly designated 27 June as “Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day”** to raise awareness of the tremendous contributions of MSMEs to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **MSMEs account for 90% of businesses, 60 to 70% of employment and 50% of GDP worldwide.** As the backbone of societies everywhere they contribute to local and national economies and to sustaining livelihoods, in particular among the working poor, women, youth, and groups in vulnerable situations.

### International Asteroid Day 30 June

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- In December 2016 the **United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution declaring 30 June International Asteroid Day** in order to “observe each year at the international level the anniversary of the **Tunguska impact over Siberia, Russian Federation, on 30 June 1908**, and to raise public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard.” International Asteroid Day aims to raise public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard and to inform the public about the crisis communication actions to be taken at the global level in case of a credible near-Earth object threat.

### “Statistics Day” celebrated on June 29, 2024

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- In recognition of the notable contributions made by **Professor (late) Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics and economic planning**, Government of India has **designated June 29 every year, coinciding with his birth anniversary, as “Statistics Day”** in the category of Special Days to be celebrated at the national level. **The theme for Statistics Day, 2024 is “Use of data for decision-making”.**

### International Day of the Tropics 29 June

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- **The inaugural State of the Tropics Report was launched on 29 June 2014**, as the culmination of collaboration between twelve leading tropical research institutions. The report offers a unique perspective on this increasingly important region. **Marking the anniversary of the report’s launch the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution in 2016, which declared that 29 June of each year is to be observed as the International Day of the Tropics.**



## QUESTIONS

1. Recently, The U.S. and top African allies conducted the African Lion military exercise in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Mozambique (b) The Gambia (c) Morocco (d) Algeria
2. Which tiger reserve in India has become the pioneer in India to implement an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based forest fire detection system?  
(a) Kanha Tiger Reserve (b) Pench Tiger Reserve  
(c) Manas Tiger Reserve (d) Ranthambore Tiger Reserve
3. Which of the following countries has become the first to ban Israeli citizens from entering its borders in solidarity with Palestine over the ongoing Gaza conflict?  
(a) Turkey (b) Iran (c) Maldives (d) Qatar
4. The Bank Clinic is an initiative by the All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBE) to help customers address their grievances amid rapid expansion in technology and a series of \_\_\_\_\_ guidelines on retail banking.  
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) NABARD (c) State Bank of India (d) Reserve Bank of India
5. Which of the following countries provided the highest foreign direct investment (FDI) to India in 2023-24?  
(a) Mauritius (b) Singapore (c) United States (d) Maldives
6. Which of the following institutes has been appointed as the mentor for the new IIM in Assam?  
(a) IIM Bangalore (b) IIM Calcutta (c) IIM Ahmedabad (d) IIM Lucknow
7. Which of the following teams recently won the UEFA Champions League for the 15<sup>th</sup> time?  
(a) Manchester City (b) Real Madrid (c) Bayern Munich (d) Borussia Dortmund
8. World Milk Day is an international day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and is observed on \_\_\_\_\_ each year since 2001.  
(a) May 25 (b) May 31 (c) June 1 (d) June 5
9. Which of the following political parties secured a landslide victory in the Sikkim assembly elections, and how many seats did they win?  
(a) Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), 31 seat  
(b) Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 31 seats  
(c) Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM), 31 seats  
(d) Indian National Congress (INC), 19 seats
10. Which of the following Indian Business Groups has recently become only the third Indian conglomerate to log \$10 billion in annual operating profit, having reached that milestone in FY24?  
(a) Adani Group (b) Tata Group (c) Reliance Group (d) Godrej Group
11. Who among the following recently became the first Indian filmmaker to receive the 'Saint Tropez Medal' of France?  
(a) Sanjay Leela Bhansali (b) Ashutosh Gowariker  
(c) Karan Johar (d) Anurag Kashyap
12. Name the Bollywood singer who has been recently awarded an Honorary Fellowship by a leading Indian diaspora students' organisation of UK for his worldwide impact in the field of music.  
(a) Kumar Sanu (b) Sonu Nigam (c) Arijit Singh (d) Shaan
13. What is the name of the indigenous stealth frigate deployed by the Indian Navy for Exercise RIMPAC in Hawaii?  
(a) INS Vikrant (b) INS Talwar (c) INS Shivalik (d) INS Kolkata

14. Which of the following recently launched the 'Saaṙthi 2.0' mobile app, and where was it launched?  
(a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in New Delhi  
(b) Ministry of Finance in Chennai  
(c) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in Mumbai  
(d) Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) in Kolkata
15. Who is projected to become Mexico's first woman president in the country's 200-year history?  
(a) Claudia Sheinbaum (b) Margarita Zavala (c) Rosario Robles (d) Beatriz Paredes
16. The United Nations General Assembly had declared \_\_\_\_\_ as World Bicycle Day.  
(a) May 29 (b) June 1 (c) June 3 (d) June 5
17. Which of the following Indian state governments will soon roll out Rs. 10,000-crore project funded by the World Bank to address air pollution?  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Rajasthan (d) Himachal Pradesh
18. What recent milestone did the State Bank of India (SBI) achieve in terms of market capitalization?  
(a) ₹6 lakh crore (b) ₹7 lakh crore (c) ₹8 lakh crore (d) ₹9 lakh crore
19. According to Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar how many voters participated in the Lok Sabha 2024 Polls and created a world record?  
(a) 49.9 crore (b) 55.4 crore (c) 64.2 crore (d) 69.7 crore
20. Recently, The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software named  
(a) DhaRA (b) PraVaHa (c) ShuDDH (d) ShaNT
21. Which railway station of the Indian Railways became the first to receive certification from the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE)?  
(a) Charbagh Railway Station (b) Gorakhpur Central Railway Station  
(c) Banaras Railway Station (d) Prayagraj Central Railway Station
22. Recently, The Department of School Education signed an MoU with the \_\_\_\_\_ in New Delhi to create an institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya.  
(a) Ministry of Education (b) CBSE  
(c) NCERT (d) National Book Trust
23. Which of the following countries recently approved the suspension of a contentious military agreement with North Korea a step that would allow it to take tougher responses to North Korean provocations?  
(a) South Korea (b) Thailand  
(c) Singapore (d) Japan
24. Which of the following international organizations is India utilizing to address its concerns regarding Australia's changes to its commitments?  
(a) International Monetary Fund (IMF) (b) World Health Organization (WHO)  
(c) World Trade Organization (WTO) (d) United Nations (UN)
25. Which of the following developed the world's first EV battery passport for flagship EX90 SUV?  
(a) Geely (b) ESA  
(c) European Union (d) Volvo
26. Which country is **not** among the top three countries that emerged as India's largest export destination?  
(a) The Netherlands (b) U.S.  
(c) Mauritius (d) UAE

27. NASA and the \_\_\_\_\_ are collaborating to develop a standardized time system for the moon as part of the Artemis program, which aims to return humans to the lunar surface.  
(a) Indian Space Research Organisation (b) European Space Agency  
(c) Japan Space Agency (d) ROSCOSMOS
28. Which of the following Indian space startups successfully launched the nation's first 3D-printed rocket engine?  
(a) ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) (b) Agnikul Cosmos  
(c) Reliance Space Technologies (d) SpaceX India
29. World Environment Day is celebrated annually on \_\_\_\_\_ and encourages awareness and action for the protection of the environment.  
(a) 1 June (b) 3 June (c) 5 June (d) 9 June
30. Name the first Indian celebrity to raise \$1.5 Million USD for CRY India?  
(a) Arjun Rampal (b) Hrithik Roshan (c) Amitabh Bachchan (d) Ajay Devgan
31. The UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 2 (b) June 4 (c) June 6 (d) June 9
32. Name the first urban local body in the country to have launched a climate budget.  
(a) Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (b) Surat Municipal Corporation  
(c) New Delhi Municipal Corporation (d) Patna Municipal Corporation
33. Which of the following countries' citizens are being favored for joining the Australian armed forces under the new eligibility criteria?  
(a) Germany, France, USA and Germany  
(b) China, India, New Zealand, and the United States  
(c) Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States  
(d) Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Peru
34. Which of the following countries hosts much of the world's investment in astronomy, due to the clear skies of its Atacama Desert, the driest desert on earth?  
(a) Peru (b) Brazil (c) Argentina (d) Chile
35. Which two locations in India have been recently designated as Ramsar Sites?  
(a) Sundarbans and Kaziranga National Park  
(b) Nagi Bird Sanctuary and Nakti Bird Sanctuary  
(c) Jim Corbett National Park and Gir Forest National Park  
(d) Keoladeo National Park and Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary
36. Who recently became the first batter to hit 600 sixes in international cricket?  
(a) Virat Kohli (b) David Warner  
(c) Martin Guptill (d) Rohit Sharma
37. Recently, The World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed the first human death from bird flu in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Mexico (b) Fiji (c) Ghana (d) Canada
38. Which of the following Asian countries will host next year's annual gathering of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents over 330 airlines worldwide?  
(a) China (b) Japan (c) India (d) Indonesia
39. The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework agreement is likely to be signed at the two-day clean economy investor forum meet in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Bangkok (b) Manila (c) Singapore (d) London



40. Which IIT was ranked 150 in the latest edition of the QS World University Rankings 2025 released recently?  
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi  
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi  
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras
41. Which of the following political party's president is sworn in as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh for the record fourth time?  
(a) Indian National Congress  
(b) Telugu Desam Party  
(c) Jana Sena Party  
(d) Bharatiya Janata Party
42. Who among the following recently secured India's first gold at the ISSF World Cup in the men's 10m air pistol event?  
(a) Sarabjot Singh  
(b) Nitesh Kumar Singh  
(c) Jitesh Sharma  
(d) Vipul Ranjan Kheterpal
43. Who is **not** in the alliance to put joint efforts into building a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector?  
(a) South Korea  
(b) Australia  
(c) United States  
(d) European Union
44. World Food Safety Day on \_\_\_\_\_ 2024 will draw attention to food safety incidents.  
(a) 5 June  
(b) 7 June  
(c) 9 June  
(d) 11 June
45. Which of the following European countries is the first to request to join South Africa's case accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza?  
(a) France  
(b) Spain  
(c) Germany  
(d) Italy
46. Which of the following political parties in India has the highest number of women MPs elected in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections?  
(a) Congress  
(b) BJP  
(c) TMC  
(d) Samajwadi Party
47. What percentage of stake will Tata Sons Private Limited hold in the merged entity of Vistara and Air India?  
(a) 73.38%  
(b) 25.1%  
(c) 1.52%  
(d) 100%
48. What was the duration of the expected trip for Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams aboard Boeing's Starliner capsule?  
(a) 10 hours  
(b) 15 hours  
(c) 25 hours  
(d) 48 hours
49. Name first Indian airport to offer India's first biometric-enabled self-bag drop facility, enhancing the travel experience for domestic flyers of Tata Group Airlines.  
(a) Kempegowda International Airport  
(b) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport  
(c) Indira Gandhi International Airport  
(d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
50. Recently, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to keep the policy rate of \_\_\_\_\_ unchanged for the eighth time in a row, saying it will maintain a tight vigil on inflation.  
(a) 3.7%  
(b) 4.8%  
(c) 5.9%  
(d) 6.5%
51. Name the Indian UNESCO World Heritage site that is set to become India's first Green Destination.  
(a) Hill Forts of Rajasthan  
(b) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus  
(c) Mamallapuram, or Mahabalipuram  
(d) Konark
52. Which of the following Indian states became the first to recently launch Regenerative Tourism?  
(a) Goa  
(b) Maharashtra  
(c) Uttarakhand  
(d) Himachal Pradesh

