

SSC BANKING MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

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



SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting in Kazakhstan endorses 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'

- **Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan.** During the meeting, a protocol was signed by the Defence Ministers of all SCO Member States. A Joint Communique was issued after the meeting, in which the SCO Defence Ministers agreed, amongst other initiatives, to **developing the idea of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future', which is rooted in the ancient Indian philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'**.
- At the meeting, the Defence Secretary reiterated India's steadfast commitment towards maintaining peace, stability and security in the SCO region. He emphasised the **need to adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards terrorism in all its forms for prosperity and development of the SCO Member States.** Shri Giridhar Aramane mentioned about India's long-standing proposal of Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the United Nations. He also highlighted the concept of **'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)', proposed by India for the Indo-Pacific.**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), also known as the Shanghai Pact, is a transcontinental political, economic, security, and military alliance. It is a permanent intergovernmental international organization. The creation of SCO was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China). The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed during the St. Petersburg SCO Heads of State meeting in June 2002, and entered into force on 19 September 2003. In terms of geographic scope and population, it is the world's largest regional organization, covering approximately 60% of the area of Eurasia, 40% of the world population, and more than 30% of global GDP. The SCO is the successor to the Shanghai Five, a mutual security agreement formed in 1996 between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Its membership has since expanded to eight states, with India and Pakistan joining on 9 June 2017. Iran started accession as a full member in September 2021 at the Dushanbe Summit in Tajikistan. Iran has been accepted as the ninth full member of the organisation. Several countries are engaged as observers or partners. The SCO is governed by the Heads of State Council (HSC), its supreme decision-making body, which meets once a year. Military exercises are also regularly conducted among members to promote cooperation and coordination against terrorism and other external threats, and to maintain regional peace and stability.

Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi takes charge as 26th Navy chief

- **Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi assumed command of the Indian Navy as the 26th Chief of the Naval Staff.** He succeeds Admiral R. Hari Kumar who retires upon superannuation after over 40 years of service.
- **Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi is an alumnus of Sainik School Rewa, Madhya Pradesh and the National Defence Academy.** He was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1985.
- He rose through the ranks to **become the Commander of the Western Naval Command before becoming the vice-admiral (vice-chief) of the Indian Navy in June 2019.** He was also made the commandant of the prestigious Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala, Kerala. He was the director general of naval operations from July 2020 to May 2021.

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 Dinesh K. Tripathi** 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 2nd Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces.

India to grant full renovation cost of Kankesanthurai Port in northern Sri Lanka

- “The Sri Lankan Cabinet has decided to implement the renovation of the Kankesanthurai Port in the Northern Province with India agreeing to grant the entire cost of the project”. The decision highlights India’s commitment to enhancing regional cooperation and supporting Sri Lanka’s infrastructure development.
- The Kankesanthurai Port or the KKS Port, covering an area of approximately 16 acres, is located 104 km (56 nautical miles) from Karaikal Port in Puducherry, India. A direct passenger ship service connects Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu to the KKS Port, covering a distance of 111 km (60 nautical miles) in about 3.5 hours. The port has the potential to boost socio-economic development and cultural relations between India and Sri Lanka, particularly in the northern region of the island nation.

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. Ranil Wickremesinghe is the current President of Sri Lanka, in office since January 2015. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka. Dinesh Gunawardena is the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

Riyawan garlic from Madhya Pradesh receives GI tag

- Riyawan garlic from Madhya Pradesh receives GI tag. In Madhya Pradesh, Riyawan garlic, renowned for its distinctive bold flavors and higher oil content, has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. This recognition marks the second GI tag for the region’s agricultural produce.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: “Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin.” The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

Hindu marriage not valid ‘unless performed with ceremonies in proper form’: SC

- A Hindu marriage is a ‘samskara’ or sacrament and cannot be recognised under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 “unless performed with ceremonies in the proper form”, the Supreme Court has ruled. Underlining that a Hindu marriage “is a sacrament which has to be accorded its status as an institution of great value in Indian society”, a bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih in an order urged “young men and women to think deeply about the institution of marriage even before they enter upon it and as to how sacred the said institution is, in Indian society”.
- The top court reminded that “a (Hindu) marriage is not an event for ‘song and dance’ and ‘wining and dining’ or an occasion to demand and exchange dowry and gifts by undue pressure leading to possible initiation of criminal proceedings thereafter”. The bench further said, “A marriage is not a commercial transaction. It is a solemn foundational event celebrated so as to establish a relationship between a man and a

woman who acquire the status of a husband and wife for an evolving family in future which is a basic unit of Indian society.

- **A Hindu marriage facilitates procreation, consolidates the unit of family and solidifies the spirit of fraternity within various communities.** After all, a marriage is sacred for it provides a lifelong, dignity-affirming, equal, consensual and healthy union of two individuals.
- It is considered to be an event that confers salvation upon the individual especially when the rites and ceremonies are conducted.” Delving into the provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act, the bench said that **“unless and until the marriage is performed with appropriate ceremonies and in due form, it cannot be said to be ‘solemnised’ as per Section 7(1) of the Act”.**
- It pointed out that “further, sub-section (2) of Section 7 states that where such rites and ceremonies **include the saptapadi, i.e., the taking of seven steps by the bridegroom and the bride jointly before the sacred fire**, the marriage becomes complete and binding when the seventh step is taken. Therefore, requisite ceremonies for the solemnisation of the Hindu marriage must be in accordance with the applicable customs or usage and where saptapadi has been adopted, the marriage becomes complete and binding when the seventh step is taken”.
- **The court was dealing with a plea by a woman seeking the transfer of a divorce petition from a court in Muzaffarpur, Bihar to a court in Ranchi, Jharkhand.** During the pendency of the petition, she and her former partner, both trained commercial pilots, decided to resolve the dispute by filing a joint application under Article 142 of the Constitution of India.

The Hindu Marriage Act (HMA) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted in 1955 which was passed on 18 May. Three other important acts were also enacted as part of the Hindu Code Bills during this time: **the Hindu Succession Act (1956), the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (1956), the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956).** The main purpose of the act was to amend and codify the law relating to marriage among Hindus and others. Besides amending and codifying Sastrik Law, it also included separation and divorce, which also exist in Sastrik Law.

India’s first Astro Tourism Campaign: Uttarakhand Tourism announces ‘Nakshatra Sabha’

- **The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board has joined hands with Starscapes, a leading astro-tourism company, to introduce Nakshatra Sabha, a new initiative to provide a comprehensive Astro Tourism experience to people.** The campaign will offer a range of activities, including stargazing, special solar observations, astrophotography contests, camping under the stars, and more.
- **The initiative aims to bring together astronomy enthusiasts, adventurers, and travellers to marvel at the wonders of the cosmos.** In addition to offering local residents professional training and skill development opportunities, the campaign seeks to boost local economies and advocate for preserving night skies. By fostering a community of ambassadors dedicated to dark sky conservation efforts throughout Uttarakhand, Nakshatra Sabha will work towards implementing a region-wide dark sky preservation policy over the coming year.

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Pushkar Singh Dhami is the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. Lieutenant General Gurmit Singh is serving as the current Governor of Uttarakhand. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.

India’s first Vande Metro rolls out

- **The first Vande Bharat Metro, a short-distance variant of the Vande Bharat Express trains, was rolled out from the Rail Coach Factory in Punjab’s Kapurthala.** Trial runs for the new-age metro are expected to commence in July. Vande Metro is a short-distance variant of the Vande Bharat Express trains, which is aimed at making travel quicker on a daily basis. The metro will be able to travel at a speed of 130 kilometers per hour. The network will **connect 124 cities within a distance of approximately 100-250 kilometers, allowing commuters to travel both within and outside the city.**

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.

Reserve one-third of posts for women: Supreme Court to SC Bar Association

- The Supreme Court asked the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) to reserve one-third of its posts for women. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Viswanathan directed that one post in the bar body administration shall be reserved for women, starting with the treasurer's post this year. Further, at least three of the nine junior executive members and two of the six senior executive committee members of the Association shall be women.

India set to host the prestigious 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection in 2024

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, through the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), will host the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 46) and the 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP 26) in Kochi, Kerala from May 20–30.
- This is in line with India's poise to facilitate constructive global dialogue on environmental stewardship, scientific collaboration, and cooperation in Antarctica. The ATCM and meetings of the CEP are pivotal in the international community's ongoing efforts to safeguard Antarctica's fragile ecosystem and promote scientific research in the region.
- Convened annually under the Antarctic Treaty System, these meetings serve as forums for Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties and other stakeholders to address Antarctica's pressing environmental, scientific, and governance issues. The Antarctic Treaty signed in 1959 and entered into force in 1961, established Antarctica as a region dedicated to peaceful purposes, scientific cooperation, and environmental protection. Over the years, the Treaty has garnered widespread support, with 56 countries currently party to it. The CEP was established under the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (the Madrid Protocol) in 1991. The CEP advises the ATCM on environmental protection and conservation in Antarctica.
- India has been a Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty since 1983. It participates in the decision-making process along with other 28 Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty to date. India's first Antarctic research station, Dakshin Gangotri, was established in 1983.
- At present, India operates two year-round research stations: Maitri (1989) and Bharati (2012). The permanent research stations facilitate Indian Scientific Expeditions to Antarctica, which have been ongoing annually since 1981.
- In 2022, India enacted the Antarctic Act, reaffirming its commitment to the Antarctic Treaty. As a signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, India remains dedicated to environmental protection, scientific cooperation, and peaceful operations in Antarctica.
- The Antarctic Treaty Secretariat (ATS) serves as the administrative hub for the Antarctic Treaty System. Established in 2004, the ATS coordinates the ATCM and CEP meetings, republishes and disseminates information, and facilitates diplomatic communication, exchanges, and negotiations related to Antarctic governance and management. It also monitors compliance with Antarctic Treaty provisions and agreements and provides assistance and guidance to Antarctic Treaty Parties on treaty implementation and enforcement matters.

Antarctica is Earth's southernmost and least-populated continent. Situated almost entirely south of the Antarctic Circle and surrounded by the Southern Ocean (also known as the Antarctic Ocean), it contains the geographic South Pole. Antarctica is the fifth-largest continent, being about 40% larger than Europe, and has an area of 14,200,000 km². Most of Antarctica is covered by the Antarctic ice sheet; with an average thickness of 1.9 km. Antarctica is governed by about 30 countries, all of which are parties of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty System. According to the terms of the treaty, military activity, mining, nuclear explosions, and nuclear waste disposal are all prohibited in Antarctica.

With INS Beas, Navy begins converting steam-powered warships to diesel

- The Indian Navy has begun the process of converting the propulsion systems of its warships from steam to diesel in a major upgrade aimed at significantly enhancing their life, maintenance support and capability. The conversion of the propulsion system of INS Beas — a Brahmaputra-class frigate — began.
- The work is being carried out in collaboration with the government-owned Cochin Shipyard Ltd. The move from the older generation steam to diesel propulsion is being carried out along with several other equipment and system upgrades. The complete midlife upgrade programme is expected to take around two years.
- There are plans to convert the remaining ships of the Brahmaputra class — INS Brahmaputra and INS Betwa — from steam to diesel propulsion. Besides these ships, the INS Vikramaditya and the INS Jalashwa are the only other platforms of the Navy that are powered by steam.

Chandigarh University becomes India's First to Start Harvard Collaborative Business Management Program

- Chandigarh University has become the first Indian university to start a Harvard University collaborative business management program by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States based prestigious university to provide aspiring business students international exposure and perspective. Chandigarh University's students to be graded with Harvard University students, get placements at top global firms.

Patna becomes second most polluted city in India

- Patna was the second most polluted city in India recording an air quality index (AQI) of 316, which is classified as 'very poor'. Other cities in the state that recorded 'poor' AQI are Siwan (282), Muzaffarpur (233), Hajipur (232) and Bettiah (221). Greater Noida in UP was the most polluted city in the country with an AQI of 346. AQI is an assessment of air quality that takes into account pollutants, including PM 2.5 – particulate matter less than 2.5 microns, and PM 10.

Great Nicobar's Shompen tribe votes for first time in general election

- The members of the Shompen tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTGs) from the Great Nicobar Islands exercised their votes for the first time in Lok Sabha polls in the Union territory. "India has an 8.6% tribal population which includes 75 groups of tribals which are PVTGs. The location of new polling booths in previously inaccessible areas has led to the large-scale inclusion of PVTGs,". According to the ECI, in last 11 state legislative elections, there were around 900,000 eligible voters from 14 PVTG communities namely Kamar, Bhunjia, Baiga, Pahadi Korwa, Abujhmadia, Birhor, Sahariya, Bhariya, Chenchu, Kolam, Thoti, Kondareddy, Jenu Kuruba and Koraga.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a union territory of India consisting of 572 islands, of which 37 are inhabited, at the junction of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. It comprises two island groups, the Andaman Islands (partly) and the Nicobar Islands, separated by the 150 km (100 mile) wide Ten Degree Channel (on the 10°N parallel), with the Andaman islands to the north of this latitude, and the Nicobar islands to the south (or by 179 km; 111 miles). The island chains are thought to be a submerged extension of the Arakan Mountains. In December 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was on a two-day visit to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, renamed three of the islands as a tribute to Subhas Chandra Bose. Ross Island was renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island; Neil Island as Shaheed Dweep Island; and Havelock Island as Swaraj Island.

Ajrakh from Kutch gets GI tag

- The Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks (CGPDTM) has bestowed the Geographical Indication (GI) certificate upon the traditional artisans of 'Kutch Ajrakh,' hailing from the vibrant region of Kutch in Gujarat. This prestigious recognition serves as a testament to the exceptional artistry and cultural significance of the age-old craft practiced by artisans in the region.
- Ajrakh, a time-honored textile craft, holds deep roots in the cultural tapestry of Gujarat, particularly in the regions of Sindh, Barmer, and Kutch, where its legacy spans millennia. The art of Ajrakh entails a meticulous process of hand-block printing on treated cotton cloth, culminating in intricate designs infused with rich symbolism and history.

- From the sourcing of natural vegetable and mineral colors to the intricate resist printing and dyeing techniques, each step in the Ajrakh-making process reflects the artisans' mastery and dedication to their craft. The villages of Dhamadka and Ajrakhpur in Kutch stand as bastions of Ajrakh tradition, where artisans continue to practice the age-old techniques passed down through generations.
- Ajrakhpur, in particular, holds historical significance as the epicenter of Ajrakh work in Gujarat, with its roots tracing back 400 years when Sind Muslims introduced the craft to the region. Over the centuries, the village has evolved into a hub of creativity, where artisans blend tradition with innovation to produce exquisite Ajrakh textiles that showcase the region's vibrant cultural heritage.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin." The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

Army looks at creating new unit to play role of enemy in military exercises

- Indian Army is working on creating a new unit that can simulate the role of an adversary during military exercises and war game training. Plans for the new unit — OPFOR, or "opposing forces" — are currently under discussion and will be implemented after final approval from the Army hierarchy. During the Army Commanders' Conference last month, top officers had decided to explore the feasibility of creating a tailor-made organisation to function as an adversarial force that can carry out realistic wargaming and training to enhance the force's combat potential. Countries such as the US have already employed this concept extensively.

On ECI's invitation, 75 International visitors from EMBs of 23 countries arrive to watch the world's largest elections unfold

- As a beacon of electoral integrity and transparency, the Election Commission of India exemplifies its commitment to conduct general elections of the highest standards, offering a golden bridge for global Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to witness democratic excellence first-hand. The Election Commission of India continues fostering international cooperation by organising the Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) during the ongoing Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The event will be a first in terms of the scale and magnitude of participation.
- 75 delegates representing various EMBs and organisations from 23 countries namely - Bhutan, Mongolia, Australia, Madagascar, Fiji, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Moldova, Tunisia, Seychelles, Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Chile, Uzbekistan, Maldives, Papua New Guinea and Namibia will take part in the event. Members from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and media teams from Bhutan and Israel will also participate.
- Beginning on the 4th of May, the program seeks to familiarise foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) with the nuances of India's electoral system as well as the best practices used by the largest democracy in the world. Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar, Election Commissioner Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu addressed the delegates on the 5th of May 2024. Thereafter, the delegates will embark on visits to six states—Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh—in small groups to observe polls and related preparedness in various constituencies. The programme will end on the 9th of May, 2024.

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. The Election Commission was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950. 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, 1951. **Rajiv Kumar is the current as and the 25th Chief Election Commissioner** of India.

IIT Madras conducts India's first blockchain-based elections, plans to scale up

- **IIT Madras students have broken new ground and bagged a record by conducting India's very first blockchain technology-based election**, using in-house developed software for transparent, tamper-proof, vote-from-anywhere student council elections. The system has the potential to transform electoral processes nationwide.
- **Initially developed as a CSR initiative with backing from a prominent Indian tech firm and the Department of Science and Technology**, the project aimed to tackle COVID-19 challenges, especially in accessing medical records and monitoring health conditions across regions.

A **cryptocurrency or crypto**, is a virtual currency secured by cryptography. It is designed to work as a medium of exchange, where individual ownership records are stored in a computerised database. The defining trait of a cryptocurrency is that they are not issued by the government agency of any country making them immune against any interference and manipulation from them. **The first type of crypto currency was Bitcoin, which to this day remains the most-used, valuable and popular. Along with Bitcoin, other alternative cryptocurrencies with varying degrees of functions and specifications have been created. Some are iterations of bitcoin while others have been created from the ground up. Bitcoin was launched in 2009 by an individual or group known by the pseudonym "Satoshi Nakamoto.** The competing cryptocurrencies that were created as a result of Bitcoin's success are known as altcoins. **Some of the well-known altcoins are as follows: Litecoin, Peercoin, Namecoin, Ethereum and Cardana.**

Army, IAF conduct joint exercise at multiple locations in Punjab

- **Indian Army's Kharga Corps, under the aegis of Army's Western Command, successfully conducted a three-day joint exercise with the IAF at multiple locations in Punjab.** The exercise was conducted to refine processes and validate employment of attack helicopters in support of mechanised operations in developed terrain. Army, IAF conduct joint exercise at multiple locations in Punjab.
- **The Gagan Strike-II exercise, which incorporated Apache and ALH-WSI helicopters, Unarmed Aerial Vehicles and Special Forces of Indian Army,** was aimed at validating various force multipliers in support of ground offensive by strike corps along with live firing by helicopters as demanded by mechanised forces during offensive maneuvers.

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 29th and the current Chief of the Army Staff.** He is the first officer from the Corps of Engineers to become the Army Chief. **General Anil Chauhan is a four-star general of the Indian Army, who is the current and 2nd Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces, since 30 September 2022.** He succeeded General Bipin Rawat, the inaugural holder of the post, who had died nine months earlier in a helicopter crash in December 2021.

BIMSTEC Secretary General to Visit India

- **The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Secretary General, Indra Mani Pandey visited India.** He visited the BIMSTEC Energy Centre in Bengaluru and have

several other meetings during the visit. **BIMSTEC comprises seven countries of the Bay of Bengal region: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.** It pursues regional cooperation in seven sectors including agriculture and food security, connectivity, environment and climate change, people to people contact, science, technology and innovation, security, trade, investment and development.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion (2021). The BIMSTEC member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand– are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors. A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018), also referred to as the mini SAARC. Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. The permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Pushkar Dhama launches Pirul Lao-Paise Pao Campaign

- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama launched the Pirul Lao-Paise Pao in the Rudraprayag district.** He urged the people to actively participate in the campaign to prevent forest fires. The Supreme Court has been hearing pleas on forest fires in Uttarakhand since early May. According to the petitions, at least 910 incidents have occurred in the state. **The apex court also criticised the central government as Uttarakhand was granted only ₹ 3.15 crore to deal with the forest fires against a demand of ₹10 crore.**

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. **On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Pushkar Singh Dhama is the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. Lieutenant General Gurmit Singh is serving as the current Governor of Uttarakhand. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.**

Japan's Ambassador Inaugurates Kohima Peace Memorial and Eco Park with Nagaland CM

- **In Nagaland, ambassador of Japan to India, Hiroshi Suzuki and Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio jointly inaugurated the Kohima Peace Memorial and laid the foundation stone of Eco Park Kohima.** The Kohima Peace Memorial and Eco Park holds particular significance as it celebrates the collaborative effort between the Government of Japan and Japanese International Corporation Agency with the Government of Nagaland. It represents not only a historical significance but also serves as a symbol of peace, reconciliation and hold profound educational value.

Nagaland is a state in northeastern India. It is bordered by the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south and the Sagaing Region of Myanmar to the east. Its capital city is Kohima and its largest city is Dimapur. **Nagaland became the 16th state of India on 1 December 1963. It has experienced insurgency and inter-ethnic conflict since the 1950s, limiting its economic development. Neiphiu Rio is the current Chief Minister of Nagaland. The current Governor of Nagaland is La Ganesan. Nagaland was the only state which has recorded a negative population growth in 2011 census. The decadal growth was -0.58%.**

Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship signs MoU with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. to conduct two Pilot Projects under the Drone Didi Yojana

- **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd to conduct two Pilot Projects under the Drone Didi Yojana.** Launched earlier this year, the scheme aims to train 15,000 women to operate drones for agricultural purposes such as fertilising the crop, monitoring crop growth and planting seeds, thereby creating new livelihood opportunities for women through imparting skills in new technology areas.
- **Under this partnership, MSDE and M&M will conduct two Pilot Projects at the National Skill Training Institute (NSTI), situated in Hyderabad and Noida, to skill 500 women in exclusive batches of 20 women**

each. The 15-day curriculum, approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), will be delivered through Remote Pilot Training Organisation (RPTO) instructors at these Centres.

- Within this partnership, NSTIs will provide infrastructure for running the training programme, hostel facility for participants, and reach out to local Women Self Help Groups and NGOs to mobilise participation. Mahindra Group will provide initial set-up support through simulation machinery/drones, simulator controller, simulator software, desktop computer with i5 processor and trainers, and meet the operating costs for the duration of the Pilot Projects, including the cost of DGCA License Holder Instructors at the centres.

Assam Greenfield airport project halted after SC overturns NGT order

- Assam government's proposed plan to construct Greenfield Airport at Doloo in Silchar using part of a tea garden has been halted after the Supreme Court of India issued its order setting aside the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) clearance. The top court while hearing a civil appeal on May 6 noted that no environmental clearance was obtained for the project. The apex court also found that the state government produced wrong information regarding uprooting 4,190,000 tea bushes and questioned the role of the NGT in this matter.

National Green Tribunal (India) had been set up under National Green Tribunal Act as a statutory body in year 2010 to deal with environmental cases and speedy implementation of decisions relating to it. India is the third country in the world – after Australia and New Zealand – to set up such a body to deal with environmental cases. The principal National Green Tribunal bench is located in Delhi, with other benches sitting in Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai. Justice Prakash Shrivastava is the Current Chairman of National Green Tribunal Chairperson since August 2023. The National Green Tribunal is governed by the principles of natural justice rather than strict procedure that is normally applied by the Code of Civil Procedure. Likewise, the tribunal is not bound by Indian Evidence Act, which makes it easier for conservation groups to present facts and issues before the tribunal compared to other courts.

India 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.
- Chahabar 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. Chahabar 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.

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.

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 22nd 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. Lakshman Prasad Acharya is currently governor of the state of Sikkim. In 2015, Sikkim became the India's first "organic state".

Guwahati Gateway Ghat: India's First River Terminal

- Assam is set to witness India's first river terminal in Guwahati. This initiative is part of the government's broader strategy to enhance connectivity and stimulate regional economic growth. Assam's Chief Minister, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, inaugurated the construction works on the Guwahati Gateway Ghat (GGG), India's first state-of-the-art river ferry terminal. The project, funded by the World Bank, is expected to revolutionize Assam's waterways. Guwahati, the largest metropolis in northeastern India, is located on the south bank of the Brahmaputra River.

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.

UNESCO Adds Three Indian Literary Masterpieces to Memory of The World Register

- Three Indian literary masterpieces have been added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Regional Register. The inclusion of the 'Ramcharitmanas', 'Panchatantra', and 'Sahṛdayāloka-Locana' in the register highlights the significance of preserving and celebrating diverse narratives and artistic expressions that shape our shared humanity. 'Sahṛdayaloka-Locana', 'Panchatantra', and 'Ramcharitmanas' were authored by renowned figures such as Acharya Anandvardhan, Pt. Vishnu Sharma, and Goswami Tulsidas, respectively.
- "These literary works have transcended time and place, leaving an indelible mark on readers and artists both within and outside India," acknowledging the instrumental role played by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in ensuring the addition of these literary works to the register. The inclusion of these texts took place during the 10th meeting of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP), held in Ulaanbaatar.
- The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) played a pivotal role in securing this historic achievement during the 10th meeting of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP). Professor Ramesh Chandra Gaur, representing IGNCA, successfully presented and defended the nominations, highlighting their cultural significance and garnering support from representatives and observers.

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.

IAF tests Arogya Maitri Cube, world's first air-lifted portable hospital, in Agra

- **Aarogya Maitri Cubes, the world's first disaster hospital packed in 72 cubes that can be airlifted**, had its test run by the Indian Air Force at Agra. Built under project Bhishm, or Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri, Aarogya Maitri Cubes is designed to be deployed anywhere at any time to address an emergency situation.
- **The Aid Cube is equipped with several innovative tools that enhance disaster response and offer medical support during emergencies.** It integrates artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics to facilitate effective coordination, real-time monitoring, and efficient management of medical services in the field.
- **Project Bhishma was announced in February 2022, following which the Ministry of Defence set up a task force towards this initiative.** At the Global South Summit in January 2023, PM Modi announced the 'Aarogya Maitri' project under which India will provide essential medical supplies to any developing country affected by natural disaster or humanitarian crisis.

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).

India-U.S. joint exercise to counter urban terrorism contingencies to conclude in Kolkata

- **The India-U.S joint exercise in conducting coordinated operations in urban counter terrorism contingencies will conclude in Kolkata.** The seventh edition of the Indo-U.S. joint counter terrorism exercise "Tarkash", between the elite National Security Guard (NSG) and the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) commenced. "The three-week exercise encompassed intense training and mock drills in urban counter terrorism scenarios.
- **The primary objective of the bilateral exercise is to build functional relation and enhance interoperability between the two Special Forces in conducting coordinated counter terror operations in urban counter terrorism contingencies.** The exercise is also aimed at improving bilateral cooperation between India and the U.S. in matters relating to combating terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations".

CJI DY Chandrachud to Attend 'J20'- Summit of Heads of Apex Courts of G20 Members - In Brazil

- **Chief Justice of India Dr. DY Chandrachud has been invited to attend 'J20' a summit of Heads of Supreme Courts and Constitutional Courts of all the G20 members.** The J20 summit is being organised by the Brazilian Federal Supreme Court in light of Brazil's presidency of G20 2024.
- **Artificial intelligence used for judicial decision-making must also be transparent and give reasons for its outcomes,** Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said. **The CJI was speaking at the J20 Summit (of heads of Supreme Courts and constitutional courts of G20 members) in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro.** The CJI said that courts are essentially "service providers and enablers of rights-affirming societies".

India's first WhatsApp Park in UP

- The renowned tourist destination in Lucknow city, formerly known as Gautam Buddha Park, has been rebranded as Happiness Park or WhatsApp Park. Describing the park's charm, upon entry, visitors encounter a large Doraemon figure, serving as a prominent selfie spot. Additionally, a long scooter also doubles as a popular selfie location. Further exploration reveals themed selfie spots inspired by movies like Hum Saath Saath Hain and 3 Idiots, alongside iconic emojis from WhatsApp. The park features wall paintings showcasing various aspects of Lucknow, complemented by cheerful faces throughout.

Centre hands over first set of CAA certificates to 14 applicants

- Two months after the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified the rules for implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which was enacted by Parliament in December 2019, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla physically handed over the first set of citizenship certificates to 14 applicants.
- Despite its enactment four years ago, the CAA could not be implemented because the rules were not notified. According to the MHA, many other applicants are being given digitally signed certificates through email. "The Empowered Committee, Delhi headed by Director (Census Operation), Delhi, after due scrutiny, have decided to grant citizenship to 14 applicants. "The first set of citizenship certificates after notification of Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 were issued.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) was passed by the Parliament of India on 11 December 2019. It amended the Citizenship Act, 1955 by providing an accelerated pathway to Indian citizenship for persecuted religious minorities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who arrived in India by 2014. The eligible minorities were stated as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis or Christians. The law does not grant such eligibility to Muslims from these countries. The act was the first time that religion had been overtly used as a criterion for citizenship under Indian law, and it attracted global criticism.

Tamil Nadu's Shore Temple is India's first Green Energy Archeological Site

- The historic Shore Temple in Mamallapuram, a renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site, has achieved a significant milestone by becoming India's first Green Energy Archeological Site. This has been made possible through the successful implementation of the Green Heritage Project, a collaborative initiative between the Renault Nissan Technology & Business Centre India (Renault Nissan Tech) and Hand in Hand India (HiH).
- As a result of the Green Heritage Project's endeavors, the Shore Temple will now be illuminated using clean and sustainable solar power. Three solar plants, each with a capacity of 10 kilowatts, have been strategically installed to harness the abundant solar energy in the region. Notably, any surplus energy generated by these solar plants will be channeled back into the grid, ensuring that it contributes to future energy needs while minimizing environmental impact.

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'.

No mining within 1-km radius around tiger habitats: SC to Rajasthan

- The Supreme Court told authorities in Rajasthan that there cannot be any mining activity within 1-km radius of critical tiger habitats. A bench of Justices B R Gavai, S V N Bhatti and Sandeep Mehta pointed out that on April 26, 2023, the court had said that mining within 1-km from the boundary of a national park or a wildlife sanctuary shall not be permissible. It added, "as such the prohibition... will be automatically applicable even to the critical tiger reserves".

- “At the cost of repetition, the protected areas would not only mean national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, but also critical tiger habitats, i.e. tiger reserves. In that view of the matter, we find that continuation of any mining activities within a radius of 1 km from the boundaries of the critical tiger reserves would be in contempt of our orders dated April 26, 2023”.
- The bench was hearing an application which said that the demarcation of the protected areas in and around the Sariska wildlife sanctuary was such that the boundaries of the critical tiger habitat extends till the outer boundary of the buffer zone, meaning there is virtually no buffer zone.
- The Rajasthan government told the court that the prohibition on mining, as ordered in April 2023, was applicable to the Eco-Sensitive Zone (of 1 km) from National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries and it did not apply to Tiger Reserves. The judgment of April 2023 stated that mining within the national park and wildlife sanctuary and within an area of 1 km from the boundary of such national park and wildlife sanctuary shall not be permissible. According to the court, Section 38XA of Wildlife Protection Act 1972 shows that tiger reserves stand on a higher pedestal than wildlife sanctuaries and national parks.

The National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) stipulated that state governments should declare land falling within 10 km of the boundaries of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries as eco-fragile zones or Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) under the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986. While the 10-km rule is implemented as a general principle, the extent of its application can vary. Areas beyond 10 km can also be notified by the Union government as ESZs, if they hold larger ecologically important “sensitive corridors”.

Arunachal’s Sela Tunnel makes it to The International Book of Honour, England

- Sela Tunnel has been officially recognised as the highest tunnel in the country by the International Book of Honour, England. The 2.598 Km long tunnel is situated at an altitude of 13000 ft on the Tezpur-Tawang Road and has been constructed by BRO India to guarantee year-round connectivity to the strategic Tawang Region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sela Tunnel, the world’s longest twin-lane tunnel, in Arunachal Pradesh. Situated at an altitude of 13,000 feet, the strategically important Sela Tunnel will ensure all-weather connectivity to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

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.

Constitution bench verdict binding on benches of lesser strength, says SC

- A judgment of a Constitution bench would be “binding” on benches of lesser strength, the Supreme Court has said while recalling an April 2022 verdict delivered by it. In its order dated April 7, 2022, the apex court had held that a panchayat cannot claim ownership of the land which has been taken from the real owners from their permissible ceiling limits under the land law in Haryana.

Ludhiana gets India’s first metaverse-powered virtual model polling booth

- In order to spread voter awareness among the residents, the administration organised country’s first metaverse-powered virtual model polling booth, live band among other activities at MBD Neopolis Mall, Ferozepur road. India’s first metaverse-powered virtual model polling booth was established for providing a virtual mock polling experience to the participants. The election song was also launched during the event and bhanga was performed by the students of BCM Arya Senior Secondary School, Shastri Nagar.

Metaverse refers to a virtual or digital universe where people can interact with each other and digital objects in a shared online space. The term “metaverse” first appeared in author Neal Stephenson’s 1992 science-fiction novel Snowcrash, which describes a future where millions of people use virtual avatars to participate in a cyberspace realm. The metaverse is essentially an interconnected network of virtual worlds, augmented reality, and virtual reality environments accessible through the internet. In this digital realm, users can create avatars, socialize with others, engage in various activities, explore virtual landscapes, and even conduct business or trade virtual goods

and services. Elements of the metaverse include virtual reality (VR) platforms, augmented reality (AR) experiences, online games, social media, virtual commerce, and virtual art galleries, among others. The metaverse aims to offer a seamless and immersive experience, blurring the lines between the physical and digital worlds. Companies such as Meta (formerly Facebook), Microsoft, and Roblox are all investing heavily in the metaverse, and it is seen as a potential major driver of growth in the technology industry in the coming years.

Senior Indian diplomat Ravi participates in SCO meeting in Kazakhstan

- Senior Indian diplomat Dammu Ravi participated in the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation member states in Astana in the Kazakh capital which discussed preparations for the upcoming Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State.
- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Secretary (Economic Relations) Ravi met Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran Mehdi Safari on the sidelines of the meeting, the Embassy of India in Kazakhstan along with some photographs of the meeting. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a political, economic, international security and defence organisation. It is the world's largest regional organisation in terms of geographic scope and population, covering approximately 80% of the area of Eurasia and 40% of the world population.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), also known as the Shanghai Pact, is a transcontinental political, economic, security, and military alliance. It is a permanent intergovernmental international organization. The creation of SCO was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China). The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed during the St. Petersburg SCO Heads of State meeting in June 2002, and entered into force on 19 September 2003. In terms of geographic scope and population, it is the world's largest regional organization, covering approximately 60% of the area of Eurasia, 40% of the world population, and more than 30% of global GDP. The SCO is the successor to the Shanghai Five, a mutual security agreement formed in 1996 between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Its membership has since expanded to eight states, with India and Pakistan joining on 9 June 2017. Iran started accession as a full member in September 2021 at the Dushanbe Summit in Tajikistan. Iran has been accepted as the ninth full member of the organisation. Several countries are engaged as observers or partners. The SCO is governed by the Heads of State Council (HSC), its supreme decision-making body, which meets once a year. Military exercises are also regularly conducted among members to promote cooperation and coordination against terrorism and other external threats, and to maintain regional peace and stability.

India to participate in G-7, Ukraine peace summits

- India will participate in all important summits that promote the agenda of global peace, security and development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said while referring to invitations to him to attend the G-7 meeting and the Ukraine peace summit. Italy is hosting the G-7 Summit meeting from June 13-15, while the Ukraine peace summit will be held in Switzerland from June 15-16.
- In an interview to PTI, the Prime Minister said India will “resonate the voice of the Global South” at these summits to shape the global discourse and advance the vision for human centric development and a prosperous and peaceful world. “The level of participation will be the factor of timing, logistics and parallel commitments,” Modi said in response to a question on whether he will be attending the two multilateral gatherings.

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 disinvited 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.

India, U.K. reaffirms FTA commitment at Strategic Dialogue

- **India and Britain have reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a mutually beneficial free trade agreement (FTA) at the annual U.K.-India Strategic Dialogue in London, as the two sides reflected the “good progress” on the 2030 Roadmap since the last review.**
- **After their meeting, the FCDO said the two leaders reviewed the progress made on the U.K.-India 2030 Roadmap since the last strategic dialogue in January last year and looked ahead to the next phase of bilateral cooperation. “This included collaborating on the world’s first malaria vaccine, working closely on India’s successful G20 Presidency and increasing opportunities for students and entrepreneurs under the Migration and Mobility Partnership.”**

A free trade agreement is a pact between two or more nations to reduce barriers to imports and exports among them. Goods and services can be bought and sold across international borders with little or no government tariffs, quotas, subsidies, or prohibitions to inhibit their exchange. The concept of free trade is the opposite of trade protectionism or economic isolationism. India has signed 13 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with its trading partners, including the 3 agreements: India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA). India-UAE Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (CEPA). India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA).

Indian Navy’s Eastern Fleet Ships arrive in Manila to participate in Maritime Partnership Exercise

- **Indian Navy ships INS Delhi, INS Shakti, and INS Kiltan arrived in Manila, Philippines, as part of the Operational Deployment of the Indian Navy’s Eastern Fleet to the South China Sea. The visit aims to strengthen the friendship and maritime cooperation between India and the Philippines.**
- **The ships were warmly welcomed by the Philippines Navy and will engage in professional interactions, sports fixtures, and community outreach programs. This visit comes amid tensions between China and the Philippines over the Scarborough Shoal, highlighting the strategic importance of maritime partnerships in the region.**
- **The ships will also participate in a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with the Philippine Navy. Tensions between China and the Philippines have escalated over the Scarborough Shoal as Manila has taken a more assertive approach in disputed areas.**
- **Approximately 220 kilometres off the coast of the Philippines and within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the shoal is a traditional fishing ground used by multiple nations and located close to important shipping channels. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), an EEZ extends about 370 km from a country’s coast.**
- **China has claimed almost the entire South China Sea rejecting claims from other nations, including the Philippines, and an international ruling that states that these claims have no legal basis. Brunei, Malaysia, and Vietnam also claim the parts of the sea. India and the Philippines formally established diplomatic relations in November 1949, shortly after both countries gained independence.**

The South China Sea is bordered by China and Taiwan to the north, the Indo-Chinese peninsula (including Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore) to the west, Indonesia and Brunei to the south, and the Philippines to the east (referred to as the West Philippine Sea). It is connected by the Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by the Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea (both marginal seas of the Pacific Ocean). The nine-dash line, also referred to as the eleven-dash line by Taiwan, is a set of line segments on various maps that accompanied the claims of the People’s Republic of China (PRC, “mainland China”) and the Republic of China (ROC, “Taiwan”) in the South China Sea. The heart of the South China Sea dispute revolves around territorial claims to land features (islands and reefs) and their associated territorial waters. The major island and reef formations in the South China Sea are the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Pratas, the Natuna Islands and Scarborough Shoal. As many as 70 disputed reefs and islets are under contention, with China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Taiwan all building more than 90 outposts on these disputed features. China claims up to 90% of the sea with its “nine-dash line” map and has physically expanded islands and constructed military

installations to assert control. China has been particularly active in the Paracel and Spratly Islands, engaging in extensive dredging and artificial island-building, creating 3,200 acres of new land since 2013. **China also controls the Scarborough Shoal through a constant Coast Guard presence.**

IAF chief VR Chaudhari inaugurates first-ever emergency medical response system in Bengaluru

- **Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari has inaugurated its first-ever Emergency Medical Response System of the Indian Air Force at Command Hospital Air Force in Bengaluru.** The Emergency Medical Response System (EMRS), which was inaugurated on May 21, has been **set up in order to provide expert guidance and definitive care** during medical emergencies of serving personnel and their families of the Indian Air Force (IAF) across the nation.
- The Ministry of Defence in the release said that the **EMRS is a first-of-its-kind 24/7 telephonic medical helpline for serving IAF personnel and their families across India.** The system aims to provide prompt response by a team of medical and paramedical professionals to the caller experiencing the emergency anywhere across the country.

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).

Project Udbhav: Indian Army to learn war tactics from vedas, puranas, and Mahabharata

- **The Indian Army's Project Udbhav is exploring the epic battles of the Mahabharata and the strategic brilliance of past Indian dynasties, shaping India's rich military heritage.** Launched last year, this initiative aims to integrate ancient strategic wisdom into contemporary military practices, making the force "future-ready" by drawing insights from India's historical military wisdom.

Joint military exercise 'Shakti': Indian, French armies share drills, expertise in jungle survival techniques

- **During the 7th edition of ongoing Joint Exercise Shakti, the Indian and French Army shared drills and expertise in jungle survival techniques.** Survival in the mountains for self-preservation was practised extensively during the Exercise.
- **The 7th edition of the India-France Joint Military Exercise "Shakti" commenced on May 13 at the Joint Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya.** The exercise aims to enhance the joint military capacity of both sides to undertake Multi-Domain Operations in a sub-conventional scenario.

MHA sets up high-powered committee to tackle increasing cybercrimes originating from SE Asian region

- The government of India has **set up an inter-ministerial committee of various law enforcement and intelligence agencies to tackle the recent "spurt" in transnational organised cybercrimes being launched against Indians from various South East Asian countries such as Cambodia.** **Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre's (I4C) chief executive officer Rajesh Kumar** told that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had set up the committee and it has held two meetings so far. The high-powered committee is headed by the special secretary (internal security) in the MHA with officers from Reserve Bank of India, Department of Financial Services, banks, Financial Intelligence Unit, Department of Telecommunication (DoT) and financial technology companies, among others, as its members.

SAMBHAV (Secure Army Mobile Bharat Version) is an end-to-end secure mobile ecosystem developed by the Indian Army. It operates on 5G technology and aims to provide secure communication and instant connectivity. Command Cyber Operations Support Wings enhance cyber capabilities at operational and tactical levels. SAMBHAV addresses the vulnerability of mobile networks to eavesdropping, offering end-to-end security. Developed in collaboration with experts, it leverages existing public cellular networks and deploys 35,000 sets in two phases, reinforcing India's stance in hybrid warfare and civil-military fusion.

Indian Wildlife Institute claims the presence of 4,000 dolphins in the Ganga and its tributaries

- With the unprecedented efforts being made by the governments through the **Namami Gange Mission to make Ganga clean and pure, the dolphin population is increasing in the river.** The number of dolphins is expected to further increase in the coming time.
- According to the Wildlife Institute of India, currently, about 4,000 dolphins are present in the Ganga and its tributaries. As per an estimate, the number of Gangetic dolphins in Uttar Pradesh is expected to be 2,000, which is more than half of the total number of Gangetic dolphins found in India. In such a situation, the biggest responsibility for their conservation and promotion lies with Uttar Pradesh.

The Ganges River Dolphin or also called 'Susu,' is the National Aquatic Animal of India. It is one of the National Symbols of India. Gangetic Dolphins are found in the river systems of Ganga, Brahmaputra, Meghna, and Karnaphuli- Sangu in Nepal, India, and Bangladesh. The reason to declare Ganges River Dolphin as the National Aquatic Animal of India was to save it from extinction. Also, the Ganges Dolphin is seen as the reflector of the health of the Ganga River.

Sikkim first state in India to introduce AI-powered traffic management system

- Sikkim will soon become the first state in India to introduce an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven traffic management system. Slated to go live by May 25, the new system aims to modernise traffic management and improve regulation efficiency by automatically verifying documents and detecting violations.
- The new AI-driven system is bound to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of traffic regulations. According to a notice released by the state's transport department, all vehicle owners (including government vehicles) have been informed to keep all their vehicle documents up to date. Any discrepancies arising out of the issue of E-challan should be brought to notice of the SPs/RTOs of the district.

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 22nd 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. Ganga Prasad Chaurasia is currently governor of the state of Sikkim. In 2015, Sikkim became the India's first "organic state".

DD Kisan deploys two AI anchors

- DD Kisan deployed two Artificial Intelligence anchors as part of the initiative to present the television channel in a new avatar. The anchors have been named as 'AI Krish' and 'AI Bhoomi', and can speak in 50 Indian and foreign languages.
- "The farmer viewers will be able to see these anchors in all the States of the country... These AI anchors will provide every necessary information about agricultural research happening in the country and at the global level, trends in agriculture mandis, changes in the weather, or any other information of government schemes,". DD Kisan, which comes under the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, was launched in 2015 to cater to the farming and rural community.

Agriculture in India is counted as the primary sector. The contribution of agriculture to GDP rose to 19.9% in 2020-21, up from 17.8% in 2019-20. The last time the agriculture sector accounted for 20% of GDP was in 2003-04. Based on the data on the total workforce compared to manufacturing (from 1993 to 2021), the agricultural workforce share fell from 64.6% in 1993-94 to 42.5% in 2018-19. Arjun Munda is the incumbent Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

India rises to 39th position in WEF index for travel, tourism development

- India has climbed to the 39th position in the latest World Economic Forum's "Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024", as travel improves after the pandemic. The United States (US) led the rankings and India was the top performer in South Asia and among the lower-middle-income nations. India was 54th in 2021, but changes in index criteria limit its direct comparison with 2022 and 2023.
- Spain, Japan, France, and Australia feature are the top four countries in the 2024 list, in that order. According to the index, which was compiled in collaboration with the UK-based University of Surrey, India demonstrates high price competitiveness (18th) and possesses competitive air transport (26th) as well as ground and port (25th) infrastructure.

Indian naval ships complete deployment to South China Sea

- India continues to expand its maritime engagement with Southeast Asia as part of the larger cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in line with Act East and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) centrality. In the latest such engagement, three Indian Navy ships – destroyer Delhi, fleet tanker Shakti and anti-submarine corvette Kiltan – concluded an operational deployment to South China Sea under the Navy's Eastern Fleet that saw port calls beginning with Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei.
- In another development last week, the second edition of the India-Australia-Indonesia trilateral maritime security workshop as well as the India-Australia navy staff talks were held in Kochi. Eight initiatives to boost maritime cooperation were agreed, according to the Australian Navy.
- In April, the Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) pollution control vessel Samudra Paharedar was on an overseas deployment to ASEAN countries during which it visited Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei. ICG has a memorandum of understanding towards enhanced maritime cooperation and maritime safety and security with the Coast Guards of the Philippines and Vietnam.

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. It also conducts routine two to three month-long deployments in the South and East China seas as well as in the western Mediterranean sea simultaneously. Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi is a serving four star officer of the Indian Navy and 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 2nd Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces.

High Court judge becomes first in Goa to register 'living will'

- Justice M S Sonak, who serves on the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court, became the first person in Goa to register a "living will" – an advance medical directive for his family for when he cannot make his own decisions. The Supreme Court had in 2018 legalised passive euthanasia, contingent upon the person having a "living will", or a written document that specifies the actions to be taken if the person is unable to make their own medical decisions in the future.
- The Supreme Court had allowed passive euthanasia while recognising the living wills of terminally-ill patients who could go into a permanent vegetative state and issued guidelines regulating the procedure. In 2023, the Supreme Court eased the process for passive euthanasia by changing certain existing guidelines for living wills. "Goa is the first state that has formalised, to some extent, the implementation of directives issued by the Supreme Court. This is a beginning and there will be some teething issues, which shall be overcome."

The word 'Euthanasia' is derived from Greek words, 'Eu' meaning 'good' and 'thanatos' meaning 'death', put together it means 'good death'. Euthanasia is defined as the hastening of death of a patient to prevent further sufferings. Passive euthanasia refers to withholding or withdrawing treatment which is necessary for maintaining life. In India, active euthanasia is a crime. Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) deals with the attempt to commit suicide and Section 306 of the IPC deals with abetment of suicide – both actions are punishable. A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court in **Common Cause vs Union of India (2018)** recognised a person's right to die with dignity, saying that a terminally ill person can opt for passive euthanasia and execute a living will to refuse medical treatment. The Court permitted an individual to draft a living will specifying that she or he will not be put on life support if they slip into an incurable coma. **The Court recognised the right to die with dignity as a fundamental right and an aspect of Article 21 (Right to Life). The "living will" is a person's right to issue advance directive on the course of his/her treatment, including withdrawal of life support, should such a situation arise.** However, there is no way a living will provision can be made fool-proof requiring no intervention of the doctor or immediate decisionmakers around a person.

Indian High Commissioner inaugurates New Indian Investment in Bangladesh

- **High Commissioner of India in Bangladesh Pranay Verma** and Investment Adviser of Bangladesh Prime Minister **Salman Fazlur Rahman** jointly inaugurated a new plant of India's leading pharmaceutical company, **Sun Pharma, near Dhaka**. This is the company's second investment in Bangladesh with a production capacity of over 1 billion tablets and capsules per year.
- The High Commissioner highlighted the new investment as part of the growing economic and industrial engagement between India and Bangladesh and a visible symbol of the recent transformation of their relationship. He stressed that the plant, which is the **first pharmaceutical unit in any Economic Zone of Bangladesh, is not just a testament to India's continued commitment to promote partnership with Bangladesh**, but also reflects the growing interest among Indian businesses to invest in Bangladesh.
- Recognizing the significant progress made by Bangladesh's Pharmaceutical Industry in the last few decades, Mr Verma underscored the emergence of Bangladesh as a key player in generic drug manufacturing. **India has been a credible partner in the growth story of Bangladesh's Pharmaceutical Industry meeting about 30% of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) demand of Bangladesh.**

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** often shortened as **Sheikh Mujib** or **Mujib**, was a Bangladeshi politician, statesman and Founding Father of Bangladesh who served as the first President and later as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh from 17 April 1971 until his assassination on 15 August 1975. **Mohammad Abdul Hamid** is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. **Sheikh Hasina** is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh. India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh (4,096-kilometer) (2,545-mile).

Uttar Pradesh becomes 1st state in country to create 10 crore Ayushman IDs

- In a significant milestone, **Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India to have created a staggering 10 crore Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) IDs under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.** UP was followed by Maharashtra.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) (PM-JAY lit. 'Prime Minister's People's Health Scheme', Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY lit. 'Persevering India Prime Minister's People's Health Scheme'; also referred to as **Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Scheme or NHPS**) is a national public health insurance fund of the Government of India that aims to provide free access to health insurance coverage for low income earners in the country. **People using the program access their own primary care services from a family doctor.** When anyone needs additional care, then PM-JAY provides free secondary health care for those needing specialist treatment and tertiary health care for those requiring hospitalization. It was **launched in September 2018 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.** That ministry later established the National Health Authority

as an organization to administer the program. It is a centrally sponsored scheme and is jointly funded by both the union government and the states. By offering services to 50 crore (500 million) people it is the world's largest government sponsored healthcare program. It is providing a cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year for medical treatment in empaneled hospitals, both public and private, offering cashless payment and paperless recordkeeping through the hospital or doctor's office; using criteria from the Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011 to determine eligibility for benefits.

NHCX, Centre's initiative to centralize health insurance processing

- **Health insurance claims will soon undergo a unified processing system through the National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX), which is currently undergoing trials. NHCX will establish a standardised format for insurance companies to adhere to when processing claims.** Presently, most health insurance providers operate their own platforms and procedures for claim approval.
- **The National Health Authority (NHA) and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) are collaborating to operationalise the National Health Claim Exchange (NHCX), a digital platform for health claims developed by the National Health Authority. It aligns with IRDAI's goal of 'Insurance for All by 2047' and will support streamlined, paperless, and secure interactions between hospitals and insurers.**

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is a regulatory body under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India and is tasked with regulating and licensing the insurance and re-insurance industries in India. It was constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The agency's headquarters are in Hyderabad, Telangana, where it moved from Delhi in 2001. IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India. Debasish Panda is the current chairman of Insurance Regulatory Development of India (Irdai).

India and Japan commit to bolster health cooperation

- **India and Japan have agreed to enhance health cooperation by expanding collaborative efforts into new areas such as digital health and artificial intelligence during the 77th WHA meeting in Geneva. The move aims to address challenges posed by an ageing population and lifestyle diseases. The focus will be on improving health outcomes. The nations will strengthen their nursing training programme to offer valuable career prospects for Indian professionals.**
- **Additionally, the two countries are set to strengthen their ongoing programme focused on training the Indian nursing professionals in the Japanese language. This programme is designed to prepare the nurses for employment opportunities in Japan, addressing the country's healthcare workforce needs while providing valuable career prospects for the Indian professionals.**

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 126th 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. He has also served as President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences Launches "PRAGATI-2024", an initiative to shape the future of Ayurveda

- **The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Ayush, launched "PRAGATI- 2024" (Pharma Research in AyurGyan And Techno Innovation). It offers a very useful opportunity for collaborative research in the field of Ayurveda. Today's interactive meeting aimed to explore research opportunities and foster collaboration between CCRAS and the Ayurveda drug industry.**

The Ministry of Ayush, a ministry of the Government of India, is responsible for developing education, research and propagation of traditional medicine and alternative medicine systems in India. Ayush is a name devised from the names of the alternative healthcare systems covered by the ministry: ayurveda, yoga & naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and homeopathy. The Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM&H) was first established in 1995 under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. ISM&H was renamed as the Department of AYUSH. The department was made into an official ministry by the Modi government in 2014. Sarbananda Sonowal is the current Cabinet Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Cabinet Minister of AYUSH in the Government of India. He is a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of India's Parliament) from Assam. He is a former Chief Minister of Assam.

India Assumes Chair of Colombo Process for 2024-26

- **India assumed the Chair of Colombo Process for 2024-26, for the first time since its inception 2003. India looks to promote safe, orderly and legal migration.** Colombo Process is a Regional Consultative Process of migrant worker origin countries from South and South East Asia. It serves as a forum for exchange of best practices on overseas employment. The Colombo Process serves as a platform for member states to share best practices and policies regarding overseas employment. It is a non-binding process that facilitates discussions on improving the management of migration and protecting the rights of migrant workers.

Indian Air Force Contingent Reached Alaska to Participate in Multi-National Exercise, Red Flag 24

- **The Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent has just reached Alaska for the US Air Force's (USAF)-led two-week advanced combat training, multi-nation military exercise, "Red Flag 24". It aims to offer realistic air-combat training for military pilots and other flight crew from the United States and allied countries.** The exercise also serves as a platform for building stronger partnerships and increasing interoperability between participating air forces. The professional interactions between planning teams, aircrew, and support staff foster mutual understanding and respect. Some of these relationships get carried forward into the senior ranks.

The origin of Red Flag was the unacceptable performance of USAF fighter pilots and weapon systems officers (WSO) in air-to-air combat during the Vietnam War in comparison to previous wars. A USAF analysis known as Project Red Baron II showed that a pilot's chances of survival in combat dramatically increased after he had completed ten combat missions. As a result, Red Flag was created in 1975 to offer USAF pilots and WSOs the opportunity to fly ten realistically simulated combat missions in a safe training environment with measurable results.

India's first astro tourism campaign 'Nakshatra Sabha' organised in Mussoorie

- **India's first astro tourism campaign "Nakshatra Sabha" was inaugurated at the George Everest peak in Mussoorie.** The venue of the event, George Everest Peak is a major tourist attraction in Mussoorie which offers spectacular views of the snow-clad Himalayan peaks and the Doon Valley. After this, astro tourism events will also be organized in places several other places across the country, including Harsil-Jadung, Benital, Rishikesh, Jageshwar and Ramnagar.

Supreme Court reconstitutes Gender Sensitisation Committee with 12 members

- **The Supreme Court has reconstituted its Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee.** "In exercise of powers conferred by Clause 4(2) of the Gender Sensitisation and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Supreme Court of India (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Regulations, 2013 and all enabling provisions in this behalf, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India has been pleased to re-constitute the Supreme Court Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee,".
- **The 12-member committee is headed by the Supreme Court judge Hima Kohli, who is the chairperson.** The panel also comprises Justice B.V. Nagarathna, Additional Registrar Sukhda Pritam and senior advocates Meenakshi Arora and Mahalakshmi Pavani. Advocate and representative of the Supreme Court Bar Association, as stipulated under Clause 4(2)(c), Soumyajit Pani, advocate-on-record Anindita Pujari, advocate Madhu Chauhan, professor Shruti Pandey, senior advocates Jaideep Gupta and Menaka Guruswamy and Leni Chaudhuri, executive director, University of Chicago Centre in India, are the other members of the committee.

The Supreme Court of India came into being on 28 January 1950. It replaced both the Federal Court of India and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which were then at the apex of the Indian court system. The first Chief Justice of India was Sir H J Kania. Originally, the Constitution of India envisaged a supreme court with a chief justice and seven judges; leaving it to parliament to increase this number. At present, SC is consisting of the Chief Justice of India and 33 sanctioned other judges. The motto of the Supreme Court is 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah', means "whence law (dharma), thence victory". It is also referred to – as the wheel of righteousness, encompassing truth, goodness and equity.

NGT orders probe into another Assam commando camp coming up on forest land

- The eastern zone bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered an inquiry into the allegedly illegal construction of another commando battalion camp on forest land in Assam. The NGT's principal bench is already hearing a suo motu case on the alleged illegal construction of commando battalion headquarters on reserve forest land in the state's Hailakandi district. **The latest case relates to the construction of the 2nd Assam Commando Battalion Camp on 28 hectares in Sivasagar district's Geleky Forest Reserve.** A petition filed by Golaghat-based environmental activist Rohit Choudhury alleged that the construction happened without approval from the Union Environment Ministry. Under the Forest (Conservation) Law, 1980, any non-forestry activity on forest land requires approval from the ministry.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a statutory body in India that deals with expeditious disposal of cases related to environmental protection and other natural resources. It was set up under the National Green Tribunal Act in 2010. India is the third country in the world, after Australia and New Zealand, to set up a statutory body for environmental protection. NGT deals with the cases related to environmental issues and speedy implementation of decisions relating to it. The Tribunal has a mandate to dispose of applications and petitions within a period of six months. National Green Tribunal with Headquarters in Delhi consists of chairperson who should have been retired as Supreme Court judge. **Justice Prakash Shrivastava is the Current Chairman of National Green Tribunal Chairperson since August 2023.**

International



India set to sign trade deal with Oman to expand its Middle East ties

- **India and Oman will sign a trade deal** in the coming months, as New Delhi seeks to **expand its ties in the Middle East, where rising tensions are putting major shipping routes at risk**. “It will help India with a strategic partner and access to key trade routes in a volatile region”.
- **India and Oman have annual trade of less than \$13 billion**, but the relationship is important for New Delhi as the **Gulf nation is a gateway to the narrow Strait of Hormuz between Oman and Iran, a major transit point for global oil shipments**. Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza has spread to hostilities with Iran, and Yemen’s Iran-aligned Houthi militants have launched repeated drone and **missile strikes in the Red Sea area, claiming solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza**.

Oman is an Arabian country located in **southwestern Asia**. It is situated on the **southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula**, and spans the **mouth of the Persian Gulf**. **Muscat is the nation’s capital** and largest city. **The Omani rial is the currency of Oman**. **Haitham bin Tariq Al Said is the current Sultan of Oman**. **Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said is Crown Prince of Oman** as the son of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

The world’s first Sikh court opens in London

- **Beneath portraits of England’s 17th-century judiciary, 46 Sikh magistrates and judges took an oath to uphold the principles of justice, equality, and integrity as prescribed by the teachings of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the Sikh faith**. Notably, most of them were women.
- **This was the launch event for the world’s first Sikh court in London**. The court was **founded by Sikh lawyers who believe secular judges lacked the religious and cultural expertise required to resolve Sikh disputes**. They believe the court will serve as an alternative dispute resolution forum for UK-based Sikhs involved in family or civil disputes. “The Sikh Court is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) based on a ‘Med-Arb’ framework, a forum created by Sikh and non-Sikh lawyers and judges from around the world to resolve disputes within the Sikh community”.

Blinken promotes Gulf Arab defence in sign to Israel and Iran

- **U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called for tighter defence integration among Gulf Arabs in response to Iran**, part of efforts to encourage moderation by Israel by dangling the prospect of better ties with the region. Mr. Blinken was starting his seventh visit to West Asia since the Hamas attacks on Israel, which has responded with a relentless military campaign in the Gaza Strip that has brought growing public pressure for a ceasefire.

Qatar Airways to unveil ‘world’s first AI digital human cabin crew’ at ATM

- **Qatar Airways is to unveil what it is calling the ‘world’s first AI digital human cabin crew’**. **Sama 2.0 will be showcased at this year’s Arabian Travel Market (ATM) Dubai**. The airline is offering visitors the chance to meet and engage with Sama 2.0 – the second generation of the world’s first AI-powered digital crew.

World’s first molten salt energy storage facility launched in Denmark

- **Danish company Hyme Energy has launched the world’s first energy storage project using molten hydroxide salt, called the Molten Salt Storage (MOSS) facility, located in the city of Esbjerg, Denmark**.

Zimbabwe's ZiG is world's newest currency

- **Out with the Zimbabwe dollar, in with the ZiG.** Zimbabwe started circulating a new currency to replace one that has been battered by depreciation and often outright rejection by the people. The ZiG was introduced electronically in early April, but people are now able to use banknotes and coins.
- **It's the southern African country's latest attempt to halt a long-running currency crisis underlining its persistent economic troubles.** The government had previously floated various ideas to replace the Zimbabwe dollar, including introducing gold coins to stem inflation and even trying out a digital currency.
- **Since it was launched electronically on April 5, the ZiG — short for Zimbabwe Gold and backed by the country's gold reserves —** appears to be heading down the same path of mistrust, with some government departments refusing to accept it.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in Southeast Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. The capital and largest city is Harare. The Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) dollar or RTG (Zimdollar or zollar, now abbreviated as ZWL or ZWL\$) was the only official currency in Zimbabwe from June 2019 to March 2020, after which foreign currencies were allowed for trade in the country again. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is current President of Zimbabwe.

UK's new 'world first' laws crack down on smart gadget cyber attacks

- All internet connected smart devices will be required to meet minimum security standards under what the UK government has dubbed as “world first” laws, effective to protect consumers and businesses from hacking and cyber-attacks.
- Under the new regime, manufacturers will be banned from having weak, easily guessable default passwords like “admin” or “12345” and if there is a common password, the user will be prompted to change it on start-up. “Consumers will have greater peace of mind that their smart devices are protected from cyber criminals, as we introduce world first laws that will make sure their personal privacy, data and finances are safe.”

Scotland's leader resigns as he struggles to win support for weakened government

- **Scotland's first minister, Humza Yousaf, resigned rather than face a no-confidence vote** just days after he torpedoed a coalition with the Green Party by ditching a target for fighting climate change. **Yousaf, who's Scottish National Party, has been weakened by a campaign finance scandal and divisions over transgender rights, stepped down after failing to strike a deal** with a breakaway nationalist party whose single seat could have given him a majority in Scotland's devolved regional parliament. With no prospect of victory, Yousaf quit rather than face defeat later this week when Scottish lawmakers were scheduled to vote on motions of no confidence in Yousaf and his government.

Saudi Arabia launches world's first AI Arabic language center

- **The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has launched the world's first artificial intelligence (AI) center for automatic processing of the Arabic language,** under the name “Arabic Intelligence Center” in Riyadh. It is operated by the King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language.
- **The center aims to improve Arabic content in the fields of data and artificial intelligence, support scientific research, and applications to achieve the National Strategy for Data and Artificial Intelligence and Saudi Vision 2030,** aiming to position Saudi Arabia as a global leader.

Kathmandu Tops List For 'Unhealthy Air' Worldwide: Urgent Mask-Wearing Advisory Issued

- In Nepal, the Ministry of Health and Population has urged people to wear masks given the increase in air pollution in Kathmandu valley. **The air quality in Kathmandu was at the top of the list of cities with 'unhealthy air' in the world.**
- According to IQAir, **an organization that measures the real-time pollution of 101 cities in the world, Kathmandu was found to be the most polluted city in the world. In terms of pollution, Kathmandu, New Delhi, Chiang Mai in Thailand, Hanoi in Vietnam, Bangkok in Thailand and Dhaka in Bangladesh are ranked first, second, third, fourth and fifth respectively.**

- According to the ‘World Air Quality Index-Ranking’, which measures the level of air pollution around the world, **Kathmandu’s air is at the top of the world’s unhealthy air list**. Air pollution affects the heart and blood vessels, lungs, brain, eyes, nose, ears, and throat and also increases the risk of asthma, cancer and other diseases. Mostly children under five years old, pregnant women, chronically ill people and the elderly account for a high number of annual deaths due to air pollution in Nepal. Air pollution has reduced the average life expectancy of Nepalese by 4.1 per cent.

Solomon Islands picks China-friendly Manele as new Prime Minister

- **Solomon Islands lawmakers selected a new prime minister, choosing foreign minister Jeremiah Manele, who has pledged to continue the Pacific Island nation’s foreign policy that drew it closer to China.** Governor General Sir David Vunagi announced outside parliament house that Manele had won 31 votes, to Opposition leader Matthew Wales’ 18 votes. Police boosted security in the capital Honiara as newly elected lawmakers arrived at parliament.

The Solomon Islands also known simply as the Solomons, is a country consisting of six major islands and over 900 smaller islands in Melanesia, part of Oceania, to the northeast of Australia. It is directly adjacent to Papua New Guinea to the west, Australia to the southwest, New Caledonia and Vanuatu to the southeast, Fiji, Wallis and Futuna, and Tuvalu to the east, and Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia to the north. Honiara is the capital and largest city of Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands dollar (ISO 4217 code: SBD) is the currency of Solomon Islands since 1977.

World has got its first AID diplomat who will represent Ukraine

- As artificial intelligence (AI) technology takes the industries by storm, **the world has got its first AID diplomat who will represent Ukraine.** The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs introduced Victoria Shi – an AI-generated spokesperson, marking the first use of an AI avatar for official government statements in history. Victoria Shi is based on a real person - Ukrainian singer and influencer Rosalie Nombre, who agreed to participate in the project.

Asia’s first spot bitcoin and ether ETFs gain in Hong Kong debut

- **Six spot bitcoin and ether exchange traded funds (ETFs) gained in their Hong Kong debut** with the three bitcoin ETFs climbing more than 3% in early trade. **Cryptocurrency is banned in mainland China, but Hong Kong has been promoting itself as a global digital asset hub,** part of a drive to maintain its allure as a financial center.

Nepal’s NPR100 currency note to have new map that includes disputed Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani

- **Nepal announced the printing of a new NPR100 currency note with a map that shows the controversial territories of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, already termed as “artificial enlargement” and “untenable” by India.** In an initial reaction, India has said Nepal’s unilateral actions will not change the ground reality. **“The meeting of the council of ministers chaired by Prime Minister Pushpakamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’ took a decision to print the new map of Nepal, which includes the Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani in the NPR100 denomination bank notes”.**

Denmark to liberalise its abortion law to allow the procedure until 18th week

- **Denmark’s government said it is relaxing its restrictions on abortion for the first time in 50 years to make it legal for women to terminate pregnancies up to the 18th week from the previous 12th week.** The law will also be changed to allow girls between 15 and 17 years old to have an abortion without parental consent.

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.

India-France to hold 7th edition of Exercise ‘Shakti’

- **India and France are set to conduct the 7th edition of the Joint Military Exercise ‘Shakti’ from May 13-26 in Meghalaya’s Umroi region. The exercise aims to enhance joint military capacity for Multi-Domain Operations in a Sub Conventional scenario. It will also promote interoperability and camaraderie between the armed forces of both nations. The previous edition of the exercise was held in France in 2021. This upcoming exercise highlights the strengthening defence ties between India and France.**

France is a unitary semi-presidential republic with its capital in Paris. Emmanuel Macron is serving as President of France and ex officio Co-Prince of Andorra since 14 May 2017. Gabriel Attal is serving as Prime Minister of France. The euro is the official currency of France. The euro is the second largest reserve currency as well as the second most traded currency in the world after the United States dollar.

Togo’s ruling party wins a majority in parliament, likely keeping a dynasty in power

- **Togo’s ruling party has won a majority of seats in the West African nation’s parliament, the election commission said as it announced provisional results that was rejected by the opposition as part of a move to extend President Faure Gnassingbe’s tenure. The provisional results showed the ruling Union for the Republic (UNIR) party won 108 out of 113 seats in the vote that tested support for a proposed new constitution that would scrap presidential elections and give lawmakers the power to choose the president.**

Togo is a country in West Africa. It is bordered by Ghana to the west, Benin to the east and Burkina Faso to the north. It is one of the least developed countries and extends south to the Gulf of Guinea, where its capital, Lome, is located. The West African CFA franc is the currency used by eight independent states in West Africa which make up the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA): Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Benjamin Netanyahu’s Cabinet votes to permanently close Al Jazeera offices in Israel

- **Israel ordered the local offices of Qatar’s Al Jazeera satellite news network to close escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s hard-line government as Doha-mediated ceasefire negotiations with Hamas hang in the balance. The extraordinary order, which includes confiscating broadcast equipment, preventing the broadcast of the channel’s reports and blocking its websites, is believed to be the first time Israel has ever shuttered a foreign news outlet although its government has taken action against individual reporters in the past. The statement from Netanyahu’s office said that under a law passed last month, the government can take action against a foreign channel seen as “harming the country.”**

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. It is bordered by Lebanon to the north, by Syria to the northeast, by Jordan to the east, by the Red Sea to the south, by Egypt to the southwest, by the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and by the Palestinian territories – the West Bank along the east and the Gaza Strip along the southwest. Isaac Herzog is serving as the current President of Israel since 7 July 2021. Benjamin Netanyahu is the current Prime Minister of Israel.

India protests Chinese road construction at Shaksgam Valley in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

- **India has registered its protest with Beijing against China’s “illegal attempts” to “alter facts on the ground” in the Shaksgam valley of occupied Kashmir, which faces the Siachen glacier. “The Shaksgam Valley is a part of the territory of India. We have never accepted the so-called China Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963 through which Pakistan unlawfully attempted to cede the area to China, and have consistently conveyed our rejection of the same.**

Xi Jinping appoints senior diplomat Xu Feihong as China’s new envoy to India

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping has appointed senior diplomat Xu Feihong as the new Ambassador to India after an unusually long delay of 18 months amid frozen relations between the two countries over the eastern**

Ladakh military standoff. He will succeed veteran Chinese diplomat Sun Weidong who completed his tenure in India in October 2022.

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. China claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. However, several ASEAN member countries, including Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei, have made counterclaims. Chinese claims in the South China Sea are described in part by the nine-dash line. China and India are the two neighbouring countries in Asia. India shares 3488 km of border with China that runs along the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.

The world's highest observatory opens in Chile

- **The University of Tokyo Atacama Observatory (TAO) is the highest astronomical observatory in the world as certified by the Guinness World Record. TAO sits at an altitude of 5,640m on the summit of a mountain in northern Chile's Atacama Desert. The 6.5m infrared-optimised telescope is finally up and running after 26 years of planning and construction. It's unique elevation – 440m higher than the next highest observatory – will afford astronomers unrivalled clarity of vision to study the cosmos in the infrared.**

Chile is a country in western South America. It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The country's capital and largest city is Santiago, and its national language is Spanish. The peso is the currency of Chile. Gabriel Boric Font is a Chilean politician serving as the president of Chile since 11 March 2022. Michelle Bachelet previously served as President of Chile from 2006 to 2010 and from 2014 to 2018 for the Socialist Party of Chile. She is the first woman to hold the Chilean presidency.

Pakistan's 'ICube Qamar' lunar mission launched with Chinese support

- **China and Pakistan have set their sights on the moon, promising groundbreaking discoveries that could reshape our understanding of Earth's celestial neighbour. Pakistan's maiden lunar mission, ICube Qamar (ICUBE-Q), has embarked on its voyage, hitching a ride aboard China's Chang'e-6 orbiter. This comes nearly nine months after India's Chandrayaan 3 made history with a soft landing on the moon's South Pole. China's lunar probe aims to gather samples that could unlock valuable insights into the disparities between the lesser-explored far side and the familiar near side of the moon.**

Vladimir Putin begins fifth term as President

- **Vladimir Putin began his fifth term as Russian leader at a glittering Kremlin inauguration, setting out on another six years in office after destroying his political opponents, launching a devastating war in Ukraine and concentrating all power in his hands. Already in office for nearly a quarter-century and the longest-serving Kremlin leader since Josef Stalin, Putin's new term doesn't expire until 2030, when he will be constitutionally eligible to run again.**
- **Since succeeding President Boris Yeltsin in the waning hours of 1999, Putin has transformed Russia from a country emerging from economic collapse to a pariah state that threatens global security. Following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine that has become Europe's biggest conflict since World War II, Russia has been heavily sanctioned by the West and is turning to other regimes like China, Iran and North Korea for support.**

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. Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation. Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020.

Former Fiji PM Bainimarama handed one-year prison sentence

- **Former Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama was sentenced to one year in prison for perverting the course of justice, with a judge finding he used his political clout to shut down a police investigation.** Bainimarama was sentenced at Fiji's High Court in the capital Suva, after being found guilty this year of quashing a police probe into alleged corruption at a Fijian university.

Fiji is an island country in Melanesia, part of Oceania in the South Pacific Ocean. Suva (is the capital and largest city of Fiji. The Fijian dollar has been the currency of Fiji since 1969. Wiliame Katonivere is the President of Fiji since 2021.

EU adopts first law tackling violence against women

- **European Union (EU) countries gave the green light to the bloc's first law devoted to combatting violence against women. The sweeping new legislation aims to protect women in the EU from gender-based violence, forced marriages, female genital mutilation and cyber violence such as online stalking and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.**
- **It also makes it easier for victims of domestic abuse to report crimes, which, according to a new framework, will be punishable by jail sentences of up to five years.** Punishments for crimes against children, spouses, ex-spouses, politicians, journalists and human rights activists can be even more severe. But a failure to reach a common definition of rape was a source of contention between several member states.

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.

Kuwait's Emir dissolves parliament, suspends some constitution articles

- **Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah said in a televised speech that he has dissolved parliament.** The Emir also suspended some of the constitutional articles for a period not exceeding four years during which all aspects of the democratic process will be studied. **The powers of the National Assembly will be assumed by the Emir and the country's cabinet.**

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. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait.

John Swinney elected as new Scotland leader

- **Scotland's Parliament has approved political veteran John Swinney of the Scottish National Party (SNP) to lead the country as first minister. Swinney, succeeds Humza Yousaf, who formally resigned from the role after his announcement last week that he would step down after just more than a year in charge. Swinney won the backing of 64 members of the Scottish parliament (MSPs) in the vote that was all but a foregone conclusion, with nearest rival Scottish Conservatives leader Douglas Ross picking up 31.**

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. John Swinney is the current First Minister of Scotland. He is a Scottish politician who has served as First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) since May 2024.

Egypt Threatens to Scrap Camp David Accords over Israeli Operation in Rafah

- **Egypt has issued a stern warning to Israel, threatening to nullify the historic Camp David Accords if Israel proceeds with its invasion of Rafah, as reported by Israeli media.** This threat comes amidst escalating tensions over Israel's ongoing military operation in Rafah, with the United States reportedly escalating its warnings to Israel regarding its actions in the region.
- **Just days ago, Egypt expressed grave concerns about the potential dangers posed by a potential Israeli military operation in Rafah, located in the southern Gaza Strip.** The city has been subject to Zionist aggression for approximately seven months. **International condemnation of Israel's actions in Rafah continues to mount**, with many expressing fears about the safety of over a million Palestinians who have been displaced to the southern area of the Gaza Strip due to the conflict. **The Camp David Accords, signed on September 17, 1978, marked a significant milestone in the relations between Israel and Egypt, culminating in the first-ever peace treaty between Israel and an Arab neighbor.** The accords, brokered by the United States, have long been considered a cornerstone of stability in the region.

Vladimir Putin reappoints Mikhail Mishustin as Russian PM

- **Following his swearing-in ceremony as the Russian President, Vladimir Putin moved ahead with the reappointment of his former Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin to the post.** As Russian law mandates, the Russian President submitted the proposal for the PM candidate to the State Duma (one of the chambers of Russian Parliament). Members of Parliament will then vote on the choice. The PM is also the first in line to take over as acting president until new elections if the Kremlin leader resigns, or is removed from office or has to step aside for health reasons.

Nepal climber Kami Rita Sherpa climbs Mt Everest for 29th time, breaks own record

- **Nepali Sherpa climber Kami Rita has scaled Everest for the 29th time, surpassing his own record of 28 ascents.** He now holds the record for the most ascents of the world's tallest peak in its 71-year climbing history. Kami Rita Sherpa, also known as 'Everest man,' embarked on the Spring Season Everest expedition from Kathmandu, accompanying a team of approximately 28 climbers.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. Nepal has a diverse geography, including **fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth.** Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, with Nepali as the official language. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the largest city. **The name "Nepal" is first recorded in texts from the Vedic period of the Indian subcontinent, the era in ancient Nepal when Hinduism was founded, the predominant religion of the country.** **The Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, affirms Nepal as a secular federal parliamentary republic divided into seven provinces.** **Pushpa Kamal Dahal is serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since December 2022.** **Bidya Devi Bhandari served as the second president of Nepal and she is the first woman to hold the office in the country.** **Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.** **Ram Chandra Paudel is serving as the third President of Nepal since March 2023.**

FATF, Interpol and UNODC call for urgent steps to target the profits of transnational organised crime

- **The heads of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Interpol, and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have called for the need to urgently step up efforts to target the huge illicit profits generated by transnational organised crime that facilitate conflicts, fund terrorism, and negatively impact vulnerable populations.** The issue was raised at a side event of the **33rd Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna** a few days ago.
- **Heads of the three international organisations were of the view that disincentivising criminal activity through targeting illicit profits would also positively impact across all goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including financial stability, inclusive economic growth, and strengthened institutions and governance.**

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.

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. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait. Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah became the emir of Kuwait on 16 December 2023, following the death of Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

'A world first': project recycles polyester into yarn for new clothes

- **In a world first in Kettering, Northamptonshire, Project Re:claim is taking technology used for recycling plastic bottles and adapting it to reprocess polyester textiles into granules that can be turned back into yarn for new clothes.**
- **The joint venture between the Salvation Army and recycling specialist Project Plan B uses items from the charity's sorting centre,** which separates out the 10-20% of donated items that cannot be resold according to type of textile. Infrared sensors pick out wool, cotton and nylon items that can be sent off to experimental reprocessors and yarn makers around the world – including polyester for the pellet-making machine.
- **Project Re:claim expects to recycle 2,500 tonnes of waste this year and to double that in 2025.** It is working with big retailers, including Tesco and John Lewis, as well as specialist manufacturers such as school uniform maker David Luke, which encourage suppliers to use the recycled polyester.

King Charles hands military title to son William in rare joint appearance

- **Britain's King Charles handed over a senior military role to his son Prince William at a ceremony,** marking a rare joint appearance for the pair as the king steps up his return to public duties after his cancer diagnosis. **Charles presented William with the title of Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Air Corps,** a position the 75-year-old monarch held for 32 years, in front of an Apache helicopter, and watched by service personnel at the Army Flying Museum in southern England.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom (UK) or Britain is a sovereign country in Europe, off the north-western coast of the continental mainland. It comprises England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands within the British Isles. The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. The capital and largest city is London, a global city and financial centre with a metropolitan area population of over 14 million. Sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom and its associated territories. Charles III (Charles Philip Arthur George) is King of the United Kingdom and the 14 other Commonwealth realms. He was the longest-serving heir apparent and Prince of Wales and, at age 73, became the oldest person to accede to the British throne upon the death of his mother, Elizabeth II, on 8 September 2022. Rishi Sunak is the current Prime Minister.