53. Which of the following countries is not elected to serve for two years from January next year as non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council?  
(a) Pakistan (b) Panama (c) Greece (d) Zimbabwe
54. Recently, President Droupadi Murmu appointed Narendra Modi to the office of Prime Minister of India exercising powers vested in her under \_\_\_\_\_ of the Constitution.  
(a) Article 56 (1) (b) Article 72 (1) (c) Article 74 (3) (d) Article 75 (1)
55. Who has recently proposed to bring an auto-replenishment facility for UPI Lite wallet?  
(a) RBI (b) Ministry of Finance (c) UPI (d) NPCI
56. Who recently won Women's singles final in French Open?  
(a) Jasmine Paolini (b) Anna Simmer  
(c) Alexandara Switachekech (d) Iga Swiatek
57. The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter is a spacecraft designed to search for the existence of water on Mars and provide support for missions to Mars, as part of \_\_\_\_\_ Mars Exploration Program.  
(a) JAXA's (b) ISRO's (c) ROSCOSMOS's (d) NASA's
58. World Ocean Day is an international day that takes place annually on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 3 June (b) 5 June (c) 8 June (d) 11 June
59. Recently, which of the following Indian states announced a step towards securing World Heritage recognition for Choraideo Maidam?  
(a) Karnataka (b) Nagaland (c) Assam (d) Sikkim
60. Who among the following recently won a bronze medal in Women's 50m rifle 3-position in International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol in Munich?  
(a) Sift Kaur Samra (b) Maneka Ranjan  
(c) Dilpreet Sayal Khanna (d) Kanak Bijlani
61. Who recently won the Norway Chess 2024 tournament?  
(a) Fabiano Caruana (b) R Praggnanandhaa (c) Magnus Carlsen (d) David Wiese
62. Who among the following recently became the first-ever Indian to win a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in UFC Louisville 2024?  
(a) Puja Tomar (b) Anita Yadav (c) Sushmita Sen (d) Divya Rana
63. Shri. Nara Chandrababu Naidu took oath as Chief Minister of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Odisha (d) Tamil Nadu
64. The first state in India to declare snakebite as a notifiable disease is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
65. The first woman helicopter pilot of Indian Navy is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Sub-Lieutenant Dhruvi Rana (b) Sub-Lieutenant Alankrita Bannerjee  
(c) Sub-Lieutenant Abhilasha Prakash (d) Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev
66. Who has been recently given 'Best Conduct of Business Regulator' award in Asia Pacific?  
(a) SEBI (b) NSE (c) BSE (d) SIDBI
67. The youngest-ever Union Cabinet Minister in Narendra Modi Cabinet 3.0 is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani (b) Jitin Prasad  
(c) Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu (d) Harsh Malhotra

68. Giorgia Meloni is the current Prime Minister of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Italy (b) France (c) Spain (d) Bulgaria
69. The Lok Sabha Secretariat is developing \_\_\_\_\_ in the Parliament House Complex and all the statues of great leaders and freedom fighters of the country are being installed in this.  
(a) “Mahaan Sthal” (b) “Prabhaav Sthal”  
(c) “Prerak Sthal” (d) “Prerana Sthal”
70. Who among the following recently won the EY World Entrepreneur of The Year 2024 title?  
(a) Vellayan Subbiah (b) Isha Ambani  
(c) Binny Bansal (d) Anand Piramal
71. Who among the following recently won men’s singles title in French Open 2024?  
(a) Alexander Zverev (b) Laslo Djere (c) Carlos Alcaraz (d) Lesia Tsuranko
72. Name the joint mission of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) with the French national space agency, National Centre for Space Studies (CNES).  
(a) ALEXA (b) TRISHNA (c) SUSHAS (d) TRINES
73. Recently, which of the following countries have affirmed consensus on the upgradation of the CPEC?  
(a) India and Nepal (b) China and Pakistan (c) Japan and Singapore (d) Indonesia and Malaysia
74. Recently, In a significant development, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), has entered into an agreement with the \_\_\_\_\_ to establish a fast instant payments system similar to India’s Unified Payments Interface (UPI).  
(a) Central Bank of Peru (b) Central Bank of Chile  
(c) Central Bank of Panama (d) Central Bank of Malaysia
75. Recently, Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan, becoming only the second after Jawaharlal Nehru to secure a \_\_\_\_\_ consecutive term.  
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
76. Recently which of the following countries Prime Minister Alexander De Croo has resigned following his party’s crushing loss in national and European parliamentary elections?  
(a) Spain (b) Belgium (c) Brazil (d) Chile
77. Recently, Reserve Bank has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of \_\_\_\_\_, to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for Digital Payments Intelligence Platform.  
(a) A P Hota (b) Suhas S Gupta (c) M N Khan (d) J K Lal
78. Recently, Prem Singh Tamang took oath as the Chief Minister of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Sikkim (b) Manipur (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Manipur
79. Who of the following countries recently launched the world’s first-of-its-kind “Pink Plus” economy?  
(a) Vietnam (b) New Zealand (c) Seychelles (d) Thailand
80. Which of the following countries recently announced world’s first green fuel?  
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Canada (d) USA
81. Who was elected as the President of the UN General Assembly for its seventy-ninth session?  
(a) António Guterres (b) Philemon Yang (c) Ban Ki-moon (d) Moussa Faki Mahamat
82. Who among the following recently clinched the Heilbronn Neckarcup Challenger in tennis recently?  
(a) Sumit Nagal (b) Kalpesh Mehta (c) Vishal Kalra (d) Mohit Chandana

83. How many additional houses has the Union Cabinet approved for construction under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) during the first meeting of the Cabinet of Narendra Modi 3.0?  
(a) 1 crore (b) 2 crore (c) 3 crore (d) 4 crore
84. Who among the following recently won the Canadian Grand Prix 2024?  
(a) George Russell (b) Lewis Hamilton (c) Max Verstappen (d) Lando Norris
85. Which country scientists recently make world's first 'Living' computer using human brain tissue?  
(a) France (b) Sweden (c) Belgium (d) Norway
86. Who is the first Buddhist to head the Ministry of Minority Affairs in India?  
(a) Agatha Sangma (b) Pema Khandu (c) Kiren Rijiju (d) Prem Singh Tamang
87. Which of the following countries recently joined the Artemis Accords?  
(a) Brazil (b) India (c) Peru (d) Canada
88. Name the Political Party of Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni that clinched a notable 28 per cent of the votes in the European elections.  
(a) Democratic Party (b) Five Star Movement  
(c) Brothers of Italy (d) Forward Italy
89. The Indian Army has launched \_\_\_\_\_ an integrated generator monitoring, protection, and control system developed by the Army Design Bureau (ADB).  
(a) 'Vidyut Rakshak' (b) 'Vidyut Prakash'  
(c) 'Vidyut Bachat' (d) 'Vidyut Sudhaar'
90. Name India's first mutual fund house to surpass ₹10 lakh crore in Average Asset under Management (AAUM)?  
(a) ICICI Mutual Fund (b) HDFC Mutual Fund  
(c) Axis Mutual Fund (d) SBI Mutual Fund
91. Who has been recently announced as the next Chief of the Army Staff by the government?  
(a) Lt Gen Vinay Sahasbuddhe (b) Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi  
(c) Lt Gen Manoj Kalra (d) Lt Gen Mahendra Ranjan
92. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), which of the following will now become UNESCO "goodwill ambassadors"?  
(a) Coldplay (b) Seventeen (c) Metallica (d) The Who
93. The first Indian-origin Sikh woman to win top barrister award in UK is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Shalini Ahuja (b) Anita Kaur (c) Tinessa Kaur (d) Harsimrat Kaur
94. The recently elected Lok Sabha after general elections held in India over seven phases from 19 April to 1 June 2024 is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha (b) 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha (c) 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha (d) 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha
95. Which of the following countries took over the chairmanship of BRICS on January 1, 2024?  
(a) India (b) Brazil (c) Russia (d) China
96. Recently, Saulos Klaus Chilima died in Plane Crash. He was the Vice President of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Fiji (b) Malawi (c) Haiti (d) Morocco
97. The Global Economic Prospects report is published by \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) World Bank (b) International Monetary Fund  
(c) World Economic Forum (d) AIIB



98. Which of the following organizations has awarded the contract for developing underwater-launched unmanned aerial vehicles (ULUAVs) to Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt Ltd?  
(a) Indian Navy  
(b) Ministry of Defence  
(c) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)  
(d) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
99. Which of the following countries will host men's Junior Hockey World Cup 2025?  
(a) Australia (b) Germany (c) India (d) Argentina
100. The first-ever International Day of Play was observed on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 5 June 2024 (b) 7 June 2024 (c) 9 June 2024 (d) 11 June 2024
101. The 50<sup>th</sup> G7 Summit was held from June 13 to 15, in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Germany (b) Italy (c) Australia (d) Japan
102. Which of the following places will **NOT** have a new National Security Guard (NSG) unit operational by the end of this year?  
(a) Ayodhya (b) Pathankot (c) Kerala (d) Gandhinagar
103. Which of the following countries recently decided to leave a Russia-led security bloc Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) after accusing Russia to plan a war against his country with Azerbaijan?  
(a) Armenia (b) Albania (c) Kyrgyzstan (d) Belgium
104. Who has been recently elected as the First Vice-Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Paris?  
(a) Shakil Ahmed Shah (b) Harsh Pati Singhanian  
(c) Mukesh Ambani (d) Anand Mahindra
105. Which of the following brands has recently surpassed \$1 trillion in brand value and retained its top position as the world's most valuable brand in 2024?  
(a) Amazon (b) Apple (c) Google (d) Microsoft
106. Which of the following countries were involved in the photographic evidence production of pollution levels for the "painting with light" project?  
(a) India, China, and the U.S. (b) India, Ethiopia, and the U.K.  
(c) India, Brazil, and South Africa (d) India, Russia, and Australia
107. Who won the silver medal in the Men's 5000-metre race at the Portland Track Festival High-Performance Meet in Portland, US?  
(a) Dylan Jacobs (b) Eric Van Der Els  
(c) Gulveer Singh (d) Avinash Sable
108. The screening of 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) will not take place in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kolkata (b) Lucknow (c) Chennai (d) Pune
109. The World Day Against Child Labour is observed every year on \_\_\_\_\_, is aimed at raising awareness and mobilising efforts to end child labour in all its forms.  
(a) June 8 (b) June 10 (c) June 12 (d) June 16
110. Which famous world businessman is related with the memoir 'Source Code'?  
(a) Bill Gates (b) Mukesh Ambani (c) Jack Ma (d) Mark Zuckerberg
111. Which edition of the Japan – India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) is JIMEX 24?  
(a) Sixth (b) Seventh (c) Eighth (d) Ninth

112. Recently which of the following Indian states has accorded approval to provide financial assistance to girl students under the Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina scheme?  
(a) Assam (b) Nagaland (c) Manipur (d) Mizoram
113. The World Economic Forum's released the Global Gender Gap Index data that highlighted a concerning trend for India, now ranking \_\_\_\_\_ out of 146 countries in the index.  
(a) 115<sup>th</sup> (b) 119<sup>th</sup> (c) 124<sup>th</sup> (d) 129<sup>th</sup>
114. According to Moody's Ratings, which of the following countries is projected to be the Asia-Pacific region's fastest-growing economy in 2024?  
(a) China (b) Indonesia (c) India (d) The Philippines
115. Recently, International Astronomical Union (IAU) has recognised exemplary research contributions of heliophysicist \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Devojyoti Kansabanik (b) Sushmit Sen  
(c) Bijoykanta Das (d) Vijay Deshpande
116. Where are the newly discovered craters named after Devendra Lal, Mursan, and Hilsa located on Mars?  
(a) Olympus Mons region (b) Tharsis volcanic region  
(c) Valles Marineris region (d) Hellas Planitia region
117. Who among the following recently became the first Indian rider to claim a three-star Grand Prix event by winning in Lipica, Slovenia?  
(a) Monika Raheja (b) Sheena Vora (c) Shruti Vora (d) Anamika Rana
118. Which of the following places is set to get central India's first commercial gamma irradiation centre for sterilisation of food and other products?  
(a) Bhopal (b) Indore (c) Pune (d) Nagpur
119. Who has been re-appointed as the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister by the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)?  
(a) Ajit Doval (b) P K Mishra (c) Rajiv Gauba (d) Deepak Kulshrestha
120. What is the title of cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin's autobiography?  
(a) "Cricketing Chronicles: The Ashwin Story" (b) "I Have the Streets: A Kutti Cricket Story"  
(c) "Ashwin: The Journey of a Cricket Legend" (d) "From Streets to Stardom: Ashwin's Tale"
121. Which of the following Indian states is preparing a law – said to be the first such in India – to prevent deaths caused by open borewells?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Assam
122. Which tehsil in Nainital district has been recently renamed to Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham?  
(a) Joshimath (b) Chamoli (c) Kosiyakutoli (d) Jyotirmath
123. Recently, Cyril Ramaphosa is re-elected as the President of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) South Africa (b) Zimbabwe (c) Cuba (d) Egypt
124. Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin has approved a plan to jointly build the International Lunar Research Station with \_\_\_\_\_, an ambitious space project which was announced previously by the two close neighbours.  
(a) China (b) Uzbekistan (c) Kyrgyzstan (d) Mongolia
125. According to property consultant Knight Frank's prime global cities index, which Indian city witnessed a 11.5% rise in luxury real estate prices, reaching the third spot globally, after Manila and Tokyo?  
(a) Mumbai (b) Gurugram (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru