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.

Putin replaces Shoigu as Russia's Defence Minister as he starts his fifth term

- Russian President Vladimir Putin replaced Sergei Shoigu as Defence Minister in a Cabinet shakeup that comes as he begins his fifth term in office. In line with Russian law, the entire Russian Cabinet resigned following Mr. Putin's glittering inauguration in the Kremlin, and most members have been widely expected to keep their jobs, while Mr. Shoigu's fate had appeared uncertain.

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. Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation. Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020.

Indonesia's Mt. Ibu erupts, spewing ash clouds

- Indonesia's Ibu volcano erupted spewing thick columns of grey ash several kilometres into the sky. The volcano on the remote island of Halmahera erupted for about five minutes, projecting ash into the sky as high as 5 km (3.1 miles).

Majestic Sei Whales Reappear in Argentine Waters

- After over a century of absence, the majestic sei whales have returned to the waters off Argentina's Patagonian coast. These giant blue-grey creatures were once on the brink of extinction due to relentless hunting during the 1920s and 1930s.

Egypt Receives Second Payment Of \$14 Bln From UAE For Ras Al-Hikma Project

- Egypt received \$14 billion from the United Arab Emirates as a second payment for the development of Ras al-Hikma peninsula. The deal with Abu Dhabi sovereign fund ADQ to develop the peninsula 200 km west of Alexandria includes a total of \$35 billion in investments and is one of the biggest deals of its kind. Egypt has also started working with the UAE to waive an Emirati deposit of \$6 billion in the Egyptian central bank and convert its value to the equivalent in Egyptian pounds (EGP).

Egypt is a country located in North Africa. Mostafa Madbouly is the current Prime Minister of Egypt. Cairo is the capital city of Egypt. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi is the current President of Egypt since 2014. Egyptian pound is the currency of Egypt. Egypt is home to famous monuments such as the Giza Pyramid Complex and the Great Sphinx. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Pyramids of Giza are built on the banks of the Nile River. The Great Pyramid of Giza was built in 2560 BC. India and Egypt, two of the world's oldest civilizations, have enjoyed a history of close contact from ancient times.

Cape Town: The world's first big city to run out of water

- While water scarcity remains a universal problem, and an urgent worry for India, South Africa's Cape Town is poised to become the first big city to run out of water with about 90 days left before supplies hit critical levels.

NASA appoints first chief artificial intelligence officer

- NASA appointed David Salvagnini as the agency's first chief artificial intelligence (AI) officer, in an extension of his current role as the chief data officer. Salvagnini will lead "NASA's efforts to guide the agency's responsible use of AI in the cosmos and on Earth to benefit all humanity."

- **Salvagnini, responsible for aligning the strategic vision and planning for AI usage across NASA**, will look to champion AI innovation, supporting the development and risk management of tools, platforms, and training. Salvagnini will continue NASA’s collaboration with other government agencies, academic institutions, industry partners, and other experts to ensure the agency is on the cutting edge of AI technology. **Salvagnini joined NASA in June 2023, after more than 20 years of working in technology leadership in the intelligence community.**

United Arab Emirates has launched a 10-year Blue Residency visa

- **The United Arab Emirates has launched a 10-year Blue Residency visa for individuals** who have made ‘exceptional efforts and contributions to protecting the environment, whether marine or land’. The fresh visa was announced by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai.
- **The “Blue Residency” is a long-term residency for a period of 10 years that will be granted to individuals with exceptional contributions and efforts in the field of protecting the environment**, whether marine or land or the quality of the air environment, sustainability and its modern technologies, the circular economy, or other fields.”

Singapore PM Lawrence Wong sworn in, in carefully planned succession

- **Singapore’s deputy leader Lawrence Wong was sworn in as the nation’s fourth prime minister** in a carefully planned political succession designed to ensure continuity and stability in the Asian financial hub. **A U.S.-trained economist, Wong succeeds Lee Hsien Loong who stepped down after two decades at the helm.** Lee’s departure marked the end of a family dynasty led by his father Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore’s first leader who built the colonial trading outpost into one of the world’s richest nations during 31 years in office.

Croatia Forms New Government

- In a significant political shift, **Croatian lawmakers have inaugurated a new government, indicating a move towards the right within the European Union nation.** This development comes as the EU prepares for its parliamentary elections. The government, still under the leadership of the conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), now welcomes the hard-right Homeland Movement into its fold. **The Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic for his third consecutive term, received approval with a 79-61 vote in the Croatian assembly, known as the Sabor.**

Armenia, Azerbaijan agree deal on disputed sections of shared border

- **Armenia and Azerbaijan had agreed a deal on disputed sections of their shared border**, a new step towards normalising ties between the historic rivals. The deal between the two Caucasus nations, both former Soviet republics, includes the return to Azerbaijan of four border villages seized by Armenia in the 1990s.

Armenia is a landlocked country in the Armenian Highlands of West Asia. It is a part of the Caucasus region and is bordered by Turkey to the west, Georgia to the north and Azerbaijan to the east, and Iran and the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan to the south. **Yerevan is the capital, largest city and financial center.** **The Armenian dram is the currency of the Republic of Armenia.** **Vahagn Garniki Khachaturyan is the 5th and current President of Armenia.** **Nikol Pashinyan is serving as the Prime Minister of Armenia since 8 May 2018.** **Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed territory, internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, although most of its territory was governed by ethnic Armenians under the breakaway Republic of Artsakh—also known as the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR)—from the end of the first Nagorno-Karabakh War between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1994 to the announcement of the pending dissolution of the republic in September 2023.**

Vietnam nominates its public security minister as new president

- **Vietnam has nominated its Public Security Minister To Lam as its new president, after his predecessor resigned in the ongoing anti-corruption campaign** that has shaken up the country’s political establishment. The Communist Party’s Central Committee had agreed to the nomination of To Lam, a Politburo member, as President. The nomination will likely be approved by Vietnam’s National Assembly during its next session on May 21.

Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger finalise regional alliance project

- **Junta-run Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have finalised plans to form a confederation after turning their backs on former colonial ruler France to seek closer ties with Russia.** Their Foreign Ministers met in Niger's capital Niamey to agree on a text establishing the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). The three countries said late January they were quitting The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which they said was under French influence.

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa, bordered by Mali to the northwest, Niger to the northeast, Benin to the southeast, Togo and Ghana to the south, and the Ivory Coast to the southwest. It has a population of 20,321,378. Previously called Republic of Upper Volta (1958–1984), it was renamed Burkina Faso by President Thomas Sankara and its capital and largest city is Ouagadougou. West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Chad confirms Mahamat Idriss Deby as president

- **Mahamat Idriss Déby was declared the winner after the Council reviewed and reaffirmed vote counts, despite minor adjustments. Déby won with 61.03%, followed by his Prime Minister with 18.54%, and Padacké with 16.93%. Voter turnout was 75.78%.**

Chad is an independent state at the crossroads of North and Central Africa. The landlocked country is bordered by Libya to the north, Sudan to the east, the Central African Republic to the south, Cameroon to the southwest, Nigeria to the southwest (at Lake Chad), and Niger to the west. The capital and largest city is N'Djamena. Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno is a Chadian politician and military officer who has been the leader of Chad since 2021, first as President of the Transitional Military Council from 2021 to 2022, then as Transitional President from 2022 to 2024, and then as the 7th President since 2024 following his victory in the presidential elections. Central African CFA franc (franc CFA) is the currency of six independent states in Central Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

Iran president Ebrahim Raisi dies in helicopter crash

- **Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian have died in the helicopter crash.** The wreckage of the helicopter that crashed near the Azerbaijan-Iranian border was found. The helicopter crashed as it was crossing mountain terrain in heavy fog, while Raisi, Iran's foreign minister and other officials were on their way back from a visit to the border with Azerbaijan in Iran's northwest.

Mohammad Mokhber is Iran's new president

- **Mohammad Mokhber, is Iran's interim president following Ebrahim Raisi's death in a helicopter crash.** He leads a council to organize a new presidential election within 50 days. Mokhber, close to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, was vice president since 2021 and previously headed Setad, an investment fund. He has been involved in significant diplomatic and military dealings with Russia.

Iran also known as Persia and officially the Islamic Republic of Iran is a country located in Western Asia. Tehran is the capital and largest city of Iran. The rial is the official currency of Iran. Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khamenei is the second and current supreme leader of Iran, in office since 1989. Khamenei is the longest-serving head of state in the Middle East, as well as the second-longest-serving Iranian leader of the last century, after Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi

Lai Ching-te sworn in as new Taiwan President

- **Lai Ching-te assumed the role of Taiwan's new president facing deeply suspicious China that believes he is a "separatist" and a divided parliament with an opposition ready to challenge his leadership.** Lai, who served as vice president under Tsai Ing-wen for the past four years, was sworn in to the presidential office in central Taipei.

Taiwan officially the Republic of China (ROC) is a country in East Asia, at the junction of the East and South China Seas in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, with the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the northwest, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. The main island of Taiwan, also known as Formosa. The capital, Taipei, forms along with New Taipei City. The New Taiwan dollar is the official currency of Taiwan.

Elon Musk launches Starlink satellite internet service in Indonesia, world's largest archipelago

- **Elon Musk traveled to Indonesia's resort island of Bali to launch Starlink satellite internet service in the world's largest archipelago nation.** Indonesia, a vast archipelago of 17,000 islands sprawled across three time zones with a population of more than 270 million, has been trying for years to secure deals with Mr. Musk's Tesla on battery investment.

Dominican Republic President Abinader re-elected to 2nd term

- **Dominican Republic President Luis Abinader was re-elected for another four-year term,** an endorsement of his handling of the economy and tough policies toward migration from Haiti. The two nations share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, but the much more prosperous Dominican Republic stands in stark contrast to its poverty and gang violence-plagued neighbor.

The Dominican Republic is a country on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north. **Santo Domingo is the capital** and largest city of the Dominican Republic. **Peso dominicano** has been the **name of the currency** of the Dominican Republic since 2010.

Nepal PM Prachanda wins vote of confidence in Parliament

- **Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' won a vote of confidence in Parliament,** the fourth within 18 months of taking office, amidst sloganeering by the main Opposition Nepali Congress that abstained from the voting. **Prachanda, a former guerilla leader from the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) – the third largest party in the House of Representatives (HoR) – received 157 votes in the 275-member House of Representatives.** In total, 158 lawmakers took part in the voting.
- **The main Opposition Nepali Congress boycotted the voting process and chanted slogans against Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Rabi Lamichhane,** accused of misappropriation of cooperative funds, leading to the delay in the session. One HoR member remained neutral.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. Nepal has a diverse geography, including **fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth.** Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, with Nepali as the official language. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the largest city. **The name "Nepal" is first recorded in texts from the Vedic period of the Indian subcontinent, the era in ancient Nepal when Hinduism was founded, the predominant religion of the country.** **The Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, affirms Nepal as a secular federal parliamentary republic divided into seven provinces.** **Pushpa Kamal Dahal is serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since December 2022.** **Bidya Devi Bhandari served as the second president of Nepal and she is the first woman to hold the office in the country.** **Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.** **Ram Chandra Paudel is serving as the third President of Nepal since March 2023.**

Spain Becomes 99th Member of International Solar Alliance

- **Spain has become the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance.** The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is a collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies as a means for bringing energy access, ensuring energy security, and driving energy transition in its member countries.
- **The ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France to mobilize efforts against climate change through the deployment of solar energy solutions.** It was **conceptualized on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in 2015.**

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. Countries that do not fall within the Tropics can join the alliance and enjoy all benefits as other members, with the exception of voting rights. 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.

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.

Spain, Ireland and Norway will recognise a Palestinian state

- Spain, Ireland and Norway said that they would recognise a Palestinian state on May 28, a step toward a long-held Palestinian aspiration that came amid international outrage over the civilian death toll and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip following Israel's offensive.
- The triple and almost simultaneous decisions may generate momentum for the recognition of a Palestinian state by other EU countries and could spur further steps at the United Nations, deepening Israel's isolation. Some 140 of 190 represented in the UN countries have already recognised a Palestinian state.
- Though the EU countries and Norway won't be recognising an existing state, just the possibility of one, the symbolism helps enhance the Palestinians' international standing and heaps more pressure on Israel to open negotiations on ending the war.

Komagata Maru incident a 'dark chapter' in Canada's history, says PM Justin Trudeau

- Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau termed the tragic Komagata Maru incident as a "dark chapter" in the country's history and asked Canadians to work together to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive country for everyone. "One hundred and ten years ago, the steamship Komagata Maru docked in Vancouver's harbour after a long journey across the Pacific Ocean. Aboard the ship, 376 people – Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus of Punjabi origin – were ready to start a new life in Canada.
- Recalling their ordeal, the prime minister said that passengers of Komagata Maru, a Japanese steamship, were detained for two harrowing months in 1914 without food, water, or medical care. Ultimately, the Komagata Maru was forced to return to India where many of its passengers were killed or imprisoned. "This tragic incident is a dark chapter in our country's history," said Trudeau, who had apologised on behalf of the Government of Canada eight years ago for what happened to the passengers of the Komagata Maru.

The Komagata Maru incident involved the Japanese steamship Komagata Maru, on which a group of people from British India attempted to immigrate to Canada in April 1914, but most were denied entry and forced to return to Budge Budge, Calcutta (present-day Kolkata). There, the Indian Imperial Police attempted to arrest the group leaders. A riot ensued, and they were fired upon by the police, resulting in some deaths. Komagata Maru sailed from British Hong Kong, via Shanghai, China, and Yokohama, Japan, to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on April 4, 1914, carrying 376 passengers from Punjab province in British India. The passengers comprised 337 Sikhs, 27 Muslims and 12 Hindus, all Punjabis and British subjects. Of these 376 passengers, 24 were admitted to Canada, but the other 352 were not allowed to disembark in Canada, and the ship was forced to leave Canadian waters. The ship was escorted by HMCS Rainbow, one of Canada's first two naval vessels. This was one of several incidents in the early 20th century in which exclusion laws in Canada and the United States were used to exclude immigrants of Asian origin.

Pink E-Rickshaw driver from Uttar Pradesh wins UK's royal award

- An rickshaw driver from a village in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh is overjoyed on meeting King Charles III at Buckingham Palace after she collected a prestigious women's empowerment award in

London. Arti received the Amal Clooney Women’s Empowerment Award, named after the world-renowned human rights barrister, at the Prince’s Trust Awards in London followed by a meeting with the 75-year-old monarch. She was honoured for inspiring other young girls through her work with the government’s Pink E-rickshaw initiative, which provides safe transport for other women with a mission to drive change, quite literally.

- **Founded by King Charles when he was the Prince of Wales, the Prince’s Trust International will now transform into the King’s Trust International as it continues its work supporting young people across 20 countries** through employment, education and enterprise programmes. The Prince’s Trust women’s empowerment award recognises the global work of young women who have succeeded against the odds and made a lasting difference to those around them.

Burkina Faso extends junta rule by five years

- Burkina Faso’s ruling junta will remain in power for another five years after participants in national talks proposed extending the transition back to democracy by 60 months from July. The military authorities seized power in a 2022 coup and promised to hold elections in July this year to restore civilian rule, but also said that security considerations would take priority. According to the new charter, signed by military leader Ibrahim Traore, the transition is set at 60 months from July 2.

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa, bordered by Mali to the northwest, Niger to the northeast, Benin to the southeast, Togo and Ghana to the south, and the Ivory Coast to the southwest. It has a population of 20,321,378. **Previously called Republic of Upper Volta (1958–1984)**, it was renamed Burkina Faso by President Thomas Sankara and its **capital and largest city is Ouagadougou**. **West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.**

China’s large-scale military drills around Taiwan could become regular

- **Following China’s Joint Sword-2024, A military exercise around Taiwan**, US experts analysed that Beijing has an intent to **make large-scale military drills around the island a regular move with the China Coast Guard (CCG) to play a more important role in a blockade.**
- **Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a think tank in Washington, issued an article, where Bonny Lin, head of the CSIC’s China Power Project, and fellow researcher Brian Hart analysed the two-day Joint Sword-2024 A, which was launched, three days after President Lai Ching-te was sworn in. Joint Sword-2024A was the third round of large-scale military exercises China has staged around Taiwan in recent years.**

Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda re-elected in vote marked by Russia fears

- **Lithuania’s President Gitanas Nauseda won re-election in a vote marked by defence concerns over neighbouring Russia.** The count published by the electoral commission showed that Nauseda won 76% of votes with 80% of ballots counted after polls closed in the second-round vote.

World Court Orders Israel To Halt Assault On Gaza’s Rafah

- **Judges at the top United Nations court ordered Israel to immediately halt its military assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, in a landmark emergency ruling in South Africa’s case accusing Israel of genocide. While the International Court of Justice, or World Court, has no means to enforce its orders, the case was a stark sign of Israel’s global isolation over its campaign in Gaza, particularly since it began its offensive against Rafah this month against the pleas of its closest ally the United States. World Court President Nawaf Salam said the situation in the Palestinian enclave had deteriorated since the court last ordered Israel to take steps to improve it, and conditions had been met for a new emergency order.**
- **“The state of Israel shall immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah governorate, which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part,” he said. Israel had not explained how it would keep the population safe during an evacuation of Rafah, or provide food, water, sanitation and medicine for the 800,000 Palestinians that had already fled the Israeli advance, he said.**

- The ICJ ordered Israel to open the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza to let in aid. Israel, it added, must provide access for investigators and report back on its progress within one month. The order was adopted by the panel of 15 international judges in a 13-2 vote, opposed only by judges from Uganda and Israel itself. South Africa hailed the ruling as groundbreaking.

International Court of Justice (ICJ) also known as the **World Court**, is the principal judicial organ of the **United Nations (UN)**. It is the **only international court that adjudicates general disputes between nations**, and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues. It was established in **June 1945 by the Charter of the UN and began work in April 1946**. The seat of the Court is at the **Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands)**. Of the **six principal organs of the UN**, it is the **only one not located in New York, United States**. The hearings of the ICJ are always public. **Official Languages: French and English**. The ICJ is the successor of the **Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ)**, which was established in **1920 by the League of Nations**. After the Second World War, the League and the PCIJ were replaced by the United Nations and ICJ, respectively. The Statute of the ICJ, which sets forth its purpose and structure, draws heavily from that of its predecessor, whose decisions remain valid. **All member states of the UN are party to the ICJ Statute and may initiate contentious legal cases**; however, advisory proceedings may be submitted only by certain UN organs and agencies. **The ICJ consists of a panel of 15 judges elected by the UN General Assembly and Security Council for nine-year terms**.

Russia to build Central Asia's first nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan

- **Russia will build a small nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan, the first such project in post-Soviet Central Asia**, **Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said at a meeting with visiting Russian President Vladimir Putin**. The nuclear deal, if implemented, will showcase Russia's ability to export not only energy, but also high-tech products to new Asian markets, at a time when the West is increasing pressure on it through sanctions. Russian state nuclear firm Rosatom will build up to six nuclear reactors with a capacity of 55 megawatts each in Uzbekistan, a much smaller-scale project than the 2.4 gigawatts one agreed in 2018 which remains to be finalised.

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**. **Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation**. **Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020**.

'Drone wall' against Russia: Six NATO countries announce border defense plan

- **Six NATO countries neighboring Russia are joining forces to build a "drone wall" to protect their borders**. "This is a completely new thing, a drone wall stretching from Norway to Poland, and the goal is to use drones and other technologies to protect our borders". **The other states taking part are Lithuania's Baltic neighbors Latvia and Estonia, as well as Poland, Finland, and Norway**.

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 13th secretary general of NATO since 2014**. A member of the Norwegian Labour Party, he previously served as the 34th Prime Minister of Norway.

The World's First Museum of Homelessness Opens In London

- The museum's opening is timely to say the least. **Across the UK 290,000 households sought help for homelessness in 2022**, the most recent data show, with the number of people placed in temporary accommodation having doubled over the preceding decade. **Many people still can't access help, and the number of people sleeping rough on Britain's streets rose 26% in the same year.** With rents rising faster than core inflation and an acute cost of living crisis only just showing signs of abating, **things are only getting worse.** In the final three months of 2023 alone, **the number of people being made homeless rose 16% nationwide.** The people whose experiences this museum explores are not only misunderstood and frequently overlooked, but they are becoming more statistically significant every year.

WHO Launches New 'Investment Round' Aiming To Raise USD 7 Billion To Tackle Global Challenges

- **The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a new 'Investment Round' aiming to raise 7 billion dollars of funds to support countries to tackle challenges like climate change, displacement, poverty and inequality.** WHO Chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that the world is facing a difficult time with multiple challenges.
- **Investment Round aims to mobilize 7 billion dollars over four years to support countries to respond to these challenges.** The Investment Round is the result of recommendations by the WHO Working Group on Sustainable Financing and was approved at the 154th Meeting of the WHO Executive Board in January 2024.

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.**

B'desh launches massive evacuation as cyclone Remal approaches from Bay of Bengal

- **Dhaka, Bangladesh launched an intensified evacuation campaign in vulnerable areas as it prepares for severe cyclonic storm 'Remal' forecast to make landfall by evening or midnight** with a potential high tidal surge and heavy rainfall in the country's coastal districts of Satkhira and Cox's Bazar. According to the latest cyclone warning bulletin, **'Remal' is likely to move in a northerly direction and may cross Sagar island of West Bengal-Khepupara coast near Mongla by evening or midnight.**

Activists sue Norway over its deep-sea mining plans

- **Environmental activists have filed a lawsuit at an Oslo court challenging Norway's proposal to carry out seabed mineral exploration, saying that authorities have not done sufficient impact assessment of the mining.** The development has come after Norway's parliament in January sanctioned a plan to “open a vast ocean area larger than Britain for seabed mineral exploration after a government-commissioned study concluded that its impact would be minimal”.

Norway is a Nordic country in Northern Europe, the mainland territory of which comprises the western and northernmost portion of the Scandinavian Peninsula. The remote Arctic island of Jan Mayen and the archipelago of Svalbard also form part of Norway. The capital and largest city in Norway is Oslo. Jonas Gahr Store has been serving as current Prime Minister of Norway since 2021. Masud Gharakhani has been serving as the President of the Norway since 2021. The krone is the currency of the Kingdom of Norway (including overseas territories and dependencies.

World's first wooden satellite built by Japan researchers

- **The world's first wooden satellite has been built by Japanese researchers who said their tiny cuboid craft is scheduled to be carried into space off on a SpaceX rocket in September.** Each side of the experimental satellite developed by scientists at Kyoto University and logging company Sumitomo Forestry measures four inches.

- The creators expect the wooden material will burn up completely when the device re-enters the atmosphere – potentially providing a way to avoid the creation of metal particles when a retired satellite returns to Earth. The metal particles could have a negative impact on the environment and telecommunications.

Dubai launches long-term Dubai Gaming Visa for gamers, content creators & developers

- In a bid to position itself as a global leader in the gaming industry, **Dubai has launched the Dubai Gaming Visa under the ambitious Dubai Program for Gaming 2033 (DPG 2033)**. This long-term residency initiative aims to attract talented gamers, content creators, and industry professionals worldwide, marking a significant step toward making Dubai a central hub for gaming innovation.
- **The DPG 2033 is a comprehensive initiative by the Dubai government to transform the city into a global gaming powerhouse by 2033**. This program includes strategies to attract international talent, nurture local expertise, and create a supportive ecosystem for gaming innovation. **The program aims to create 30,000 new jobs in the gaming sector and contribute an estimated \$1 billion to Dubai's GDP by 2033.**

Abu Dhabi is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south and by Oman to the east and northeast. The land border with Qatar in the Khawr al Udayd area is a source of ongoing dispute.

Donald Trump Becomes First Ex US President to be convicted of a Crime

- **Donald Trump became the first former US president ever convicted of a crime after a New York jury found him guilty on all charges in his hush money case**, months before an election that could see him yet return to the White House. He could in theory be sentenced to four years behind bars for each count but is more likely to receive probation. The 77-year-old Republican, who was released without bail, is now a felon – a historic and startling first in a country where presidents are frequently described as the most powerful man in the world.

Donald John Trump is an American politician, media personality, and businessman who served as the 45th president of the United States from 2017 to 2021. Trump's political positions have been described as populist, protectionist, isolationist, and nationalist. He won the 2016 U.S. presidential election as the Republican nominee against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton despite losing the national popular vote. He became the first U.S. president with no prior military or government service. **Trump is the only American president to have been impeached twice**. In March of that year, a Manhattan grand jury indicted Trump on 34 felony counts of fraud, making him the first former president to face criminal charges; he pleaded not guilty to all counts.

South Korea Plans Mars Landing In 2045 As It Launches First Space Agency

- **South Korea plans to make a Mars landing by 2045 and spend 100 trillion won (\$72.6 billion) until then on space exploration**, President Yoon Suk Yeol said at the launch of the country's first space agency. The Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA) will lead the country's "space economy," with hundreds of businesses and enterprises working to catapult South Korea into the ranks of the world's top five space powers.
- **"KASA will usher in a new space era by cultivating experts while intensively supporting the aerospace industry ecosystem and fostering challenging and innovative R&D,"** The country's first lunar lander is planned for 2032. South Korea became the seventh country to own an indigenous space launch vehicle and satellite development technology with the launch of the Nuri rocket in May last year that put a commercial grade satellite in orbit. The agency is aimed at streamlining policy and development functions shared among different government ministries and will bring under its structure the aerospace research institute that developed the Nuri and its precursor space launch vehicles. **South Korea plans at least three more space launches by 2027 and has plans to launch military satellites.**

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. 38th parallel, popular name given to latitude 38° N that in East Asia roughly demarcates North Korea and South Korea.

US: Vermont becomes 1st state to require oil companies pay for damage from climate change

- Vermont has become the first state to enact a law requiring fossil fuel companies pay a share of the damage caused by climate change after the state suffered catastrophic summer flooding and damage from other extreme weather. Republican Gov Phil Scott allowed the bill to become law without his signature.
- Under the legislation, the Vermont state treasurer, in consultation with the Agency of Natural Resources, would provide a report by January 15, 2026, on the total cost to Vermonsters and the state from the emission of greenhouse gases from January 1, 1995 to December 31, 2024.
- The assessment would look at the affects on public health, natural resources, agriculture, economic development, housing and other areas. It's a polluter-pays model affecting companies engaged in the trade or business of extracting fossil fuel or refining crude oil attributable to more than 1 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions during the time period.
- The funds could be used by the state for such things as upgrading stormwater drainage systems; upgrading roads, bridges and railroads; relocating, elevating or retrofitting sewage treatment plants and making energy efficient weatherization upgrades to public and private buildings.

Iceland elects businesswoman Halla Tomasdottir as President

- Halla Tomasdottir, a businesswoman and investor, has won Iceland's presidential election, topping a crowded field of candidates in which the top three finishers were women. Ms. Tomasdottir was elected to the largely ceremonial post with 34.3% of the vote, defeating former Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir, with 25.2%, and Halla Hrund Logadottir, with 15.5%.

Iceland is a Nordic island country between the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge between North America and Europe. Its capital and largest city is Reykjavík. The krona is the currency of Iceland. Katrin Jakobsdottir has been serving as the Prime Minister of Iceland since 2017. Guoni Thorlacius Jóhannesson is serving as the current President of Iceland.

Pakistan Army gets minority woman brigadier in historic first

- Dr Helen Mary Roberts, serving in the Pakistan Army Medical Corps, has made history by becoming the first woman from the Christian and minority community to achieve the rank of brigadier in the Muslim-majority country. Roberts was among Pakistan Army officers promoted as brigadiers and full colonels by the Selection Board. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in 2021, there are 96.47 per cent Muslims in the country, followed by 2.14 per cent Hindus, 1.27 per cent Christians, 0.09 per cent Ahmadi Muslims and 0.02 per cent others.

OPEC+ To Hold June 2 Output Policy Meeting Online

- The OPEC+ group of oil producers, comprising the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies led by Russia, has pushed back its output policy meeting and will convene online. The meeting was to have been in Vienna on June 1, but will now be held online a day later.
- OPEC+ oil producers are making voluntary output cuts totalling about 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) for the first half of 2024, led by Saudi Arabia rolling over an earlier voluntary cut. The curbs are on top of earlier reductions of 3.66 million bpd to the end of 2024, announced in various steps since late 2022. That brings total pledged cuts to 5.86 million bpd, equal to about 5.7% of daily world demand, Reuters calculations show. Sources from countries that have made voluntary supply cuts that an extension was likely.
- The OPEC+ supply cuts since late 2022 have been against a backdrop of rising output from the United States and other non-member producers while worries over demand have remained in focus as major economies grapple with high interest rates.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the Baghdad Conference in 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. It aims to manage the supply of oil in an effort to set the price of oil in the world market, in order to avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies of both producing and purchasing countries. It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. OPEC membership is open to any country that is a substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization. OPEC has a total of 13 Member Countries viz. Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola and Venezuela are members of OPEC. Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries Plus is a loosely affiliated entity consisting of the OPEC members and 10 of the world's major non-OPEC oil-exporting nations which are: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

The ANC party that freed South Africa from apartheid loses its 30-year majority

- The African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority in a historic election result that puts South Africa on a new political path for the first time since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule 30 years ago.
- With nearly 99% of votes counted, the once-dominant ANC had received just over 40% in the election, well short of the majority it had held since the famed all-race vote of 1994 that ended apartheid and brought it to power under Nelson Mandela. The final results are still to be formally declared by the independent electoral commission that ran the election.
- While opposition parties hailed it as a momentous breakthrough for a country struggling with deep poverty and inequality, the ANC remained the biggest party by some way but will now need to look for a coalition partner or partners to remain in the government and reelect President Cyril Ramaphosa for a second and final term. Parliament elects the South African president after national elections.
- The result ended the ANC's three-decade dominance of South Africa's young democracy, but the way forward promises to be complicated for Africa's most advanced economy, and there's no coalition on the table yet. The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, was on around 21%. The new MK Party of former President Jacob Zuma, who has turned against the ANC he once led, came third with just over 14% of the vote in the first election it has contested.

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.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra Assumes Role As President Of GST Appellate Tribunal

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman administered the oath of integrity and secrecy to retired Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as the President of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), in New Delhi. Justice Mishra's appointment marks the beginning of the operationalisation of the GSTAT, a crucial body for resolving GST-related disputes.
- The GSTAT is the Appellate Authority to hear various appeals under the Central Goods and Services Tax Act. It consists of a Principal Bench and various State Benches. As per the approval of the GST Council, the Government has notified the Principal Bench, to be located in New Delhi, and 31 State Benches at various locations across the country. The Tribunal will ensure swift, fair, judicious and effective resolution to GST disputes, besides significantly reducing the burden on higher courts.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a successor to VAT used in India on the supply of goods and services. GST is a digitalized form of VAT where you can also track the goods & services. Both VAT and GST have the same taxation slabs. It is a **comprehensive, multistage, destination-based tax**: comprehensive because it has subsumed almost all the indirect taxes except a few state taxes. Multi-staged as it is, the GST is imposed at every step in the production process, but is meant to be refunded to all parties in the various stages of production other than the final consumer and as a destination-based tax, it is collected from point of consumption and not point of origin like previous taxes. Goods and services are divided into five different tax slabs for collection of tax: 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. However, petroleum products, alcoholic drinks, and electricity are not taxed under GST and instead are taxed separately by the individual state governments, as per the previous tax system. The tax came into effect from 1 July 2017 through the implementation of the One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The GST replaced existing multiple taxes levied by the central and state governments.

India's first Upgradable ATM launched

- Hitachi Payment Services has launched the country's first Upgradable ATM. An upgradable ATM unit can be transformed to cash recycling machine (CRM) as and when a bank needs it, eliminating the need for a separate CRM. This can be done at a bank branch.
- The Upgradable ATM can be transformed into high-performance Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) at any point of time. Manufactured under the 'Make in India' initiative, these new Upgradable ATMs provide more flexibility and efficiency to banks.

Up 2.3 times in 15 years, India's Chinese import bill to rise further

- India's imports from China crossed \$101 billion in 2023-24 from about \$70 billion in 2018-19, and the country's share of India's industrial goods imports has risen from 21% to 30% over 15 years, according to a report by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) which reckoned that Chinese imports will rise sharply in coming years.

- **Goods imports from China have risen 2.3 times faster than India's total imports over 15 years**, the GTRI study noted, adding that China is the top supplier in eight major industrial sectors, including machinery, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and textiles, belying the general perception that Chinese imports are high only in the electronics sector.

SEBI board approves amendment to MF rules

- **The Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is making it mandatory for Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to have an institutional mechanism for deterrence of potential market abuse**, including front-running. Considering the recent front-running instances observed by the market regulator, the SEBI Board approved amendments to SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996 to enhance the existing regulatory framework by requiring Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to put in place a structured institutional mechanism for identification and deterrence of potential market abuse including front-running and fraudulent transactions in securities.

India press freedom score falls, says Reporters sans Frontieres

- **India's score in the World Press Freedom Index fell over the last year, from 36.62 to 31.28**, according to **Reporters Without Borders (RSF for Reporters sans Frontières)**, which puts together an annual index of freedom enjoyed by journalists in 180 jurisdictions. **India's rank improved from 161 in 2023 to 159 in 2024**, but this was because other countries had slipped in their rankings.
- The government has in the past dismissed international rankings of freedoms in India as propaganda. **Norway and Denmark topped the RSF table while Eritrea was at the bottom, with Syria just ahead of it.** The government has in the past dismissed international rankings of freedoms in India as misinformed and propaganda driven.

India, Ghana agree for early operationalisation of UPI on Ghana interbank payment systems

- **India and Ghana are working to link their payment systems - Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Ghana Interbank Payment and Settlement Systems (GHIPSS) respectively** to permit users to make instant, low-cost fund transfers on a reciprocal basis.
- The two countries have also delved into discussions **regarding the possibilities of a Memorandum of Understanding on Digital transformation Solutions; Local Currency Settlement System and the opportunities offered by African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).**
- **NPCI International has recently announced its partnership with Bank of Namibia to support them in developing a UPI-like real-time payment system in the African nation.** The bilateral trade between India and the West African nation Ghana has increased to USD 2.87 billion in 2022-23 from USD 2.6 billion in 2021-22. The trade gap is in the favour of Ghana mainly due to imports of gold by India which accounts for nearly 80 per cent of total imports from Ghana.

India received over \$111 billion in remittances in 2022, first country to ever reach that figure: UN

- **India received over \$111 billion in remittances in 2022, the largest in the world, becoming the first country to reach and even surpass the \$100 billion mark.** The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), in its World Migration Report 2024 launched in 2022, **India, Mexico, China, the Philippines and France were the top five remittance recipient countries.**
- **“India was well above the rest, receiving more than USD 111 billion, the first country to reach and even surpass the USD 100 billion mark. Mexico was the second-largest remittance recipient in 2022, a position it also held in 2021 after overtaking China, which historically had been the second-biggest recipient after India.**
- **“The contraction of remittance flows to China has been attributed to multiple factors, including demographic shifts that have resulted in the shrinking of the working age population and the country's zero-Covid policy, which prevented people from travelling abroad for work,”** the report said.
- **International remittances surged by 650 per cent, from USD 128 billion to USD 831 billion between 2000 and 2022.** Migrant remittances surpass foreign direct investment in boosting the GDP of developing nations. 281

million international migrants globally; number of those displaced hit a record high by the end of 2022 at 117 million. The significant rise in remittances reflects the substantial contribution of Indian diaspora worldwide to their home country's economy.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a United Nations related organization working in the field of migration. The organization implements operational assistance programmes for migrants, including internally displaced persons, refugees, and migrant workers. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was founded in 1951 in response to the large number of internally displaced persons and war refugees in Europe after the Second World War. The International Organization for Migration is based in Geneva. Its Director General is Amy Pope.

India's First Net-Zero Business Park Launched in Chennai

- **Morphogenesis proudly announces the accolade achieved by the International Tech Park Chennai, Radial Road (ITPC-Radial Road), developed for Capitaland Investment Limited (CLI).** This milestone marks the first-ever certification of a business park in India as net-zero, validating its commitment to energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste management by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
- **The Net Zero Energy strategy adopted by Morphogenesis incorporates a comprehensive approach, leveraging both passive and active measures to curtail energy consumption while maximizing efficiency.** Additionally, the project integrates various strategies to minimize water consumption and enhance reuse within its premises.

India overtook Japan to become world's 3rd largest solar power generator in 2023

- **Rapid solar energy deployment in India pushed the country past Japan to become the world's third-largest solar power generator in 2023,** according to a new report. The report by global energy think tank Ember said India ranked ninth in solar energy deployment in 2015.
- **Solar produced a record 5.5 per cent of global electricity in 2023. In line with the global trend, India generated 5.8 per cent of its electricity from solar last year, as reported in Ember's "Global Electricity Review".** Ember's Asia Programme director Aditya Lolla said, "Increasing clean electricity is not just for reducing carbon emissions in the power sector. It is also needed to meet the rising electricity demand in an increasingly-electrified economy and to decouple economic growth from emissions, which is crucial for tackling climate change."

Top 10 wealthiest cities in the world in 2024

- **Henley & Partners, an international wealth migration specialist, in collaboration with New World Wealth, a global data intelligence firm, recently published the World's Wealthiest Cities Report 2024,** which highlights the richest cities globally for the year 2024.
- **The report highlights New York City, which has continued to maintain its position as the world's wealthiest city, with 11 other US cities joining the top 50 list.** In contrast, Tokyo, which held the top spot a decade ago, has fallen to third place due to a decline in its high-net-worth individual population.
- **Singapore, on the other hand, has made significant strides, rising to fourth place with impressive growth in its millionaire population, solidifying its position as a leading Asian financial hub.** In the Middle East, Dubai has emerged as the wealthiest city, ranking 21st in the top 50 list. Traditional financial centres such as London have seen a decline in ranking, moving down to fifth place, while Los Angeles has climbed to sixth place with substantial growth in its wealthy population. **Notably, India has made significant progress, with two of its cities breaking into the top 50 list. Mumbai and Delhi rank 24th and 37th, respectively, indicating a growing presence of wealthy individuals in the country.**

China largest trading partner of India in FY24 with USD 118.4 bn; US second with USD 118.3 bn

- **China has emerged as the largest trading partner of India with USD 118.4 billion two-way commerce in 2023-24,** slightly edging past the US, according to the data of economic think tank GTRI. **The bilateral trade between India and the US stood at USD 118.3 billion in 2023-24.** USA was the top trading partner of New Delhi during 2021-22 and 2022-23.

- **The Global Trade Research Initiative said that from fiscal year 2019 to FY2024, India’s trade dynamics with its top 15 trading partners underwent significant transformations, impacting both exports and imports along with the status of trade surplus or deficit across various sectors. It added that China witnessed a marginal decline in exports by 0.6 per cent, from USD 16.75 billion to USD 16.66 billion, while imports from China surged by 44.7 per cent, from USD 70.32 billion to USD 101.75 billion.**

Inter-Services Organisations Act notified: Defence Ministry

- **The Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Act has been notified in a gazette and has been enforced with effect from May 10.** The move comes amid the theaterisation plan envisioned by the government. Under the theaterisation model, the government seeks to integrate the capabilities of the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, and optimally utilise their resources for wars and operations. The Act empowers Commanders-in-Chief and Officers-in-Command of ISOs to exercise control over service personnel, serving under them, for effective maintenance of discipline and administration, without disturbing the unique service conditions of each individual service.

India overtakes Australia, Japan and Singapore in data centre capacity

- **India has become the country with the highest data center capacity in the Asia-Pacific region, surpassing major countries like Australia, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Singapore, and Korea.** The country is expected to record the highest capacity addition of 850 MW during the 2024-2026 period, higher than major APAC countries. The sector has seen significant investments from global operators, real estate developers, and private equity funds.

Forbes 30 Under 30: Statiq founders Akshit Bansal, Raghav Arora & TDC founder Bhagya Shree Jain find a spot

- **Forbes released its ninth edition of the “30 Under 30 Asia” list, celebrating 300 young entrepreneurs, leaders, and trailblazers under 30 who are driving innovation and transforming industries across the Asia-Pacific region.** The list also features India’s Akshit Bansal and Raghav Arora, Co-founders of Statiq and Bhagya Shree Jain, Founder of The Disposal Company. Bansal and Arora founded Sharify Services, under the brand Statiq, which offers a nationwide network of charging stations for electric vehicles. The company raised \$27.5 million and is expected to generate revenue of \$9.9 million in 2024.
- **It also plans to double its network to 16,000 by 2025. Bhagya Shree Jain founded The Disposal Company (TDC) in 2020 to promote plastic neutrality as a sustainable concept.** TDC advises consumer goods companies on reducing their plastic footprint and brokers plastic credits for customers and pays waste workers for recycling, providing a stable wage.
- **The other notable persons featured in 2024 list include K-pop girl band Ive, Singaporean track and field athlete Veronica Shanti Pereira, Japan’s youngest mayor Ryosuke Takashima of Ashiya City, and many others.** Over 4,000 candidates were evaluated by Forbes’ Asia reporters and editors, with a panel of independent judges assessing factors such as funding, revenue, social impact, scale, inventiveness, and potential. The distinguished panel included industry leaders like Roshni Nadar Malhotra.

Norway excludes Adani Ports from Government Pension Fund Global over ethical concerns

- **Norges Bank, the central bank of Norway, has excluded Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) from its Government Pension Fund Global, over the ‘unacceptable risk’ the company contributes to human rights violations during the times of war and conflicts.** The Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global GPF is one of the world’s largest funds, owning almost 1.5 percent of all shares in the world’s listed companies. It has holdings in around 9,000 companies worldwide.
- **Besides, two other companies – Weichai Power Co Ltd and L3Harris Technologies Inc – have also been excluded from the investment by the GPF. The decision to exclude APSEZ, which was announced on May 15, is based on a recommendation from the Council on Ethics of November 21, 2023.** APSEZ, a part of the Adani Group, is a logistics company that engages, among other things, in the operation of ports and port services.

India ranks first in adoption of GenAI across Asia Pacific: Deloitte survey

- With 93 per cent of students and 83 per cent of employees actively engaging with the technology, **India ranks first in the adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) across Asia-Pacific**, a report released by **Deloitte India**. It, however, added that only 50 per cent of these employees believe their managers know they use this technology. The findings were a part of the “Generative AI in the Asia Pacific: Young Employees Lead as Employers Play Catch-Up” report, based on a survey of 11,900 individuals across 13 countries in the region. It also noted that over the next five years, **an increase of a whopping 182 per cent is anticipated in the daily usage of GenAI**.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the intelligence of machines or software, as opposed to the intelligence of humans or animals. It is a field of study in computer science that develops and studies intelligent machines. “AI” may also refer to the machines themselves. **AI technology is widely used throughout industry, government and science. Some high-profile applications are: advanced web search engines (e.g., Google Search), recommendation systems (used by YouTube, Amazon, and Netflix), understanding human speech (such as Siri and Alexa), self-driving cars (e.g., Waymo), generative or creative tools (ChatGPT and AI art), and competing at the highest level in strategy games (such as chess and Go).** AI founder **John McCarthy** agreed, writing that “Artificial intelligence is not, by definition, simulation of human intelligence”.

WIPO concludes new treaty to protect genetic resources, traditional knowledge

- **Members of Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have concluded an agreement under which it will be mandatory for patent applicants to disclose country of origin or source of genetic resources** if the claimed invention is based on those materials or associated traditional knowledge.
- **The treaty will provide additional protection for Indian genetic resources and traditional knowledge.** Although these are currently protected within India, they are prone to misappropriation in countries, which do not have disclosure obligations.
- The current patent legislation does not have a mandatory provision requiring patent applicants to disclose the country of origin or source in case where the invention is based on genetic resources. **At present, only 35 countries have some form of disclosure obligations, most of which are not mandatory and do not have appropriate sanctions or remedies in place for effective implementation.**
- **The new treaty was adopted on May 24 at the WIPO headquarters in Geneva after 192 countries and 86 observers participated in the two-week negotiations from May 13-24 at a Diplomatic Conference.** This treaty will require contracting parties, including the developed world, to bring changes in their existing legal framework for enforcing disclosure of origin obligations on patent applicants.
- **Genetic resources (GRs) are present in things like medicinal plants, agricultural crops, and animal breeds.** While genetic resources themselves cannot be directly protected as intellectual property, inventions developed using them can, most often through a patent.
- **Some genetic resources are also associated with traditional knowledge (ATK) through their use and conservation by indigenous peoples as well as local communities,** often over generations. This knowledge is sometimes used in scientific research and, as such, may contribute to the development of a protected invention.
- **The WIPO treaty on “intellectual property, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge” is a significant win for countries of the global South and for India,** which is a hub of biodiversity hotspots with abundance of traditional knowledge, and wisdom.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is one of the 15 specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN). Pursuant to the 1967 Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization, WIPO was created to promote and protect intellectual property (IP) across the world by cooperating with countries as well as international organizations. It began operations on 26 April 1970 when the convention entered into force. **The current Director General is Singaporean Daren Tang,** former head of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, who began his term on 1 October 2020. **WIPO is one of the oldest specialised agencies of United Nations. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.** Every year **World Intellectual Property Day is being celebrated on 26th April.** India joined WIPO in 1975. Palestine has permanent observer status. Intellectual

property (IP) is a category of property that includes intangible creations of the human intellect, and primarily encompasses **copyrights, patents and trademarks**. It also includes other types of rights, such as **trade secrets, publicity rights, moral rights**, and rights against **unfair competition**. WIPO currently has 193 member states. All member states of the UN are entitled, though not obliged, to become members of the specialized agencies like WIPO.

ISB ranks number one in India, 26 globally in FT Executive Education Custom Ranking 2024

- **The Indian School of Business (ISB) has been ranked number one in the newly published Financial Times (FT) Executive Education Custom Ranking 2024** and has bagged the second spot in Asia. **Globally, the institution has been placed at the 26th position.**
- **Among other institutions who bagged a spot in the list include EMLyon Business School, York University, IIM Bangalore, IIM Ahmedabad, and IIM Indore.** Meanwhile, the ISB has issued a press release on the recent achievement wherein it stated that ISB Executive Education offers a diverse range of programmes for enterprises and public sector organisations across domains and leadership levels. The institution has a deep association with central and state government entities partnering in various capacity-building measures, ranging from customised learning solutions, skill development at scale and research and impact assessment that informs policymaking.

World's First 6G Device Launched in Japan

- **A Japanese consortium has unveiled the prototype of what is touted to be the world's first high-speed 6G device, promising data transfer rates at lightning speed.** This groundbreaking innovation opens the door to a realm of possibilities previously unimaginable.
- **The purported device can transmit data at a whopping 100 gigabits per second (Gbps) and can cover more than 300 feet.** The device is 20x faster than the ongoing 5G technology. With the use of the 100 gigahertz (GHz), the prototype of 6G device can reach speeds of 100 Gbps indoors and the 300 GHz band enables the device to offer 100 gigahertz (GHz) outdoors. In comparison, the 5G technology has a theoretical maximum speed of 10 Gbps. However, real-world speeds are much lower around 200 megabits per second (Mbps) for T-Mobile users in the US.

Oxford Economics' Global Cities Index: At 350, Delhi highest ranked Indian city

- **Delhi has scored the 350th rank in the Oxford Economics' Global Cities Index**, which has compared the world's 1000 largest cities on parameters ranging from economics to human capital. New York ranks first on the index, followed by London, San Jose, Tokyo, Paris, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Melbourne and Zurich.
- **The list of 1000 largest cities, spread across 163 different countries**, also feature several other Indian cities, including Bengaluru, Mumbai and Chennai. However, no Indian city could make the Top 300. The national capital is the best performing Indian city on the list.

First Israeli auto firm sets up manufacturing unit in India

- **EVR Motors, an Israel-based innovator specializing in high power-density electric motors, announced the inauguration of its new Greenfield plant in Manesar, Haryana, under its subsidiary, LEVR Motors.** This facility marks a significant milestone as the first manufacturing operation in India for an Israeli automotive firm and will play a pivotal role in the company's global production strategy.
- **The Manesar plant will produce trapezoidal geometry coils, a patented key component of EVR's Trapezoidal Stator Radial Flux Permanent Magnet (RFPM) motor technology.** These coils are essential for EVR's electric motors, known for being smaller, lighter, and more cost-effective while maintaining the flexibility to meet diverse customer needs.

Maldives eyes India's RuPay service 'to bolster the Maldivian Rufiyaa', launch soon

- **Maldives will soon launch India's RuPay service "to bolster the Maldivian Rufiyaa".** The upcoming launch of India's RuPay while announcing how both India and China have agreed to use local currency in bilateral trade. "The upcoming launch of India's RuPay service is anticipated to further bolster the Maldivian rufiyaa (MVR)."

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.**

Zimbabwe's gold-backed currency — ZiG

- **The introduction of the world's newest currency in April inspired a reggae artist to record a song praising the ZiG, or Zimbabwe Gold. The catchy tune, titled "Zig Mari," received generous play on state television and radio. Although money typically doesn't require publicity, Zimbabwe's sixth national currency in 15 years needs all the help it can get.**
- **Desperate to halt a money crisis underlining the country's economic troubles, the government launched the gold-backed ZiG, the latest attempt to replace the Zimbabwe dollar, which had been battered by depreciation and often outright rejection by people unwilling to put their faith in it. The ZiG is the sixth currency used following the spectacular 2009 collapse of the Zimbabwe dollar amid hyperinflation of 5 billion per cent, one of the world's worst currency crashes. The government printed a 100-trillion Zimbabwe dollar banknote to keep up with spiralling prices that saw a loaf of bread going for more than 500 million Zimbabwe dollars.**

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in Southeast Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. The capital and largest city is Harare. The Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) dollar or RTG (Zimdollar or zollar, now abbreviated as ZWL or ZWLS) was the official currency in Zimbabwe from June 2019 to April 2024. The Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) has been the official currency of Zimbabwe since 8 April 2024, backed by US\$575 million worth of hard assets: foreign currencies, gold, and other precious metals. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is serving as President of Zimbabwe since 24 November 2017.

'World's first' recycled container garment factory takes shape in Kenya

- **'World's first' recycled container garment factory takes shape in Kenya. Already under construction in the Athi River Export Processing Zone (EPZ), the recycled container factory is expected to be completed by December 2024 and could become a model for eco-friendly industrial design.**

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.

Maharashtra tops in attracting highest FDI for second time in row

- **Maharashtra has attracted the highest foreign direct investment for the second consecutive year in 2023-24. The state emerged on top in attracting FDI in 2022-23 too. As per the data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Maharashtra received FDI amounting to Rs. 1,25,101 crore in 2023-24. While it is higher than any other state, it is also higher than Rs. 1,18,422 crore that the state received in 2022-23. Data shows that the FDI received by the state during the financial year 2023-24 is more than double the total investment received by Gujarat (Rs. 60,119 crore) and Karnataka (Rs. 54,427 crore). The state received more FDI than the combined sum of second-ranked Gujarat and third-ranked Karnataka.**

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.

World Bank partners with Swiss National Bank and SIX Digital Exchange to advance digitalization in capital markets

- The World Bank has priced the first Swiss franc-denominated digital bond issued by an international entity. It will be settled using Swiss franc wholesale central bank digital currency (wCBDC) provided by the Swiss National Bank.
- This 7-year CHF 200 million digital bond, the largest World Bank CHF bond issuance since 2009, uses Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) and advances the digitalization of capital markets while also supporting the financing of World Bank's sustainable development activities. The World Bank partnered with the SNB and SIX Digital Exchange (SDX) to further scale efforts in the use of DLT in capital markets. This partnership introduces the use of wCBDC by the SNB for initial settlement.

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.

Banks in News

RBI proposes tighter project finance rules

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) proposed tighter rules to govern lending to projects under implementation. The central bank's draft rules include a classification of the projects as per their phase and higher provisioning of up to 5 per cent during the construction phase, even if the asset is standard.
- It can be noted that in the last credit cycle, project loans were seen to have led to a build-up of stress on bank books. The standard asset provisioning otherwise stands at 0.40 per cent. Under the proposed norms, first announced in September 2023 and the details revealed a bank has to set aside 5 per cent of the exposure during the construction phase, which goes down as the project becomes operational. Once the project reaches the 'Operational phase', the provisions can be reduced to 2.5 per cent of the funded outstanding and then further down to 1 per cent if certain conditions are met.

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 updates guidance note for banks, NBFCs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has updated its "guidance note" on operational risk management for the financial sector, and also extended it to the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), including housing finance companies. The 2005 'Guidance Note on Management of Operational Risk' covered only commercial banks.
- The RBI said all regulated entities (REs) in India should implement a robust information and communication technology (ICT) risk management programme in alignment with their operational risk management framework. All regulated entities in India should implement a robust information and communication technology (ICT) risk management programme in alignment with their operational risk management framework.

PayU gets RBI's in-principle nod to operate as payment aggregator

- Fintech firm PayU has received an in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank to operate as a payment aggregator. In January 2023, RBI had returned applications of Prosus Group firm PayU and asked it to resubmit them within 120 days. With in-principle approval in place, PayU can now onboard new merchants to provide them digital payment services. "This license is pivotal in our mission to establish a globally renowned digital payment infrastructure rooted in India. Aligned with the government's Digital India initiative and the RBI's forward-thinking regulations, we are dedicated to driving digitisation and financial inclusion, particularly for small merchants".

ICICI Bank introduces UPI for NRIs through international mobile numbers

- ICICI Bank has rolled out a new facility allowing its non-resident Indian (NRI) customers to make Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions in India using their international mobile numbers. The announcement, made is expected to enhance the ease of everyday payments for NRIs. Previously, NRIs had to register an Indian mobile number with their Non-Resident External (NRE) or Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) bank accounts to use UPI, limiting their ability to make payments conveniently.
- The new facility allows ICICI Bank's NRI customers to use their international mobile numbers registered with their NRE/NRO accounts for UPI payments. This change applies to customers residing in ten countries, including the USA, UK, UAE, Canada, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

- The bank confirmed that this service is available through its mobile banking app, iMobile Pay, providing an easy way for NRIs to make utility payments, merchant and e-commerce transactions, and other financial activities without switching to an Indian mobile number. Customers can make payments by scanning any Indian QR code, sending money to a UPI ID, or sending to an Indian bank account.

Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) Bank Limited is an Indian multinational bank and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai with registered office in Vadodara. It offers a wide range of banking and financial services for corporate and retail customers through a variety of delivery channels and specialized subsidiaries in the areas of investment banking, life, non-life insurance, venture capital and asset management. **Sandeep Bakhshi** is the current MD & CEO, ICICI Bank. **ICICI** is the second-largest private bank in India. **HDFC** is the largest private bank in India in terms of market capitalization.

World Bank Report on Agri-food System

- The World Bank's recent report, "Recipe for a Livable Planet: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in the Agrifood System", has emphasized on significant potential for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the agrifood sector, which currently accounts for about a third of all global emissions.
- The report outlines actions that countries can take to enhance food security, improve the food system's resilience to climate change, and protect vulnerable populations during the transition to a low-carbon economy. The World Bank report identifies the top ten agrifood system emitters, which include China, Brazil, India, the United States, and Indonesia, among others. These countries are responsible for 55% of global agrifood emissions, with the top 20 emitters accounting for 67%.

SBI First Bank to Join India International Bullion Exchange

- State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest commercial bank, has announced that it has become the first bank to join India International Bullion Exchange's Trading Cum Clearing (TCM) programme. The India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) is a effort aiming to create platform for trading precious metals.
- SBI has joined as the first Trading Cum Clearing Member of IIBX strengthens its position as a vital stakeholder in developing GIFT City as India's financial markets' future. This will allow SBI IBU Gift City to trade on the IIBX platform and settle them on behalf of its customers.

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 43rd largest bank in the world and ranked 221st 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 16th 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.

RBI's proposed framework to administer project financing

- To strengthen the existing regulatory framework for long gestation period financing for projects such as infrastructure, non-infrastructure and commercial real estate sectors, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued draft regulations for consultation. The regulations endeavour to provide a "harmonised prudential framework" for financing projects. It also proposes to revise the criteria for changing the date of commencement of commercial operations (DCCO) of such projects.

- As per the banking regulator, **this is in light of a review of the extant instructions and analysis of the risks inherent in such financing.** Comments on the draft direction are solicited until June 15. Infrastructure projects usually have a long gestation period, with a higher probability of not being financially viable.
- **It may not always be possible to meet investment requirements of the projects fully from the budgetary resources of the government.** This opens up two financing avenues: public private partnerships and project financing from domestic financial institutions. The latter is particularly crucial for certain projects with longer payback periods. Depending on scale and technology, these projects may also require a loan with a longer tenure.

Worldline ePayments India gets RBI nod to operate as payment aggregator

- **Worldline ePayments India, a player in digital payments received authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator (PA) under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act of 2007.** The platform worked with merchants from various segments such as e-commerce, BFSI, retail, utilities, education, travel and hospitality for digital payments.

Atanu Chakraborty re-appointed as HDFC Bank chairman for 3 years

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the re-appointment of Atanu Chakraborty as the Part Time Chairman of HDFC Bank for a period of three years.** Also the Board of Directors of the bank has approved the re-appointment of Atanu Chakraborty as Part Time Chairman and Independent Director of the bank for a period of three years.

HDFC Bank gets \$500 mn push for loans to women

- **A \$500-million credit line has been extended by International Finance Corporation to HDFC Bank to provide finance to women through microloans in rural areas.** IFC is an arm of the World Bank that supports private sector initiatives. The private lender will use the money to finance microloans to self-help groups and joint liability groups that are enrolled in the sustainable livelihoods initiative. **The International Finance Corporation extends a \$500 million credit line to HDFC Bank for providing microloans to women in rural areas, specifically targeting self-help groups and joint liability groups enrolled in the sustainable livelihoods initiative.**

RBI to transfer Rs 2.11 lakh crore as surplus to government for 2023-24

- In a big boost to the fiscal position of the government, **the central board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved a transfer of Rs 2.11 lakh crore as surplus, or dividend, to the Central Government for the year accounting year 2023-24.** This surplus transfer to the government is a 141 per cent jump over the last year's (2022-23) dividend of Rs 87,416 crore.

RBI Guv Shaktikanta Das launches PRAVAAH, Retail Direct mobile app and FinTech Repository

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched three major initiatives namely the PRAVAAH portal, RBI Retail Direct mobile application and FinTech Repository as earlier announced in April 2023, April 2024 and December 2023 respectively.** The said initiatives, **aimed at enhancing regulatory processes, facilitating retail investment, and providing comprehensive data on the fintech sector,** were launched by Governor Shaktikanta Das in presence of several leaders from the industry.
- According to the central bank, **the PRAVAAH portal (Platform for Regulatory Application, Validation and AuthOrisation) is a secure, centralized web-based platform designed for individuals and entities to seek authorizations, licenses, or regulatory approvals from the RBI.**

RBI to allow opening of rupee account outside India

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed the opening of rupee accounts outside India as part of its strategic action plan to internationalise the domestic currency.** With emphasis on continuous synchronisation of the FEMA operating framework with the evolving macroeconomic environment, rationalisation of various guidelines will be of primary focus, the central bank said in its annual report.
- The RBI said it has **finalised a strategic action plan for 2024-25 and envisaged liberalisation of external commercial borrowing (ECB) framework and 'Go-live' for phase I of software platform for ECBs and trade credits reporting and approval (SPECTRA) project.**

- The RBI will permit opening of rupee (INR) accounts outside India by persons resident outside India (PROIs) as part of the 2024-25 agenda for internationalisation of the domestic currency. “INR lending by Indian banks to PROIs and enabling foreign direct investment (FDI) and portfolio investment through special accounts [special nonresident rupee (SNRR) and special rupee vostro account (SRVA),” the report said.
- Rationalisation of the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) and review of the IFSC regulations under FEMA also are part of the agenda for the current financial year. The RBI report further said rationalisation of regulations towards promoting the internationalisation of the INR was undertaken to enable the settlement of bilateral trade in local currencies.

PM Modi Commends Banking Sector as Net Profit Crosses Rs 3 Lakh Cr for First Time In FY24

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised the “remarkable” turnaround in the health of India’s banking sector after net profit crossed Rs 3 lakh crore for the first time in FY24. The net profit of listed public and private sector banks rose 39% to Rs 3.1 lakh crore from Rs 2.2 lakh crore in FY23. Public sector banks generated a record Rs 1.4 lakh crore in net profit during the year – an increase of 34% over the year-ago period – while private sector banks increased their net profit by 42% to nearly Rs 1.7 lakh crore compared to Rs 1.2 lakh crore a year ago.

RBI moves 1 lakh kg of gold from UK back to India, first such move of this quantum since 1991

- India’s central bank has moved around a 100 tonnes, or 1 lakh kilograms of gold from the United Kingdom back to its vaults in India, and intends to move more in coming months. RBI faced severe criticism back in 1991 when it was forced to pledge part of its gold reserves as the country was undergoing a foreign exchange crisis. This is the first time since 1991 that India has moved such a heavy scale of gold. This has been done for logistical reasons as well as diversity of storage. Domestically, gold is stored in vaults located in the RBI’s old office building on Mumbai’s Mint Road and in Nagpur.

HDFC Bank has launched a new digital credit card called Pixel Play Credit Card

- HDFC Bank has launched a new digital credit card called Pixel Play Credit Card that allows you to customize benefits to fit your lifestyle and select merchants of your choice to earn cashback, choose card design, and select your preferred billing cycle date. It comes with a benefit of 5% of annual Cashback and Rs 500 Annual Fees. It is 100% digital. No documentation, email, or calling required. Simply convert to EMI and manage EMI repayments fully from your Payzapp. You can easily apply for the PIXEL Play Credit Card through the Payzapp.

HDFC Bank Limited (also known as HDB) is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai. HDFC Bank was incorporated in 1994 as a subsidiary of the Housing Development Finance Corporation, with its registered office in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. It is India’s largest private sector bank by assets and world’s 4th largest bank by market capitalisation as of July 2023 after its reverse takeover of its parent HDFC. It is the second largest company by market capitalisation of \$172 billion on the Indian stock exchanges. It is also the sixteenth largest employer in India with nearly 1.77 lakh employees. Atanu Chakraborty is currently the Chairperson of HDFC Bank, India’s largest lender by market capitalization. Sashidhar Jagdishan is the current MD and CEO of HDFC Bank.

Firms in News

IREDA granted 'Navratna' status

- Public sector Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) said **the government had granted it the 'navratna' status**. This takes the **total number of navratna PSEs to 17**. These companies have the **autonomy to invest up to Rs.1,000 crore**.
- **IREDA is a Non-Banking Financial Institution engaged in promoting**, developing and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency/conservation.

Navratna status is a recognition given by the Indian government to select public sector enterprises (PSEs) that have **financial and operational autonomy**. The grant of Navratna status to RVNL provides it with more operational freedom, financial autonomy, and enhanced delegation of powers. **This status enables PSEs to invest up to Rs. 1000 crore without any approval from the central government, giving them more flexibility in decision making, personnel management, and joint ventures.** The CPSEs which are Miniratna I, Schedule 'A' and have obtained 'excellent' or 'very good' MOU rating in three of the last five years and having composite score of 60 or above in following six selected performance indicators are eligible to be considered for grant of Navratna status.

London-based Indian-origin artist Anish Kapoor tops the Hurun India Art List 2024

- For the sixth consecutive year, **London-based Indian origin artist Anish Kapoor has topped the Hurun India Art List of the most successful Indian artists alive, released by the Hurun Research Institute**. The list ranks the top 50 living Indian artists according to the sales of their works sold at public auctions as of January 1, 2024.
- **Ranked at number two is Baroda-based artist-pedagogue Gulammohammed Sheikh, whose 2015 canvas Ark Kashmir sold for Rs. 21 crore last year**. Number three on the list is Delhi-based Arpita Singh, who also retains her position as the most successful woman artist.

Richest in UK: From Gopichand Hinduja, Lakshmi Mittal to Rishi Sunak and Akshata Murty

- **Gopichand Hinduja and his family have once again secured the top spot on the Sunday Times Rich List, with a net worth of £37.2 billion, up from £35 billion the previous year**. Sir Leonard Blavatnik, a Ukrainian-born philanthropist and business magnate, holds the position of the second-richest individual in Britain, with a staggering net worth of £29.25 billion.
- **British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his wife, Akshata Murty, have climbed the ranks in the prestigious 'Sunday Times Rich List' for 2024, propelled by Murty's lucrative shareholding in Infosys. Ranked 245th with an estimated wealth of £651 million.**
- **The top 10 of the 2024 'Sunday Times Rich List' sees another set of India-born brothers, David and Simon Reuben, build on their wealth to rise to third place from last year's fourth, with a fortune estimated at around GBP 24.977 billion. At No. 8 is NRI tycoon of ArcelorMittal steelworks Lakshmi N. Mittal, who slips two places from last year with an estimated GBP 14.921 billion, followed by Vedanta Resources' industrialist Anil Agarwal at No. 23 with an estimated GBP 7 billion – down one rank from 2023.**
- **Other Indian-origin billionaires on the 2024 list include textiles entrepreneur Prakash Lohia at No. 30 with an estimated GBP 6.23 billion; retail majors Mohsin and Zuber Issa at No. 39 with GBP 5 billion; and pharma chiefs Navin and Varsha Engineer at 58 with GBP 3 billion.**
- **Among the top 100 richest Britons are brothers Simon, Bobby and Robin Arora at No. 65 with GBP 2.682 billion and leading NRI industrialist Lord Swraj Paul and family ranked 67th with an estimated wealth of GBP 2.6 billion – same as last year.** Fashion industrialist Sunder Genomal, a new entrant in 2023, is ranked 77th with a fortune estimated at GBP 2.214 billion, with hoteliers Jasminder Singh and family coming in at 83 with GBP 2.001 billion. On the whole, the 36th edition of the rich list reveals the largest fall in billionaires in its history – down from a peak of 177 in 2022 to 165 this year.
- "This year's Sunday Times Rich List suggests Britain's billionaire boom has come to an end. Many of our home-grown entrepreneurs have seen their fortunes fall, and some of the global super-rich who came here are moving

away,” said the list’s compiler, **Robert Watts**. However, moving from millionaire to billionaire on the tally is former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney – now the first U.K. musician to achieve that status after boosting his wealth by GBP 50 million over last year.

HUDCO granted the Navratna status

- **Housing & Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) rose on BSE a day after the Department of Public Enterprises (OPE) granted the Navratna status to the company.** Department of Public Enterprises (OPE) has granted the Navratna Status to Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO).”

NHPC Limited to collaborate with Norwegian company for implementation of Floating Solar Energy Technology in India

- **NHPC Limited, the largest organization for hydropower development in India, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with M/s Ocean Sun,** a Norwegian company operating as a technology provider to the floating solar industry. As per the MoU, NHPC and Ocean Sun will explore key areas of cooperation for demonstration of Ocean Sun’s floating solar energy technology based on photovoltaic panels. The panels would be mounted on hydro-elastic membranes, at relevant sites to be identified by NHPC.
- **The agreement is in continuation of efforts towards sustainable development and addition of renewable energy capacity by NHPC,** which is engaged not only in hydro power development but also in various renewable energy projects such as solar, wind and green hydrogen projects.

Adani Ports & SEZ attains India’s first AAA ratings in private infrastructure space

- **Adani Ports & SEZ (APSEZ), one of the largest profit contributors for Adani Group,** has been upgraded to AAA rating by Care Ratings. This is the highest possible rating given to an issuer by credit-rating agencies in India, signifying strong credit worthiness and the capacity to repay investors.
- This achievement also holds major significance for India’s private infrastructure sector, **marking APSEZ as the first and only private infrastructure developer of its magnitude to get this recognition.** Notably, Adani Energy Solution’s two transmission assets–WTGL (West Transmission Gujarat Limited) and Alipurdwar have also been rated AAA ratings by India Ratings. However, at the company level, APSEZ is the first. The ratings upgrade was largely driven by APSEZ’s robust business model, strong growth in operations with healthy profitability, coupled with high liquidity and low leverage.

NPCI inks pact with Bank of Namibia for developing UPI-like instant payment system

- **NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), entered into an agreement with the Bank of Namibia (BoN) for developing an instant payment system like Unified Payment Interface (UPI) for the African nation.**
- **This partnership marks NPCI’s first-ever collaboration with a central bank to deploy the UPI stack in an international market.** The collaboration is aimed at developing real-time person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions in Namibia. “Through this collaboration, BoN will gain access to best-in-class technology and insights from NIPL, enabling the creation of a similar platform in Namibia for the digital welfare of its citizens”.
- In January 2024, NPCI announced the launch of the UPI-PayNow linkage that enables Indians to receive remittances directly into their bank accounts from Singapore and vice-versa. In February this year, it announced a partnership with e-commerce and proximity payments company Lyra, to enable UPI acceptance in France. The same month, UPI services were rolled out in Sri Lanka and Mauritius.

Google to Manufacture Pixel Phones In Tamil Nadu, Says CM MK Stalin

- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that Google will soon commence local production of its flagship Pixel smartphones in the state.** The manufacturing facility will be set up near Chennai in collaboration with Foxconn, a leading contract electronics manufacturer.
- **Stalin revealed that the state’s Industry Minister TRB Raja had visited Google’s US headquarters along with Foxconn to discuss the prospect of establishing a manufacturing unit in Tamil Nadu.** Following these negotiations, Google and Foxconn have agreed to set up a Pixel smartphone manufacturing plant in the state.

- **“This development will create employment opportunities for the youth of Tamil Nadu who have obtained higher education in the field of information technology.”** The chief minister highlighted that Tamil Nadu already hosts manufacturing units for industry giants like Samsung and Apple, and Google’s entry into the state is a testament to its growing attractiveness as a hub for premium smartphone production.
- Last year, Google had announced its plans to manufacture Pixel smartphones in India during the ‘Google for India 2023’ event. The tech giant, led by Indian-American CEO Sundar Pichai, aims to capitalize on the surging demand for premium smartphones in the country, which is estimated to be the world’s second-largest smartphone market.
- Tamil Nadu has set an ambitious target of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2030, and the state government has been actively pursuing investment opportunities to establish the state as an advanced manufacturing hub. According to Stalin, the state has attracted investments worth Rs 9.61 lakh crore through investment conferences held in various countries, resulting in the creation of 30 lakh jobs.

Semiconductor company Mindgrove launches India’s first commercial MCU chip

- Peak XV Partners-backed fabless semiconductor startup Mindgrove Technologies said it launched what it claimed is India’s first commercial high-performance SoC (system on chip). Named Secure IoT, it is designed for IoT devices and will likely cost 30% less than other chips in similar segments.
- The startup, supported by IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation and incubated in the IIT-Madras Incubation Cell, said the chip has had a successful MPW tape-out (the silicon industry term for prototyping) at the 28 nm node, and that reference boards will be available for original equipment manufacturers to try out it in the coming weeks.

Zomato unveils ‘India’s first’ crowd-supported weather infrastructure

- Food aggregator Zomato has launched a crowd-supported weather infrastructure network consisting of 650 on-ground stations to provide real-time information on key parameters such as temperature and rainfall. The network, weatherunion.com, provides localised, real-time information on key weather parameters such as temperature, humidity, wind speed and rainfall, among others.

FICCI Organises Cold Chain & Logistics Summit in New Delhi

- The Cold Chain and Logistics Summit is being organised by the FICCI in New Delhi. The summit aim is to foster collaboration and innovation in developing an integrated, sustainable, and efficient cold chain ecosystem for India’s perishable goods industry.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group based in India. Mr. Subhrakant, Managing Director, Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys Ltd has taken over as FICCI President for 2022-2023, from Mr Sanjiv Mehta. It was established in 1927, on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi by Indian businessman G.D. Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas. It is the largest, one of the oldest and the apex business organisation in India. It is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation. FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs. Currently, it is headquartered in the national capital New Delhi and has a presence in 12 states in India and 8 countries around the world.

GAIL’s 10 MW green hydrogen plant in Madhya Pradesh inaugurated

- State-owned GAIL (India) Ltd’s maiden green hydrogen plant at Vijapur in Madhya Pradesh has been commissioned, making a major step for the nation’s largest natural gas transmission and distribution firm’s foray into new and alternate energy.
- The 10-megawatt proton exchange membrane electrolyser for the green-hydrogen producing unit at the Vijapur complex has been imported from Canada. The plant will produce about 4.3 tonnes of green hydrogen per day, with a purity of about 99.999 per cent by volume.
- It uses electricity produced from renewable sources such as the sun’s solar energy, to split water to produce green hydrogen. Current regulations provide for blending only 5 per cent hydrogen with natural gas. GAIL is conducting joint studies with Engineers India Limited and IIT Kanpur to further blend hydrogen with natural gas.

GAIL (India) Limited (formerly known as Gas Authority of India Ltd.) is an Indian state-owned energy corporation with primary interests in the trade, transmission and production distribution of natural gas. GAIL also has interests in the exploration and production solar and wind power, telecom and telemetry services (GAILTEL) and electricity generation. **GAIL was founded as the Gas Authority of India Ltd. in August 1984** under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to build, operate and maintain the HVJ Gas Pipeline. **On 1 February 2013, the Indian government conferred GAIL with Maharatna status along with 11 other Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).** It is headquartered in Delhi.

Tata Steel becomes first Indian steel company to complete fully loaded voyage from Australia to India on B24 biofuel

- **Tata Steel became the first Indian steel company to undertake a fully loaded voyage from East Coast of Australia to India.** The cape vessel “MV Cape XL” departed from Gladstone port after loading 1,48,500 metric tons of coal and arrived at Kalinga International Coal Terminal Paradip Private Ltd. (KICTPPL) port.
- **The voyage has set a new benchmark for sustainable shipping practices in India and marks a new milestone** in the country’s maritime sector. The vessel was powered by a B24 biofuel blend with Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil (VLSFO). The B24 blend, the current benchmark grade for marine biofuel, combines 24% used cooking oil methyl ester (UCOME) with 76% VLSFO.

Tata Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mumbai. Founded in 1868 by Jamshedji Tata, the group gained international recognition after purchasing several global companies. It is **one of the biggest and oldest industrial groups in India.** Each Tata company operates independently under the guidance and supervision of its own board of directors and shareholders. **In 1991, Ratan Tata became chairman of Tata Group. This was also the year of economic liberalization in India,** opening up the market to foreign competitors. **Natarajan Chandrasekaran became the first non-Parsi and professional executive to head the Tata Group. Significant Tata affiliates include Air India, Tata Chemicals, Tata Communications, Tata Consultancy Services,** Tata Consumer Products, Tata Elxsi, Tata Motors, Tata Power, Tata Steel, Jamshedpur FC, Tanishq, Voltas, Tata Cliq, Tata Projects Limited, Tata Capital, Titan, Trent, Indian Hotels Company Limited, TajAir, Cromā, and Tata Starbucks, etc.

TCS and IIT Bombay Collaborate to Create India’s First Semiconductor Chip Imaging Tool

- **IT services major Tata Consultancy Services has entered into a partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, to develop what it said is India’s first quantum diamond microchip imager.** According to a statement from the IT services major, this to-be-developed sensing tool will hold the potential to unlock new levels of precision in the examination of semiconductor chips, reduce chip failures and improve the energy efficiency of electronic devices.
- **Semiconductor chips are an essential component of all modern electronic devices.** These chips act as the brain of devices across industries such as communications, computing, healthcare, military systems, transportation, clean energy, and what not. Currently, four semiconductor units — three in Gujarat and one in Assam — are in under construction stage.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is an Indian multinational information technology (IT) services and consulting company with its headquarters in Mumbai. It is a part of the Tata Group and operates in 150 locations across 46 countries. **TCS is the second largest Indian company by market capitalization and is among the most valuable IT service brands worldwide.**

S&P upgrades India’s rating outlook to positive on growth, improved govt spendin

- **S&P Global Ratings upgraded India’s sovereign rating outlook to positive from stable while retaining the rating at ‘BBB-’ on robust growth and improved quality of government expenditure.** S&P said it could upgrade India’s sovereign rating in the next two years if the country adopts a cautious fiscal and monetary policy that diminishes the government’s elevated debt and interest burden while bolstering economic resilience. “The positive outlook reflects our view that continued policy stability, deepening economic reforms, and high infrastructure investment will sustain long-term growth prospects”.

S&P Global Inc. (prior to April 2016 McGraw Hill Financial, Inc., and prior to 2013 The McGraw–Hill Companies, Inc.) is an American publicly traded corporation headquartered in Manhattan, New York City. Its primary areas of business are **financial information and analytics**. It is the parent company of S&P Global Ratings, S&P Global Market Intelligence, S&P Global Mobility, S&P Global Engineering Solutions, S&P Global Sustainable, and S&P Global Commodity Insights, CRISIL, and is the majority owner of the S&P Dow Jones Indices joint venture. “S&P” is a shortening of “Standard and Poor’s”.

Reliance and Tata recognised among the World’s Most Influential Companies by TIME

- **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has been named one of the World’s Most Influential Companies by TIME magazine, making its second appearance on the prestigious TIME 100 list.** This recognition places Reliance in the ‘Titans’ category, highlighting its transformative impact across various sectors in India and beyond. Reliance now holds the unique distinction of being the only Indian company to have been included twice in this elite list.
- **This recognition comes after Jio Platforms, a subsidiary of Reliance, was included in the inaugural TIME 100 Most Influential Companies List of 2021.** This distinction makes Reliance the only Indian company to receive this recognition twice, showcasing its continued impact and influence on a global scale.
- **TIME lauded the company, describing it as ‘India’s Juggernaut.’** The publication highlighted the company’s origins, tracing back to its foundation as a textile and polyester enterprise 58 years ago by Dhirubhai Ambani, and its evolution into India’s most valuable company with a market capitalization exceeding USD 200 billion.

Reliance Industries Limited is an Indian multinational conglomerate company, headquartered in Mumbai. It has diverse **businesses including energy, petrochemicals, natural gas, retail, telecommunications, mass media, and textiles**. Reliance is one of the **most profitable companies in India, the largest publicly traded company in India by market capitalisation, and the largest company in India as measured by revenue**. RIL has a market capitalisation of US\$243 billion as of March 31, 2022. The company was co-founded by Dhirubhai Ambani and Champaklal Damani in 1960’s as Reliance Commercial Corporation. **Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani** is an Indian business magnate and chairman, managing director, and the largest shareholder of RIL.