126. Which of the following is currently the fourth-highest equity market globally by market capitalization?  
(a) Hong Kong (b) China (c) Japan (d) India
127. The first indigenous loiter munition recently inducted by the Indian army is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Nagastra-1 (b) Sarvastra -1 (c) Kulastra-1 (d) Vinashak-1
128. Which of the following states have recently sought a reduction in the extent of eco-sensitive areas (ESAs) in the Western Ghats to allow for development works?  
(a) Gujarat, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu (b) Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Goa  
(c) Karnataka, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra, Goa, and Kerala
129. Name the Indian who recently won the World Junior Girls' Chess Championship.  
(a) Aparajita Sanghi (b) Ajita Rana (c) Vineeta Rawat (d) Divya Deshmukh
130. World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) is held on \_\_\_\_\_ each year.  
(a) June 10 (b) June 12 (c) June 14 (d) June 17
131. An Indian Air Force-IAF contingent participated in the Exercise Red Flag 2024 conducted at Eielson Air Force Base in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) USA (b) France (c) Germany (d) Canada
132. Recently, Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena sanctioned the prosecution of which novelist for allegedly provocative statements made at a 2010 event propagating Kashmiri separatism, under Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.  
(a) Saba Naqvi (b) Arundhati Roy (c) Aravind Adiga (d) Varuna Rathi
133. Who was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh?  
(a) Dr. P Narayana (b) N Chandrababu Naidu  
(c) Konidela Pawan Kalyan (d) YS Jagan Mohan Reddy
134. The Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in \_\_\_\_\_ is making it to World Selection for the UNESCO Prix Versailles Museums 2024.  
(a) Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh (b) Palwal, Haryana  
(c) Bhuj, Gujarat (d) Ranchi, Jharkhand
135. Which of the following countries will host the 2025 G7 Summit?  
(a) Canada (b) Germany (c) Japan (d) France
136. The first of its kind in India, a geothermal power project of 1 megawatt is being built on a pilot basis by ONGC's Energy Centre at Puga in Changthang area of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Ladakh (c) Sikkim (d) Nagaland
137. Under the CSIR-ASPIRE scheme, how many women scientists are set to receive research grants for three years?  
(a) 100 (b) 200 (c) 300 (d) 400
138. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 11 June (b) 15 June (c) 17 June (d) 19 June
139. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) was celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 11 June 2024 (b) 15 June 2024 (c) 18 June 2024 (d) 20 June 2024
140. Who is the recipient of the V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award at MIFF 2024?  
(a) L Murugan (b) Subbiah Nallamuthu (c) V. Shantaram (d) M Murugan Shastri

141. Name Indian Air Force's first multinational air exercise that will see the participation of ten countries, in addition to a few others acting as observers.  
(a) Tarang Shakti-2024 (b) Bharat Shakti-2024  
(c) India Shakti-2024 (d) Yuva Shakti-2024
142. Which of the following states recently became the first civil secretariat in India to rely fully on solar power?  
(a) Assam (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Kerala (d) Gujarat
143. Which of the following railway bridges holds the title of the world's highest railway bridge?  
(a) Chenab Bridge (b) Sangaldan Bridge (c) Banihal Bridge (d) Reasi Bridge
144. The Parliamentary constituency of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Vadodara (b) Varanasi (c) Valsad (d) Vellore
145. Recently, the two day Summit on Peace in Ukraine ended in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Switzerland (b) Poland (c) Ireland (d) France
146. Which of the following recently won the "Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024" by Central Banking, a leading publication based in London, UK?  
(a) Reserve Bank of India (b) Reserve Bank of Bhutan  
(c) Nepal Rashtra Bank (d) Central Bank of Indonesia
147. The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC will be held in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kazakhstan (b) Turkmenistan  
(c) Malaysia (d) Azerbaijan
148. Who among the following won the Yuva Puraskar for their poetry collection "Smritiyon Ke Beech Ghiri Hai Prithvi" by Sahitya Akademi?  
(a) K. Vaishali (b) Gaurav Pandey  
(c) Nayanjyoti Sarma (d) Sutapa Chakraborty
149. Which of the following Indian players were part of the women's table tennis team that won the bronze medal at the BRICS Games in Kazan, Russia?  
(a) Pooja Sahasrabudhe, Mouma Das, and Yashini Sivasankar  
(b) Poymantee Baisya, Moumita Dutta, and Yashini Sivasankar  
(c) Manika Batra, Ayhika Mukherjee, and Yashini Sivasankar  
(d) Ankita Das, Madhurika Patkar, and Poymantee Baisya
150. Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 10 (b) June 13 (c) June 15 (d) June 18
151. World Crocodile Day is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 12<sup>th</sup> (b) June 15<sup>th</sup> (c) June 17<sup>th</sup> (d) June 19<sup>th</sup>
152. India is ranked \_\_\_\_\_ among 180 countries, in the 2024 Environment Performance Index (EPI) released by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network.  
(a) 154<sup>th</sup> (b) 159<sup>th</sup> (c) 166<sup>th</sup> (d) 176<sup>th</sup>
153. According to a report by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which of the following two countries together possess almost 90 per cent of all nuclear weapons?  
(a) Russia and USA (b) France and Germany  
(c) Japan and China (d) North Korea and Japan



154. Which of the following recently gave final approval to a major and long-awaited plan to better protect nature in the 27-nation bloc?  
(a) European Union (b) Asian Union (c) African Union (d) UNO
155. Which of the following countries has recently launched the world's first self-driving flying taxi?  
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) India (c) USA (d) Australia
156. Name the drive launched by Punjab Police in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs) that will carry out a one-week drive against drugs.  
(a) 'Mission Nishchay' (b) 'Mission Sahyog' (c) 'Mission Nirakaran' (d) 'Mission Sahayata'
157. Air India is setting up a school in \_\_\_\_\_ to train as many as 180 pilots a year.  
(a) Punjab's Amritsar (b) Maharashtra's Amravati  
(c) Assam's Guwahati (d) Uttar Pradesh's Noida
158. Chattergala Pass is a mountain pass in the Middle Himalayas of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Sikkim (c) Uttarakhand (d) Jammu and Kashmir
159. Recently, \_\_\_\_\_, which use cow dung as a "significant" ingredient, have been certified for their quality and eco-friendly attributes by the National Test House (NTH).  
(a) Khadi Praramparik paints (b) Khadi Pratikatmak paints  
(c) Khadi Praktirik paints (d) Khadi Natural paints
160. Name the University which has been declared a World Heritage site established in 2010, by an Act of the Parliament.  
(a) Nalanda University (b) Gaya University (c) Darjeeling University (d) Patna University
161. The Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 5<sup>th</sup> (b) June 11<sup>th</sup> (c) June 15<sup>th</sup> (d) June 18<sup>th</sup>
162. Which of the following countries Senate recently voted overwhelmingly in support of a marriage equality bill, making it the first Southeast Asian country to enact such a law?  
(a) Laos (b) Cambodia (c) Thailand (d) Singapore
163. Which of the following teams recently won the 2024 NBA Finals, championship series of the National Basketball Association (NBA)'s 2023–24 season?  
(a) Dallas Mavericks (b) Miami Heat (c) Denver Nuggets (d) Boston Celtics
164. Which of the following countries participated in the Baltops military exercises as a full NATO member for the first time in June 2024?  
(a) Lithuania (b) Poland (c) Sweden (d) Germany
165. Who is ranked as India's most valued celebrity according to Kroll's Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2023?  
(a) Shah Rukh Khan (b) Virat Kohli (c) Ranveer Singh (d) Akshay Kumar
166. Recently, Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Bangladesh (b) Bhutan (c) Myanmar (d) Nepal
167. Which of the following has recently launched a first-of-its-kind skin bank facility that aims to revolutionise the treatment of severe burn injuries and other skin-related conditions for service personnel and their families?  
(a) Indian Navy (b) Indian Air Force (c) Indian Army (d) Indian Paramilitary Force
168. Who among the following recently released India's first joint doctrine for cyberspace operations?  
(a) The Prime Minister of India (b) The Chief of Defence Staff General  
(c) The Minister of Home Affairs (d) The National Security Advisor

169. Which of the following airports is the second globally and first Indian to implement the Self Service Bag Drop (SSBD) facility?  
(a) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport  
(b) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport  
(c) Indira Gandhi International Airport  
(d) Kempegowda International Airport
170. According to Nestle’s annual report, which of the following countries is the largest market for Nestle’s Maggi, with six billion servings in the financial year 2023-24?  
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) Indonesia
171. Which of the following states received the highest number of complaints by the National Commission for Women (NCW) in 2024?  
(a) Maharashtra (b) Delhi (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Manipur
172. Recently, India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has partnered with \_\_\_\_\_ Transfer, a global leader in cross-border money transfers to provide convenient and affordable doorstep financial services to customers in remote areas across the country.  
(a) Ria Money (b) Quick Money (c) Gia Money (d) Fast Money
173. Who among the following won the Democratic primary in Virginia’s 10<sup>th</sup> congressional district, becoming the first Indian-American to do so?  
(a) Krystle Kaul (b) Suhas Subramanyam (c) Kamala Harris (d) Ro Khanna
174. Recently, environmental activists sprayed an orange substance on Stonehenge, a UNESCO world heritage site in \_\_\_\_\_, demanding legal commitment to phase out fossil fuels by 2030  
(a) England (b) Italy (c) France (d) Belgium
175. Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin and \_\_\_\_\_ leader Kim Jong-un signed a partnership deal during a summit in Pyongyang, in a bid to expand their economic and military cooperation.  
(a) South Korean (b) Laos (c) North Korean (d) Cambodian
176. Which of the following companies recently became the world’s most valuable publicly traded company due to its advancements in artificial intelligence?  
(a) Apple (b) Microsoft (c) Nvidia (d) Google
177. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the “Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K” event in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Srinagar (b) Jammu (c) Udhampur (d) Anantnag
178. What significant change regarding the Earth’s inner core began in 2010 according to a new study?  
(a) It began to speed up its rotation compared to the planet’s surface.  
(b) It began to slow down its rotation compared to the planet’s surface.  
(c) It started moving independently from the Earth’s surface.  
(d) It started to melt into the outer core.
179. Who has won the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 crown in Chess in Jermuk Armenia?  
(a) Arjun Erigasi (b) Gagan Moitra  
(c) Kaustubh Dinkar (d) Vipul Kwatra
180. Who among the following recently won the Gold medal in the men’s javelin throw competition at the World Athletics Continental Gold Tour at the Paavo Nurmi Stadium in Turku, Finland?  
(a) Neeraj Chopra (b) Shahnawaz Khan  
(c) Nirbhay Mundra (d) Vipulav Nair

181. Who has been recently appointed by President Droupadi Murmu as Speaker Protem under Article 95(1) of the Constitution?  
(a) Bhartruhari Mahtab (b) Thalikkottai Rajuvar Baalu  
(c) Radha Mohan Singh (d) Sudip Bandyopadhyay
182. Uttar Pradesh is set to establish the world's first conservation and breeding centre for Asian king vultures or red-headed vultures in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Maharajganj (b) Jhansi (c) Pilibhit (d) Ballia
183. Recently, Surama Padhy was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the \_\_\_\_\_ Assembly.  
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Odisha (c) Sikkim (d) Haryana
184. Recently, The Union Cabinet approved the development of a Rs. 76,200-crore all-weather greenfield deep draft major port at VadHAVAN in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Maharashtra (d) Gujarat
185. The campaign launched by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of World Environment Day 2024 is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 'Ek Ped Bharat Ke Naam' (b) 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam'  
(c) 'Ek Ped Desh Ke Naam' (d) 'Ek Ped Apno Ke Naam'
186. India along with its which neighbor country recently launched a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC)?  
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka
187. Recently, Cyril Ramaphosa was sworn in for a second term as President of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Zimbabwe (b) Eritrea (c) South Africa (d) Somalia
188. Which of the following has recently launched a new thematic index called Nifty India Tourism which will track the performance of stocks in Nifty 500 index representing the travel and tourism theme?  
(a) NSE Indices (b) BSE Indices (c) GIFT Nifty Indices (d) Nifty 500
189. Recently, an agreement aimed at enhancing road safety through the deployment of Artificial Intelligence was signed between the \_\_\_\_\_ and Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi.  
(a) National Highways Authority of India  
(b) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways  
(c) RITES Limited  
(d) IRCON International
190. Recently, The United Nations said that \_\_\_\_\_ will be designated the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology'.  
(a) 2034 (b) 2025 (c) 2045 (d) 2027
191. Recently, the second edition of the global conference on financial resilience which was organized by the College of Supervisors (CoS) of RBI was held in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Bengaluru (d) Hyderabad
192. What was the theme of this year's International Day of Yoga?  
(a) Yoga for Health (b) Yoga for Peace  
(c) Yoga for Self and Society (d) Yoga for a Better World
193. The EAGLE Act or the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment Act is associated with which of the following countries?  
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) USA  
(c) Canada (d) Australia

194. Recently, The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has unveiled India's first Nifty EV & \_\_\_\_\_, marking a significant step in the fast-paced growth of the country's stock market.  
(a) Indian Automotive Index (b) National New Age Auto Index  
(c) New Age Automotive Index (d) Motion EV Indian Index
195. Which of the following Indian institutes won the joint second prize in the Trinity Challenge's second competition for their project on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)?  
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi  
(b) Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru  
(c) Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi  
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
196. What was the name of the winged vehicle used in the third and final Landing Experiment (LEX-03) conducted by ISRO?  
(a) Vikram (b) Vaayu (c) Pushpak (d) Kaustubh
197. Who among the following recently became the first bowler to pick 50 wickets in T20 World Cup history?  
(a) Shakib al Hasan (b) Trent Boult (c) Pat Cummins (d) Andre Russell
198. Recently, The Indian compound women's archery team achieved a hat-trick of World Cup gold medals by defeating which country in the third stage of the event in Antalya?  
(a) Lithuania (b) Latvia (c) Estonia (d) Panama
199. When is the Fête de la Musique, also known as Music Day, celebrated annually?  
(a) July 4 (b) December 25 (c) June 21 (d) October 31
200. Who among the following recently received the Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranagari Award for Best Debut Director at the 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival?  
(a) Edmond Ranson (b) Sreemoyi Singh  
(c) Vipul Maurya (d) Deepak Mishra
201. Who is leading the high-level committee constituted by the Ministry of Education to oversee the National Testing Agency (NTA)?  
(a) Randeep Guleria (b) B J Rao (c) K Radhakrishnan (d) K Kasturirangan
202. Which will be India's first Mega Port?  
(a) Vadhavan Port (b) Mumbra Port (c) Mundra Port (d) Kochi Port
203. Which of the following states in India showed a year-on-year growth in Foreign Direct Equity Investments (FDI) during fiscal year 2024 despite the national decline to a five-year low?  
(a) Karnataka (b) Maharashtra (c) Rajasthan (d) Kerala
204. Which of the following countries performed world's first innovative liver transplant surgery, saving patient with advanced liver cancer?  
(a) Japan (b) India (c) China (d) USA
205. Which of the following states announced the extension of its sponsorship for Hockey India until 2036?  
(a) Jharkhand (b) West Bengal (c) Odisha (d) Uttar Pradesh
206. The World Hydrography Day is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 17 June (b) 21 June (c) 23 June (d) 25 June
207. Yuri Gagarin became the first human to complete one orbit of Earth in year \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 1957 (b) 1959 (c) 1961 (d) 1965



208. What is a requirement for Indian nationals and OCI cardholders applying for the Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)?
- (a) Submission of passport copy only
  - (b) Biometric data (fingerprint and facial image) along with specified information
  - (c) Proof of financial stability
  - (d) Submission of Residential Proof of Last 15 Year
209. What is the primary purpose of the India-Russia mutual logistics agreement?
- (a) To facilitate trade and economic cooperation between India and Russia
  - (b) To streamline military-to-military exchanges including exercises, training, port calls, and HADR efforts
  - (c) To establish a joint military alliance against common adversaries
  - (d) To promote cultural exchanges and tourism between India and Russia
210. Why was Narges Mohammadi sentenced to an additional year in prison?
- (a) For participating in illegal protests against the Iranian government.
  - (b) For making propaganda against the Iranian system.
  - (c) For espionage activities against Iran.
  - (d) For publicly criticizing the Iranian Supreme Leader.
211. Who among the following has recently created history at the WTT Contender in Lagos by becoming the first Indian to clinch a singles title at a Contender level?
- (a) Sudeeksha Mukherjee
  - (b) Meenal Kulkarni
  - (c) Mrunal Jha
  - (d) Sreeja Akula
212. According to the Global Energy Transition Index released by the World Economic Forum, what is India's rank among the surveyed countries?
- (a) 57<sup>th</sup>
  - (b) 63<sup>rd</sup>
  - (c) 70<sup>th</sup>
  - (d) 75<sup>th</sup>
213. India's entry to the world's first Miss AI beauty pageant is \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) Zara Shatavari
  - (b) Vipula Chandan
  - (c) Swatantra Hismat
  - (d) Akula Jeevan
214. Who among the following drivers won the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix in 2024?
- (a) Lewis Hamilton
  - (b) Max Verstappen
  - (c) Lando Norris
  - (d) George Russell
215. Which of the following ministries oversees SAMEER, the autonomous R&D laboratory collaborating with MCTE and the Indian Army?
- (a) Ministry of Defence
  - (b) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
  - (c) Ministry of Home Affairs
  - (d) Ministry of Science and Technology
216. Which of the following cities was designated as India's first UNESCO City of Literature?
- (a) Kozhikode
  - (b) Kochi
  - (c) Kullu
  - (d) Coorg
217. In World Investment ranking in 2023, what is the rank of India?
- (a) 6<sup>th</sup>
  - (b) 9<sup>th</sup>
  - (c) 15<sup>th</sup>
  - (d) 27<sup>th</sup>
218. Which of the following recently introduced two new guidelines aimed at enhancing the safety of electric vehicles in the L, M, and N categories?
- (a) International Statistical Institute
  - (b) Indian Standard Institute
  - (c) Bureau of Indian Standards
  - (d) Tata Motors
219. Which of the following states in India has been approved for the installation of 1 GW offshore wind energy projects?
- (a) Gujarat and Maharashtra
  - (b) Gujarat and Tamil Nadu
  - (c) Tamil Nadu and Karnataka
  - (d) Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh

220. Which of the following countries has topped the Global Energy Transition Index in the latest report by the World Economic Forum?  
(a) Norway (b) Finland (c) Sweden (d) France
221. Who has been recently named Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha?  
(a) Jagat Prakash Nadda (b) S Jaishankar (c) Nirmala Sitharaman (d) Hardeep Singh Puri
222. Recently, the Ministry of Coal has initiated India's first-ever pilot project for Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Odisha (c) Jharkhand (d) Madhya Pradesh
223. UN General Assembly has designated the International Day of Women in Diplomacy on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 18<sup>th</sup> (b) June 24<sup>th</sup> (c) June 27<sup>th</sup> (d) June 30<sup>th</sup>
224. After the Home Ministry suggested changes in first resolution, the Kerala Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to officially change the from Kerala to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Keralaya (b) Keral (c) Keralam (d) Kremlam
225. Recently, A boy with severe epilepsy from \_\_\_\_\_ has become the first patient in the world to trial a new device fitted in their skull to control seizures.  
(a) USA (b) France (c) UK (d) Germany
226. Which of the following has become the first country in the world to receive a payment from the World Bank for the results achieved within the framework of the government policy support program for reducing emissions in the energy sector?  
(a) Uzbekistan (b) Kyrgyzstan (c) Kazakhstan (d) Turkmenistan
227. As part of sub-regional connectivity initiatives, India will extend transit facilities for movement of Bangladesh goods to \_\_\_\_\_ and Bhutan through railway network.  
(a) Nepal (b) Myanmar (c) Pakistan (d) Afghanistan
228. Recently, lawmakers approved a new nationalist-dominated government of Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Liechtenstein (b) North Macedonia (c) Tuvalu (d) San Marino
229. Which of the following countries has been nominated as the Chair of the International Sugar Organization (ISO) Council for 2024?  
(a) Brazil (b) United States (c) India (d) China
230. Which of the following has recently introduced India's first AI-powered navigation map designed for cars and mobility services?  
(a) Genesys International 1 (b) Virat Limited  
(c) Interconnect International (d) General International
231. Which of the following cities has recently been recognized as a 'World Craft City' by the World Crafts Council?  
(a) Jaipur (b) Malappuram (c) Mysore (d) Srinagar
232. Recently, The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved a proposal from the Tata Sons to build a 'museum of temples' in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Mathura (b) Ayodhya (c) Gorakhpur (d) Varanasi
233. Who is credited with successfully advocating for more inclusive language in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, specifically changing "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal"?  
(a) Eleanor Roosevelt (b) Hansa Mehta (c) Indira Gandhi (d) Malala Yousafzai

234. Which of the following countries is all set to host the first ever International Solar Festival in September 2024?  
(a) France (b) India (c) USA (d) Germany
235. The United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is an international observance is held annually on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 21 June (b) 23 June (c) 26 June (d) 29 June
236. Where will the restored statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh be installed by the Punjab government of Pakistan?  
(a) Lahore Fort (b) Kartarpur Sahib  
(c) Islamabad Circle (d) Karachi Stadium
237. Which of the following countries became the first to successfully bring rock and soil samples from the far side of the moon?  
(a) United States (b) Russia (c) India (d) China
238. Who among the following occupied the post of Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha?  
(a) Akhilesh Yadav (b) Rahul Gandhi  
(c) Maniesh Tewari (d) Amitabh Bhattacharya
239. Which of the following countries has the United States designated recently as its major non-NATO ally (MNNA)?  
(a) Canada (b) Kenya (c) Japan (d) Australia
240. Who has been recently appointed as the vice chancellor of Universal AI University (UAIU), as he becomes the first foreign national to hold this position in an Indian university?  
(a) Tarundeep Singh Anand (b) Simon Mak  
(c) Mark Spencer (d) Kastro Ulfred
241. Who has been recently elected as the Speaker of 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha?  
(a) Bharathuri Mahtab (b) Om Birla (c) K Suresh (d) Anurag Thakur
242. “Ratle power project” is located on which of the following rivers?  
(a) Jhelum (b) Chenab (c) Indus (d) Ravi
243. Which of the following countries will introduce a tax on livestock carbon dioxide emissions from 2030, making it the first country to do so?  
(a) Switzerland (b) Denmark (c) Norway (d) Sweden
244. Recently, UNESCO has warned that \_\_\_\_\_ Great Barrier Reef “remains under serious threat,” directing the country to take immediate action to protect the world’s largest coral system.  
(a) Australia’s (b) Russia’s (c) Indonesia’s (d) Malaysia’s
245. Which of the following countries recently received the highest amount of remittances in 2023 according to the World Bank report?  
(a) Mexico (b) China (c) India (d) The Philippines
246. What recent status was granted to Central Electronics Limited (CEL) by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh?  
(a) Maharatna (b) Navratna  
(c) Mini Ratna (Category-1) (d) Miniratna (Category-2)
247. Recently, ISRO’s commercial arm NSIL said that its newest rocket the SSLV will have its first dedicated commercial launch when it puts into orbit the \_\_\_\_\_ – a satellite built by Australia-based Space Machines Company.  
(a) Nishant (b) Kaustubh (c) Optimus (d) Linus