BSE Market Cap Hits \$5 Trillion Milestone

- **The market capitalisation of companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has reached a historic \$5 trillion, marking a fresh high.** This achievement is attributed to the ongoing rally in the Indian stock markets, bolstered by firm support from various sectoral indices and positive economic indicators.
- Indian stock indices have shown resilience with minimal volatility over recent sessions. **The conclusion of the five-phase general elections has bolstered investor confidence, with expectations of a third term for the Narendra Modi-led government.** This political stability has likely triggered fresh stock purchases. Several factors have buoyed the Indian stock market recently. April’s US consumer inflation data came in softer than expected, and India has seen a consistent moderation in inflation. **Remarkably, the BSE market cap reached \$4 trillion in early April and surged by another trillion within a month and a half.**
- **This rapid growth reflects robust GDP forecasts, manageable inflation levels, political stability, and commendable central bank monetary policies, positioning India as the fastest-growing major economy.** Despite overseas investors being net sellers of Indian equities in recent sessions, domestic institutional investors have compensated by remaining net buyers.

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 7th largest stock exchange with a market capitalization exceeding US\$5 trillion as of May 2024.

Adani Ports signs 30-year concession pact to operate terminal at Dar es Salaam Port in Tanzania

- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) said its wholly owned subsidiary Adani International Ports Holdings Pte Ltd (AIPH) has signed a 30-year concession agreement with the Tanzania Ports Authority to operate and manage Container Terminal 2 at the Dar es Salaam Port in Tanzania.** The Dar es Salaam Port is a gateway port with a well-connected network of roadways and railways.

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.

NSE Indices launches India's first electric vehicle index

- NSE Indices Ltd, a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange, launched the EV and new-age automotive index to track the performance of companies which form a part of the EV ecosystem. This would be the country's first ever electric vehicle (EV) index.
- "The launch of the Nifty EV and new-age automotive index will facilitate creation of products which will create opportunity for asset managers to invest in the electric vehicle and new-age automotive market thereby providing an investment vehicle to investors".
- The government has always been at the forefront of framing policies related to EV adoption so that EVs with the latest technology can be manufactured in the country and attract investments by global EV manufacturers, thereby giving a boost to the Make in India initiative. **The base date for the new thematic index is April 2, 2018, and the base value is 1,000. The index will be reconstituted semi-annually and rebalanced on a quarterly basis.** The index is expected to act as a benchmark for asset managers and be a reference index tracked by passive funds in the form of Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), index funds and structured products.

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).

NHAI Launches Initiative to Attract the UAE's Investments for India's Highway Expansion

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched an initiative to monetize its infrastructure, seeking investments from the UAE to sustain and enhance India's expanding national highway network. NHAI's delegation, led by Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav and NHIT MD Suresh Goyal, is conducting high-level meetings and roadshows in Dubai and Abu Dhabi to attract foreign investment via NHAI Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InVITs).
- At a Dubai roadshow with the Consulate General of India and SBICAPS UAE, Yadav highlighted India's highway expansion from 70,000 to 140,000 kilometres in a decade, driven by significant government investment. **NHAI aims to build lasting UAE investor relationships, with positive responses in Dubai and upcoming meetings in Abu Dhabi.** This initiative represents a strategic move to secure sustainable funding for India's highway expansion, attract significant capital, and foster a beneficial partnership for both India and investors.

The National Highways Authority of India or NHAI is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, set up in 1995 (Act 1988) and is responsible for management of a road network of over 50,000 km of National highways out of 1,32,499 km in India. It is a nodal agency of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH). NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for satellite mapping of highways.

Melinda French Gates to step down from Gates Foundation

- Melinda French Gates, the billionaire ex-wife of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, announced that she is stepping down from her role as co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. She said that she will receive 12.5 billion dollars to use for her own charitable purposes as part of her agreement with her ex-husband. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a non-profit fighting poverty, disease, and inequity

around the world. It was launched in 2000 and is considered to be one of the biggest charitable foundations in the world. Melinda French Gates parted her ways with Bill Gates after 27 years of marriage. The couple's divorce was officially formalised nearly three months after announcing their separation in August 2021.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is an American private foundation founded by Bill Gates and Melinda French Gates. Based in Seattle, Washington, it was launched in 2000 and is reported to be the second largest charitable foundation in the world, holding \$69 billion in assets as of 2020. The primary stated goals of the foundation are to enhance healthcare and reduce extreme poverty across the world, and to expand educational opportunities and access to information technology in the U.S.

Hero MotoCorp becomes first Indian automaker to join ONDC network

- **Hero MotoCorp has become the first auto company in India to integrate with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).** This partnership not only marks a significant milestone for Hero MotoCorp but also reinforces the Digital India initiative, aiming to propel the nation's digital transformation and economic expansion. The integration into the ONDC network promises to enhance the shopping experience by offering customers easy access to two-wheeler parts, accessories, and merchandise through various buyer applications.

Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) was launched in late 2021 under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) by the Ministry of Commerce as part of the Digital India push. ONDC works as a network of interconnected e-marketplaces through which sellers, including brands, can list and sell their products directly to customers bypassing any middlemen or intermediaries. ONDC functions on the basis of an open network where it will not be a single platform similar to Amazon or Flipkart but rather in the form of a gateway where buyers and sellers across different platforms will be able to connect.

PhonePe Launches Cross-Border UPI Payments in Sri Lanka

- **PhonePe announced that it has enabled UPI payment acceptance in collaboration with LankaPay.** PhonePe announced that its app users visiting Sri Lanka can now make payments using UPI across LankaPayQR merchants across the nation. Earlier in February, India's instant payment technology service, the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), was launched in Sri Lanka and Mauritius in a virtual event that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his Mauritius counterpart Pravind Jugnauth and President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe.

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.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



ISRO to test Gaganyaan parachutes by dropping module from chopper

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is likely to undertake an important test under the Gaganyaan mission to check the parachute system of the crew module in the next few days. The Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT) will see a Chinook helicopter dropping the crew module from a height of around 4-5 km. “The test is likely to be conducted in the next two or three days.
- The first IADT will test the parachute system under nominal conditions, meaning it will mimic the process of splashdown of the crew module when both parachutes open in a timely manner”. This will be the first in a series of IADT to test the parachute system under off-nominal conditions such as one parachute not opening, both parachutes not opening, or delayed deployment of the parachutes.

Gaganyaan is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft intended to be the formative spacecraft of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme. It is ISRO’s first human space flight programme. The spacecraft is being designed to carry three people, and a planned upgraded version will be equipped with rendezvous and docking capabilities. In its maiden crewed mission, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)’s largely autonomous 5.3-metric ton capsule will orbit the Earth at 400 km altitude for up to seven days with a two- or three-person crew on board. The first crewed mission was originally planned to be launched on ISRO’s LVM3 in December 2021, But this has since been delayed to no earlier than 2025.

China launches 3-member crew to its space station as it seeks to put astronauts on the moon by 2030

- China launched a three-member crew to its orbiting space station as part of its ambitious program that aims to put astronauts on the moon by 2030. The Shenzhou-18 spacecraft lifted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on the edge of the Gobi Desert in northwestern China atop a Long March 2-F rocket. The spacecraft’s three-member crew will relieve the Shenzhou-17 team, which has been staffing China’s Tiangong space station since last October.

ISRO releases ISSAR 2023 report on vulnerability of space assets to collisions

- ISRO has released a report assessing the vulnerability of its assets in outer space to environmental hazards such as natural objects like asteroids as well as artificial space objects, to ensure safe and sustainable space operations, Releasing the Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR) 2023, ISRO Chairman S Somanath said, “Space Situational Awareness (SSA) is a must in outer space.”
- According to the report, about 1,37,565 close approach alerts were received from USSPACECOM. Also, a total of 3,033 alerts for close approaches within the distance of one kilometre were deduced by the ISRO satellites. The report also identified 2,700 close approaches with other operational satellites within 5 kilometres. On certain occasions, coordination was carried out with other international agencies like SpaceX and EUMETSAT.

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.

Russia activates world's first satellite for Arctic observation

- The Russian space agency, Roscosmos, announced the commissioning of the first satellite system in the world for the observation of the Arctic Circle. Arktika-M was created on the basis of the unified Navigator platform of the Russian Lavochkin corporation. The first Arktika satellite was launched into orbit in February 2021 and the second in December last year.

Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo system successfully flight-tested by DRDO

- Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) system was successfully flight-tested from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. SMART is a next-generation missile-based light-weight torpedo delivery system, designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to enhance the anti-submarine warfare capability of the Indian Navy far beyond the conventional range of lightweight torpedo.
- This canister-based missile system consists of several advanced sub-systems, namely two-stage solid propulsion system, electromechanical actuator system, precision inertial navigation system etc. The system carries advanced light-weight torpedo as payload along with parachute-based release system. The missile was launched from the ground mobile launcher. Several state-of-the-art mechanisms such as symmetric separation, ejection and velocity control have been validated in this test.

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.

China launches Chang'e-6, world's first mission to bring rocks from Moon's far side

- China has launched its Chang'e-6 mission, aiming to become the first country to collect rock and soil samples from the far side of the Moon. The mission, part of China's ambitious lunar exploration program, lifted off on a Long March 5 rocket from the Wenchang Satellite Launch Center.
- Chang'e-6 is targeting a landing in the southern portion of the Apollo crater, located within the South Pole-Aitken (SPA) basin on the lunar far side. This ancient, massive impact basin is thought to hold valuable clues about the Moon's composition and early history. The spacecraft, weighing 3,200 kg, will carry scientific instruments from France, Italy, Sweden, and Pakistan. Its primary objective is to collect around 2 kg of material from 2 m below the lunar surface and return it to Earth for analysis.

India's first indigenous bomber UAV unveiled in Bengaluru

- Flying Wedge Defence and Aerospace Technologies, an Indian defence and aerospace company, marked a milestone in Bengaluru by unveiling the FWD-200B, pegged to be the country's first indigenous bomber unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The FWD-200B is a medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) unmanned combat aerial vehicle designed and manufactured entirely in India.
- Founder Suhas Tejaskanda highlighted the significant cost reduction compared to foreign counterparts, with the FWD-200B priced at just ₹25 crores, a fraction of the cost of similar U.S. models. This affordability underscores India's commitment to self-sufficiency in defense technology.
- The FWD-200B boasts a payload capacity of 100 kgs and is classified as a MALE Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle, offering medium-altitude, long-endurance capabilities. Integrated with optical surveillance payloads and precision air strike weapons, it ensures versatility in various combat scenarios.

India Successfully Tests SMART Missile System

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight test of the **Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART)** system from **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island** off the coast of Odisha.
- According to a statement by the Ministry of Defence, **the SMART system represents the next generation of missile-based light-weight torpedo delivery systems, designed to bolster the Indian Navy's anti-submarine warfare capabilities beyond the conventional ranges of lightweight torpedoes.**
- **The canister-based missile system comprises several advanced sub-systems, including a two-stage solid propulsion system, an electromechanical actuator system, a precision inertial navigation system, among others.** The system carries an advanced light-weight torpedo as its payload with a parachute-based release mechanism. The missile was launched from a ground mobile launcher. Several state-of-the-art mechanisms such as symmetric separation, ejection and velocity control were validated during the test.

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.** **Dr VS Arunachalam, a material scientist, became the first DRDO scientist to head the DRDO and also to assume the office of the Scientific Adviser.**

ISRO Successfully Tests New Liquid Rocket Engine in Tamil Nadu

- **The Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO successfully tested the new liquid rocket engine manufactured through Additive Manufacturing technology.** The test was successfully carried out at **ISRO Propulsion Complex in Mahendragiri in Tamilnadu.**
- **This new redesigned PS4 engine has brought down the number of parts from 14 to a single piece and eliminated 19 weld joints.** This will significantly save on the raw material usage per engine, reduce metal powder from 565 kgs to 13.7 kgs and reduce the production time by 60 percent.
- **This new redesigned engine will be used for the fourth stage of PSLV launch vehicle and also in the Reaction Control System of the First Stage in PSLV.** ISRO is planning to induct this PS4 engine into the regular PSLV program. Additive Manufacturing technology means 3D printing of PS4 engines.
- **The Private partner Wipro 3D joined hands with ISRO to successfully carry out the hot testing of the 3D printed PS4 engine.** This will usher in a new era of advanced 3D manufacturing technique of India's space programme.

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.**

Army set to receive Iгла-S air defence systems partly assembled in India

- **The Army is all set to begin receiving another set of Russian Iгла-S very short range air defence systems (VSHORAD), filling a critical void in the its air defence requirements which has been repeatedly delayed.** **Iгла-S is a man-portable air defence system (MANPADS) developed by Russia.** It is a **hand-held defence system that can be operated by an individual or crew.** It is designed to **bring down low-flying aircraft and can also identify and neutralise air targets such as cruise missiles and drones.** A **VSHORAD is the soldier's last line of defence against enemy combat aircraft, helicopters and UAVs in the multilayered air defence network.** It has a range of **500 metres to 6 kilometres and attack targets up to an altitude of 3.5 kilometres.** The speed of the missile is 400 metres per second and the deployment time is 13 seconds.
- **The Army is also set to receive the first of two Israeli Hermes-900 Medium Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) assembled by ADSTL in Hyderabad.** The **Iгла-S systems were**

contracted last year under the fourth tranche of Emergency Procurements (EP) and are being assembled by Adani Defence Systems And Technologies Limited (ADSTL) in India under technology transfer from Rosoboronexport. Under this, the Army contracted 48 Iгла-S launchers, 100 missiles, 48 night sights and one missile testing station under a ₹260 crore contract and deliveries are set to begin by end-May 2024.

Webb telescope spots most distant and oldest black hole collision ever

- The James Webb Telescope has discovered the most distant merger of two gigantic black holes dating to the time of 740 million years after the universe-forming Big Bang. To give perspective, the Big Bang is an event that occurred 13.8 billion years ago.
- As per a European Space Agency report, the supermassive black holes have masses of millions to billions times that of the Sun in most massive galaxies in the local universe, including in the Milky Way galaxy. The system is known as ZS7.

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is a space telescope developed by NASA with the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). The telescope is named after James E. Webb, who was the administrator of NASA from 1961 to 1968 and played an integral role in the Apollo program. It is intended to succeed the Hubble Space Telescope as NASA's flagship mission in astrophysics. JWST was launched on 25 December 2021 on Ariane flight VA256. It is designed to provide improved infrared resolution and sensitivity over Hubble, and will enable a broad range of investigations across the fields of astronomy and cosmology, including observations of some of the most distant events and objects in the Universe such as the formation of the first galaxies, and allowing detailed atmospheric characterization of potentially habitable exoplanets.

Hanooman AI launched in India, works in 98 languages including 12 Indian

- 3AI Holding and Seetha Mahalaxmi Healthcare (SML) launched Hanooman AI, an Indian large language model (LLM) designed with the Indian demographic in mind. The AI model was first unveiled on February 21 at an event in Mumbai.
- Hanooman AI boasts support for 12 Indian languages and a total of 98 global languages, along with text translation capabilities. Currently, the Hanooman AI platform is freely available to all users, but the company has plans to introduce a premium version with a paid subscription in the future. Hanooman AI comes packed with features designed to cater to various important sectors, including healthcare, governance, financial services, and education.
- With its impressive support for 12 Indian languages and a total of 98 global languages, Hanooman AI can communicate with users in their native language, providing a seamless experience across diverse linguistic backgrounds. Some of the global languages supported by the AI include English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and more.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the intelligence of machines or software, as opposed to the intelligence of humans or animals. It is a field of study in computer science that develops and studies intelligent machines. "AI" may also refer to the machines themselves. AI technology is widely used throughout industry, government and science. Some high-profile applications are: advanced web search engines (e.g., Google Search), recommendation systems (used by YouTube, Amazon, and Netflix), understanding human speech (such as Siri and Alexa), self-driving cars (e.g., Waymo), generative or creative tools (ChatGPT and AI art), and competing at the highest level in strategy games (such as chess and Go). AI founder John McCarthy agreed, writing that "Artificial intelligence is not, by definition, simulation of human intelligence".

India's 2024 economic growth projection revised upwards by UN to nearly 7 per cent

- The United Nations has revised upwards India's growth projections for 2024, with the country's economy now forecast to expand by close to seven per cent this year, mainly driven by strong public investment and resilient private consumption. The World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2024 said, "India's economy is forecast to expand by 6.9 per cent in 2024 and 6.6 per cent in 2025, mainly driven by strong public investment and resilient private consumption. Although subdued external demand will continue to weigh on merchandise export growth, pharmaceuticals and chemicals exports are expected to expand strongly."

France announces winners of world's first commercial-scale floating offshore wind auction

- France announced the winners of the 250 MW South Brittany floating offshore wind auction, the world's first commercial-scale floating offshore wind auction. This is a major milestone for floating offshore wind technology. So far Europe has only built small pilot and demonstrator projects.
- French Minister Delegate for Energy Roland Lescure announced the auction results for the 250 MW floating wind site off the coast of Southern Brittany. It was the first time a country has held a commercial-scale auction to award a feed-in tariff for a floating offshore wind farm.

Prototype models towards world's largest radio telescope obtains 'first light'

- The first prototype dish antenna which will be replicated towards building the world's largest radio telescope has achieved results from the first light. Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Observatory is the proposed telescope which is being planned to be constructed across the two continents, in South Africa and Australia. A total of 1.31 lakh low-frequency antennas will form the SKA-Low telescope in Western Australia, which will help scientists to study the first billion years and the evolution of the Universe. Whereas, there are 197 mid-frequency antennas proposed for the SKA-Mid telescope in South Africa. Once built, SKAO will be the most powerful radio telescope cable of peering upto 3,000 trillion km into the Universe to study galaxies and stars in greater detail, test theories of gravity and more.

The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is an intergovernmental international radio telescope project being built in Australia (low-frequency) and South Africa (mid-frequency). The combining infrastructure, the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), and headquarters, are located at the Jodrell Bank Observatory in the United Kingdom. The SKA cores are being built in the southern hemisphere, where the view of the Milky Way galaxy is the best and radio interference at its least. With receiving stations extending out to a distance of at least 3,000 km (1,900 mi) from a concentrated central core, it will exploit radio astronomy's ability to provide the highest-resolution images in all astronomy.

Established in 1856, Pune's Shivajinagar gets India's first green meteorology observatory

- Pune's Shivajinagar meteorological observatory has completely switched to round-the-clock solar-powered operations. This is the country's first observatory run by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) to go green. This exercise is part of the joint efforts by the Ministries of Earth Sciences (MoES) and Renewable Energy to promote green and clean energy at work spaces. A letter in this regard was received at MoES recently. IMD has pan-India offices and observatories, many of these set to soon carry out feasibility surveys ahead of adopting similar renewable energy measures.

Cubans put Asian silkworms to work for artisans in experimental project

- Cuban biochemist Dayron Martin, dressed in a white lab coat and jeans, looks over a table swarming with silkworms with the admiration of a proud father. Hundreds of the cream-coloured caterpillars squiggle across a bed of dark green mulberry leaves - the worm's preferred food - freshly plucked from bushes just outside his laboratory.
- This is the payoff, he says: The worms - native to Asia but happily transplanted to Cuba - are spinning a fine, lustrous white fiber that he hopes will be used by Cuban artisans to create products ranging from dresses, blouses, shirts and even cosmetics.
- Martin, who heads the ArteSeda project at the "Indio Hatuey Experimental Station" in western Cuba, oversees the process start to finish, from rearing the caterpillars to producing their preferred food and then harvesting their silk. "It's an ancestral process more than 5,000 years old," Martin says of the traditional Chinese practice, though he notes that it has only recently been adopted in Cuba.
- Silkworms are the larva of a moth (*Bombyx mori*) native to Asia. They spin a cocoon of silk fiber that has long been used as the source of commercial silk. The Cuban project, which began with funding from the European Union, the Cuban government and more recently from the French government, aims to teach artisans the process and allow them to raise their own worms from scratch.

Madhya Pradesh's first-ever city museum to display history using modern technology

- In a historic move, the Government of India has approved the establishment of the first-ever city museum in Bhopal. The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board is setting up the Bhopal City Museum in the left wing of Moti Mahal. It is a one-of-a-kind project by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board that will bring forth a tourist interpretation centre and a citizen engagement centre for heritage and culture lovers.

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.

NASA Launches Small Climate Satellite to Study Earth's Poles

- NASA successfully launched the first of a pair of small climate satellites from the Rocket Lab's Launch Complex 1 in Mahia, New Zealand. The mission, dubbed PREFIRE (Polar Radiant Energy in the Far-Infrared Experiment), aims to study heat emissions at the Earth's poles, shedding light on the intricate interplay between these regions and global climate change.
- The PREFIRE mission consists of two shoebox-sized CubeSats, each equipped with a sophisticated thermal infrared spectrometer capable of measuring the far-infrared radiation emitted by the Earth's coldest and most remote regions. By collecting this crucial data, scientists hope to better predict the impact of climate change on sea ice loss, ice sheet melt, and sea-level rise.
- "NASA's innovative PREFIRE mission will fill a gap in our understanding of the Earth system, providing our scientists a detailed picture of how Earth's polar regions influence how much energy our planet absorbs and releases," said Karen St Germain, director of NASA's Earth Science Division in Washington, D.C.

Twelve nations sign the Zero Debris Charter

- Twelve nations have signed the Zero Debris Charter at the ESA/EU Space Council, solidifying their commitment to the long-term sustainability of human activities in Earth orbit. The Zero Debris Charter is a world-leading effort to become debris neutral in space by 2030 that was unveiled at the ESA Space Summit in Seville meeting in November 2023.
- It is the first time that countries have subscribed at national level, boosting Europe as a leader in clean space while demonstrating widespread acceptance of the charter. Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom have all pledged to adhere to the charter. More than 100 organisations have already promised to sign the community-led endeavour in the coming months.

DRDO chairman Samir V. Kamat gets one year extension

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet granted an extension of one year to Dr. Samir V. Kamat, Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development, and Chairman, Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) up to May 31, 2025 or until further orders, whichever is earlier. This comes a day after Army chief General Manoj Pande was granted a one-month extension in service up to June 30, 2024. Dr. Kamat was appointed to the post in August 2022 and took over from Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy who was then appointed the Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister.

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.

China unveils rifle-firing robot dog in joint military exercise with Cambodia

- China showcased a robot dog equipped with an automatic rifle mounted on its back, during ongoing joint military exercise with Cambodia. "Intelligent equipment such as robot dog and drones are in spotlight at the ongoing China-Cambodia "Golden Dragon 2024" joint military exercise."

- **Ongoing China-Cambodia “Golden Dragon 2024” joint military exercise involves the participation of 1,315 Cambodian military personnel and 760 Chinese soldiers.** The Golden Dragon exercises have been held on a regular basis since 2016, around the same time that Cambodia canceled similar exercises with the United States known as Angkor Sentinel. Earlier, in November 2023, in a joint exercise held in China, involving the Chinese, Cambodian, Lao, Malaysian, Thai and Vietnamese militaries, rifle-armed robotic canines were shown.

India successfully test-fires Rudra air-to-surface missile from SU-30MKI off Odisha coast

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) **successfully flight tested the RudraM-II air-to-surface missile from a Su-30 MKI jet off Odisha coast.** The Defence Ministry said the flight-testing of the RudraM-II missile met all the trial objectives.
- **RudraM-II is an indigenously-developed solid-propelled air-launched missile system meant for air-to-surface role to neutralise several types of enemy assets.** A number of state-of-the-art indigenous technologies developed by various DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) laboratories have been incorporated in the missile system.

\$115.9 bn in climate finance raised: OECD

- **Developed countries provided and mobilised \$115.9 billion in climate finance for developing countries in 2022, exceeding the annual 100 billion goal for the first time and reaching a level that had not been expected before 2025, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said.**

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an intergovernmental organisation with 38 Member countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. It is a forum whose member countries describe themselves as committed to democracy and the market economy, providing a platform to compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practices, and coordinate domestic and international policies of its members. The OECD's headquarters are at the Chateau de la Muette in Paris, France.

India's IIT Madras Startup Agnikul Cosmos Launches World's 1st Rocket with Fully 3D-Printed Engine

- **IIT Madras' startup, Agnikul Cosmos, has launched the world's first rocket with a single-piece three-dimensional (3D) printed engine.** The rocket Agnibaan SOrTeD (SubOrbital Technological Demonstrator) is also India's first semi-cryogenic engine-powered rocket launch that was completely designed and manufactured indigenously.
- It was also launched from India's first privately developed launchpad called 'Dhanush' established by Agnikul at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The test flight aims to demonstrate in-house and homegrown technologies, gather crucial flight data, and ensure the optimal functioning of systems for Agnikul's orbital launch vehicle, the 'Agnibaan'.
- **Agnibaan is a two-stage rocket with a capacity to carry up to 300 kg to a height of 700 km.** The rocket engines are powered by liquid oxygen or kerosene. It can access both low- and high-inclination orbits and is completely mobile, designed for accessing more than 10 launch ports, as per the company.

Inventions/Discoveries/Health

World's deepest blue hole discovered, with hidden tunnels and caves

- **Scientists may have stumbled upon the deepest blue hole on Earth- a mysterious underwater cavern with depths that seem to have no end.** The immense size of the Taam Ja' Blue Hole, located in Mexico's Chetumal Bay. New measurements taken during a December diving expedition revealed the hole plunges a staggering 1,380 feet (420 meters) below the surface, which is nearly as deep as the iconic Trump Tower in Chicago. This incredible depth suggests the blue hole could be a haven for undiscovered marine life, waiting to be explored.
- **The newly discovered blue hole is a staggering 1,380 feet deep, it outshines the previous record holder, the Sansha Yongle Blue Hole (also known as the Dragon Hole) in the South China Sea, by a whopping 480 feet.** These underwater chasms are a geological marvel. Formed by glacial runoff over millennia, blue holes (or "Karst formations" in scientific speak) are essentially vertical caves submerged in the ocean. They can be incredibly vast, stretching hundreds of feet down and across, creating mesmerizing sapphire sinkholes.

Scientists find evidence of hidden water ice on Moon: 'About 5-8 times larger'

- **In a new study, scientists bring hope for finding more water ice in the polar craters of the Moon.** Additionally, the study reveals that there's twice as much water ice in the northern polar region compared to the southern polar region. **The study, conducted by scientists from the Space Applications Centre (SAC)/ISRO, along with researchers from IIT Kanpur, University of Southern California, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and IIT (ISM) Dhanbad, indicates that there could be 5 to 8 times more subsurface ice in the first couple of meters compared to what's on the surface, in both the northern and southern poles.**
- The research team used seven instruments, including radar, laser, optical, neutron spectrometer, ultraviolet spectrometer, and thermal radiometer, **aboard National Aeronautics and Space Administration or NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter to investigate the origin and distribution of water ice on the Moon.**

New Covid variant FLiRT spreads in US

- **FLiRT, a group of new Covid-19 variants belonging to Omicron's JN.1 lineage is spreading fast in US, raising concern about a new wave of infections in summer.** With new mutations, the variants KP.2 and KP 1.1 are considered to more infectious than previous Omicron variants, but experts say the symptoms remain more or less the same.
- **KP.2 has reported to have taken over JN.1 variant in US although cases of hospitalization there remains low, as per media reports.** KP.1.1, another FLiRT variant is also detected in the US, but seems to be less in circulation than KP.2. The nickname 'FLiRT' is based on the technical names for their mutations.

Coronaviruses are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. Symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, headache, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms may begin one to fourteen days after exposure to the virus. At least a third of people who are infected do not develop noticeable symptoms.

India's first robotics park

- **The country's first Artificial Intelligence & Robotics Technology Park (ARTPARK) was launched in Bengaluru, Karnataka.** It is promoted by a not-for-profit foundation set up by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru, with a seed capital of Rs. 230 crore from the State and Central governments. ARTPARK (AI and Robotics Technology Park) along with AI Foundry is going to launch a \$100 million venture fund to support AI and robotics innovations in India. The fund will be backed by the government, private companies, and VCs.
- **ARTPARK, India's pioneering AI and robotics hub established in 2020 within the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) campus, Bengaluru, aims to foster inclusivity and equitable access to technology.** With a core focus on innovation, skilling, and industry collaboration, ARTPARK nurtures startups, supports research, and

tackles societal challenges. Backed by substantial funding, it's a nexus for developing cutting-edge solutions and driving India's technological advancement.

Percolation wells, a logical solution to Bengaluru's water riddle

- **United Way of Bengaluru (UWBe), a unit of the global United Way network, a privately-funded non-profit organisation founded 132 years ago, is pitching in to find a logical solution to Bengaluru's water woes. UWBe has embarked on an ambitious project to build 10,000 percolation wells across the City by 2026.**
- **Percolation wells are designed to capture rainwater so that the ground water table is restored, conserved and recharged as the created percolation and filtration environment triggers natural aquifers. Percolation wells are 12 feet deep and 4 feet wide earthen dams padded with concrete rings inside and filled with gravel so that rainwater gets trapped into it and percolates down to natural aquifers.**

IIT-Madras startup Mindgrove launches first India-made microcontroller chip

- **India is finally set to have a made-in-India microcontroller chip powering electronic devices. Mindgrove Technologies, incubated by IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation and IIT Madras Incubation Cell, and supported by Peak XV Partners, has launched Secure IoT, India's debut high-performance SoC (system on chip).**
- **A system-on-chip (SoC) combines many electronic parts into one chip, like a mini-computer. It goes into the printed circuit board (PCB) and is used in various devices, making them smaller and more efficient. With Secure IoT, Indian Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) can integrate an Indian SoC into their products and help reduce the cost of their feature-rich devices, without compromising on high-end features.**

Google unveils AI for predicting behavior of human molecules

- **Artificial intelligence is giving machines the power to generate videos, write computer code and even carry on a conversation. It is also accelerating efforts to understand the human body and fight disease. Google DeepMind, the tech giant's central artificial intelligence lab, and Isomorphic Labs, a sister company, unveiled a more powerful version of AlphaFold, an artificial intelligence technology that helps scientists understand the behavior of the microscopic mechanisms that drive the cells in the human body. An early version of AlphaFold, released in 2020, solved a puzzle that had bedeviled scientists for more than 50 years. It was called "the protein folding problem."**
- **Proteins are the microscopic molecules that drive the behaviour of all living things. These molecules begin as strings of chemical compounds before twisting and folding into three-dimensional shapes that define how they interact with other microscopic mechanisms in the body.**
- **Biologists spent years or even decades trying to pinpoint the shape of individual proteins. Then AlphaFold came along. When a scientist fed this technology a string of amino acids that make up a protein, it could predict the three-dimensional shape within minutes.**
- **When DeepMind publicly released AlphaFold a year later, biologists began using it to accelerate drug discovery. Researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, used the technology as they worked to understand the coronavirus and prepare for similar pandemics. Others used it as they struggled to find remedies for malaria and Parkinson's disease.**

Alphabet Inc. is an American multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mountain View, California. It was created through a restructuring of Google on October 2, 2015, and became the parent company of Google and several former Google subsidiaries. Larry Page and Sergey Brin announced their resignation from their executive posts in December 2019, with the CEO role is filled by Sundar Pichai, also the CEO of Google. Page and Brin remain co-founders, employees, board members, and controlling shareholders of Alphabet Inc.

IIT-Madras incubated start-up develops India's first secure IoT microprocessor

- **The Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-Madras) celebrated the successful design, manufacturing and boot-up of India's first commercial high-performance RISC-V based System on Chip (SoC) named 'Secure IoT' developed by Mindgrove, an IIT-Madras incubated start-up.**

- V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT-Madras, said it is an **important milestone and achievement for the institute in developing the first Atmanirbhar secure IoT microprocessor** and also for the budding start-up Mindgrove, an IIT-Madras and IITM Pravartak incubated company funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) scheme.

IIT Guwahati develops high-performance materials for supercapacitors

- **Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology-Guwahati (IIT-G) have developed novel materials and methodology that significantly enhances the performance metrics of supercapacitors.** Led by Uday Narayan Maiti from the department of physics, IIT-G, the findings of the research have been published in the prestigious journal, Small, published by Wiley-VCH.

Chennai Doctors Successfully Perform India's First Robotic Cytoreductive Surgery

- **Surgical oncologists at Chennai's Apollo Cancer Centre (ACC) have successfully performed India's first Robotic Cytoreductive Surgery (CRS) with Hyperthermic Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC) for a peritoneal surface cancer.** This minimally invasive, robotic-assisted approach marks a paradigm shift in treating Pseudomyxoma Peritonei (PMP), an aggressive appendix cancer, offering patients a new standard of care, enabling faster recovery and improved quality of life.
- A female patient, was diagnosed with bilateral ovarian masses and had extensive surgical intervention, including the removal of the uterus, ovaries, appendix, and part of the omentum, Subsequent histopathological examination revealed a **high-grade mucinous tumour of the appendix with pseudomyxoma peritonei (PMP), necessitating additional surgery.** The patient was found to have residual mucinous implants (gelatinous deposits that remain in the abdomen post-surgery for appendicular mucinous tumors) in the pelvis and around the cecum (first part of the colon).

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 group of inherited red blood cell (RBC) disorders. RBCs contain hemoglobin, a protein that carries oxygen and healthy RBCs are round. **In SCD, the hemoglobin is abnormal, which causes the RBCs to become hard and sticky and look like a C-shaped farm tool called a "sickle.** The National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission launched in 2023 aims to eliminate sickle cell anemia from India by 2047. In 2018, the Government of India launched the Anaemia Mukta Bharat (AMB) strategy with the target to reduce anaemia in the vulnerable age groups such as women, children and adolescents. AMB is based on a life cycle approach, providing preventive and curative mechanisms through a 6X6X6 strategy including six target beneficiaries, six interventions and six institutional mechanisms for all stakeholders to implement the strategy. Anaemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or their oxygen-carrying capacity is insufficient to meet physiologic needs, which vary by age, sex, altitude, smoking, and pregnancy status.

New "fiery" exoplanet discovered, found to display volcanic activity like Jupiter's Io

- **Researchers have discovered a new "fiery, glowing red" exoplanet displaying intense volcanic activity similar to Jupiter's moon Io.** In a known star system about 66 light years away from Sun, the astrophysicists discovered signals for a new rocky planet about a third larger than Earth.
- **The signals were captured by NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite,** which searches for exoplanets or planets outside our solar system, orbiting the brightest stars in the sky. The newly discovered rocky exoplanet, named TOI-6713.01, has a lot in common with Jupiter's rocky innermost moon, Io, and is known to be the most volcanically active body in our solar system.

Exoplanets are planets that orbit other stars and are beyond our solar system. The first confirmation of detection of exoplanets occurred in 1992. According to NASA, to date, more than 5,000 exoplanets have been discovered. Scientists believe that there are more planets than stars as each star have at least one planet orbiting it. Exoplanets come in a host of different sizes. They can be gas giants bigger than Jupiter or as small and rocky as Earth. They are also known to have different kinds of temperatures — boiling hot to freezing cold.

AIIMS New Delhi Signed MoU with University Of Bolton Institute Of Medicine

- **AIIMS New Delhi has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University of Bolton Institute of Medicine to collaborate in the field of medical research, innovation and education.** The medical institute said in a release that the MoU was signed through a virtual event by executives from both institutions. It added that the partnership will encompass various initiatives such as staff and student exchange, educational conferences and collaborative degree programmes.

West Nile fever spreads in Kerala

- **West Nile Fever is a viral infection transmitted primarily by mosquitoes, caused by the West Nile virus (WNV).** The virus is commonly found in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America, and West Asia. Most people infected with the West Nile virus don't experience any symptoms. **About 20% of people who become infected with WNV will develop West Nile fever.**
- However, for some, particularly the elderly or those with weakened immune systems, **symptoms can range from mild flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, and fatigue to more severe complications like meningitis or encephalitis, which can lead to neurological damage or death.** Transmission occurs when mosquitoes become infected after feeding on infected birds, and then bite humans.
- **While there is no specific treatment for West Nile Fever, supportive care can help alleviate symptoms.** Prevention focuses on avoiding mosquito bites by using insect repellent, wearing protective clothing, and eliminating mosquito breeding sites such as standing water.

West Nile Fever is caused by the West Nile virus (WNV), a single-stranded RNA virus that is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito (Mosquitoes of the genus Culex are generally considered the principal vectors of WNV) and Birds serve as reservoir hosts. The virus is a member of the Flaviviridae family and the flavivirus genus. **The virus is commonly found in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America, and West Asia. It was first isolated in a woman in the West Nile district of Uganda in 1937. It was identified in birds in the Nile Delta region in 1953, according to the World Health Organization.** Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds, subsequently transmitting the virus to humans and animals through bites. The virus may also be transmitted through contact with other infected animals, their blood, or other tissues. Rare cases of transmission through organ transplant, blood transfusions, and transplacental transmission. No human-to-human transmission of WNV through casual contact has been documented. **No vaccine is available for humans. Asymptomatic in about 80% of cases. Symptoms of West Nile fever include fever, headache, tiredness, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and skin rash.** Severe cases may lead to neurological symptoms such as neck stiffness, stupor, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis.

In a first in Indian subcontinent, dog undergoes non-invasive heart surgery at Delhi vet hospital

- **A dog with a complex heart condition successfully underwent a minimally invasive heart surgery at a hospital with veterinarians claiming it to be the first such procedure to be carried out by private practitioners in the Indian subcontinent.** Seven-year-old beagle, Juliet, was suffering from Mitral valve disease for the last two years, Dr. Bhanu Dev Sharma, an interventional cardiologist for small animals at Max PetZ Hospital in East of Kailash.

The world's first 100% biodegradable pen launches in India

- **Over seven years ago, New Delhi-based Saurabh H Mehta set out on a mission to craft a pen sans plastic and has now launched what he claims is the world's first 100% biodegradable pen.** With a background in sustainability and innovation, and after working in the energy access sector across South and South-East Asia, Saurabh returned to the capital in 2017 to step into his family business of plastic ballpoint pens.

Blue Origin: Gopichand Thotakura becomes first Indian space tourist

- History was made on May 19 when Indian-origin entrepreneur and pilot Gopichand Thotakura soared into space aboard Blue Origin's NS-25 mission, becoming the first Indian tourist to venture beyond our planet. This momentous event, part of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' ambitious space travel program, marks a significant milestone for India and space tourism. Blue Origin's tourism rocket carried passengers to the edge of space for the first time in nearly two years, following a hiatus caused by an unsuccessful uncrewed test flight. The New Shepard rocket and capsule launched during a window opening from Blue Origin's facilities in West Texas. The company's website live-streamed the mission, called NS-25.

Blue Origin Enterprises, L.P., commonly referred to as Blue Origin is an American aerospace manufacturer, defense 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. 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. The organization was awarded the Robert J. Collier Trophy in 2016 for demonstrating rocket booster reusability with their New Shepard Rocket Program.

America's first Black astronaut candidate finally goes to space 60 years later on Bezos rocket

- America's first Black astronaut candidate finally rocketed into space 60 years later, flying with Jeff Bezos' rocket company. Ed Dwight was an Air Force pilot when President John F. Kennedy championed him as a candidate for NASA's early astronaut corps. But he wasn't picked for the 1963 class. Dwight, now 90, got to experience a few minutes of weightlessness with five other passengers aboard the Blue Origin capsule as it skimmed space. All of the astronauts were well shortly after the capsule parachuted down after a flight of roughly 10 minutes.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

The 4,600-year-old woman from Rakhigarhi

- Roughly 150 km from Delhi, the national capital, down the Delhi-Sirsa highway, a meandering road leads to the twin villages of Rakhi Shahpur and Rakhi Khas in Haryana's Hissar district. The narrow, dusty road, typical of small-town India, belies the importance of the place to which it leads — the archaeological site of Rakhigarhi.
- A plaque here reads that it is the largest site of the Harappan culture. Ninety-nine years after it was discovered, the findings have raised questions about history and identity. Mound 7 of the excavation site that extends across 3.5 sq km or 350 hectares, has been identified as a burial plot from which 56 skeletons were recovered. **Of these, a woman's, roughly 4,600 years old, has created a buzz among those who work in history, anthropology, genomics, and linguistics.** The DNA analysis of the skeleton says “the individual we sequenced fits as a mixture of people related to ancient Iranians (the largest component) and Southeast Asian hunter-gatherers”, as per Cell. It also says that there was no Steppe Pastoral gene (from people in Central Asia) in the Rakhigarhi woman.