248. Recently, South India's first and the country's largest leopard safari was inaugurated at \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Bannerghatta Biological Park (b) B.R. Hills Wildlife Sanctuary  
(c) Periyar National Park (d) Viralmalai Wildlife Park
249. Who has been recently appointed as the new President of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI)?  
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Sunil Gavaskar  
(c) Kapil Dev (d) Anil Kumble
250. The United Nations General Assembly designated which date as "Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day"?  
(a) June 1 (b) June 15 (c) June 27 (d) June 30
251. Who has been appointed as the next secretary-general of NATO?  
(a) Jens Stoltenberg (b) David Cameroon (c) Mark Rutte (d) Ursula von der Leyen
252. What is the new name for the universal service obligation fund as per the Telecommunications Act 2023?  
(a) BharatNet Fund (b) Telecom Service Fund  
(c) Digital Bharat Nidhi (d) Telecom Development Fund
253. India is likely to get its first Vande Bharat sleeper train by \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) August 2024 (b) June 2025 (c) December 2025 (d) March 2026
254. According to \_\_\_\_\_ of the Constitution, the President is required to address a joint session of Parliament at the beginning of the session after each Lok Sabha election.  
(a) Article 83 (b) Article 87 (c) Article 89 (d) Article 92
255. Which of the following countries is the first to offer preemptive bird flu vaccinations to workers exposed to animals?  
(a) United States (b) Australia (c) Finland (d) Canada
256. What was the primary reason behind the proposed finance bill that Kenyan President William Ruto refused to sign into law?  
(a) To increase government employees' salaries (b) To fund new infrastructure projects  
(c) To raise funds to pay off debt (d) To reduce unemployment rates
257. Who among the following recently launched India's first Defence Index?  
(a) Motilal Oswal (b) HDFC (c) ICICI (d) State Bank of India
258. Our universe is \_\_\_\_\_ billion years old whereas the Earth is 4.5 billion years old.  
(a) 1.4 (b) 6.5 (c) 8.9 (d) 13.6
259. The \_\_\_\_\_ Olympics, will see plenty of historic firsts but the one that holds immense significance for India will be the first-ever country House at the Olympic Games – the India House.  
(a) Paris 2024 (b) Los Angeles 2024  
(c) New York 2024 (d) London 2024
260. In December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution declaring \_\_\_\_\_ International Asteroid Day.  
(a) 21 June (b) 24 June (c) 27 June (d) 30 June
261. Name the app launched by Indian Railways to provide in-depth information on the three new criminal laws which are to come into force from July 1.  
(a) Sangyaan App (b) Gyaan App (c) Chakshu App (d) Anubhav App



262. Which category did India achieve in the Mutual Evaluation conducted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 2023-24?  
(a) Enhanced follow-up (b) Regular follow-up  
(c) Periodic follow-up (d) Conditional follow-up
263. Who was recently nominated to stay on as European Commission president for a second five-year term?  
(a) Candolisa Rise (b) Hilary Clinton  
(c) Ursula von der Leyen (d) Angela Merkel
264. Who has been recently named as the next president of the European Council?  
(a) Ursula von der Leyen (b) António Costa  
(c) Josep Borrell (d) Kaja Kallas
265. Which of the following companies became the first Indian company to recently surpass a market capitalization of Rs. 21 lakh crore?  
(a) Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) (b) Infosys  
(c) Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) (d) Wipro
266. The first Indian data centre startup to go public on Nasdaq is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Yotta (b) Guru (c) Through (d) Jackson
267. Which of the following Geoportals were launched by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh for rural land record and emergency management?  
(a) Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0) and National Emergency Database (NED Ver. 5.0)  
(b) Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0) and National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)  
(c) Bhuvan Land Records (Ver. 4.0) and National Emergency Management System (NEMS Ver. 5.0)  
(d) Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0) and National Disaster Management Database (NDMD Ver. 5.0)
268. Who holds the record for the fastest double-century in the history of women's Test cricket?  
(a) Annabel Sutherland (b) Shafali Verma (c) Ellyse Perry (d) Smriti Mandhana
269. In India, "Statistics Day" is / was celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 27 June (b) 29 June (c) 30 June (d) 2 July
270. Who was recently awarded 12<sup>th</sup> Vishwa Hindi Samman in Hindi Samvad event organised by Embassy of India in Nepal recognising her contribution in development of Hindi literature?  
(a) Dr Usha Thakur (b) Dr Deepa Mathur (c) Dr Ankita Singh (d) Dr Visakha Srivastava
271. Recently, IAS officer Sujata Saunik became the first woman chief secretary of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Goa (b) Maharashtra (c) Gujarat (d) Rajasthan
272. Who has been appointed as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)?  
(a) Nitin Gupta (b) Ravi Agrawal (c) Rajesh Kumar (d) Suresh Mehta
273. Each year on \_\_\_\_\_, International Day of the Tropics raises awareness about various challenges that tropical nations face. It's also a day to celebrate the extraordinary diversity of the Tropics.  
(a) June 23 (b) June 26 (c) June 29 (d) June 30
274. Which of the following cricket teams became first team to breach 600 marks in women's Tests?  
(a) New Zealand (b) England (c) India (d) South Africa
275. Recently, the World Bank has approved \$1.5 billion in financing to help India accelerate the development of which type of energy?  
(a) Nuclear energy (b) Fossil fuel energy (c) Low-carbon energy (d) Bioenergy

276. The United Nations warned that only \_\_\_\_\_ of its 169 targets to improve life for the world's more than 7 billion people are on track to be reached by the 2030 deadline.  
(a) 11% (b) 17% (c) 23% (d) 27%
277. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, which of the following cities has been ranked as the world's most livable city for the third consecutive year?  
(a) Copenhagen, Denmark (b) Zurich, Switzerland  
(c) Vienna, Austria (d) Tokyo, Japan
278. What is the primary reason given by Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the increasing dangers like avalanches, landslides, floods, and storms?  
(a) Overpopulation (b) Deforestation (c) Climate change (d) Urbanization
279. Which of the following states in India has set a record by generating one crore tokens through the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID?  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka  
(c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
280. Which of the following union ministries recently launched eSankhyiki Portal for Enhanced User Experience and Ease of Data Access?  
(a) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment  
(b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs  
(c) Ministry of Finance  
(d) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

## ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c The U.S. and top African allies conducted the African Lion military exercise in Morocco, addressing new challenges in volatile regions.
2. b The Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra has become the pioneer in India to implement an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based forest fire detection system.
3. c The Maldives has taken a significant stance by becoming the first country to ban Israeli citizens from entering its borders. This decision, announced by President Mohamed Muizzu, is a gesture of solidarity with Palestine amid the ongoing Gaza conflict.
4. d The Bank Clinic is an initiative by the All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) to help customers address their grievances amid rapid expansion in technology and a series of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines on retail banking.
5. b Even though FDI from Singapore decreased by 31.55% to \$11.77 billion, it still remained the highest source of FDI for India during the mentioned fiscal year.
6. c IIM Ahmedabad has been appointed as the mentor institute for the new IIM in Assam.
7. b Real Madrid withstood a Borussia Dortmund barrage to win the Champions League for the 15<sup>th</sup> time as Dani Carvajal and Vinicius Junior struck late in a 2-0 win at Wembley.
8. c World Milk Day is an international day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to recognize the importance of milk as a global food. It has been observed on June 1 each year since 2001.
9. c In the Sikkim assembly elections, the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) won 31 out of the 32 seats, demonstrating a landslide victory. The opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) managed to secure only one seat, indicating SKM's dominance in the elections.
10. a The Adani Group has become only the third Indian conglomerate after the Tata Group and Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Group to log \$10 billion in annual operating profit, having reached that milestone in FY24 despite higher policy rates, global business volatility, and a stock rout spawned by misgovernance allegations.
11. b Ashutosh Gowariker was honored with the prestigious 'Saint Tropez Medal' at the Nirvana Indian Culture and Cinema Festival in the city of Saint Tropez, France.
12. b Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam, who was in the UK for a concert series, has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by a leading Indian diaspora students' organisation for his worldwide impact in the field of music.
13. c The Indian Navy is deploying the indigenous stealth frigate INS Shivalik for Ex RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific), which is scheduled to be held in Hawaii. This exercise involves participation in a major multinational maritime warfare training event.
14. c The 'Saaṛthi 2.0' mobile app was launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in Mumbai. This regulatory body aims to provide a platform with user-friendly tools to help simplify complex financial concepts for the public.
15. a Claudia Sheinbaum is projected to become Mexico's first woman president. This is a significant milestone in the country's history, which spans 200 years.
16. c In April 2018, the United Nations General Assembly declared June 3 as World Bicycle Day.
17. b The state government will soon roll out a Rs. 10,000-crore project funded by the World Bank to address air pollution. The Haryana Clean Air Project for Sustainable Development will be implemented in the state in a phased manner with the first phase being implemented in the districts falling in the National Capital Region (NCR) and replication in entire state later.
18. c The State Bank of India's market capitalization crossed the ₹8 lakh crore mark after the bank's shares surged to a record high of ₹907. This milestone highlights the significant growth in the bank's market value, driven by the recent rally in its stock price.
19. c Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that India has created a world record with 64.2 crore voters participating in the Lok Sabha Polls.

- 20. b** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software named Parallel RANS Solver for Aerospace Vehicle Aero-thermo-dynamic Analysis (PraVaHa). This software was developed in ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).
- 21. c** Banaras Railway Station of North East Railway (NER) is the first station of the Indian Railways to receive certification from the international institution JUSE (Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers). This recognition highlights the station's adherence to high standards of quality and efficiency.
- 22. d** The Department of School Education signed an MoU with the National Book Trust in New Delhi to create an institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya.
- 23. a** South Korea's government approved the suspension of a contentious military agreement with North Korea a step that would allow it to take tougher responses to North Korean provocations.
- 24. c** India's decision to take Australia to arbitration indicates its utilization of the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement mechanism to address concerns about changes to Australia's commitments that could affect services trade.
- 25. d** While the partnership with Geely and Circular was instrumental in the development process, Volvo Cars took the lead in developing the EV battery passport for its flagship EX90 SUV.
- 26. c** The Netherlands has emerged as India's third largest export destination after the U.S. and UAE during 2023-24, even as the country's merchandise shipments dipped by over 3%.
- 27. b** NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are collaborating to develop a standardized time system for the moon as part of the Artemis program, which aims to return humans to the lunar surface.
- 28. b** Agnikul Cosmos, an Indian space startup, achieved this milestone by successfully launching the nation's first 3D-printed rocket engine.
- 29. c** World Environment Day is celebrated annually on 5 June and encourages awareness and action for the protection of the environment. It is supported by many non-governmental organizations, businesses, government entities, and represents the primary United Nations outreach day supporting the environment.
- 30. a** Arjun Rampal Becomes The First Indian Celebrity To Raise \$1.5 Million USD For CRY India.
- 31. c** UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on June 6.
- 32. a** On the occasion of World Environment Day the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) unveiled a climate budget for the year 2024-25. It was the first urban local body in the country and fourth globally, after Oslo, New York and London, to have launched a climate budget.
- 33. c** Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and the United State countries' citizens are being favored according to the information provided.
- 34. d** Chile hosts much of the world's investment in astronomy thanks to the clear skies of its Atacama Desert, the driest desert on earth.
- 35. b** Nagi Bird Sanctuary and Nakti Bird Sanctuary. These two sites, located in the Jhajha forest range of Jamui District in Bihar, India, have been designated as Ramsar Sites on World Environment Day.
- 36. d** India captain Rohit Sharma hit another milestone during India's 2024 World Cup opener against Ireland in New York. Finishing with four fours and three sixes in his innings of 52, Rohit became the first batter to hit 600 sixes in international cricket.
- 37. a** The World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed the first human death from bird flu after an alarming increase in cases. The victim, a resident of Mexico, succumbed to the illness after suffering from symptoms of avian influenza A (H5N2).
- 38. c** India will host next year's annual gathering of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents over 330 airlines worldwide.



39. c India, the US, and a dozen other nations are poised to sign a Clean Economy Agreement under the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, aimed at meeting climate objectives through collaborative financing.
40. a The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi was ranked 150 in the latest edition of the QS World University Rankings 2025 released. With an improvement of 47 positions from last year's 197<sup>th</sup> rank, this is the highest rank that IIT Delhi has achieved.
41. b N Chandrababu Naidu, the president of the Telugu Desam Party, is scheduled to take the oath as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh for the fourth time on June 12.
42. a Sarabjot Singh secured India's first gold at the ISSF World Cup in the men's 10m air pistol event, outshooting top competitors with a score of 242.7 in the final.
43. b South Korea, India, the United States, Japan, and the European Union (EU) have come together to launch an alliance to put joint efforts into building a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector.
44. b World Food Safety Day on 7 June 2024 will draw attention to food safety incidents.
45. b Spain is the first European country to take the step of requesting to join South Africa's case after it was filed with the International Court of Justice.
46. b According to the provided data, BJP has 31 women MPs elected in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, making it the party with the highest number of women MPs.
47. a Tata Sons Private Limited will hold a 73.38% stake in the merged entity of Vistara and Air India.
48. c The trip aboard Boeing's Starliner capsule, from launch to docking at the International Space Station, was expected to take approximately 25 hours. This duration includes the time required for the spacecraft to rendezvous with the ISS and dock safely.
49. a Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) offers India's first biometric-enabled self-bag drop facility, enhancing the travel experience for domestic flyers of Tata Group Airlines.
50. d The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to keep the policy rate unchanged at 6.5% for the eighth time in a row, saying it will maintain a tight vigil on inflation.
51. c The fabled Mamallapuram or Mahabalipuram, known for its UNESCO World Heritage site, is all set to become India's first Green Destination.
52. a Goa becomes India's first state to launch Regenerative Tourism.
53. d Somalia was elected along with Denmark, Greece, Pakistan and Panama to serve for two years from January next year.
54. d President Droupadi Murmu appointed Narendra Modi to the office of Prime Minister of India exercising powers vested in her under Article 75 (1) of the Constitution.
55. a The Reserve Bank has proposed to bring an auto-replenishment facility for UPI Lite wallet. RBI plans to bring UPI Lite within the e-mandate framework.
56. d In the French Open Tennis Women's singles final, World No. 1 Iga Swiatek of Poland overcame an early wobble to beat first-time Italy's Jasmine Paolini 6-2, 6-1 at Roland Garros.
57. d The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter is a spacecraft designed to search for the existence of water on Mars and provide support for missions to Mars, as part of NASA's Mars Exploration Program.
58. c World Ocean Day is an international day that takes place annually on 8 June.
59. c Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced a step towards securing World Heritage recognition for Choraideo Maidam. Sarma revealed that the Assam Government has decided to engage with the Ambassadors of all member countries of UNESCO through the Ministry of External Affairs to garner support for the prestigious status.
60. a Women's 50m rifle 3-positions specialist Sift Kaur Samra won a bronze medal on the concluding day of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol in Munich, as India ended the competition with two medals.

- 61. c** Magnus Carlsen won the Norway Chess 2024 tournament after defeating Fabiano Caruana in the Armageddon with white pieces.
- 62. a** Puja Tomar, scripted history as she became the first-ever Indian to win a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in UFC Louisville 2024.
- 63. a** Telugu Desam Party National President Nara Chandrababu Naidu takes oath as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on 12<sup>th</sup> June at 11:27 am.
- 64. c** To bring more awareness about snakebite prevention as well as to prevent snake persecution, a first-of-its-kind WhatsApp chatbot has been launched in Mysuru. Karnataka also became the first state in India to declare snakebite as a notifiable disease.
- 65. d** After the IAF and Army, the Navy has now also begun inducting women as helicopter pilots, with Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev becoming the first to get the “golden wings” at the passing-out parade at the naval air station INS Rajali at Arakkonam in Tamil Nadu.
- 66. a** Sebi has been given ‘Best Conduct of Business Regulator’ award in Asia Pacific by The Asian Banker for its role in enhancing the regulatory framework for securities markets in India.
- 67. c** The TDP MP from Andhra’s Srikakulam Lok Sabha constituency is the youngest-ever Minister in Modi Cabinet 3.0. Srikakulam MP Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu (TDP) is all set to become the youngest ever member of the Central Cabinet, being headed by Prime Minister - designate Narendra Modi, at age 36.
- 68. a** Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni joined top political and cultural figures at Verona’s ancient Arena amphitheater for an open-air celebration of Italian lyric opera’s recognition by UNESCO as a global cultural treasure.
- 69. d** Lok Sabha Secretariat is developing “Prerana Sthal” in the Parliament House Complex and all the statues of great leaders and freedom fighters of the country are being installed in this.
- 70. a** Vellayan Subbiah, executive vice-chairman of Tube Investments of India and chairman of Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co, has won the EY World Entrepreneur of The Year 2024 title.
- 71. c** Carlos Alcaraz wins men’s singles title after beating Alexander Zverev in five sets
- 72. b** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) shared more details on the Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment (TRISHNA) mission, a joint endeavour with the French national space agency, National Centre for Space Studies (CNES).
- 73. b** Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese President Xi Jinping in their meeting have affirmed consensus on the upgradation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and advancing high-quality development of the multi-billion dollar project in the second phase.
- 74. a** In a significant development, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international division of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has entered into an agreement with the central bank of Peru to establish a fast instant payments system similar to India’s Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- 75. b** Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan, becoming only the second after Jawaharlal Nehru to secure a third consecutive term.
- 76. b** Alexander De Croo, the prime minister of Belgium, has resigned following his party’s crushing loss in national and European parliamentary elections.
- 77. a** The Reserve Bank has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of former MD and CEO of National Payments Corporation of India, Mr. A P Hota to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for Digital Payments Intelligence Platform.
- 78. a** Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) convenor Prem Singh Tamang is set to take oath as the chief minister of the Himalayan state for the second consecutive term.
- 79. d** Thailand launches the world’s first-of-its-kind “Pink Plus” economy, spearheaded by Borderless.lgbt.

- 80. a** Japan announces world's first green fuel.
- 81. b** Philemon Yang, the former Prime Minister of Cameroon, was elected by acclamation as the President of the UN General Assembly for its seventy-ninth session.
- 82. a** In tennis, India's Sumit Nagal clinched the Heilbronn Neckarcup Challenger in Germany.
- 83. c** The Union Cabinet approved the construction of 3 crore more rural and urban houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). This decision was made during the first meeting of the Cabinet of Narendra Modi 3.0 at his residence on 7 Lok Kalyan Marg.
- 84. c** Max Verstappen managed the race conditions and competition expertly to win the Canadian Grand Prix.
- 85. b** Swedish Scientists Make World's First 'Living' Computer Using Human Brain Tissue.
- 86. c** The Ministry of Minority Affairs in India, traditionally led by Muslims even under BJP governments, is now headed by Kiren Rijiju, a Buddhist. This is the first time the ministry has a Buddhist leader.
- 87. c** Peru is the latest nation to join the Artemis Accords, as indicated by NASA Administrator Bill Nelson during a ceremony with the U.S. State Department at NASA Headquarters in Washington.
- 88. c** Italy's far-right leader, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, has reinforced her political dominance both at home and within the European Union. Her Brothers of Italy party clinched a notable 28 per cent of the votes in the European elections, strengthening her leadership and influence.
- 89. a** The Indian Army has launched 'Vidyut Rakshak', an integrated generator monitoring, protection, and control system developed by the Army Design Bureau (ADB).
- 90. d** SBI Mutual Fund, country's largest Asset Management Company (AMC), has become the first mutual fund house in India to surpass ₹10 lakh crore in Average Asset Under Management (AAUM).
- 91. b** Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi will succeed Gen Manoj C Pande as the next Chief of the Army Staff.
- 92. b** K-pop megastars Seventeen will become UNESCO "goodwill ambassadors". Seventeen, the 13-strong South Korean band founded in 2015, were second only to Taylor Swift for global revenue last year, according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI).
- 93. c** Indian-origin Tinessa Kaur is first Sikh woman to win top barrister award in UK.
- 94. d** The 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha was formed after general elections were held in India over seven phases from 19 April to 1 June 2024.
- 95. c** Russia took over the year-long chairmanship of BRICS on January 1, 2024. Russia will be hosting over 250 events during its presidency, with the central event being the BRICS summit in Kazan in October 2024.
- 96. b** Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera said that the plane carrying the country's Vice-President Saulos Klaus Chilima had crashed, killing everyone on board, including Chilima.
- 97. a** In India, growth is estimated to have picked up to 8.2 per cent in fiscal year (FY) 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024) – 1.9 percentage points higher than estimated in January, according to the World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report.
- 98. c** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has awarded the technology development contract for ULUAVs to Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt Ltd. DRDO's Technology Development Fund (TDF) facilitated this decision through a competitive bidding process.
- 99. c** The Executive Board of the International Hockey Federation announced that India will host the next men's Junior Hockey World Cup. This event is notable for being held in India and is set to take place in December.
- 100. d** The first-ever International Day of Play, to be observed on 11 June 2024.
- 101. b** The 50<sup>th</sup> G7 Summit was held from June 13 to 15, in Apulia, Italy.

- 102. d** The new NSG units are being set up in Ayodhya, Pathankot, and Kerala. Gandhinagar already has an existing NSG hub, and there is no indication in the information provided that a new unit will be set up there by the end of this year.
- 103. a** Armenia will leave a Russia-led security bloc, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan confirmed for the first time, accusing members of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation of having planned a war against his country with Azerbaijan.
- 104. b** Harsh Pati Singhania, the Chairman and Managing Director of JK Paper Ltd and Director of JK Organisation, has been elected as the First Vice-Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Paris. This role signifies his prominent position and recognition in the international business community.
- 105. b** Apple has surpassed \$1 trillion in brand value, with a 15% increase from last year, retaining its top position as the world's most valuable brand in 2024, followed by Google and Microsoft.
- 106. b** The “painting with light” project produced photographic evidence of pollution levels in cities across three specific countries: India, Ethiopia, and the U.K. The collaboration aimed to raise awareness and spark debate about air pollution in these diverse locations.
- 107. c** The silver medal in the Men's 5000-metre race at the Portland Track Festival High-Performance Meet was won by India's Gulveer Singh. Dylan Jacobs of the USA won the gold medal, and Eric Van Der Els of the USA won the bronze medal.
- 108. b** For the first time ever, the 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) is expanding to other cities. Along with Mumbai, parallel screenings will take place in Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, and Pune.
- 109. c** The World Day against Child Labour, observed every year on June 12, is aimed at raising awareness and mobilising efforts to end child labour in all its forms.
- 110. a** Microsoft founder Bill Gates' memoir, 'Source Code,' a reflection on his early life and decision to start Microsoft, is set for release in February 2025.
- 111. c** JIMEX 24 is the eighth edition of the Japan – India Maritime Exercise. This series of exercises began in 2012, and the 2024 exercise marks the eighth time the two countries have conducted this bilateral maritime exercise.
- 112. a** Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that in a push to increase enrolment of girl students in higher education, the Cabinet has accorded approval to provide financial assistance to girl students under the Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina scheme to be offered as Admission Assistance.
- 113. d** The World Economic Forum's release of the Global Gender Gap Index data highlighted a concerning trend for India, as the nation saw a drop of two positions, now ranking 129<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries in the index.
- 114. c** Moody's Ratings report titled “Credit Conditions – Asia-Pacific H2 2024 Credit Outlook” stated that India is expected to remain the fastest-growing economy in the Asia-Pacific region in 2024, maintaining the momentum from the previous year.
- 115. a** The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has recognised exemplary research contributions of heliophysicist Devoiyoti Kansabanik.
- 116. b** The craters named “Lal”, “Mursan”, and “Hilsa” are located in the Tharsis volcanic region of Mars, which is a vast volcanic plateau home to the largest volcanoes in the Solar System.
- 117. c** Shruti Vora rewrote the history books after she became the first Indian rider to claim a three-star Grand Prix event by winning in Lipica, Slovenia with a scoreline of 67.761 points.
- 118. d** Nagpur is set to get central India's first commercial gamma irradiation centre for sterilisation of food and other products.
- 119. b** The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of P K Mishra as the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. This position is crucial as the Principal Secretary assists the Prime Minister in managing the executive branch of the government.
- 120. b** “I Have the Streets: A Kutti Cricket Story” title reflects Ashwin's journey from his early days of playing cricket before becoming a well-known cricketer. The title signifies a personal and candid reflection on his life and career.