Rakhigarhi or Rakhi Garhi is a village and an archaeological site in the Hisar District of the northern Indian state of Haryana, situated about 150 km northwest of Delhi. It is located in the Ghaggar River plain, some 27 km from the seasonal Ghaggar river, and belonged to the Indus Valley civilisation, being part of the pre-Harappan (7000-3300 BCE), early Harappan (3300-2600 BCE), and the mature phase (2600-1900 BCE) of the Indus Valley Civilisation. **It was among the largest settlements of the ancient civilisation, and most scholars believe it to have been between 80 hectares and 100+ hectares in area.** Other related excavation sites in the area are Mitathal and the smaller site Lohari Ragho, which are still awaiting excavation.

Climate lawsuits build as a Latin American court hears largest case ever

- **Latin America's human rights court holds a final hearing in Brazil in a case that's part of a global wave of climate litigation, as several international courts prepare first-time opinions on what countries must do to combat climate change.** The rulings could also set off a wave of new litigation brought by citizens, businesses and governments. However, the enforcement of such decisions is largely untested. **A Swiss parliamentary committee rejected a ruling for example by a top European court that said Switzerland had violated the human rights of its citizens by not doing enough to prevent climate change.**
- **The international tribunal set up under the U.N. Law of the Seas decided that carbon emissions amount to marine pollution and that countries must go beyond the Paris Agreement to protect oceans.** Next year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is expected to have its say and could attempt to draw the earlier court decisions into one global ruling applicable to all U.N. members.
- **“The reason for (the wave of litigation) is people's deep frustration that their elected representatives are not taking rapid and fair climate action,”** said Lucy Maxwell, co-director of the nonprofit Climate Litigation Network. **“The climate litigation landscape is really broad and diverse and massively growing.”**

Kenyan delegation shares draft MoU on wildlife conservation with tiger authority

- **A six-member Kenyan government delegation that visited India to appraise India's work on Project Cheetah presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) outlining collaborations in the field of wildlife conservation, capacity building and knowledge sharing.**
- **Among the collaborative steps mentioned in the MoU, one was on seeking India's help in obtaining equipment for forest rangers in Kenya, to improve their field patrolling and wildlife conservation.** Other issues pertained to improving ties between the two countries on broad wildlife conservation issues. India has been exploring the option of sourcing cheetahs from Kenya for phase-II of Project Cheetah as it is believed that they would adapt better to India's tropical climate since a part of Kenya is located in the northern hemisphere.

India likely to send tigers to Cambodia later this year

- **India is likely to send four tigers to Cambodia by November-December to help reintroduce the big cats into its forests. India signed a pact with Phnom Penh for the world's first transnational tiger reintroduction in November 2022. They discussed the proposal to send four tigers to Cambodia by November-December. India likely to send tigers to Cambodia later this year.**

Half of World's Pastures Degraded by Overuse, Climate Change, UN Report Says

- **Half the world's natural pasture land has been degraded by overexploitation and the impact of climate change, putting food supplies and livelihoods in peril, the United Nations body in charge of fighting desertification said. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) warned that a sixth of the world's food supplies were at risk from the deterioration of the world's rangelands – which include savannas, wetlands and deserts as well as grassland.**
- **Population growth, urbanisation and rising food demand have encouraged herders to rear more animals than the land can support, and have also driven the conversion of natural pastures into intensive cropland, leading to declines in soil fertility and worsening droughts.**
- **Barron Joseph Orr, UNCCD's chief scientist, said that while the situation was bleak, there was a growing recognition that land restoration is part of the solution to climate change – with rangelands accounting for a third of the world's carbon reservoir capacity.**
- **“Emissions are the big issue for sure, but where do we want to put the carbon – where does it naturally belong? In our soils and in our vegetation, and if you keep undermining that, you undermine your solution.”. Rangelands constitute about 54% of the world's total land and support two billion farmers, herders and ranchers, the UNCCD report said. The previous estimate of degradation was 25%, but UNCCD said it severely undercounted the damage done, with its new figure based on surveys from experts in more than 40 countries.**

India highlights Forest Conservation and Sustainable Forest Management initiatives at the 19th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

- **India participated in the 19th 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.**

International Big Cat Alliance is an initiative launched by Prime Minister of India in April 2023 in Mysuru commemorating the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger. The objective of the IBCA is to ensure cooperation for the conservation of seven big cats: lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, jaguar, and puma. Five of these cats, apart from jaguar and puma, are found in India. It is open to 97 'range' countries, which contain the natural habitat of these big cats, as well as other interested nations, international organizations, etc. It aims for mutual cooperation among countries for mutual benefit in furthering the conservation agenda.

Water level drops to 23% in India's main reservoirs: Central Water Commission report

- The water level of the country's 150 main reservoirs has dropped to 23 per cent and is also 77 per cent less than last year's levels at this time, according to Central Water Commission (CWC) data. The present storage is merely 77 per cent of last year's levels and 94 per cent of the normal storage, CWC data stated.

Centre notifies eco zone of Rajasthan wildlife sanctuary

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has issued a draft notification declaring extent and boundaries of Shergarh Wildlife Sanctuary eco-sensitive zone in Rajasthan. Eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) is a buffer area around the core protected forest areas to minimise human-wildlife conflict, promote in-situ conservation of wildlife and reduce impact on fragile ecosystems.
- The Shergarh Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) was notified as a wildlife sanctuary in 1983, but since then declaration of eco-sensitive zone was not finalised. In the past eight years, several efforts made to demarcate ESZ areas. In its draft notification, the ESZ encompassed an area of 348.60 sq km with an extent of 1.0 km (minimum) to 17.0 km (maximum) around the boundary of the core area of the wildlife sanctuary, which is 98.6 sq km. The sanctuary is home to some endangered wild animals, such as leopard, Indian wolf, blackbuck, chinkara, large Bengal monitor lizard, pythons, peafowl and vulture.

India's fossil fuel capacity grows 2.44% in FY24; non fossil-fuel rises 11%

- India's fossil fuel-based power generation capacity increased 2.44% to 243.22 GW in FY24 from 237.27 GW in March 2023. There was a 10.79% rise in non-fossil fuel based capacity (renewable energy sources) addition at 190.57 gigawatt (GW) in 2023-24 over 172.01 GW in 2022-23, the government data showed.

Over 50 pc of world's mangroves at risk of collapse, climate change leading factor: IUCN

- More than half of the world's mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapse, with nearly one in five facing severe risk, according to the findings of the first global mangrove assessment. Climate change threatens one-third (33 per cent) of the mangrove ecosystems, according to the study done using the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Ecosystems – a global standard for measuring the health of ecosystems. Deforestation, development, pollution and dam construction pose a serious threat to mangroves, but the risk to these ecosystems is increasing due to sea-level rise and the increased frequency of severe storms due to climate change.

Launch of the World Wildlife Crime Report 2024

- The World Wildlife Crime Report 2024 was launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, Austria. This is the third report in a series following the 2020 and 2016 publications. The report provides an updated focus on trends in the illegal trade in wildlife species listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- It presents a systematic analysis of wildlife crime harms and impacts, probes the factors driving wildlife trafficking trends, and takes stock of current knowledge about the effectiveness of the different types of interventions being pursued to resolve wildlife crime. The data in the report is largely derived from the available national annual illegal trade reports, which CITES Parties are required to submit each year. This data is included in the CITES Illegal Trade Database and hosted by UNODC on behalf of the CITES Secretariat.
- The dissemination platform for the database allows illegal trade data to become an accessible and valuable resource for CITES Parties, who use the data to guide their decision-making and support the development of targeted and evidence-based responses to combat wildlife crime. CITES plays a crucial role in combating wildlife crime as the primary legal framework for regulating international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants listed in the CITES Appendices.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

India legend Yuvraj Singh named ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 ambassador

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced India legend Yuvraj Singh as an ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 ambassador, which will be played in the West Indies and USA from June 1 to 29.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is the world governing body of cricket. It was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 by representatives from Australia, England and South Africa. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965, and took up its current name in 1987. The ICC has its headquarters in Dubai, UAE. The ICC has 105 member nations currently: 12 Full Members that play Test matches, and 94 Associate Members. Shashank Manohar resigned as Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) on 30 June 2020, after more than four years in the role. New Zealand administrator Greg Barclay was elected Chairman on 24 November 2020. Geoffrey John Allardice is an Australian former cricketer and current administrator, who serves as the CEO of the International Cricket Council.

Velavan Senthilkumar Wins Batch Open PSA Challenger Title in Paris

- India's Velavan Senthilkumar won his eighth Professional Squash Association (PSA) Tour title by winning the Batch Open, a PSA Challenger event.

Grandmaster Title to Indian Chess Prodigy Vaishali Ramesh Babu

- Indian Chess Prodigy, Vaishali Ramesh Babu, has officially been awarded the title of Grandmaster by FIDE, the International Chess Federation. This remarkable achievement makes Vaishali the third Indian female Grandmaster, joining Koneru Humpy and Harika Dronavalli. Vaishali's promotion to Grandmaster title carries a unique distinction, as she and her brother, Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa, became the world's first Grandmaster brother-sister duo.

Tejaswin Shankar Wins Men's High Jump Event At USATF Festival

- India's Tejaswin Shankar clinched victory in the men's High Jump event at the USATF Festival in Tucson, Arizona, USA. The National record holder Tejaswin cleared 2.23 metres in his first attempt to secure the top spot at the World Athletics Continental Tour – Silver event. With this jump, he equaled his season-best effort. Earnie Sears of USA finished second, while Roberto Vilches of Mexico was third. Another Indian athlete, Sarvesh Kushare cleared 2.13m to finish fifth.

Lando Norris wins first-ever F1 race at Miami Grand Prix

- McLaren's Lando Norris emerged victorious over Max Verstappen of Red Bull Racing in a thrilling showdown at the Miami Grand Prix (GP). This monumental win, Norris's first, sparked jubilant celebrations not just at the podium, but across the globe.

Yuzvendra Chahal become the first Indian bowler to take 350 wickets in T20 cricket history

- Yuzvendra Chahal achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first Indian bowler to take 350 wickets in T20 cricket history. This outstanding achievement showcases his exceptional skill and consistency in

the shortest format of the game. Rajasthan Royals spinner Chahal got to the landmark during the IPL match against Delhi Capitals with the wicket of Rishabh Pant.

Aman Sehrawat Becomes First Indian Male Wrestler to Qualify For 2024 Paris Olympics

- Aman Sehrawat has become the first Indian male wrestler to secure a quota place for the 2024 Paris Olympics. Asian champion Sehrawat secured a Paris quota in the men's 57 kg freestyle category at the World Wrestling Olympic Qualifiers in Istanbul, Turkiye. Sehrawat beat Chongsong Han of Korea 12-2 in the semi-final for India's sixth quota in wrestling for the 2024 Olympics. All of the previous five quotas were obtained by the Indian women wrestlers. The Istanbul meet is the final opportunity for wrestlers to obtain a quota for the upcoming Summer Games.

Para Powerlifting World Cup: Sakina Khatun Secures 2 Bronze Medals in Thailand

- India's Sakina Khatun clinched two bronze medals at the Para Powerlifting World Cup 2024 in Pattaya, Thailand. She secured the medals in the Best Lift and Total Lift categories, with a formidable lift of 93 Kgs in the women's up to 55 kg event. Despite her remarkable performance, she just fell shy of securing a spot for the Paralympic Games, this year.
- Earlier in the Men's up to 65 Kg category, India's Ashok Malik secured the gold medal with a personal best lift of 197 kg, while in the Men's up to 49 kg category, Parmjeet Singh claimed the silver with a lift of 162 kg. In the Women's up to 67 kg event, another Indian, Kasthuri Rajamani earned the bronze with a lift of 105 kg.

Neeraj Chopra Claims Gold in Federation Cup

- Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra won the gold medal in men's javelin throw event of the Federation Cup in his spear shimmering through the balmy sky after an unusually slow start in his first competitive outing on Indian soil in three years. DP Manu, who settled for silver, had finished his final round throw.

IPL 2024: 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 25th innings in the IPL, surpassing the joint-Indian record held by the legendary Tendulkar and Gaikwad who scaled the feat in 31 innings apiece. While Tendulkar reached the mark in April 2010, CSK skipper Gaikwad completed 1000 runs in the 2022 season.

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' 14th world champion – and the first female – on a night when home fans turned out in force to fill Cardiff's Utilita Arena.

Manika Batra becomes first Indian woman to break into top-25 of world table tennis singles rankings

- India's tables tennis icon Manika Batra reached a new pinnacle in her career, climbing to World No. 24 in the latest ITTF Rankings unveiled. This remarkable ascent saw her soar 15 spots, leaping from her previous

position at No. 39. Not only did she secure her status as India's top-ranked player once again, surpassing Sreeja Akula, but at 25 years old, Manika also etched her name in history as the first Indian woman to break into the top 25 singles rankings.

Superbet Poland Rapid & Blitz: Magnus Carlsen captures title

- **Magnus Carlsen emerged as the winner of the 2024 Superbet Poland Rapid & Blitz.** The World #1 became the leader of the Grand Chess Tour 2024 season and took home \$40,000 first prize.

Indian Football Legend Sunil Chhetri Announces His Retirement

- **Indian football legend Sunil Chhetri has announced his retirement after a distinguished career with the national team.** Chhetri revealed that the upcoming match against Kuwait on June 6, this year at the Salt Lake stadium in Kolkata will be his final appearance in the national colours.
- **Chhetri, the current captain of the Indian national team, made his debut on 12th June, 2005 against Pakistan.** He leaves behind an extra ordinary legacy as India's all time top scorer, with 94 goals in 150 international matches. He is also the **third-highest active international goal-scorer, behind only Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal and Lionel Messi of Argentina.**

World's highest competition pool has been opened in Bhutan

- **World Aquatics announced the opening of the first-ever competitive swimming pool at a record altitude of 2,400 meters above sea level in Bhutan.** The pool is part of the Pools for All Program to promote aquatic sports in the region.

Nishad Kumar, Preethi Pal Win Medals At World Para Athletics Championships

- **The Indian team picked up its first medals in the World Para Athletics Championships with high jumper Nishad Kumar and 200 metres runner Preethi Pal winning a silver and bronze in Kobe, Japan.** Kumar, a Tokyo Paralympics silver medallist, cleared 1.99 metres to finish second in the men's T47 high jump final and pick up India's first medal on the third day of competitions. American Roderick Townsend won the gold with a jump of 2.05 metres.

Thailand Open badminton: Satwik-Chirag win title, beat China's Chen-Liu

- **India's star men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued its dream run as it secured the Thailand Open Super 500 title by outwitting Chen Bo Yang and Liu Yi of China.** The World number three Indian duo, which had claimed its first major title in Thailand in 2019, prevailed over Liu and Chen, ranked 29th, in 46 minutes to receive a major boost ahead of the Paris Olympics.

Zverev Wins Sixth Masters Title At Italian Open

- **Alexander Zverev warmed up for the French Open by winning his sixth Masters title when he beat first-time finalist Nicolas Jarry in the Italian Open final.** It was a second title in Rome for the German third seed having won his first in 2017 when he was a 20-year-old and his first trophy since he broke his ankle in the French Open semi-finals in 2022.

Chandru G knocks out Jaskaran to win WBC India national title

- **Tamil Nadu's rising star Chandru G clinched the WBC India Cruiserweight Championship title with a spectacular fourth round knockout victory over Punjab boxer Jaskaran Singh.**

Virat Kohli wins Orange Cap in IPL 2024, becomes first Indian to secure honour twice

- **Star batter Virat Kohli has concluded the 2024 Indian Premier League season with the Orange Cap, awarded to the player with the most runs in the season.** This achievement makes him the only Indian to have won this honour twice. Despite his team, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, being eliminated in the playoffs after losing to Rajasthan Royals, Kohli scored an impressive 741 runs in 15 matches.

Sindhu signs off with runner-up finish at Malaysia Masters

- **Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu's wait for a much-needed title extended further as she faltered in the finishing line, going down in three games to world no. 7 Wang Zhi Yi of China in the summit clash.** Fifth

seed Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, last won the Singapore Open and Commonwealth Games in 2022 and finished runner-up at the Madrid Spain Masters in 2023.

Dipa Karmakar scripts history, becomes first Indian gymnast to win gold in Asian Senior C'ships

- **Top Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar became the first from the country to win a gold medal in the Asian Senior Championships as she clinched the yellow metal in the women's vault event.** The 30-year-old Dipa secured an average of 13.566 in the vault final in Uzbekistan's capital city.
- **North Koreans Kim Son Hyang (13.466) and Jo Kyong Byol (12.966) grabbed the silver and bronze medals respectively. Dipa, who had finished fourth in the vault final at the 2016 Rio Olympics, had won a bronze medal in the same event in the 2015 edition.**

Sunil Narine becomes first player to win 'Most Valuable Player' award in IPL thrice

- **Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) all-rounder Sunil Narine has become the first player to win the 'Most Valuable Player' award in the Indian Premier League (IPL) thrice after beating the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the final of the 2024 season.**
- **Narine won his first MVP award in the IPL 2012 after picking up 24 wickets, it was also his debut season.** His second MVP came in the 2018 season of the tournament when he scored 357 runs and picked 17 wickets as well. In the 17th season of the IPL, Narine displayed a stunning performance for the Kolkata-based franchise. He scored 488 runs and bagged 17 wickets.

India's Simran Sharma Wins Gold Medal at World Para Athletics Championship in Kobe, Japan

- **India's Simran Sharma has won a Gold medal in the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan. Simran clinched the gold in the women's 200m T12 event, achieving a personal best time of 24.95 seconds on the competition's final day.**
- **India concluded their World Para Athletics Championships journey with remarkable achievements, securing a total of 17 medals, including six golds, propelling them to the sixth position in the standings.** Delhi's sprinter Simran Sharma elevated India's medal tally by claiming the country's sixth gold. Her remarkable performance saw her improve upon her previous personal best of 25.16 seconds, securing the gold medal.

Charles Leclerc Makes History with Monaco Grand Prix Triumph

- **Charles Leclerc, the Ferrari driver, has achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the first Monegasque driver to win the Monaco Grand Prix since Louis Chiron in 1931, ending a drought of 92 years.**
- **Leclerc controlled McLaren's Oscar Piastri, team-mate Carlos Sainz and McLaren's Lando Norris all race without any of them making a pit stop to take Ferrari's second win of 2024.**

Alexander Zverev serves his way to Italian Open title

- **Alexander Zverev put on a serving clinic in a win over Nicolas Jarry to claim his second Italian Open title and earn his biggest trophy since tearing his ankle apart two years ago.** Zverev opened the match with three straight aces on the red clay court and won 20 of his 21 service points in the first set.
- **The German didn't drop a point on his first serve until late in the second set when the 6-foot-7 (2.01 meter) Jarry ran down a well-placed drop shot and replied with a cross-court winner.**

R Praggnanandhaa Clinches First Classical Chess Win Over World No.1 Magnus Carlsen

- **Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa claimed his maiden classical game victory over world number one Magnus Carlsen to take the sole lead in the Norway Chess tournament.**

Sport Events

Badminton: BWF Junior World Championships returns to India

- Guwahati has been announced as the host city of the BWF World Junior Championships in 2025. The Junior Worlds usually features a team event first, followed by individual events across the five categories that both will be held at the Badminton Association of India's (BAI) National Centre of Excellence in the northeastern region of India. The World Juniors were last held in India in Pune in 2008. India's only gold medal in the junior major came that year when Saina Nehwal defeated Sayaka Sato to become world champion.

Mumbai City FC lifts ISL Cup, beats Mohun Bagan Super Giants by 3-1

- Bipin Singh came to haunt Mohun Bagan once again as a gritty Mumbai City FC rode on the midfielder's strike to secure a stunning 3-1 comeback win and grab the ISL title for a second time in front of a partisan Salt Lake Stadium crowd.

China wins Uber Cup for 16th time, beats Indonesia 3-0 in final

- China underlined its supremacy by beating Indonesia to win the Uber Cup for the 16th time. China, which lost the final to South Korea in Bangkok two years ago, routed Indonesia 3-0, playing its first Uber Cup final since 2008. Both nations will meet in the Thomas Cup final. It is for the first time since 2012 that the same countries will be playing in both the men's and women's finals.

NADA India organizes #PlayTrue Campaign to create awareness about clean sports

- The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), India concluded #PlayTrue Campaign, with turnout of more than 12,133 participants. The campaign commemorated WADA's Play True Day and aimed at fostering awareness about the importance of clean sport and anti-doping practices in India, received overwhelming participation and support from athletes, coaches, and sports enthusiasts nationwide.
- The #PlayTrue Campaign highlights NADA India's commitment to equipping athletes, coaches, and the entire sporting community with a thorough understanding of anti-doping regulations, empowering them to champion clean play in India. The campaign served as a crucial event for athletes and stakeholders to collaborate, exchange insights, and strategies towards establishing a resilient anti-doping framework in anticipation of the Paris 2024 Olympics. India's unwavering commitment to advocating for fair play, integrity, and upholding the principles of clean sports on the global stage was prominently showcased throughout the event.

India's first-ever 'hybrid pitch' unveiled at HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala

- India's first-ever 'hybrid pitch' was unveiled at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium in a grand ceremony. The event was attended by IPL Chairman Arun Dhimal and cricket dignitaries including Paul Taylor, a former England cricketer and SIS's international cricket director. The hybrid pitch, which combines natural turf with synthetic fibres, promises enhanced durability and consistent playability, reducing the strain on ground staff and maintaining quality playing conditions.

Reliance set to host first-ever India House at 2024 Paris Olympics

- Reliance Foundation, principal partner of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and non-profit arm of Reliance Industries, is set to host the first-ever India House at this year's Paris Olympics, which takes place between 26 July and 11 August. The 40,000 square-foot facility will not only showcase Indian culture to the world at the biggest sporting event of them all, but will also serve as a 'home away from home' of sorts for the Indian athletes who will be action in the Games along with their families.

ICC Announce Women's T20 World Cup

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the fixtures for the ninth ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 taking place from 3 to 20 October in Bangladesh. Ten teams will play 23 matches, over 18 action-packed days, at two venues in Bangladesh, the Shere Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka and the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in Sylhet.

Kolkata Knight Riders thrash Sunrisers Hyderabad to lift third IPL title

- Kolkata Knight Riders lifted their third Indian Premier League (IPL) title with an eight-wicket thrashing of Sunrisers Hyderabad in a lop-sided final in Chennai.

Japan won 30th Sultan Azlan Shah Trophy

- Japan managed to end a 37-year wait to lift the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup (PSAS) for the first time after defeating Pakistan 4-1 on penalties in the final action of the 30th edition of the tournament in Ipoh.

Japan hosted the 2024 World Triathlon Championship Series race

- Japan hosted the 2024 World Triathlon Championship Series race, drawing the sport's top competitors. This event also marked the last opportunity for U.S. triathletes to auto-secure quotas for the Olympic Games Paris 2024. Morgan Pearson's historic win marked the first time a U.S. man has claimed victory in a World Triathlon Series event since 2009 while Taylor Knibb's silver-medal performance secured another podium finish for the American team. The rest of Team USA trailed closely behind, the stakes higher than ever.

FIFA Confirm First Ever Women's Club World Cup Will Kick off in 2026

- FIFA has officially announced the scheduled dates for the inaugural Women's Club World Cup tournament, slated to take place in January and February of 2026. The tournament's first edition is expected to feature 16 teams. Additionally, the FIFA Council formally appointed Mattias Grafstrom as the FIFA Secretary General, having been nominated on an interim basis in October last year.

Brazil chosen to host soccer's 2027 Women's World Cup following a vote by FIFA's 211 members

- Brazil will host the 2027 Women's World Cup after a vote of FIFA's 211 members chose the South American bid over a joint bid from Belgium, Netherlands and Germany. The FIFA Congress selected from a reduced field of two candidates to host the 2027 tournament after a joint bid by the United States and Mexico was pulled late last month, and South Africa withdrew its candidacy in November.

Manchester City wins historic fourth straight Premier League title

- Manchester City created English football history, overcoming West Ham 3-1 to win their fourth straight Premier League title and break Arsenal's hearts as Jurgen Klopp made an emotional Liverpool exit.

First Asian Relay Championships

- India finishes the first Asian Relay Championships with three medals. The Indian athletic contingent finished the first Asian Relay Championships with three medals -one gold and two silver. The first Asian Relay Championships was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

Indian Milk Producer Amul Appointed As 'Official Sponsor' Of Sri Lanka Men's Team for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024

- Sri Lanka Cricket has announced that Indian milk producer Amul has been appointed as the 'Official Sponsor' of the Sri Lanka Men's Team for the duration of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024. CEO of Sri Lanka Cricket Ashley De Silva said that Amul's partnership with Sri Lanka Cricket is an excellent move, as associating with an international sports brand is going to help the firm gain market growth and further enhance its brand visibility among the international audience. Sri Lanka will kick off the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 campaign facing South Africa in New York. The ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 will be held in the West Indies and the USA from June 1 to 29.

BFI Agrees to become a member of World Boxing

- The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has agreed to become a member of World Boxing, the International Federation established to ensure boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic Movement. The membership application has been approved by the BFI's General Assembly, and will be ratified by World Boxing's Executive Board.

- The BFI president, Ajay Singh, recently met with World Boxing’s President and Secretary General to discuss ways in which India can support the International Federation in growing its member base in Asia where FBI is one of the largest National Federation.

Jay Shah Lays Foundation Stone for BCCI’s Training Facilities in Northeast

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Secretary, Jay Shah, laid the foundation stone for the board’s upcoming state-of-the-art training facilities in the northeastern region of India. The indoor cricket academies will serve players from Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim and will be based in Shillong, Itanagar, Kohima, Aizawl, Imphal and Gangtok. These new facilities, which have been specifically designed to groom budding cricketers from the region, will feature world-class indoor nets, indoor swimming pools, and fitness centers, providing year-round training options for the athletes from these six states.

Barcelona finally beats Lyon and retains Women’s Champions League crown

- Barcelona ended its losing streak against the game’s most successful club beating Lyon 2-0 to clinch its third Women’s Champions League title in four years. World player of the year Aitana Bonmatí scored in the second half and former world player Alexia Putellas added a second deep in stoppage time for defending champion Barcelona in front of a record crowd of 50,827 for a final.



AWARDS



Chhattisgarh activist Alok Shukla to receive Goldman Prize for Hasdeo Arand movement

- The 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize, also known as the Green Nobel will be awarded to Alok Shukla, convener of Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan (CBA), for his work to protect Hasdeo Arand, one of the largest contiguous stretches of very dense forest in central India spanning 170,000 hectares, with 23 coal blocks. “Alok Shukla led a successful community campaign that saved 445,000 acres of biodiversity-rich forests from 21 planned coal mines in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh.
- The Goldman Environmental Prize was established in 1989 by late San Francisco civic leaders and philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman. Prize winners are selected by an international jury from confidential nominations submitted by a worldwide network of environmental organizations and individuals. The Goldman Environmental Foundation announced seven recipients of the 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize.

Biden to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 19 politicians, activists, athletes and more

- President Joe Biden has bestowed the highest civilian honour in the US on activists, astronauts and Olympians at the White House. President Joe Biden wanted to recognise Clarence B. Jones with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honour.
- Among the 19 recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom was Jim Thorpe, the first Native American to win a gold medal. He died in 1953. Mr Biden also recognised the most decorated female swimmer in history, Katie Ledecky. Many of the recipients were Mr Biden’s fellow Democrats. They include two who ran for president: former Vice-President Al Gore and former Secretary of State John Kerry, who just stepped down as US special climate envoy. Another, Nancy Pelosi, was the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House Representatives.
- Other ground-breakers honoured included Ellen Ochoa, the first Hispanic woman in space, and Michelle Yeoh, the first Asian to win a Best Actress Oscar. Teresa Romero, the first Latina to become president of a national union, the United Farm Workers, was recognised.

Bhavi Mehta wins 2024 Oxford Book Cover Prize for designing Pradeep Sebastian’s ‘The Book Beautiful’

- Oxford Bookstores announced Bhavi Mehta as the winner of the 2024 Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize. She won the prize for designing The Book Beautiful written by Pradeep Sebastian and published by Hachette India. She received a trophy and a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh.
- The jury comprised author and Member of Parliament, Shashi Tharoor; author and columnist Shobhaa De; author and academic Kunal Basu; Director of Apeejay Surrendra Group Priti Paul; Director of Institut français in India and Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Action, French Embassy in India, Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens; and Director Information Services South Asia Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Anja Riedeberger. The jury was chaired by museum curator, author and art historian Alka Pande.

UNESCO awards press prize to Palestinian journalists in Gaza

- At least 97 members of the press have been killed since the war broke out in October, 92 of who were Palestinians. UNESCO awarded its world press freedom prize to all Palestinian journalists covering the war in Gaza, where Israel has been battling Hamas for more than six months.

Assam's Purnima Devi Barman Receives 'Green Oscar' Whitley Gold Award 2024

- A wildlife biologist from Assam has been honoured with a leading UK wildlife charity award for her conservation efforts of the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat. Dr Purnima Devi Barman won the GBP 1,00,000 Whitley Gold Award from the Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN), which supports grassroots conservation leaders from around the world, at a Royal Geographical Society awards ceremony in London. Ms Barman received the trophy from charity patron Princess Anne – the Princess Royal, the sister of King Charles III, in recognition of her conservation of the stork known locally as “Hargila” in Assamese.

World Food Prize goes to 2 who helped protect vital seeds in an Arctic Circle vault

- Two men who were instrumental in the “craziest idea anyone ever had” of creating a global seed vault designed to safeguard the world’s agricultural diversity will be honored as the 2024 World Food Prize laureates in Washington. Cary Fowler, the US special envoy for Global Food Security, and Geoffrey Hawtin, an agricultural scientist from the United Kingdom and executive board member at the Global Crop Diversity Trust, will be awarded the annual prize this fall in Des Moines, Iowa, where the food prize foundation is based. They will split a \$500,000 award.
- The winners of the prize were named at the State Department, where Secretary of State Antony Blinken lauded the men for their “critical role in preserving crop diversity” at seed banks around the world and at a global seed vault, which now protects over 6,000 varieties of crops and culturally important plants. Fowler and Hawtin were leaders in effort starting about 2004 to build a back-up vault of the world’s crop seeds at a spot where it could be safe from political upheaval and environmental changes.
- A location was chosen on a Norwegian island in the Arctic Circle where temperatures could ensure seeds could be kept safe in a facility built into the side of a mountain. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault opened in 2008 and now holds 1.25 million seed samples from nearly every country in the world.

The World Food Prize is an international award recognizing the achievements of individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world. Conceived by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Norman Borlaug and established in 1986 through the support of General Foods, the prize is envisioned and promoted as the Nobel or the highest honors in the field of food and agriculture. The first chairperson of the World Food Prize laureate selection committee was Norman Borlaug. Borlaug appointed the first laureate M. S. Swaminathan as his successor in 2009. Since 1987, the prize has been awarded annually to recognize contributions in any field involved in the world food supply, such as animal science, aquaculture, soil science, water conservation, nutrition, health, plant science, seed science, plant pathology, crop protection, food technology, food safety, policy, research, infrastructure, emergency relief, and poverty alleviation and hunger.

Chiranjeevi, Vyjayanthimala bestowed Padma Vibhushan award

- Veteran actors Vyjayanthimala Bala and Konidela Chiranjeevi were bestowed the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian honour awarded for exceptional and distinguished service. President Droupadi Murmu presented the awards to Vyjayanthimala and Chiranjeevi at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Pulitzer Prize 2024

- The Pulitzer Prizes are set to be announced traditionally the most anticipated day of the year for those hoping to earn print journalism’s most prestigious honor. Along with honoring winners and finalists in 15 journalism categories, the Pulitzer Board also recognizes distinguished work in areas including books, music and theater. The Pulitzers also announced that five of the 45 finalists this year used artificial intelligence in research and reporting of their submissions. It was the first time the board required applicants for the award to disclose use of AI. The prizes were established in the will of newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer and first awarded in 1917.

Shabana Azmi to be honored with City of London Award

- Renowned veteran actor Shabana Azmi is set to receive the prestigious Freedom of the City of London Award. The accolade will be presented at the UK Asian Film Festival, dubbed the longest-standing South Asian film festival outside Asia. The City of London Corporation will bestow this honor in recognition of Azmi’s

significant contributions to Indian cinema and her relentless advocacy for women's rights spanning over five decades. Azmi is known for contributing to both art and commercial films.

Pawan Sindhi Honored with Global Pride of Sindhi Award 2024

- **Pawan Sindhi was bestowed with the prestigious Global Pride of Sindhi Award 2024** at an event attended by esteemed saints, Mahatmas, and sadhus. The occasion celebrated Mr. Sindhi's remarkable contributions to society and his dedication to serving humanity.
- **The award night witnessed a gathering of like-minded individuals who came together to promote the values of humanity, peace, and prosperity.** In his acceptance speech, Mr. Sindhi expressed his gratitude for being recognized and highlighted the importance of such events in spreading noble messages within society.

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan Honoured with Honorary Doctorate by McGill University

- **Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, a globally renowned leader in public health and infectious diseases, has been named among the 10 exceptional individuals to receive an honorary degree from Canada's prestigious McGill University** during the Spring 2024 Convocation ceremonies.
- Swaminathan has had an illustrious career spanning over 40 years in clinical care and research. **She joined the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2017 as the Deputy Director-General (Programmes) and was appointed as the organization's first Chief Scientist in March 2019**, a role she served through the COVID-19 pandemic until late 2022.

Chandrakant Satija Honoured with Global Excellence Award 2024

- In a prestigious ceremony held at the Sahara Star Hotel in Mumbai on May 12th, **Chandrakant Satija, the renowned educationist and Founder/CEO of Chandra Admission Consultants, was honored with the Global Excellence Award 2024.** The award, presented by the famous Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra, recognized Satija as the Most Trusted Admissions Consultant in the Vidarbha Region.
- With over 21 years of experience in the education sector, **Chandrakant Satija has dedicated himself to providing quality education, career counseling, and admission guidance to students.** His unwavering commitment has earned him the trust of parents not only in Vidarbha but also in adjoining cities of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

Infosys Prize now only for researchers aged up to 40 years

- **The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) announced certain changes in the Infosys Prize.** The upper age limit for prize winners is being revised from 50 years to 40 years. **The fundamental objective of the Infosys Prize continues to be to recognise the best research that benefits humanity and creates role models for young scholars and aspiring scientists in India.** The fundamental objective of the Infosys Prize continues to be to recognise the best research that benefits humanity and creates role models for young scholars and aspiring scientists in India.

Ruskin Bond Awarded Prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship

- In a momentous occasion, **the eminent author Ruskin Bond has been bestowed with the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, the highest honour conferred by India's premier literary organization, the Sahitya Akademi.** Due to Bond's ill health, the prestigious award was presented to him at his Mussoorie home by Sahitya Akademi President Madhav Kaushik and Secretary K. Sreenivasarao, in the presence of his son. Bond's literary prowess has been recognized with numerous accolades, including the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2019. He was also honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar in 2012 for his contributions to children's literature.

Cannes: Anime giant Studio Ghibli honoured with a Palme d'Or

- **Studio Ghibli, the Japanese anime factory of surreal ecological wonders that has for 39 years spirited away moviegoers with tales of Totoros, magical jellyfish and floating castles, was celebrated by the Cannes Film Festival with an honorary Palme d'Or.** At Cannes, where standing ovations can stretch on end, the fervor that greeted Ghibli's emissaries - Goro Miyazaki (son of Hayao) and Kenichi Yoda - was nevertheless among the most thunderous receptions at the festival. Thierry Fremaux, Cannes' artistic director, walked across the stage of the Grand Theatre Lumiere filming the long ovation, he said, for a video to send to Miyazaki.

International Booker Prize 2024: German win for Kairos

- German writer Jenny Erpenbeck and translator Michael Hofmann have won the International Booker Prize. Their novel Kairos follows the destructive love affair between a 19-year-old student and a married man in his 50s who meet on a bus in East Berlin around 1986.
- Their relationship comes to embody the German Democratic Republic’s “crushed idealism” and eventual “dissolution of a whole political system”. They will split the £50,000 prize. Judges chose Kairos from a shortlist of six books and praised the “luminous prose” and rich quality of the translation.

FTII Student Bags ‘La Cinef’ Award At 77th Cannes Film Festival

- In a historic moment for Indian cinema, “SUNFLOWERS WERE THE FIRST ONES TO KNOW,” a short film directed by Chidanand Naik, a student of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), has won the prestigious Cannes’ La Cinef Award for Best Short at the 77th Cannes Film Festival in France.
- The film, a production of FTII’s one-year Television program, is a collaborative effort by Naik (Direction), Suraj Thakur (Cinematography), Manoj V (Editing), and Abhishek Kadam (Sound). The students worked on the film as part of their final year coordinated exercise and passed out from FTII in 2023.
- “SUNFLOWERS WERE THE FIRST ONES TO KNOW” tells the story of an elderly woman who steals the village’s rooster, throwing the community into disarray. To bring the rooster back, a prophecy is invoked, sending the old lady’s family into exile.
- This achievement marks a significant milestone for Indian cinema, as FTII’s student films have been receiving international acclaim, particularly at Cannes, in recent years. In addition to Naik’s film, several FTII alumni, including Payal Kapadia, Maisam Ali, Santosh Sivan, and others, received recognition at this year’s Cannes Film Festival.

Indian-Origin US Scientist Shrinivas R Kulkarni Wins Prestigious Shaw Prize In Astronomy

- Shrinivas R Kulkarni, an Indian-origin professor of astronomy from the US will be bestowed the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy for his ground-breaking discoveries about millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects.
- Apart from Mr Kulkarni, who is the George Ellery Hale Professor of Astronomy and Planetary Science, Division of Physics, Mathematics and Astronomy at the California Institute of Technology, the other Shaw Prize awardees are Swee Lay Thein and Stuart Orkin, both from the US, who received the Shaw Prize in Life Science and Medicine is awarded in equal shares, and Peter Sarnak, another US scientist who received the Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences. “The Shaw Prize in Astronomy is awarded to Shrinivas R Kulkarni, for his ground-breaking discoveries about millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects.

Anasuya first Indian to win Best Actress at Cannes

- Kolkata-born Anasuya Sengupta has made history by winning the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival. The honour has come in the Un Certain Regard section for Sengupta’s role in Bulgarian director Konstantin Bojanov’s ‘The Shameless’.
- The honour for Anasuya Sengupta has come in Un Certain Regard section for her role in Bulgarian director Konstantin Bojanov’s ‘The Shameless’, in which she plays a sex worker who flees a Delhi brothel after murdering a cop. Un Certain Regard section runs parallel to the main competition, and seeks to bring to the fore new trends, paths and countries making cinema. Now settled in Goa, Sengupta is a successful art director and has worked in feature films like Sanjeev Sharma’s ‘Saat Uchakkey’ and Bengal director Srijit Mukherji’s ‘Forget Me Not’. The latter was a part of a Netflix anthology Ray.