- 121. b** Madhya Pradesh govt is preparing a law – said to be the first such in India – to prevent deaths caused by open borewells. Over nine such incidents have been reported in MP in the past seven months.
- 122. c** The Uttarakhand government has approved renaming Kosiyakutoli tehsil in Nainital district to Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham as part of the local residents’ long-standing demand for recognizing the area’s significance.
- 123. a** Cyril Ramaphosa is re-elected as South Africa’s president following a landmark coalition deal between his African National Congress (ANC) and opposition parties.
- 124. a** Russian President Vladimir Putin has approved a plan to jointly build the International Lunar Research Station with China, an ambitious space project which was announced previously by the two close neighbours.
- 125. a** Mumbai witnessed a 11.5% rise in luxury real estate prices, reaching the third spot globally, after Manila and Tokyo.
- 126. a** India has surpassed Hong Kong in terms of the total market capitalization of all BSE-listed companies, making it the fourth-highest equity market globally. As of the provided data, India’s market cap stands at \$5.18 trillion, just above Hong Kong’s \$5.17 trillion.
- 127. a** In a significant stride towards achieving ‘atmanirbharta’ (self-reliance) in ammunition and defence systems, the Indian Army is set to induct its first indigenous loiter munition, Nagastra-1.
- 128. b** Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Goa are the three states mentioned in the passage that have sought a reduction in the extent of eco-sensitive areas to facilitate development works.
- 129. d** In chess, India’s Divya Deshmukh won the World Junior Girls’ Chess Championship after beating Bulgaria’s Beloslava Krasteva in the final round at the Gift City Club in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- 130. c** World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) is held on June 14 each year.
- 131. a** An Indian Air Force-IAF contingent participated in the Exercise Red Flag 2024 conducted at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska of the United States Air Force.
- 132. b** Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena sanctioned the prosecution of novelist Arundhati Roy, for allegedly provocative statements made at a 2010 event propagating Kashmiri separatism, under Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- 133. c** Konidela Pawan Kalyan, the leader of the JanaSena Party (JSP), was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He was given multiple portfolios, including Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, Rural Water Supply, Environment and Forests, and Science and Technology.
- 134. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed delight over the Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in Bhuj, Gujarat making it to World Selection for the UNESCO Prix Versailles Museums 2024.
- 135. a** Canada will host the next year’s G7 Summit in Alberta.
- 136. b** The first of its kind in India, a geothermal power project of 1 megawatt is being built on a pilot basis by ONGC’s Energy Centre at Puga in Changthang area of Ladakh.
- 137. c** Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh announced that 300 women scientists were set to receive research grants for three years under the CSIR-ASPIRE scheme, indicating the government’s commitment to supporting women in scientific research.
- 138. c** The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on 17 June.
- 139. b** World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) will be celebrated on 15 June 2024.
- 140. b** The announcement at the Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) 2024 was made by Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan that the award will be given to Subbiah Nallamuthu, a renowned, award-winning Wildlife filmmaker from Chennai.

- 141. a** The Indian Air Force’s first multinational air exercise, Tarang Shakti-2024, will be held in August, and is likely to see the participation of ten countries, in addition to a few others acting as observers.
- 142. a** Assam: Janata Bhawan solar project inaugurated; becomes first civil secretariat in India to rely fully on solar power.
- 143. a** The Indian Railways conducted an extensive inspection of the newly constructed world’s highest railway bridge, built on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir.
- 144. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited his Parliamentary constituency Varanasi on June 18 for the first time after assuming office for a third consecutive term, during which he will release the 17<sup>th</sup> installment of PM-KISAN scheme amounting to more than ₹20,000 crore for 9.26 crore beneficiary farmers across the country.
- 145. a** The two day Summit on Peace in Ukraine at the Bürgenstock resort in Switzerland ended with participants hoping for an end to the war between Moscow and Kyiv.
- 146. a** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has won the “Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024” by Central Banking, a leading publication based in London, UK.
- 147. d** The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly known as COP29, will be the 29<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change conference. COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Mukhtar Babayev will preside COP29.
- 148. b** Gaurav Pandey won the prestigious award for his poetry collection “Smritiyon Ke Beech Ghiri Hai Prithvi”.
- 149. b** Poymantee Baisya, Moumita Dutta, and Yashini Sivasankar were the players in the Indian women’s table tennis team that clinched the bronze medal.
- 150. c** Global Wind Day or World Wind Day is a worldwide event that is held on June 15. It is organised by WindEurope and GWEC (Global Wind Energy Council).
- 151. c** World Crocodile Day is celebrated on June 17<sup>th</sup>.
- 152. d** India, the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, was placed among the lowest-rung countries in air quality, projected emissions, and biodiversity and habitat in the 2024 Environment Performance Index (EPI). India ranked 176<sup>th</sup> among 180 countries, above Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar only, in the overall index released by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network.
- 153. a** Russia and the US together possess almost 90 per cent of all nuclear weapons.
- 154. a** European Union countries gave final approval to a major and long-awaited plan to better protect nature in the 27-nation bloc.
- 155. a** Saudi Arabia has launched the world’s first self-driving flying taxi.
- 156. a** Punjab Police in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs) will carry out a one-week drive against drugs in Fazilka district during which they will reach out to residents of as many as 42 villages along the India-Pakistan border to gather actionable intelligence about the demand and supply of drugs. During the drive, named as ‘Mission Nishchay’, police officers will fan out in villages in Fazilka district and interact with residents.
- 157. b** Air India is setting up a school in Maharashtra’s Amravati to train as many as 180 pilots a year.
- 158. d** Chattergala Pass, is a mountain pass in the Middle Himalayas of the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir, India, connecting the town of Bhaderwah in the Neeru river valley with Basohli in the Shiwalik hills.
- 159. c** Khadi Prakritik paints, which use cow dung as a “significant” ingredient, have been certified for their quality and eco-friendly attributes by the National Test House (NTH).
- 160. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be in Bihar next week to inaugurate the campus of Nalanda University, named after the world-famous ancient seat of learning. Situated less than 20 km from the Nalanda Mahavira, which has been declared a World Heritage site, the university was established in 2010, by an Act of the Parliament.

- 161. d** The Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed on June 18<sup>th</sup> across the world.
- 162. c** Thailand's Senate voted overwhelmingly in support of a marriage equality bill, making it the first Southeast Asian country to enact such a law.
- 163. d** The 2024 NBA Finals was the championship series of the National Basketball Association (NBA)'s 2023–24 season and conclusion to the season's playoffs. The best-of-seven playoffs were played between the Eastern Conference champion Boston Celtics who defeated the Western Conference champion Dallas Mavericks in 5 games.
- 164. c** Sweden participated in the Baltops military exercises as a full NATO member for the first time in June, after joining the trans-Atlantic military alliance earlier this year.
- 165. b** According to the report, Virat Kohli is India's most valued celebrity with a brand value of USD 227.9 million, marking a significant increase of nearly 29% from USD 176.9 million in 2022.
- 166. b** Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani met Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the country's Druk Green Power Corporation for a 570 MW hydroelectric plant in Chukha province.
- 167. c** The Indian Army has launched a first-of-its-kind skin bank facility that aims to revolutionise the treatment of severe burn injuries and other skin-related conditions for service personnel and their families.
- 168. b** India's first joint doctrine for cyberspace operations was released by the Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan. This event took place during a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, highlighting its importance within the military leadership.
- 169. c** The Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi is the second globally to implement the Self Service Bag Drop (SSBD) facility, following Toronto Airport. This initiative allows passengers to bypass check-in desks by using self-service kiosks and SSBD units.
- 170. a** India is the largest market for Nestle's Maggi, with six billion servings in the financial year 2023-24, according to Nestle's annual report.
- 171. c** Uttar Pradesh received the highest number of complaints with a total of 6,492 out of the 12,648 complaints received by the NCW in 2024. This is significantly higher than the number of complaints from any other state.
- 172. a** India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has partnered with Ria Money Transfer, a global leader in cross-border money transfers to provide convenient and affordable doorstep financial services to customers in remote areas across the country.
- 173. b** Suhas Subramanyam won the Democratic primary in Virginia's 10<sup>th</sup> congressional district, making him the first Indian-American to achieve this victory.
- 174. a** After environmental activists sprayed an orange substance on Stonehenge, a UNESCO world heritage site in southwest England, police arrested two people. Just Stop Oil protest group demanded that Britain's next government legally commit to phasing out fossil fuels by 2030.
- 175. c** Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un signed a partnership deal during a summit in Pyongyang, in a bid to expand their economic and military cooperation and cement a united front against Washington.
- 176. c** Nvidia edged ahead of other tech companies to become the world's most valuable publicly traded company. This achievement is attributed to its advancements and significant role in the field of artificial intelligence, particularly generative AI, which has driven a monumental ascent in its market value.
- 177. a** Mr Modi participated in the "Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K" event in Srinagar.
- 178. b** The new study provided "unambiguous evidence" that the Earth's inner core started to slow down its rotation in 2010. This is a significant finding because it shows a change in the dynamic relationship between the inner core and the rest of the planet.
- 179. a** India's highest-rated chess player Grandmaster (GM) Arjun Erigasi, has won the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 crown in Jermuk, Armenia, with a round to spare.

- 180. a** Olympic and World Champion Neeraj Chopra has won the Gold medal in the men's javelin throw competition at the World Athletics Continental Gold Tour at the Paavo Nurmi Stadium in Turku, Finland.
- 181. a** President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab as Speaker Protem under Article 95(1) of the Constitution to perform the duties of Speaker till election of the Speaker.
- 182. a** Uttar Pradesh is set to establish the world's first conservation and breeding centre for Asian king vultures or red-headed vultures in Maharajganj.
- 183. b** Senior BJP leader Surama Padhy was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Odisha Assembly.
- 184. c** The Union Cabinet approved the development of a Rs. 76,200-crore all-weather greenfield deep draft major port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra.
- 185. b** The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has launched 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' Campaign on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- 186. d** India and Sri Lanka launched a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), reflecting the deepening maritime security cooperation between the two sides, as external affairs minister S Jaishankar met the top leadership in Colombo to bolster ties in a range of areas.
- 187. c** Cyril Ramaphosa was sworn in for a second term as South Africa's president in a ceremony in the administrative capital, Pretoria, with help from a coalition of parties for the first time in its 30-year rule.
- 188. a** NSE's index services subsidiary, NSE Indices has launched a new thematic index called Nifty India Tourism which will track the performance of stocks in Nifty 500 index representing the travel and tourism theme.
- 189. a** The Government has said that an agreement aimed at enhancing road safety through the deployment of Artificial Intelligence was signed between the National Highways Authority of India and Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi.
- 190. b** The United Nations has said 2025 will be designated the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology'.
- 191. b** The second edition of the global conference on financial resilience organized by the College of Supervisors (CoS) of RBI in Mumbai, the Governor noted that AI and ML can significantly enhance predictive analytics, enabling banks and NBFCs to identify potential risks and trends more accurately.
- 192. c** The theme for this year's International Day of Yoga was "Yoga for Self and Society." Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that the world is looking at yoga as a powerful agent of global good, which enables individuals to live in the present without the baggage of the past. This theme underscores the holistic benefits of yoga for both personal well-being and societal harmony.
- 193. b** The EAGLE Act, or the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment Act, seeks to overhaul the current immigration system. It will expand employment-based Green Cards by removing the per-country limit and raising family-sponsored Green Cards from 7% to 15%.
- 194. c** The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has unveiled India's first Nifty EV & New Age Automotive Index, marking a significant step in the fast-paced growth of the country's stock market.
- 195. c** The Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi (IIIT-Delhi) won the joint second prize in the Trinity Challenge's second competition for their project aimed at tackling the escalating threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The other institutions listed were not mentioned in the context of this specific achievement.
- 196. c** The winged vehicle used in the third and final Landing Experiment (LEX-03) conducted by ISRO was named 'Pushpak.' The vehicle was released from an altitude of 4.5 km by an Indian Air Force Chinook Helicopter and autonomously executed cross-range correction maneuvers, approached the runway, and performed a precise horizontal landing at the runway centerline. This experiment was part of ISRO's efforts to develop Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) technology.
- 197. a** Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib al Hasan became the first bowler to pick 50 wickets in T20 World Cup history at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, North Sound, Antigua.