NIMHANS bags the Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion for 2024 by the World Health Organization

- National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru, an Institute of National Importance under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has been awarded with the Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion for 2024 by the World Health Organization (WHO).

- **The Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion, established by WHO in 2019, recognizes individuals, institutions and/or governmental or non-governmental organizations that have demonstrated remarkable contributions to health promotion.** Union Health Minister, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya congratulated NIMHANS on being conferred with this award.

Indian peacekeeper to be honoured posthumously with prestigious U.N. medal for sacrifice in line of duty

- **An Indian peacekeeper who lost his life serving under the UN flag is among over 60 military, police and civilian peacekeepers to be honoured posthumously with a prestigious medal for their service and supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.**
- **Naik Dhananjay Kumar Singh, who served with the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), will be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjold medal during a solemn ceremony on May 30 when the UN commemorates the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers.** India is the second largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping.
- **It currently deploys more than 6,000 military and police personnel to the UN operations in Abyei, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, the Middle East, Somalia, South Sudan, and Western Sahara.** Nearly 180 Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty, the highest number by far from any troop-contributing country.

Major Radhika Sen to receive prestigious 2023 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award

- **Major Radhika Sen, an Indian woman peacekeeper, who served with the UN mission in Congo, will be honoured with a prestigious military gender advocate award, with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres describing her as a “true leader and role model.”**
- **Major Sen, who served with the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), will receive the prestigious ‘2023 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award’ from Mr. Guterres during a ceremony at the world body’s headquarters marking the International Day of UN Peacekeepers.**
- **Major Sen is the second Indian peacekeeper to receive this prestigious award after Major Suman Gawani, who had served with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and was honoured with the 2019 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award.**

PERSONS IN NEWS

India's Gita Sabharwal appointed to top UN post in Indonesia

- UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Gita Sabharwal of India as the United Nations resident coordinator in Indonesia. Sabharwal, brings close to 30 years of experience in development supporting climate transition, sustainable peace, governance and social policy, while leveraging digital technology and data to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Sabharwal has been appointed as the UN resident coordinator in Indonesia with the host government's approval, it said. Previously, Sabharwal served as the UN resident coordinator in Thailand and as peacebuilding and development adviser for the United Nations in Sri Lanka. Before joining the UN, Sabharwal was The Asia Foundation's deputy country representative for the Maldives and Sri Lanka and held positions as the poverty and policy adviser for the United Kingdom's Department for International Development in India and Vietnam.

Sadiq Khan wins record third term as Mayor of London

- Sadiq Khan registered a decisive victory to secure a record third term as Mayor of London, as the local election results from England and Wales continued to reflect a strong swing in favour of the Opposition Labour Party. The Pakistani-origin Labour candidate secured a massive 10,88,225 votes with a 43.8 per cent vote share, well ahead of the Conservative candidate Susan Hall's 8,12,397 votes – an impressive majority of over 2,75,000.

Pakistan's foreign minister Ishaq Dar appointed as deputy prime minister

- Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was appointed as the country's deputy prime minister. Dar, a chartered accountant and a veteran politician, belongs to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party. The PML-N and the PPP agreed on a power-sharing deal to form the coalition government even though the former prime minister Imran Khan-backed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-backed independents won majority seats at the 266-member National Assembly.

'Just a Mercenary?', former RBI head Duvvuri Subbarao's memoir, looks back on a long civil service career

- "The autobiography will have details of personal life, stories, and gossip. A memoir would be stoic and about professional life," he said. When I got Duvvuri Subbarao's book about his career, I slotted it as a "memoir". But it is neither. He calls it notes from his life and career. The genre "notes" differs from the other two in interesting ways. Both autobiography and memoir would have multiple characters, anecdotes and a context that lends to a narrative with the protagonist at the centre. And we would have interesting encounters.
- However, "notes" are unique. It is excessively centered around the protagonist, and others flash like the images seen from the window of a moving train. They add light and colour, but the focus is on the journey of the passenger. This should not be construed as a narcissistic trip. Far from it. It is a dispassionate assessment of the journey, from a distance, having an outside view of him.

The Winner's Mindset

- One of the finest all-rounders, Shane Watson, author of this book, tells us in vivid detail, how by mentally becoming stronger his career was transformed. The lessons that Watson learnt and his own experiences as one of the world's best cricketers make The Winner's Mindset different from the usual self-help books.
- Watson's brutal honesty – while talking about the demons he faced, his insecurities, his failures, and the wrong things he did as an athlete from a psychological point of view – helps, too. The book, not surprisingly, would appeal more to cricketers or people who follow this most fascinating of games closely. But Watson is addressing a wider audience. He gives tips about getting the best out of oneself by applying various mental techniques.

Apurva Chandra Appointed As Chairperson Of Committee A Of 77th WHA Event

- Apurva Chandra, Union health secretary, Government of India, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Committee A at the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA), announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- **The Committee A of WHA, the event scheduled to be held from May 27 to June 1 held at Geneva, is chaired by India.** Committee A is tasked with facilitating crucial discussions on a range of programmatic topics. These include universal health coverage, public health emergency preparedness and response, antimicrobial resistance, climate change, and sustainable financing for the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **India's leadership in Committee A underscores its growing influence in global health governance.** The World Health Assembly features sessions from three main committees: Plenary, Committee A, and Committee B. India's chairmanship of Committee A will continue until June 1.

Kareena Kapoor Khan appointed UNICEF India National Ambassador

- **UNICEF India announced Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan as its new National Ambassador.** The "Crew" star, who has been associated with UNICEF India since 2014, will support the not-for-profit organisation in furthering every child's right to early childhood development, health, education and gender equality.
- **Kareena had earlier served as a Celebrity Advocate for UNICEF India. Besides Kareena, UNICEF India has also appointed its first-ever Youth Advocates,** who are peer leaders and champions on issues like climate action, mental health, innovations and Girls in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).
- **The four advocates are Gauranshi Sharma from Madhya Pradesh on right to play and disability inclusion; Kartik Verma from Uttar Pradesh on climate action and child rights advocacy; singer Nahid Afrin from Assam on mental health and early childhood development; and Vinisha Umashankar from Tamil Nadu is a budding innovator and STEM pioneer.**

Sabyasachi Mukherjee becomes 1st Indian designer to walk Met Gala carpet

- **Renowned fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee made history by becoming the first Indian designer to grace the prestigious Met Gala carpet.** He attended the fashion extravaganza donning a long coat and jewels from Sabyasachi High Jewellery. The designer shared pictures of himself on social media, detailing his outfit, "An embroidered cotton duster coat from the Sabyasachi Resort 2024 collection layered with tourmalines, pearls, emeralds, and diamonds from Sabyasachi High Jewellery."

Author Ruskin Bond receives Sahitya Akademi Fellowship

- **Eminent English author Ruskin Bond was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship at his Mussoorie home.** Bond was named a recipient of Akademi's highest honour in September 2021. However, due to his ill health, he could not be given the honour in person.
- Bond, who has written over 300 short stories, essays and novels and more than 30 books for children besides several other works, is the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992, Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar in 2012, Padma Shri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2019 among other prestigious awards.

Meghalaya gets first woman police chief

- **Meghalaya is all set to get its first woman head of police with Idashisha Nongrang,** a 1992-batch IPS officer, being appointed its next DGP.

Ronaldo tops highest-paid athlete list - Forbes

- **Cristiano Ronaldo has topped the Forbes list of highest-paid athletes for the fourth time in his career, with Jon Rahm moving up to second.** Ronaldo also headed the list last year following his move to Saudi Arabian football club Al Nassr. Business magazine Forbes says, external the 39-year-old Portugal forward earned \$260m (£205m) - up from \$136m (£108.7m) - over the past 12 months. **Ronaldo's great rival Lionel Messi has fallen a place to third behind Rahm.**
- **The Spanish golfer has jumped up to second on the back of his switch to the Saudi-funded LIV Golf tour and is reported to have earned \$218m (£172m).** Footballers Neymar and Karim Benzema have also entered the top 10 after moves to the Saudi Pro League. Giannis Antetokounmpo (fifth) joins fellow basketball stars LeBron James (fourth) and Stephen Curry (ninth) on the list, while American football quarterback Lamar Jackson is in 10th spot.

ITC's Sanjiv Puri assumes charge as CII President

- **Sanjiv Puri, Chairman and Managing Director of ITC, has assumed office as the president of the Confederation of Indian Industry for 2024-25.** He takes over from R Dinesh, Chairman of TVS Supply Chain Solutions. Rajiv Memani takes over as President-Designate of CII for 2024-25. He is Chairman of the India region of EY (Ernst & Young), a leading global professional services organisation.

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.

Kapil Sibal elected president of Supreme Court Bar Association

- **Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Kapil Sibal won the election to the post of the president of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).** He has held the position thrice in the last three decades. Sibal, who completed 50 years at the Bar last year, has been the president of SCBA thrice in the past — 1995-1996; 1997-1998 and 2001-2002 — before becoming a Union minister in the UPA government.

BARC appoints Dr Bikramjit Chaudhuri as chief of measurement science

- **Dr. Bikramjit Chaudhuri assumes the role of Chief of Measurement Science and Analytics at BARC India, succeeding Dr. Derrick Grey, who served for six years.** With extensive experience in data science and analytics from Datamatics Group, KPMG, Nielsen, and ZS Associates, Bikram aims to enhance BARC's audience measurement system.

India's first crowdfunded film 'Manthan' starring Naseeruddin Shah and Smita Patil gets a standing ovation at Cannes

- **The 77th Cannes Film Festival is currently underway at the French Riviera. This year, Shyam Benegal's masterpiece 'Manthan' was screened at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. India's first crowdfunded film joined their ranks, receiving a standing ovation at the festival.** Shyam Benegal's National Award-winning 'Manthan' (1976) starring Naseeruddin Shah, the late Smita Patil, and the late Girish Karnad received a standing ovation at the film festival.

Tinkesh Kaushik Becomes World's 1st Triple Amputee to Reach Everest Base Camp

- **Tinkesh Kaushik, a man from Goa, has become the world's first triple amputee to reach the Mount Everest Base Camp located 17,598 feet above sea level,** a private disability rights body has claimed. Mr Kaushik, who completed the challenging Everest Base Camp journey said despite his physical disabilities, he managed to achieve the feat due to his mental strength. The man lost his both limbs below knees and a hand following an electrocution accident in Haryana when he was 9 years old. The amputee, who uses prosthetic limbs, moved to Goa a few years back and has been working as a fitness coach.

UK's Royal Naval College welcomes first Indian Navy officer to train cadets at premier institution

- **In a significant milestone for India-UK defence cooperation Lieutenant Commander N Dinesh Anand became the first Indian Navy officer to conduct training at the Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) in Dartmouth, south-west England.** "As the first Indian Instructor at the premier UK training establishment, the officer would play a pivotal role in fostering friendship and interoperability between the Indian Navy and Royal Navy."
- **BRNC Dartmouth, located in the county of Devon, serves as the initial training establishment for officers in the Royal Navy and is renowned as the premier officer training academy in the UK.** According to the MoD, it plays a vital role in defence by providing Initial Officer Training and ongoing leadership development. The college also supports defence diplomacy efforts by training international officers.

In a first, Andhra woman becomes US court judge

- Vijayawada native Jaya Badiga has been appointed judge of Sacramento county superior court in California, the first woman from Andhra to become a judge in the US. Jaya is the daughter of industrialist and former Machilipatnam MP Badiga Ramakrishna. Earlier, she was commissioner in the Sacramento court. She graduated from Osmania University before relocating to US.

Kaamya Karthikeyan scales Mt. Everest to become youngest Indian to achieve the feat

- Sixteen-year-old Kaamya Karthikeyan became India's youngest and world's second youngest to scale Mount Everest from the Nepal side. Ms. Kaamya Karthikeyan is a student of Navy Children School, Mumbai. She and her father, a naval officer, Commander S. Karthikeyan summited Mt. Everest.
- "After this feat, she has become the second youngest girl in the world and the youngest Indian Mountaineer to summit the world's highest peak from the Nepal side,". She is a twelfth class student and has now completed six milestones in her mission to summit the highest peak of all seven continents and aims to summit Mt. Vinson Massif in Antarctica this December to become the youngest girl to accomplish the seven summits challenge.

Gautam Adani overtakes Mukesh Ambani to become richest Asian

- Gautam Adani has retaken the tag of richest person in Asia after a surge in stock price of the listed companies in his apples-to-airport conglomerate helped him overtake Reliance Industries head Mukesh Ambani. Mr. Adani with a net worth of \$111 billion is now ranked as the 11th richest in the world, ahead of Mr. Ambani whose \$109 billion wealth placed him at No. 12, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Chandrashekhhar Gaurinath Karhadkar takes charge as new Director of Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research

- Chandrashekhhar Gaurinath Karhadkar, who served as the Director, Reactor Group, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai, has assumed office as the new Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam. He succeeds B. Venkatraman, who retired recently.
- Under his leadership, the decommissioning plan for a large reactor like CIRUS was prepared for the first time in the country, keeping balance of the radiation risk and the financial outlay. Mr. Karhadkar chaired several administrative, financial, technical, and regulatory committees

Ruchira Kamboj, India's first woman Permanent Representative to UN, retires

- India's first woman Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ruchira Kamboj retired after 35 years of service, during which she served as Indian envoy in Bhutan, South Africa and the UNESCO. As the Russia-Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas wars raged on, Kamboj navigated the discussions at the UN in New York over the last two years. Kamboj was the All India women's topper of the 1987 Civil Services batch and the topper of the 1987 Foreign Service batch.
- She became Permanent Representative/Ambassador of India to New York, on August 2, 2022. Fluent in three languages, Hindi, English and French, Kamboj began her diplomatic career in Paris as the Third Secretary in the Indian Embassy to France from 1989-91. Kamboj was Counsellor at India's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York from 2002-05, where she dealt with a wide range of political issues, including UN Peacekeeping, UN Security Council Reform, the Middle East crisis etc.

Government extends tenure of Army Chief Gen Pande by one month till June 30

- The Appointments Committee of Cabinet on May 26 granted one month extension in tenure to Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Gen Manoj Pande beyond his retirement date, upto June 30, 2024. He was due to retire on May 31 on turning 62 years of age. Normally, for Service Chiefs the tenure is 62 years of age or three years whichever is earlier.
- There is only such instance in the past, when in 1975 then Army Chief Gen G.G. Bewoor was given a one year extension by Indira Gandhi-led Government so that the next in line as per seniority Lt Gen Prem Bhagat retired from service. Gen Bewoor served as Chief from January 16, 1973 to May 31, 1975 and was succeeded by Gen T. N. Raina.

MISCELLANEOUS

Indian Army and Punit Balan Group unite to establish India's first Constitution Park

- **The Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group joined hands to inaugurate the nation's first Constitution Park in Pune.** The ceremony, led by Lt. Gen. Ajai Kumar Singh, emphasized the importance of citizens honoring their duties outlined in the Constitution to drive India towards development by 2047.

Indian Army, IAF to jointly deploy Predator drones in Gorakhpur, Sarsawa air bases

- **The Indian Army and the Air Force are planning to jointly deploy MQ-9B Predator drones at air bases in Sarsawa and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh,** for upgrading their surveillance capabilities all along the Line of Actual Control with China from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.

India to host delegation from Kenya, discuss cheetah sourcing

- **India is likely to host a delegation of Kenyan officials to explore the possibility of sourcing cheetahs from the east African country for the next phase of Project Cheetah.** The Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh was chosen as the second site for reintroduction of cheetahs last year.
- **The authorities will host the Kenyan delegation to primarily discuss their willingness to translocate cheetahs to India, the terms of such a translocation,** including the number of cheetahs they are willing to part with. As part of Project Cheetah, India plans to introduce eight to 14 cheetahs annually for five years, subject to availability.

Adani eyes South China Sea, plans port development in Philippines' Bataan

- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), India's largest private port operator, is eyeing the Philippines' Bataan for its port development plan.** The company plans to develop a 25-meter-deep port that can accommodate Panamax vessels. Adani Group, meanwhile, is also planning investments in ports, airports, power, and defence sectors. President Marcos advised starting regionally, with the ports initially serving local or domestic shipping needs before expanding to the international market.

Hindu population share fell 7.8% between 1950-2015 in India, Muslims up 43.15%: EAC-PM paper

- **The share of the Hindu population decreased by 7.82% between 1950 and 2015 in India,** while that of Muslims increased by 43.15%, suggesting that there is a conducive environment in the country to foster diversity, said a recent working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). The report pointed out that in keeping with the global trends of declining majority, India too has witnessed a reduction in the share of the majority religious denomination by 7.82%.
- **The paper titled 'Share of Religious Minorities: A Cross-Country Analysis (1950-2015)' further said the share of Jains in the population of India decreased from 0.45% in 1950 to 0.36% in 2015.** "... The share of the majority Hindu population decreased by 7.82% between 1950 and 2015 (from 84.68% to 78.06%). The share of Muslim population in 1950 was 9.84% and increased to 14.09% in 2015 — a 43.15% increase in their share," said the paper prepared by a team led by Shamika Ravi, member, EAC-PM.
- **It also said the share of Christian population rose from 2.24 per cent to 2.36 per cent – an increase of 5.38 per cent between 1950 and 2015 – while Sikh population rose from 1.24 per cent to 1.85 per cent – 6.58 per cent rise in their share.** The share of Parsi population witnessed a stark 85 per cent decline, reducing from 0.03 per cent in 1950 to 0.004 per cent. **The Census reports showed that Hindu population rose from 30.5 crore in 1951 to 96.63 crore in 2011 – an increase of 66.13 crore – while those of Muslims rose from 3.54 crore to 17.22 crore, an increase of 13.68 crore.**

Southern coastal areas face the seasonal phenomenon of 'Kallakkadal', threatening lives, fishing and tourism

- **Recently, hundreds of houses have been flooded in several coastal areas of Kerala due to high sea waves named Kallakkadal.** Lakshadweep and Tamil Nadu coast are other areas often affected by Kallakkadal. The word Kallakkadal means 'a sea that comes suddenly like a thief'. The word is derived by combining two Malayalam words: 'Kallan' (thief) and 'Kadal' (sea).

- **Kallakkadal refers to coastal flooding caused by swell waves during the pre-monsoon season (April-May) and sometimes during post monsoon along the southwest coast of India.** The term Kallakkadal, used by local fishermen, is a combination of two Malayalam words, including Kallan and Kadal. “Kallan means thief and Kadal means sea, meaning “ocean that arrives as a thief.
- **It is caused by waves formed by ocean swells, which originate from distant storms such as hurricanes or prolonged periods of intense gale winds (usually in the southern part of the Indian Ocean).** These storms transfer significant energy from the air into the water, resulting in the formation of extremely high waves. These waves can travel vast distances from the storm center until they reach the shoreline.
- **Kallakkadal occurs without precursors or any kind of local wind activity and as a result, it has been very difficult for the coastal population to get an advance warning.** However, early warning systems like the Swell Surge Forecast System —launched by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) in 2020 gives forewarning seven days in advance.
- **Kallakkadal came under the spotlight after the 2004 tsunami and is often mistaken for a tsunami.** However, a tsunami is a series of enormous waves created by an underwater disturbance, usually associated with earthquakes occurring below or near the ocean. **Ocean waves (like Kallakkadal) have a wavelength of only 30 or 40 meters, tsunamis have a very long wavelength often hundreds of kilometers long.**

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). It is located in Hyderabad & was established in 1999. It is a unit of the Earth System Science Organization (ESSO), New Delhi. It is **mandated to provide the best possible ocean information and advisory services to society, industry, government agencies and the scientific community** through sustained ocean observations and constant improvement through systematic and focused research.

In a first, India sets up its own pavilion at World Hydrogen Summit

- **For the first time, India has set up its own pavilion, at the World Hydrogen Summit 2024, being held in Rotterdam, Netherlands. The India Pavilion, set up by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, is one of the largest pavilions at the summit.** The three-day World Hydrogen Summit is a prestigious event in the global green hydrogen ecosystem. Around 15,000 delegates from around the world are attending the summit. The India Pavilion at the conference provides India an opportunity to showcase to the world the progress made by the country in the field of Green Hydrogen.

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 Shivaling 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.**

India will host a ‘Bharat Parv’ at the 77th Cannes Film Festival for the first time

- **At the Cannes Film Festival for the first time India will host a ‘Bharat Parv’ for dignitaries and delegates from around the world participating in the Festival.** The goal is to engage with film celebrities, filmmakers, directors, producers, buyers and sales agents from across the world and showcase the myriad creative opportunities and a rich bank of creative talent.
- **The official poster and trailer of the 55th India International Film Festival (IFFI) to be held in Goa on 20-28 November, 2024 will be unveiled at the Bharat Parv.** The Bharat Parv will also see the release of the ‘Save the Date’ for the First World Audio-Visual And Entertainment Summit (WAVES) to be hosted alongside the 55th IFFI.

- **Bharat Parv started in 2016 and has been held annually at the lawns and Gyan Path in front of Red Fort until 2020. In 2021, it was held virtually. The Ministry of Tourism has been designated as the nodal ministry for the event.** The event includes a food festival, a handicraft mela, folk and tribal dance performances, cultural troupe performances, a display of Republic Day tableaux, and the illumination of the Red Fort, among other things. Branding and promotion of Dekho Apna Desh, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, G20 and Mission LIFE would be undertaken during the event. The program is a way to celebrate India’s unity in diversity and to make India a hub of civilization, culture, spirituality and inheritance in the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal.

BARK Air, World’s First “Dog-Centric” Airline, Embarks On Its First Flight In US

- **BARK Air, a new airline that offers travel opportunities for humans and their dogs, is now off the ground. BARK Air, launched by a dog toy company BARK in partnership with a jet charter service, is a luxury airline for dogs of all sizes along with their owners. BARK Air shared details of the first flight of the airline that took off from New York to Los Angeles.**

NTIPRIT, Ghaziabad conducts workshop on “Global Standards & IPR” on World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

- **A one-day workshop on “Global Standards & IPR” highlighted the importance of “Global Standards & IPR” for any country’s development. A precursor to the significant World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) scheduled to be hosted by India from October 15-24, 2024; the workshop also provided a platform for national stakeholders to forge global partnerships and align with international best practices in telecommunications standards.**
- **The workshop was hosted by National Telecommunications Institute for Policy Research, Innovation and Training (NTIPRIT), Ghaziabad under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in collaboration with International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Area office and Innovation Centre, New Delhi, at its campus in Ghaziabad; to commemorate World Telecommunication and Information Society Day. NTIPRIT, Ghaziabad conducts workshop on “Global Standards & IPR” on World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.**

India’s ‘Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know’ wins La Cinef prize at Cannes 2024

- **Indian filmmaker Chidananda S Naik’s ‘Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know’ won the 1st prize of La Cinef for Best Short at Cannes 2024. Mansi Maheshwari’s ‘Bunnyhood’ won the third prize in the same category. While ‘Bunnyhood’ is a UK film, it is made by an Indian from Meerut. The La Cinef awards were announced. Cannes will allocate a grant of 15,000 euros for the first prize and 11,250 euros and 7,500 euros for the second and third prizes, respectively.**
- **FTII student Chidananda S Naik’s ‘Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know’ won the first prize amongst 17 other films. The selection consisted of 18 films by film students from 2,263 applicants from 555 film schools across the globe.**

Kerala High Court Enables ‘First Of Its Kind’ Mobile E-Sewa Kendra at Idukki

- **Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque, Chairman of the Committee in charge of Computerisation of High Court inaugurated e-Sewa Kendra in the Idukki district. The e-Sewa Kendra extends assistance for the e-filing of cases, to obtain information about case status and copies of judgments and orders.**

National Archives of India Undertakes First Overseas Digitization of Diaspora Records in Oman

- **In a collaborative effort, the Indian Embassy in Muscat and the National Archives of India (NAI) successfully completed a first-of-its-kind project to archive historical documents of the Indian diaspora in Oman. Titled “The Oman Collection – Archival Heritage of the Indian Community in Oman,” the project ran from May 19th to 27th, 2024. It saw enthusiastic participation from 32 prominent Indian families from Gujarat, whose presence in Oman dates back 250 years.**
- **Marking a significant step for the NAI, this was their first overseas venture in digitizing diaspora documents. Over 7,000 documents in English, Arabic, Gujarati, and Hindi were digitized under this project, with the oldest dating back to 1838 and most from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These included personal**

diaries, account books, ledgers, telegrams, trade invoices, passports, citations, letters, correspondences, and photographs, offering insights into the Indian community's lives, cultural practices, social activities, trade, commerce, and contributions to Omani society.

Seoul to open world's first hotel on bridge

- **Seoul will open the first-ever hotel built on a bridge**, connecting the northern and southern parts of the city. Named Sky Suite, the hotel is located on the northern end of the Hangang Bridge, where scenic views of the Han River can be enjoyed all day.

Nepal Celebrates 71st International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day 2024

- **Nepal Celebrates 71st International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day 2024, commemorating man's first ascent of Mt. Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa in May 29, 1953.** According to the statistics of the Tourism Department of Nepal, about 8,000 people have climbed Mt Everest so far. Among the 14 highest mountains in the world, eight of them are in Nepal, including Everest, the highest peak in the world. In year 2021, the new height of Everest was measured as 8,848.86 meters.

An Iceland volcano starts erupting again, shooting lava into the sky

- **A volcano in southwestern Iceland erupted for the fifth time since December**, spewing red lava that once again threatened the coastal town of Grindavik and led to the evacuation of the popular **Blue Lagoon geothermal spa**. The eruption began in the early afternoon following a series of earthquakes north of the town of 3,800 people that was largely evacuated in December when the volcano came to life after centuries of dormancy and put on an impressive show of nature's power.
- Although activity began to calm down by early evening, **initial estimates found the eruption was the most vigorous in the area so far, as lava shot 50 meters (165 feet) into the sky from a fissure that grew to 3.5 kilometers (2.1 miles) in length.** Barriers built to protect Grindavik deflected the flowing lava that cut off two of the three roads leading to town and was close to reaching the third.

Government Raises Retirement & Death Gratuity Limits To Rs. 25 Lakh

- **The maximum limit of retirement gratuity and death gratuity has been revised by the government from 20 lakh to 25 lakh rupees.** It said, the revised limit will come into effect from 1st January 2024.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Veterinary Day

- The 2024 World Veterinary Day is celebrated on 27th of April and has the theme ‘Veterinarians are essential health workers. Veterinarian’s competencies must be regarded as an essential and integral part of health at large.

International Jazz Day 30 April

- The 2024 edition of International Jazz Day was celebrated on 30 April in more than 190 countries. The Global Host for this year’s celebration is the city of Tangier, Morocco. This marks the first time a city on the African continent hosts International Jazz Day.

International Labour Day 2024

- International Labour Day, also known as ‘May Day’, is celebrated at the international level to promote and encourage healthy dialogue among social partners. The total number of workers in India across both organized and unorganized sectors is more than 50 crores.
- In India, the first Labour Day was celebrated on May 1, 1923, in Madras. The day also coincides with Maharashtra Day. Maharashtra Day is celebrated on May 1st every year in the state of Maharashtra to commemorate the state’s formation on May 1, 1960. It is also known as Maharashtra Diwas.
- International Labour Day was first started in the late 19th-century labour movement in the United States. In 1886, the specific date of May 1 was chosen to commemorate a nationwide strike for an eight-hour workday. This event culminated in the Haymarket Affairs in Chicago, which was a regrettable incident where a labour protest escalated into violence. This resulted in the loss of life of seven police officers and at least four civilians. On May 1, workers gathered in Haymarket Square to peacefully demonstrate for an eight-hour workday. However, the protest turned violent when a bomb was detonated and it led to casualties among both police officers and protesters.

World Press Freedom Day 3 May

- World Press Freedom Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993, following the recommendation of UNESCO’s General Conference. Since then, 3 May, the anniversary of the Declaration of Windhoek is celebrated worldwide as World Press Freedom Day. “A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis” is the theme of World Press Freedom Day 2024.

World Portuguese Language Day

- The date of 5 May was officially established in 2009 by the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) - an intergovernmental organization that has been in official partnership with UNESCO since 2000, and which brings together peoples with the Portuguese language as one of the foundations of their specific identity - to celebrate the Portuguese language and Lusophone cultures.

International Day of Mine Awareness

- International Firefighters’ Day (IFFD) is observed on 4 May every year. This day is dedicated to the firefighters who put their lives on the line every day to protect their communities and the environment. The theme for International Day for Mine Awareness 2024 is Protecting Lives, Building Peace.

World Athletics Day

- World Athletics Day is organized by the IAAF (International Amateur Athletic Federation) on May 7 every year. It was first celebrated in the year 1996.
- This year the theme for World Athletics Day is – ‘World Mile Challenge’. This year’s focus is on running, jogging, or walking a mile to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Roger Bannister’s (the first man to run a sub-four-minute mile) on May 6, 1954.

Coal Miner’s Day is celebrated on May 4 each year

- **Coal Miner’s Day is celebrated on May 4 each year.** It honours the hard work and sacrifices of coal miners around the world. The day reminds us of its vital role in providing energy for homes, industries, and communities. Coal mining is a really important job for lots of people.

World Athletics Day

- **Every year, World Athletics Day is observed on May 7.** The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) was founded in Stockholm, Sweden on July 17, 1912. Since 2019, the organisation is referred to as World Athletics.
- **The first World Athletics Day was celebrated on May 15, 1996,** with participation from 50 countries. Late Primo Nebiolo, the then-president of the International Association of Athletics Federations started the celebrations of the special day. Till date, every May 7 is observed a World Athletics Day. **The theme for World Athletics Day 2024 is “World Mile Challenge”.**

National Cartoonist Day

- **May 5th is National Cartoonist Day,** a world-wide celebration of cartoonists and their work. **The National Cartoonist Society declared the date in the 1990s to promote support for the cartooning industry,** and to recognize the impact they have had on society. **The date of May 5th was chosen to recognize the first appearance (in color) of the mischievous cartoon character “The Yellow Kid” in the New York World newspaper on May 5, 1895.** The character was created by comic strip artist Richard F. Outcault, and was featured in his cartoon titled “At the Circus in Hogan’s Alley”.

World Thalassemia Day

- **World Thalassemia Day is being observed to raise awareness among people** about the prevention and treatment of thalassemia. It is a genetic blood disorder that affects haemoglobin production in the body. **The theme of the 2024 World Thalassemia Day is “Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassaemia Treatment for All.”**

International Day of Plant Health, 12 May

- **The United Nations designated 12 May the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect biodiversity and the environment,** and boost economic development.

World Migratory Bird Day

- **In 2024, World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated on two days, 11 May and 12 October, aligning with the cyclic nature of bird migration in different hemispheres.** The theme will focus on the importance of insects for migratory birds, and highlight concerns related to decreasing populations of insects. **The theme of World Migratory Bird Day 2024 is ‘Protect Insects, Protect Birds.’** It will highlight the importance of insects in the life of migratory birds

World Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day

- **World Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day is an annual celebration of the principles of the International Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day.** World Red Cross Day is also known as Red Crescent Day. **World Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day is celebrated on 8 May every year.**

International Day of Families

- **In 1993, the General Assembly decided in a resolution that 15 May of every year should be observed as The International Day of Families.** This day provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families.
- On 25 September 2015, the 193 member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, a set of 17 goals aiming to eliminate poverty, discrimination, abuse and preventable deaths, address environmental destruction, and usher in an era of development for all people, everywhere. Families and

family-oriented policies and programmes are vital for the achievement of many of these goals. **The theme of the 2024 International Day of Families will focus on ‘Families & Climate Change: International Year of the Family + 30’.**

International Nurses Day

- **International Nurses Day is an international day observed around the world on 12 May each year, to mark the contributions that nurses make to society. The theme for International Nurses Day 2024 is Our Nurses. Our Future.** The economic power of care. International Nurses Day is observed on May 12 every year.

International Day of Light

- **The International Day of Light is celebrated on 16 May each year, the anniversary of the first successful operation of the laser in 1960 by physicist and engineer, Theodore Maiman.** This day is a call to strengthen scientific cooperation and harness its potential to foster peace and sustainable development. **This year, it falls on Thursday, May 16, 2024, under the theme of “Light in Our Lives,” to let the light guide us the way forward.**

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, 17 May

- **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2024** offers the chance to explore how digital innovation can help connect everyone and unlock sustainable prosperity for all. With 2.6 billion people still unconnected, glaring digital gaps hinder innovation across much of the world. Many countries – lacking key policies, investments, and digital skills – are struggling to keep up in fast-changing digital landscape. **WTISD 2024 reminds the world of the progress yet to be made to ensure that everyone can benefit from digital technologies.** This year’s World Telecommunications and Information Society Day 2024 **focuses on the theme, “Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development,”** underlying how digital innovation may help link everyone and create sustainable prosperity for all.

International Museum Day

- **International Museum Day is an international day held annually on or around 18 May,** coordinated by the International Council of Museums. The event highlights a specific theme which changes every year reflecting a relevant theme or issue facing museums internationally. **The theme for International Museum Day 2024 was “Museums for Education and Research.”**

World Bee Day 20 May

- **World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20. On this day Anton Jansa, the pioneer of beekeeping, was born in 1734.** The purpose of the international day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem.
- **The theme for World Bee Day 2024 is “Bee Engaged with Youth.”** The theme highlights that the youth can play in protecting bees and other pollinators.

International Tea Day 21 May

- **International Tea Day is observed annually on May 21,** according to the United Nations. The concerning resolution was adopted on December 21, 2019, and calls on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to lead the observance of the Day. While there is no specific theme for the year 2024, the focus remains on promoting sustainable production and responsible consumption of tea.

World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, 21 May

- **Held every year on 21 May, UNESCO leads the celebration of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development highlighting not only the richness of the world’s cultures, but also the essential role of intercultural dialogue for achieving peace and sustainable development.**
- **With 89% of all current conflicts in the world occurring in countries with low intercultural dialogue,** to forge effective cooperation and sustain peace, strengthening intercultural dialogue must be a priority. According to UNESCO data, the cultural and creative sector is one of the most powerful engines of development worldwide.

- It accounts for more than 48 million jobs globally –almost half of which are held by women – representing 6.2% of all existing employment and 3.1% of global GDP. It is also the sector that employs and provides opportunities for the largest number of young people under the age of 30.

National Anti-Terrorism Day 2024

- The P.V. Narasimha Rao-led Congress government, which came to power after the 1991 election, declared 21 May as an anti-terrorism day to pay tribute to Rajiv Gandhi and to promote awareness about the consequences of terrorist activities.

World Football Day 25 May

- 2024 marks the 100th anniversary of the first international football tournament in history with the representation of all regions, which took place on May 25, 1924, during the summer Olympic games held in Paris. In recognition of this milestone, on May 7, 2024, the General Assembly passed Resolution proclaiming May 25 as World Football Day. The resolution acknowledges “the global reach of football and its impact in various spheres, including commerce, peace and diplomacy, and recognizing that football creates a space for cooperation.”

Commonwealth Day

- Each year on 24th May, Commonwealth Day is commemorated. Commonwealth Day is observed on the birthday of Queen Victoria of England, who was born on 24th May, 1819, and is observed by all countries which were once a colony of the British Empire. Commonwealth Day is observed on various dates all across the globe. The theme of 2024 is “One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth”. The theme highlights the identification and development of the strengths of each country by utilising the unique network and the resources of the commonwealth for mutual benefit, fostering a connected and digital commonwealth.

World Thyroid Day

- World Thyroid Day is observed annually on May 25th to raise awareness about the thyroid gland and the various conditions that affect it. The thyroid gland, a small butterfly-shaped organ located at the base of the neck, produces two essential hormones: thyroxine and triiodothyronine. The theme for this year’s World Thyroid Day is - Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

International Day of UN Peacekeepers 29 May

- The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, May 29, is “an international day to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication, and courage and to honor the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.”
- Observed under the theme “Fit for the future, building better together,” this year’s International Day looks at the invaluable contributions military, police and civilian peacekeepers have made over the last seven decades. It encapsulates the spirit of progress and collective action towards creating a more equal, just and sustainable world. To mark the International Day at UN Headquarters, the UN Secretary-General will lay a wreath at the Peacekeepers Memorial in honour of fallen peacekeepers.

World Hunger Day 2024

- On May 28th, the world unites for World Hunger Day. This day raises awareness about the urgent issue of global hunger. It’s time to acknowledge the millions suffering from malnutrition and the need for sustainable solutions to end hunger for good.
- The theme for World Hunger Day 2024 is “Thriving Mothers, Thriving World.” This theme underscores the critical role that women play in ensuring food security for their families and communities.

International Day of Potato

- In December 2023, the General Assembly decided to designate 30 May as the International Day of Potato to raise awareness of the multiple nutritional, economic, environmental and cultural values of the potato and

its contribution as an invaluable food resource and as a generator of income for rural families and producers, with a view to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving its Sustainable Development Goals. **Observation of International Day of Potato on the theme ‘Harvesting diversity, Feeding hope’** at College of Agriculture, Iroisemba on 30th May 2024.

World No Tobacco Day

- The Member States of the World Health Organization created World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes. In 1987, the World Health Assembly passed Resolution calling for 7 April 1988 to be “a world no-smoking day.” **In 1988, calling for the celebration of World No Tobacco Day, every year on 31 May. This year’s theme, “Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference,”** underscores the urgent need to shield youth from the detrimental influences of tobacco consumption.