- 198. c** The Indian compound women's archery team secured their third consecutive World Cup gold medal by defeating Estonia in the third stage of the event held in Antalya.
- 199. c** The Fête de la Musique, also referred to as Music Day, is celebrated annually on June 21. This date marks the beginning of summer in the northern hemisphere, and the event encourages people to play music outside in public spaces.
- 200. b** Sreemoyi Singh was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranagari Award for Best Debut Director for her film "And, Towards Happy Alleys" at the 18<sup>th</sup> Mumbai International Film Festival.
- 201. c** K Radhakrishnan, former ISRO chief, is leading the committee appointed by the Ministry of Education to ensure transparent and fair conduct of examinations through the NTA. The committee also includes B J Rao and Randeep Guleria among its members.
- 202. a** The Vadhavan port, which the Cabinet cleared this week, will be India's first to begin life as a mega port.
- 203. b** Maharashtra, along with Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, managed to grow FDI year-on-year in FY24, despite the overall national decline.
- 204. c** Shanghai performs world's first innovative liver transplant surgery, saving patient with advanced liver cancer.
- 205. c** The Odisha government announced the extension of its sponsorship for Hockey India until 2036 – a year that marks the centenary of the state's formation in 1936.
- 206. b** On 21 June every year, the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) celebrates the World Hydrography Day to raise awareness about hydrography and how it plays a vital role in improved knowledge of the seas and oceans.
- 207. c** Yuri Gagarin became the first human to be sent to space 63 years ago. Travelling on Vostok 1, Gagarin completed one orbit of Earth on 12 April 1961, with his flight taking 108 minutes.
- 208. b** Eligible individuals need to submit their biometrics (fingerprint and facial image) along with other required information specified in the application form for the FTI-TTP.
- 209. b** To streamline military-to-military exchanges including exercises, training, port calls, and HADR efforts. This is directly stated in the passage: "The agreement will simplify military-to-military exchanges for exercises, training, port calls and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts."
- 210. b** Narges Mohammadi, an Iranian activist, was sentenced to another year in prison for making propaganda against the system, as stated by her lawyer Mostafa Nili. This charge was based on her activities such as urging voters to boycott Iran's parliamentary election, corresponding with European lawmakers, and discussing issues of torture and sexual assault suffered by another Iranian journalist and activist.
- 211. d** Sreeja Akula created history at the WTT Contender in Lagos by becoming the first Indian to clinch a singles title at a Contender level.
- 212. b** India has been ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> out of 120 countries surveyed in the Global Energy Transition Index by the World Economic Forum. This indicates an improvement from the previous year when India was ranked 67<sup>th</sup>.
- 213. a** Zara Shatavari India's entry to the world's first Miss AI beauty pageant.
- 214. b** "Max Verstappen won the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix for the third consecutive year" indicates that he won in 2023.
- 215. b** SAMEER is an autonomous R&D laboratory under MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology), which signed the MoU to collaborate on advancing Next Generation Wireless Technologies for the Indian Army. This collaboration is significant as it supports the technological absorption goals outlined for the Indian Army by 2024.
- 216. a** Kozhikode was designated as India's first UNESCO City of Literature on October 31, 2023, marking a significant recognition of its literary heritage.
- 217. c** Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into India fell to \$28.1 billion in 2023 from \$49.3 billion in 2022 with the country slipping seven notches to rank 15 in the World Investment Ranking in 2023, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said.

- 218. c** The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) introduced two new guidelines aimed at enhancing the safety of electric vehicles in the L, M, and N categories. L refers to two-wheelers, while the M and N categories correspond to four-wheelers and goods trucks, respectively.
- 219. b** The Union Cabinet has approved 1 GW offshore wind energy projects, with 500 MW each planned off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. This decision marks India's first offshore wind energy project and aims to leverage these locations for significant renewable energy production.
- 220. c** Sweden has topped the Global Energy Transition Index, maintaining its position from the previous year. This indicates that Sweden is leading in terms of effective energy transition among the countries surveyed.
- 221. a** BJP president and Union Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda has been named Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha, replacing Union Minister Piyush Goyal, who won from the Mumbai North constituency in the Lok Sabha elections and took oath as a member of the Lower House.
- 222. c** The Ministry of Coal has initiated India's first-ever pilot project for Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) at the Kasta coal block in Jamtara District, Jharkhand.
- 223. b** At the 76<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, the assembly declared by consensus that June 24<sup>th</sup> of each year would be celebrated as the International Day of Women in Diplomacy. This day aims to recognize and promote the contributions of women in diplomacy.
- 224. c** After the Home Ministry suggested changes in first resolution, the Kerala Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to officially change from Kerala to 'Keralam'.
- 225. c** A boy with severe epilepsy from United Kingdom has become the first patient in the world to trial a new device fitted in their skull to control seizures.
- 226. a** Uzbekistan has become the first country in the world to receive a payment from the World Bank for the results achieved within the framework of the government policy support program for reducing emissions in the energy sector, as reported by the World Bank of Uzbekistan.
- 227. a** As part of sub-regional connectivity initiatives, India will extend transit facilities for movement of Bangladesh goods to Nepal and Bhutan through railway network.
- 228. b** North Macedonia's lawmakers approved a new nationalist-dominated government of Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski.
- 229. c** India has been nominated as the Chair of the International Sugar Organization (ISO) Council for 2024. This nomination reflects India's significant role in the global sugar industry as the world's largest consumer and the second-largest producer of sugar.
- 230. a** Genesys International has introduced India's first AI-powered navigation map designed for cars and mobility services.
- 231. d** Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has been officially recognized as a 'World Craft City' by the World Crafts Council. This recognition will help boost the handloom and handicraft sector in the region and benefit tourism and infrastructure development.
- 232. b** The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved a proposal from the Tata Sons to build a 'museum of temples' in Ayodhya at a cost of Rs. 650 crore.
- 233. b** Hansa Mehta, a feminist leader, activist, and diplomat from India, played a pivotal role in making the Universal Declaration of Human Rights more inclusive. She argued against using "men" as a synonym for humanity, resulting in the change from "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal" in Article 1. This change was significant in advancing women's rights and gender equality.
- 234. b** India is all set to host the first ever International Solar Festival in September this year.
- 235. c** The United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is an international observance held annually on 26 June.

- 236. b** The Punjab government of Pakistan plans to install the restored statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Kartarpur Sahib, also known as Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, to allow visiting Sikhs from India to view it.
- 237. d** China achieved this milestone with its Chang'e 6 probe. Previously, countries like the United States and Russia (Soviet Union) had collected samples from the moon, but these missions were limited to the near side. China's mission marked the first time samples were brought back from the moon's far side.
- 238. b** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will take up the position of Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- 239. b** The United States has designated Kenya as its major non-NATO ally, as stated in a memorandum published by the White House. This designation provides Kenya with certain benefits in the areas of defense trade and security cooperation.
- 240. b** Simon Mak has been named the vice chancellor of Universal AI University (UAIU), marking a significant milestone as he becomes the first foreign national to hold this position in an Indian university.
- 241. b** Om Birla has been elected as the Lok Sabha Speaker once again.
- 242. b** The Ratle power project is located on the Chenab river in the Chenab Valley.
- 243. b** Denmark, a major pork and dairy exporter, will introduce a tax on livestock carbon dioxide emissions from 2030, making it the first country to do so and hoping to inspire others to follow.
- 244. a** UNESCO has warned that Australia's Great Barrier Reef "remains under serious threat," directing the country to take immediate action to protect the world's largest coral system.
- 245. c** According to the World Bank report, India received USD 120 billion in remittances in 2023, making it the highest recipient among the listed countries.
- 246. c** Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced the grant of "Mini Ratna" status (Category-1) for Central Electronics Limited (CEL). This designation is given to certain public sector enterprises in India that meet specific performance criteria and grant them greater autonomy.
- 247. c** ISRO's commercial arm NSIL said that its newest rocket the SSLV will have its first dedicated commercial launch when it puts into orbit the Optimus – a satellite built by Australia-based Space Machines Company.
- 248. a** South India's first and the country's largest leopard safari was inaugurated by Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre at the Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP).
- 249. c** Kapil Dev, a World Cup-winning former India cricket captain, has been unanimously chosen as the new President of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI). He succeeds H R Srinivasan.
- 250. c** The United Nations General Assembly designated June 27 as "Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day" to raise awareness of the vital role MSMEs play in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 251. c** Mark Rutte, the outgoing Dutch prime minister, has been appointed as the next secretary-general of NATO. He will take over from Jens Stoltenberg on October 1.
- 252. c** The Telecommunications Act 2023 renames the universal service obligation fund to Digital Bharat Nidhi. This fund can now be used not only for supporting the establishment of telecom services in rural areas but also for funding research and development, and pilot projects.
- 253. a** India is likely to get its first Vande Bharat sleeper train this year. In a significant development, the trial runs of the Vande Bharat sleeper train are expected to start from August 15, 2024.
- 254. b** According to Article 87 of the Constitution, the President is required to address a joint session of Parliament at the beginning of the session after each Lok Sabha election.
- 255. c** Finland is the first country to offer preemptive bird flu vaccinations to certain workers exposed to animals. This effort is part of a joint EU procurement, securing vaccines for 10,000 people from CSL Seqirus.

- 256. c** The primary reason behind the proposed finance bill was to raise funds to pay off debt. The government aimed to address its financial obligations through the new taxes included in the bill. However, this proposal led to significant public dissatisfaction as it was perceived to exacerbate the economic struggles of many Kenyans.
- 257. a** Motilal Oswal launches India's first Defence Index.
- 258. d** Our universe is 13.6 billion years old whereas the Earth is 4.5 billion years old; and the newly discovered star clusters are believed to have been born when the Universe was 460 million years old.
- 259. a** The Paris 2024 Olympics, which is exactly a month away, will see plenty of historic firsts but the one that holds immense significance for India will be the first-ever country House at the Olympic Games – the India House.
- 260. d** In December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution declaring 30 June International Asteroid Day in order to “observe each year at the international level the anniversary of the Tunguska impact over Siberia, Russian Federation, on 30 June 1908, and to raise public awareness about the asteroid impact hazard.”
- 261. a** Railway Protection Force Chief Manoj Yadava has launched Sangyaan App, a mobile application to provide in-depth information on the three new criminal laws which are to come into force from July 1.
- 262. b** India was placed in the “regular follow-up” category as per the Mutual Evaluation Report adopted during the FATF plenary in Singapore. This is a significant achievement as it indicates a high level of compliance and is a distinction shared by only four other G-20 countries.
- 263. c** Ursula von der Leyen, a German politician and member of the centre-right European People's party, was nominated by the EU's heads of state and government to stay on as European Commission president for a second five-year term.
- 264. b** António Costa, a socialist and former Portuguese prime minister, was named by the EU leaders as the next president of the European Council.
- 265. c** Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) is the first Indian company to achieve a market capitalization of Rs. 21 lakh crore. This milestone was reached due to the company's diversified business operations ranging from oil to telecommunications.
- 266. a** Yotta becomes first Indian data centre startup to go public on Nasdaq.
- 267. b** Dr. Jitendra Singh launched two Geoportals developed by ISRO: “Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)” for rural land records and “National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)” for emergency management. These portals are designed for visualization and planning with high-resolution satellite imagery.
- 268. b** Shafali Verma broke the record for the fastest double-century in women's Test cricket history by scoring her double ton off just 194 balls, surpassing the previous record held by Annabel Sutherland.
- 269. b** In recognition of the notable contributions made by Professor (late) Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics and economic planning, Government of India has designated June 29 every year, coinciding with his birth anniversary, as “Statistics Day” in the category of Special Days to be celebrated at the national level.
- 270. a** Dr Usha Thakur was awarded 12<sup>th</sup> Vishwa Hindi Samman in an Hindi Samvad event organised by Embassy of India in Nepal recognising her contribution in development of Hindi literature.
- 271. b** IAS officer Sujata Saunik took charge of chief secretary of Maharashtra becoming the first woman in the state's 64-year-old history to hold the position.
- 272. b** Ravi Agrawal, a 1988-batch IRS officer, has been appointed as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), succeeding Nitin Gupta.
- 273. c** Each year on June 29, International Day of the Tropics raises awareness about various challenges that tropical nations face. It's also a day to celebrate the extraordinary diversity of the Tropics.
- 274. c** India become first team to breach 600 mark in women's Tests.
- 275. c** The World Bank has extended \$1.5 billion in financing to help India accelerate the development of low-carbon energy. This initiative aims to support India's efforts to scale up renewable energy, develop a vibrant market for green hydrogen, and stimulate investments in low-carbon energy technologies.



- 276. b** The United Nations warned that only 17% of its 169 targets to improve life for the world's more than 7 billion people are on track to be reached by the 2030 deadline.
- 277. c** Vienna, the capital of Austria, has been ranked as the world's most livable city for the third year in a row according to the Economist Intelligence Unit. This ranking is based on the city's high scores in various indicators such as stability, health care, education, and infrastructure.
- 278. c** Amit Shah attributes the increasing dangers such as avalanches, landslides, floods, and storms to climate change, highlighting its future impact on natural disasters.
- 279. c** Uttar Pradesh has set a record by generating one crore tokens through the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID. It is the first and only state in India to achieve this feat.
- 280. d** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) Launches eSankhyiki Portal for Enhanced User Experience and Ease of Data Access.



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