Global Day of Parents 1 June

- **The Global Day of Parents is observed on 1 June every year.** The United Nations General Assembly established this day to express international awareness about the importance of parenthood and to promote the healthy development of children by their parents.
- **The Global Day of Parents is an important day to reflect on the importance of parenthood and to promote the healthy development of children.** It is also a day to raise awareness about the challenges faced by parents and to highlight the need for support and resources. **The official theme for Global Day of Parents 2024 is “The Promise of Playful Parenting”.**



QUESTIONS

- Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting in _____.
(a) Beijing, China (b) Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
(c) Astana, Kazakhstan (d) Baku, Azerbaijan
- Name the Public sector Company that had been recently granted the “Navratna” status.
(a) Buildings Construction Corporation Limited (b) Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency
(c) Container Corporation of India Limited (d) Rail Vikas Nigam Limited
- Which of the following companies has launched the country's first Upgradable ATM?
(a) Hitachi Payment Services (b) Unique Payment Services
(c) One Payment Services (d) Girder Payment Services
- Recently, Fintech firm _____ has received an in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank to operate as a payment aggregator.
(a) PayPal (b) PayU (c) Paytm (d) Pay Fortune
- China launched a three-member crew to its orbiting space station as part of its ambitious program that aims to put astronauts on the moon by _____.
(a) 2027 (b) 2030 (c) 2033 (d) 2036
- Who among the following was recently appointed as the Pakistan's deputy Prime Minister?
(a) Bilawal Ali Zardari (b) Amir Muqam
(c) Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh (d) Ishaq Dar
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced India legend _____ as an ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 ambassador, which will be played in the West Indies and USA from June 1 to 29.
(a) Virendra Sehwaq (b) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
(c) Yuvraj Singh (d) Rahul Dravid
- The world's first Sikh court opens in _____.
(a) Paris (b) Amsterdam (c) London (d) Brussels
- The 2024 edition of International Jazz Day will be celebrated on _____ in more than 190 countries.
(a) 23 April (b) 26 April (c) 30 April (d) 3 May
- India and _____ will sign a trade deal, as India seeks to expand its ties in the Middle East, where rising tensions are putting major shipping routes at risk.
(a) Jordan (b) Oman (c) Belgium (d) Syria
- Who among the following Indian environmental activists has been awarded the 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize for their efforts in protecting Hasdeo Arand in central India?
(a) Deepak Munda (b) Alok Shukla (c) Aniket Pradhan (d) Sushil Kumar Dey
- Name the Scotland's first minister, who recently resigned rather than face a no-confidence vote just days after he torpedoed a coalition with the Green Party by ditching a target for fighting climate change.
(a) Humza Yousaf (b) Abdullah Lateef (c) Mohammad Naim (d) Kamran Jamil
- Where is the Molten Salt Storage (MOSS), world's first energy storage project using molten hydroxide salt facility located?
(a) Copenhagen (b) London (c) Esbjerg (d) Brussels

14. According to the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) report, what is the percentage increase in India's imports from China between 2018-19 and 2023-24?
(a) 30% (b) 44% (c) 36% (d) 21%
15. We often find Shergarh Wildlife Sanctuary in news. This Wildlife Sanctuary is located in _____.
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Haryana
16. Recently, the Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR) 2023 was released by _____.
(a) DRDO (b) Ministry of Science and Technology
(c) ISA (d) ISRO
17. What is the name of the AI digital human cabin crew unveiled by Qatar Airways?
(a) Ava 2.0 (b) Sama 2.0 (c) Luna 2.0 (d) Alexa 2.0
18. Name the Indian who recently won his eighth Professional Squash Association (PSA) Tour title by winning the Batch Open, a PSA Challenger event.
(a) Thirukumar Senthil (b) Mukesh Jhagiani
(c) Velavan Senthilkumar (d) Amit Raghav
19. Name the company which has been recently granted the Navratna status by Department of Public Enterprises (OPE).
(a) NABARD (b) HUDCO (c) FCI (d) FICCI
20. The 2024 World Veterinary Day is / was celebrated on _____.
(a) 27th April (b) 30th April (c) 3rd May (d) 5th May
21. Recently, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi assumed command of the Indian Navy as the _____ Chief of the Naval Staff.
(a) 21st (b) 24th (c) 26th (d) 29th
22. Which of the following countries has recently decided to implement the renovation of the "Kankesanthurai Port" with India agreeing to grant the entire cost of the project?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Seychelles (c) Myanmar (d) Mauritius
23. Name the country which has recently adopted a new currency "ZiG".
(a) Mexico (b) Zimbabwe (c) Zanzibar (d) Cuba
24. The _____ is making it mandatory for Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to have an institutional mechanism for deterrence of potential market abuse, including front-running.
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) CRISIL (c) Reserve Bank of India (d) SEBI
25. _____ is the largest organization for hydropower development in India which has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with M/s Ocean Sun, a Norwegian company operating as a technology provider to the floating solar industry.
(a) Tehri Dam Project (b) NTPC Limited (c) Tata Power (d) NHPC Limited
26. Recently, _____, a player in digital payments received authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator (PA) under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act of 2007.
(a) Payline ePayments India (b) Payon ePayments India
(c) Worldline ePayments India (d) Digital India ePayments
27. Recently, The Russian space agency, Roscosmos, announced the commissioning of the first satellite system in the world for the observation of the _____.
(a) Mariana Trench (b) Greenland (c) Arctic Circle (d) Antarctic Circle

28. The _____ is likely to undertake an important test under the Gaganyaan mission to check the parachute system of the crew module.
(a) DRDO (b) ISRO
(c) Ministry of Science & Technology (d) PMO
29. Which of the following has been announced as the host city of the BWF World Junior Championships in 2025?
(a) Shillong (b) Lucknow (c) Guwahati (d) New Delhi
30. International Labour Day, also known as May Day or Workers Day, is annually observed on _____ in more than 80 countries, including India, Cuba, China, and many others.
(a) April 26 (b) April 28 (c) May 1 (d) May 3
31. Which of the following Indian states has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Riyawan garlic?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Rajasthan
32. Which tribal group from the Great Nicobar Islands recently exercised their voting rights for the first time in Lok Sabha polls in the Union territory?
(a) Jarawa (b) Onge (c) Shompen (d) Sentinalese
33. Recently, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have launched the world's first artificial intelligence (AI) center for automatic processing of the Arabic language, under the name "Arabic Intelligence Center" in _____.
(a) Tabuk (b) Riyadh (c) Buraydah (d) Dammam
34. Recently, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed _____ of India as the United Nations resident coordinator in Indonesia.
(a) Gita Sabharwal (b) Anandita Patel (c) Jessica Shah (d) Meenal Jain
35. Recently, Asia's first spot bitcoin and ether ETFs made debut in _____.
(a) Beijing (b) Hong Kong (c) Manila (d) Singapore
36. Which of the following entities does the updated guidance note on operational risk management by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) now extend to?
(a) Commercial banks only
(b) Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) only
(c) Both commercial banks and housing finance companies
(d) Both commercial banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)
37. Name the system that was successfully flight-tested from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
(a) UNIVERSAL (b) UNIQUE (c) SMART (d) POWER
38. Who among the following recently became the third Indian female Grandmaster?
(a) Vaishali Ramesh Babu (b) Shikha Sampat
(c) Koneru Humpy (d) Harika Dronavalli
39. Who was awarded the 2024 Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize for designing the cover?
(a) Pradeep Sebastian (b) Bhavi Mehta (c) Shashi Tharoor (d) Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens
40. The United Nations General Assembly declared _____ to be World Press Freedom Day or just World Press Day.
(a) April 28 (b) April 30 (c) May 1 (d) May 3
41. In 2019, the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference decided to proclaim _____ of each year as "World Portuguese Language Day".
(a) 1 May (b) 3 May (c) 5 May (d) 9 May

42. According to IQAir, an organization that measures the real-time pollution of 101 cities in the world, _____ was found to be the most polluted city in the world.
(a) New Delhi (b) Kuala Lumpur (c) Beijing (d) Kathmandu
43. What directive did the Supreme Court give to the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) regarding gender representation?
(a) Reserve half of its posts for women. (b) Reserve one-third of its posts for women.
(c) Reserve one-fourth of its posts for women. (d) Do not reserve any posts specifically for women.
44. Which of the following cities is the manufacturing hub of the first Vande Bharat Metro?
(a) Bhopal (b) Varanasi (c) Kapurthala (d) Pune
45. The _____ Tourism Development Board has joined hands with Starscapes, a leading astro-tourism company, to introduce Nakshatra Sabha, a new initiative to provide a comprehensive Astro Tourism experience to people.
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Jharkhand (c) Uttarakhand (d) Uttar Pradesh
46. As artificial intelligence (AI) technology takes the industries by storm, the world has got its first AID diplomat who will represent _____.
(a) Ukraine (b) The Netherlands (c) Belgium (d) Russia
47. Recently, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), entered into an agreement with the _____ for developing an instant payment system like Unified Payment Interface (UPI) for the African nation.
(a) Bank of Uganda (BoU) (b) Bank of Zimbabwe (BoZ)
(c) Bank of Namibia (BoN) (d) Bank of Nigeria (BoN)
48. A Hindu marriage is a 'samskara' or sacrament and cannot be recognised under the _____ "unless performed with ceremonies in the proper form", the Supreme Court has ruled.
(a) Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (b) Hindu Marriage Act, 1962
(c) Hindu Marriage Act, 1968 (d) Hindu Marriage Act, 1974
49. The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, through the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), will host the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 46) and the 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP 26) in _____.
(a) Kochi, Kerala (b) Bengaluru, Karnataka
(c) Vellore, Tamil Nadu (d) Guntur, Andhra Pradesh
50. Recently, UNESCO awarded its world press freedom prize to all _____ journalists covering the war in Gaza.
(a) Ukrainian (b) American (c) Palestinian (d) British
51. What is India's rank in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index published annually by Reporters Without Borders (RSF)?
(a) 137th (b) 149th (c) 159th (d) 166th
52. Which of the following countries has recently launched its Chang'e-6 mission, aiming to become the first country to collect rock and soil samples from the far side of the Moon?
(a) South Korea (b) Japan (c) China (d) USA
53. Recently, Jeremiah Manele was selected as a new Prime Minister by lawmaker's of _____.
(a) Solomon Islands (b) Cuba (c) Tuvalu (d) Suriname
54. Name the second site chosen last year for the reintroduction of cheetahs as part of Project Cheetah?
(a) Gir National Park, Gujarat (b) Ranthambore National Park, Rajasthan
(c) Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh (d) Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand

55. Recently, Constitution Park, a collaborative effort between the Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group, saw its grand opening in _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Nagpur (c) Bhopal (d) Pune
56. Which of the following European countries is relaxing its restrictions on abortion for the first time in 50 years to make it legal for women to terminate pregnancies up to the 18th week from the previous 12th week?
(a) Denmark (b) Iceland (c) Sweden (d) Norway
57. Whose re-appointment has been recently approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as the Part Time Chairman of HDFC Bank for period of three years?
(a) Atanu Chakraborty (b) Vipul Manchanda (c) Deepak Bajaj (d) Aniket Bhargawa
58. Which of the following ships of the Brahmaputra class is currently undergoing the conversion process from steam to diesel propulsion?
(a) INS Brahmaputra (b) INS Betwa (c) INS Beas (d) INS Vikramaditya
59. When is International Firefighters' Day observed annually?
(a) 1st May (b) 4th May (c) 10th May (d) 15th May
60. "Just a Mercenary?: Notes from My Life and Career," is a memoir of former RBI Governor _____.
(a) Y V Reddy (b) Urjit R Patel (c) Raghuram Rajan (d) Duvvuri Subbarao
61. Name the Indian who recently received 'Green Oscar' Whitley Gold Award 2024.
(a) Purnima Devi Barman (b) Ashapurna Devi Raheja
(c) Anandita Basu (d) Meenakshi Jha Mukherjee
62. Which of the following cities topped the list as the most polluted city in India based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) provided?
(a) Greater Noida (b) Muzaffarpur (c) Lucknow (d) Bhopal
63. Recently, Sadiq Khan registered a decisive victory to secure a record third term as Mayor of _____.
(a) London (b) Paris (c) Amsterdam (d) Canberra
64. Which of the following Indian universities has become the first Indian university to start a Harvard University collaborative business management program by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)?
(a) Chandigarh University (b) Patna University
(c) Banaras Hindu University (d) Delhi University
65. Which of the following countries recently announced the printing of a new NPR100 currency note with a map that shows the controversial territories of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, already termed as "artificial enlargement" and "untenable" by India?
(a) Bangladesh (b) Nepal (c) Bangladesh (d) Pakistan
66. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), India's largest private port operator, is eyeing the _____ Bataan for its port development plan.
(a) Malaysia (b) Indonesia (c) Iran (d) Philippines
67. The Indian Army and the Air Force are planning to jointly deploy MQ-9B Predator drones at air base _____ in Uttar Pradesh.
(a) Meerut (b) Gorakhpur (c) Hapur (d) Ayodhya
68. India and _____, are working to link their payment systems to permit users to make instant, low-cost fund transfers on a reciprocal basis.
(a) Ghana (b) Uganda (c) Chad (d) Morocco

69. World Athletics Day is organized by the IAAF (International Amateur Athletic Federation) on _____ every year.
(a) May 3 (b) May 5 (c) May 7 (d) May 10
70. Which of the following recently lifted Indian Super League (ISL) 2023-24?
(a) Mumbai City FC (b) Mohun Bagan (c) East Bengal (d) North East United
71. Who has been recently announced as the new National Ambassador by UNICEF India?
(a) Kareena Kapoor Khan (b) Deepika Padukone
(c) Alia Bhatt (d) Kriti Sanon
72. Recently, Togo's ruling party has won a majority of seats in the West African nation's parliament. Name the Present President of Togo?
(a) Bonfoh Abass (b) Faure Gnassingbé (c) Gnassingbé Eyadéma (d) Kléber Dadjo
73. Name the group of new Covid-19 variants belonging to Omicron's JN.1 lineage is spreading fast in US.
(a) FLiRT (b) FiRST (c) UniQE (d) AIERT
74. Each Year, Coal Miner's Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) April 29 (b) May 2 (c) May 4 (d) May 7
75. Name the renowned veteran actor who is set to receive the prestigious Freedom of the City of London Award.
(a) Sharmila Tagore (b) Waheeda Rehman (c) Rekha (d) Shabana Azmi
76. _____, India's pioneering AI and robotics hub established in 2020 within the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) campus, Bengaluru, aims to foster inclusivity and equitable access to technology.
(a) KALAPARK (b) JALPARK (c) ARTPARK (d) UNIPARK
77. The Army is working on creating a new unit _____ that can simulate the role of an adversary during military exercises and war game training.
(a) FORP (b) ONFOR (c) OPFOR (d) CALL Force
78. Recently, Israel ordered the local offices of _____ Al Jazeera satellite news network to close escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line government.
(a) Kuwait's (b) Saudi Arabia's (c) Qatar's (d) Oman's
79. Which of the following countries is **NOT** among the participants in the Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) organised by the Election Commission of India during the Lok Sabha Elections 2024?
(a) Russia (b) Brazil (c) Zimbabwe (d) Nepal
80. Which of the following teams recently won the Uber Cup and marked its 16th win in the tournament?
(a) South Korea (b) Indonesia (c) China (d) Thailand
81. Recently, The Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks (CGPDTM) has bestowed the Geographical Indication (GI) certificate upon the traditional artisans of 'Ajraakh,' hailing from the vibrant region of _____.
(a) Sunderbans in West Bengal (b) Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu
(c) Kutch in Gujarat (d) Paradip in Odisha
82. Every year, World Athletics Day is observed on _____.
(a) May 2 (b) May 5 (c) May 7 (d) May 9
83. Recently, India's first-ever 'hybrid pitch' was unveiled in _____.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Rajasthan

84. Recently, India has registered its protest with Beijing against China's "illegal attempts" to "alter facts on the ground" in the Shaksgam valley of occupied Kashmir, which faces the _____ glacier.
(a) Rimo (b) Biafo (c) Pindari (d) Siachen
85. Which of the following banks has recently rolled out a new facility allowing its non-resident Indian (NRI) customers to make Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions in India using their international mobile numbers?
(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) Kotak Mahindra Bank
86. Which of the following IIT students have recently bagged a record by conducting India's very first block chain technology-based election, using in-house developed software for transparent, tamper-proof, vote-from-anywhere student council elections?
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Kanpur
87. Recently, who has been administered the oath of integrity and secrecy as the President of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), in New Delhi?
(a) Bipul Kumar Shah (b) Mahendra Narayan
(c) Sanjaya Kumar Mishra (d) Saksham Mittal
88. The University of Tokyo Atacama Observatory (TAO) is the highest astronomical observatory in the world at an altitude of 5,640m on the summit of a mountain in _____.
(a) Italy (b) Panama (c) Chile (d) Morocco
89. Which of the following IIT startup Mindgrove recently launched first India-made microcontrollers chip?
(a) IIT-Madras (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Bombay (d) IIT Kharagpur
90. Which of the following recently concluded #PlayTrue Campaign, with turnout of more than 12,133 participants to create awareness about clean sports?
(a) SAI (b) BCCI (c) Athletics India (d) NADA, India
91. What is the name of the recently conducted three-day joint exercise of Indian Army along with IAF?
(a) Dhara Strike-II (b) Safal Strike-I (c) Gagan Strike-II (d) Bharat Strike-II
92. Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of _____.
(a) Tamil Nadu, India (b) Odisha, India
(c) Andhra Pradesh, India (d) Jharkhand, India
93. Who among the following recently emerged victorious in the Miami Grand Prix (GP) Formula One motor race?
(a) Lando Norris (b) Charles Leclerc (c) Max Verstappen (d) Sergio Perez
94. Name the first renowned Indian fashion designer to grace the prestigious Met Gala carpet recently.
(a) Maneesh Malhotra (b) Sabyasachi Mukherjee
(c) Geeta Kapoor (d) Gauri Khan
95. Recently, Vladimir Putin began his _____ term as Russian President.
(a) Third (b) Fourth (c) Fifth (d) Seventh
96. Which of the following countries received the largest amount of remittances in 2022 according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)?
(a) Mexico (b) India (c) China (d) Indonesia
97. Who has been recently appointed as the new Chinese Ambassador to India after an 18-month delay?
(a) Sun Weidong (b) Xu Feihong (c) Li Linping (d) Vu Jediong
98. Which of the following countries recently made its maiden lunar mission, ICube Qamar (ICUBE-Q)?
(a) Pakistan (b) South Korea (c) Oman (d) Iraq

99. Recently, India's first net-zero business park was launched in _____.
(a) Bengaluru (b) Mumbai (c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
100. The World Cartoonist Day is celebrated every year in _____.
(a) May 5th (b) May 7th (c) May 9th (d) May 11th
101. On which date is World Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day celebrated annually?
(a) 5 May (b) 8 May (c) 10 May (d) 15 May
102. The Pulitzer Prizes are two-dozen annual awards given by _____ for achievements in the United States in "journalism, arts and letters."
(a) Yale University (b) Oxford University (c) Columbia University (d) Stanford University
103. Name the Indian who recently clinched victory in the men's High Jump event at the USATF Festival in Tucson, Arizona, USA.
(a) Atul Bedade (b) Tejaswin Shankar (c) Mahesh Raisinghani (d) Apoorva Gandhi
104. The present Secretary General of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is _____.
(a) Indra Mani Pandey (b) Tenzin Lekphell
(c) M Shahidul Islam (d) Sumith Nakandala
105. According to the report by global energy think tank Ember, what position did India secure in terms of solar power generation in 2023?
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
106. Which of the following recently released the report "Recipe for a Livable Planet: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in the Agrifood System"?
(a) World Bank (b) International Monetary Fund
(c) United Nation General Assembly (d) Asian Development Bank
107. Which of the following recently unveiled 'India's first' crowd-supported weather infrastructure?
(a) Paytm (b) Ola Eats (c) Zomato (d) Swiggy
108. Which country former Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama was recently sentenced to one year in prison for perverting the course of justice, with a judge finding he used his political clout to shut down a police investigation?
(a) Fiji (b) Suriname (c) Malaysia (d) Indonesia
109. We recently found West Nile Fever in news. West Nile Fever is a viral infection transmitted primarily by _____, caused by the West Nile virus (WNV).
(a) Donkeys (b) Monkeys (c) Mosquitoes (d) Flies
110. Which of the following countries will host the ninth ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2024?
(a) India (b) Bangladesh (c) Australia (d) England
111. Which state recently launched the "Pirul Lao-Paisa Pao" campaign to contain the raging forest fire in the state?
(a) Nagaland (b) Jharkhand (c) Uttarakhand (d) Madhya Pradesh
112. Who among the following were recently awarded the Annual World Food Prize 2024?
(a) Cary Fowler and Geoffrey Hawtin (b) Rattan Lal and Simon N. Groot
(c) Cynthia Rosenzweig and Heidi Kühn (d) Lawrence Haddad and David Nabarro
113. Name the veteran actress who was recently bestowed the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian honour.
(a) Vyjayanthimala Bala (b) Waheeda Rehman (c) Sharmila Tagore (d) Jaya Bachchan

114. In May, World Migratory Bird Day will be celebrated on _____.
(a) 7 May (b) 9 May (c) 11 May (d) 15 May
115. Name the company which became the first Indian steel company to undertake a fully loaded voyage from East Coast of Australia to India.
(a) Tata Steel (b) Jindal Steel (c) Essar Steel (d) Bhushan Steel
116. Recently, Ambassador of Japan to India, Hiroshi Suzuki inaugurated the Peace Memorial and laid the foundation stone of Eco Park in _____.
(a) Gangtok (b) Aizawl (c) Agartala (d) Kohima
117. Which of the following cities has maintained its position as the world's wealthiest city in 2024 according to the World's Wealthiest Cities Report 2024?
(a) London (b) New York City (c) Tokyo (d) Singapore
118. Who has been recently approved by Scotland's Parliament to lead the country as the first minister?
(a) Humza Yousaf (b) John Swinney (c) Nicola Sturgeon (d) Alex Salmond
119. Where is the Svalbard Global Seed Vault located?
(a) In the heart of the Amazon rainforest. (b) On a Norwegian island in the Arctic Circle.
(c) At the summit of Mount Everest. (d) Beneath the Sahara Desert.
120. Which of the following recently gave the green light to the bloc's first law devoted to combatting violence against women?
(a) European Union (b) Asian Union (c) African Union (d) Australian Union
121. Recently, The _____ has been notified in a gazette and has been enforced with effect.
(a) Inter-Military Services Organization (Command, Control and Discipline) Act
(b) Inter-Services Organizations (Command, Control and Commitment) Act
(c) Inter-Services Organizations' (Command, Control and Discipline) Act
(d) Inter-Services Military (Command, Control and Discipline) Act
122. Which of the following two countries are set to conduct the 7th edition of the Joint Military Exercise 'Shakti'?
(a) India and Suriname (b) India and Jordan (c) India and France (d) India and Saudi Arabia
123. Which of the following countries Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah has recently dissolved parliament?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Kuwait (c) Oman (d) Jordan
124. We often find Camp David accord in news. This accord is a peace treaty between _____.
(a) Eritrea and Somalia (b) Israel and Egypt (c) Israel and Palestine (d) Oman and Jordan
125. What is the primary advantage of the newly tested liquid rocket engine manufactured through Additive Manufacturing technology by ISRO?
(a) Increased engine thrust capability. (b) Reduction in the number of parts and weld joints.
(c) Enhanced fuel efficiency. (d) Improved heat resistance.
126. Which of the following institutions has developed novel materials and methodology to enhance the performance metrics of supercapacitors?
(a) Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
127. Who among the following wrestlers became the first Indian male wrestler to secure a quota place for the 2024 Paris Olympics?
(a) Aman Kumar (b) Aman Sehrawat (c) Aman Singh (d) Aman Verma

128. Which of the following Indian athletes recently secured a gold medal at the Para Powerlifting World Cup 2024?
(a) Mahesh Mahajn (b) Vipul Ranjan (c) Ashok Malik (d) Geeta Gupta
129. Name the famous Indian author who was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship at his Mussoorie home.
(a) Amish Tripathi (b) Ruskin Bond (c) Vipul Gandharva (d) Manish Mahajan
130. World Thalassaemia Day is being observed on _____ annually to raise awareness among people about the prevention and treatment of thalassaemia.
(a) 4 May (b) 6 May (c) 8 May (d) 10 May
131. Recently, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd to conduct two Pilot Projects under the _____.
(a) Drone Bharat Yojana (b) Drone Saheli Yojana
(c) Drone Didi Yojana (d) Drone Sahayak Yojana
132. Recently, Mikhail Mishustin has been reappointed as the Prime Minister of _____.
(a) Sweden (b) Denmark
(c) Russia (d) Taiwan
133. Name the Nepali Sherpa climber who has scaled Everest for the 29th time, surpassing his own record of 28 ascents?
(a) Kami Rita (b) Sheetal Thapa (c) Bipul Mahatha (d) Manoj Luthana
134. Which of the following state government's proposed plan to construct Greenfield Airport at Doloo using part of a tea garden has been halted after the Supreme Court of India issued its order setting aside the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) clearance?
(a) Sikkim (b) Assam (c) Meghalaya (d) Nagaland
135. Which of the following countries emerged as India's largest trading partner in the fiscal year 2023-24?
(a) United States (b) China (c) Japan (d) Germany
136. Which medical institution in Chennai successfully performed India's first Robotic Cytoreductive Surgery (CRS) with Hyperthermic Intraperitoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC) for peritoneal surface cancer?
(a) Madras Medical College (b) Apollo Cancer Centre
(c) Government General Hospital (d) Fortis Malar Hospital
137. Which of the following Asian cricket teams has recently announced that Indian milk producer Amul has been appointed as the 'Official Sponsor' of the Men's Team for the duration of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024?
(a) India (b) Bangladesh (c) Sri Lanka (d) Hong Kong
138. We find a term "Kallakkadal" in term of nature. Kallakkadal is associated with _____.
(a) Land (b) Sea (c) River (d) Tree
139. The United Nations designated _____ the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger.
(a) 5 May (b) 9 May (c) 12 May (d) 16 May
140. Idashisha Nongrang is a IPS officer who has been appointed as _____ next DGP, making her the first woman to hold this position in the state.
(a) Nagaland (b) Sikkim (c) Meghalaya (d) Manipur
141. The Mahalaxmi Jatra is a traditional festival celebrated in honor of the goddess Mahalaxmi, blending religious traditions with cultural festivities in _____.
(a) Nepal (b) Bangladesh (c) Sri Lanka (d) Mauritius

142. Name the operation under which the Indian Army's Trishakti Corps demonstrated unwavering support for North Sikkim's remote communities in Naga and Rangrang villages.
- (a) Operation Sadbhavana (b) Operation Sanskar
(c) Operation Bharat (d) Operation Devasthan
143. Who among the following recently became the first British-Indian of Assamese descent to be appointed to the House of Lords, the upper chamber of the country's parliament?
- (a) Ayesha Hazarika (b) Sushma Mani
(c) Devoleena Mukherjee (d) Anandita Bhattacharya
144. Who is the head of the new cabinet formed in Kuwait?
- (a) Emad al al-Atiqi (b) Anwar Ali al-Mudhaf
(c) Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah (d) Abdullah Ali al-Yahya
145. Recently, India participated in the 19th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), held at the UN Headquarters in _____.
- (a) Brussels (b) New York (c) Zurich (d) Paris
146. India is set to sign an agreement with _____ to manage Chabahar Port for the next 10 years.
- (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Lebanon (c) Iran (d) Oman
147. Name the 12-year-old kid who has become the first person in the world to receive commercially licensed gene therapy for sickle cell disease.
- (a) Kendric Cromer (b) Zenish Paulstrom (c) Alex Chrono (d) Thomas Peterson
148. Who among the following recently became Wales' first female world champion boxer?
- (a) Lauren Price (b) Rauba Gillboard (c) Monika Jhares (d) Sebba Venhaem
149. Which of the following countries is believed to be the first nation in modern times to have completely lost all of its glaciers?
- (a) Venezuela (b) Brazil (c) Peru (d) Chile
150. Recently, Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra finished _____ at the Doha Diamond League meeting javelin throw event.
- (a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fifth
151. Which of the following states is set to witness India's first river terminal?
- (a) Assam (b) Uttarakhand (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Tripura
152. Which of the following banks has become the first to join the India International Bullion Exchange's Trading Cum Clearing (TCM) programme?
- (a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) State Bank of India (d) Punjab National Bank
153. Who did President Vladimir Putin replace as Defence Minister in a recent Cabinet shakeup?
- (a) Sergei Lavrov (b) Dmitry Medvedev
(c) Sergei Shoigu (d) Mikhail Mishustin
154. Recently, Ibu volcano erupted spewing thick columns of grey ash several kilometers into the sky. Ibu volcano is located in _____.
- (a) Malaysia (b) Seychelles (c) Japan (d) Indonesia
155. Recently, Britain's King Charles handed over a senior military role Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Air Corps to his son _____.
- (a) Prince William (b) Prince Harry (c) Prince Williamson (d) Prince James

156. Name the first auto company in India which integrated with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).
(a) Hero MotoCorp (b) Honda Moto (c) Bajaj Auto (d) TVS
157. Who among the following recently announced that she is stepping down from her role as co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation?
(a) Melinda French Gates (b) Stefannie Gates
(c) Suzie Gates (d) Liza Ray Gates
158. Recently, Researchers have discovered a new “fiery, glowing red” exoplanet displaying intense volcanic activity similar to _____ moon Io.
(a) Mars (b) Jupiter (c) Saturn (d) Earth
159. Which of the following teams recently won the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup (PSAS) for the first time?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) India (d) Malaysia
160. The International Day of Families is observed annually on _____.
(a) 8 May (b) 11 May (c) 15 May (d) 21 May
161. International Nurses Day is an international day observed around the world on _____ each year.
(a) 7 May (b) 10 May (c) 12 May (d) 15 May
162. The World Wildlife Crime Report 2024 was launched by the _____ in Vienna, Austria.
(a) World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
(b) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
(c) Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
(d) United Nation General Assembly (UNGA)
163. Which of the following banks has launched a new digital credit card called Pixel Play Credit Card?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) RBL Bank (d) Axis Bank
164. Recently, Aarogya Maitri Cubes, the world’s first disaster hospital packed in 72 cubes that can be airlifted, had its test run by the Indian Air Force at _____.
(a) Prayagraj (b) Kanpur (c) Lucknow (d) Agra
165. Recently, the majestic sei whales have returned to the waters after over a century of absence from the coast off _____.
(a) Argentina (b) Peru (c) Brazil (d) Chile
166. How many Indian literary masterpieces have been recently added to UNESCO’s Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Regional Register?
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Five (d) Seven
167. Who among the following recently became the first Indian woman to break into top-25 of world table tennis singles rankings?
(a) Monika Luthra (b) Manika Batra (c) Tripti Bora (d) Alka Misra
168. Recently, _____ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University of Bolton Institute of Medicine to collaborate in the field of medical research, innovation and education.
(a) AFMC, Pune (b) KGMU, Lucknow
(c) JIPMER, Puducherry (d) AIIMS New Delhi
169. In 2024, the World Hydrogen Summit was held in _____.
(a) Hungary (b) Netherlands
(c) Bhutan (d) Switzerland

170. Who among the following chess players emerged as the winner of the 2024 Superbet Poland Rapid & Blitz tournament?
(a) Viswanathan Anand (b) Magnus Carlsen
(c) Hikaru Nakamura (d) Fabiano Caruana
171. Recently, The seventh edition of the Indo-U.S. joint counter terrorism exercise _____ between the elite National Security Guard (NSG) and the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) commenced.
(a) Dhanush (b) Spear (c) Tarkash (d) Bharat
172. Recently, The J20 Summit (of heads of Supreme Courts and constitutional courts of G20 members) was held in _____.
(a) Argentina's Buenos Aires (b) Brazil's Rio de Janeiro
(c) Chile's Santiago (d) Peru's Lima
173. We often find Ras al-Hikma peninsula in news. This peninsula is in _____.
(a) Argentina (b) Brazil (c) Egypt (d) Oman
174. The world's first big city to run out of water is _____.
(a) Johannesburg (b) Zurich (c) Santiago (d) Cape Town
175. Who is appointed as NASA's first chief artificial intelligence (AI) officer?
(a) Ulugh Jhaver (b) Thomas Bourg (c) David Salvagnini (d) Kitter Lutharia
176. Recently, PhonePe announced that it has enabled UPI payment acceptance in collaboration with _____.
(a) MauritiusPay (b) MaldivesPay (c) LankaPay (d) AmericanPay
177. Which of the following countries in the Asia-Pacific region has recently surpassed others to become the leader in data center capacity?
(a) Australia (b) India (c) Japan (d) Singapore
178. The Army is all set to begin receiving another set of _____ Igla-S very short range air defence systems (VSHORAD), filling a critical void in the air defence requirements which has been repeatedly delayed.
(a) American (b) Russian (c) Italian (d) German
179. How many teams are expected to participate in the first edition of the Women's Club World Cup tournament?
(a) 8 teams (b) 12 teams (c) 16 teams (d) 20 teams
180. The International Day of Light is celebrated on _____ each year.
(a) 11 May (b) 13 May (c) 16 May (d) 19 May
181. India is to have its first WhatsApp Park in _____.
(a) Gurugram, Haryana (b) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
(c) Bhagalpur, Bihar (d) Guwahati, Assam
182. Name the renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is also India's first Green Energy Archaeological Site.
(a) Basilica of Bom Jesus
(b) Kakatiya Rudreshwara Ramappa Temple
(c) Shore Temple in Mamallapuram
(d) The Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai
183. The _____ has recently launched a 10-year Blue Residency visa for individuals who have made 'exceptional efforts and contributions to protecting the environment, whether marine or land'.
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia
(c) South Korea (d) Canada

184. Name the Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate who recently won the election to the post of the president of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).
(a) Kapil Sibal (b) Abhishek Manu Singhavi
(c) Jayant Sinha (d) Bansuri Swaraj
185. Recently, Singapore's deputy leader Lawrence Wong was sworn in as the nation's _____ Prime Minister.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Sixth
186. Recently, Norges Bank, the central bank of _____, has excluded Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) from its Government Pension Fund Global, over the 'unacceptable risk' the company contributes to human rights violations during the times of war and conflicts.
(a) The Netherland (b) New Zealand (c) Norway (d) Sweden
187. Who among the following did **not** find his place in ninth edition of the "30 Under 30 Asia" list released by Forbes?
(a) Akshit Bansal (b) Raghav Arora (c) Bhagya Shree Jain (d) Deep Narang
188. Recently, The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) announced certain changes in the Infosys Prize. The upper age limit for prize winners is being revised from 50 years to _____.
(a) 45 years (b) 42 years (c) 40 years (d) 35 years
189. Name the Indian football legend who has recently announced his retirement after a distinguished career with the national team.
(a) Sumit Nonggoi (b) Albert Pinto (c) Deepak Singh (d) Sunil Chhetri
190. Every year, the world observes _____ as World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.
(a) May 13 (b) May 15 (c) May 17 (d) May 13
191. Which of the following countries will host the 2027 Women's Football World Cup?
(a) Brazil (b) Mexico (c) South Africa (d) Argentina
192. Who among the following athletes topped the Forbes list of highest-paid athletes for the fourth time in his career?
(a) Lionel Messi (b) Cristiano Ronaldo (c) Jon Rahm (d) Neymar Jr.
193. Which of the following tunnels has been officially recognised as the highest tunnel in the country by the International Book of Honour, England?
(a) Atal Tunnel (b) Sela Tunnel
(c) Banihal Qazigund Road Tunnel (d) Syama Prasad Mookerjee Tunnel
194. Which of the following former Soviet republics is set to regain control of four border villages according to the recent agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan?
(a) Armenia (b) Azerbaijan (c) Georgia (d) Ukraine
195. According to a report released by Deloitte India, which country ranked first in the adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) across Asia-Pacific?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) India (d) Singapore
196. Who is the current Prime Minister of Croatia leading the conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)?
(a) Zoran Milanovic (b) Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic
(c) Andrej Plenkovic (d) Ivica Dacic
197. Recently, The _____ has discovered the most distant merger of two gigantic black holes dating to the time of 740 million years after the universe-forming Big Bang.
(a) Thomas Ebb Telescope (b) Unique Rover Telescope
(c) Alexander Thomas Telescope (d) James Webb Telescope

198. Recently, The Supreme Court told authorities in Rajasthan that there cannot be any mining activity within _____ radius of critical tiger habitats.
(a) 0.5-km (b) 1-km (c) 2-km (d) 5-km
199. Recently, World's highest competition pool has been opened in _____.
(a) Chile (b) Nepal (c) Canada (d) Bhutan
200. International Museum Day is an international day held annually on or around _____, coordinated by the International Council of Museums.
(a) 3 May (b) 7 May (c) 18 May (d) 25 May
201. World Bee Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) May 12 (b) May 17 (c) May 20 (d) May 25
202. Who among the following won the gold medal in the men's T47 high jump final at the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan?
(a) Nishad Kumar (b) Preethi Pal (c) Roderick Townsend (d) Thomas Juke
203. Which of the following countries is **not** in the alliance establishing the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES)?
(a) Burkina Faso (b) Niger (c) Somalia (d) Mali
204. Which of the following cities gets India's first metaverse-powered virtual model polling booth?
(a) Ludhiana (b) Lucknow (c) Bhagalpur (d) Vidisha
205. Name India's first crowd funded film that received a standing ovation at the 77th Cannes Film festival.
(a) Manthan (b) Utsav (c) Anand (d) Ankur
206. What was the name of the mission conducted by Blue Origin, marking the return of space tourism?
(a) NS-20 (b) NS-25 (c) NS-30 (d) NS-15
207. Constitution bench is the name given to the benches of the Supreme Court of India which consist of at least _____ judges of the court.
(a) Three (b) Five
(c) Seven (d) Nine
208. Which of the following events recently hosted discussions on the urgent need to combat illicit profits generated by transnational organized crime?
(a) The United Nations General Assembly in New York
(b) The 33rd Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna
(c) The G20 Summit in Riyadh
(d) The World Economic Forum in Davos
209. Vietnam nominated _____ as its new President.
(a) To Lam (b) Nguyen Phu Trong
(c) Ho Chi Minh (d) Tran Dai Quang
210. Who won the presidential election in Chad after the Council reviewed and reaffirmed vote counts?
(a) Mahamat Idriss Deby (b) Succès Masra
(c) Albert Pahimi Padacké (d) Nasra Djimasngar
211. The World Economic Situation and Prospects is a report produced by _____.
(a) World Bank (b) International Monetary Fund
(c) United Nations (d) Greenpeace International

212. Which country President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian have recently died in the helicopter crash?
(a) Iraq (b) Iran (c) Oman (d) Jordan
213. Recently, Lai Ching-te assumed the role of _____ new President.
(a) Vietnam's (b) Mauritius's (c) Taiwan's (d) Hong Kong's
214. Who among the following holds the top spot on the Sunday Times Rich List for 2024?
(a) Sir Leonard Blavatnik and his Family (b) Gopichand Hinduja and his family
(c) Rishi Sunak and Akshata Murty (d) Laxmi Nivas Mittal and Family
215. The world's largest archipelago nation is _____.
(a) Indonesia (b) Japan (c) Mauritius (d) Australia
216. Recently, A \$500-million credit line has been extended by International Finance Corporation to _____ to provide finance to women through microloans in rural areas.
(a) ICICI Bank (b) Axis Bank (c) HDFC Bank (d) State Bank of India
217. International Tea Day is observed annually on _____.
(a) May 11 (b) May 17 (c) May 21 (d) May 25
218. Recently, a free trade agreement (FTA) at the annual U.K.-India Strategic Dialogue was held in _____.
(a) New Delhi (b) London (c) Berkshire (d) Cardiff
219. Name America's first Black astronaut candidate finally rocketed into space 60 years later, flying with Jeff Bezos' rocket company?
(a) Ed Dwight (b) Albert Slight
(c) Thomas Moody (d) William Lodpin
220. Name the India's star men's doubles pair who recently secured the Thailand Open Super 500 title.
(a) Mrunal Shah and Nadeem Khan (b) Vipul Shah and Ankit Raje
(c) Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty (d) Gautam Raisinghani and Kunal Rai
221. Which of the following teams recently won their fourth straight Premier League title in football?
(a) West Ham (b) Arsenal (c) Everton (d) Manchester City
222. Recently, AI Holding and Seetha Mahalaxmi Healthcare (SML) launched _____, an Indian large language model (LLM) designed with the Indian demographic in mind.
(a) Sitaram AI (b) Shaktiman AI (c) Hanooman AI (d) KrishnaAI
223. In June 2024, The Ukraine peace summit will be held in _____.
(a) Norway (b) Poland (c) Finland (d) Switzerland
224. Recently, To strengthen the existing regulatory framework for long gestation period financing for projects such as infrastructure, non-infrastructure and commercial real estate sectors, the _____ issued draft regulations for consultation.
(a) SIDBI (b) Reserve Bank of India (c) NABARD (d) CRISIL
225. Who is serving as Iran's interim president following Ebrahim Raisi's demise in a helicopter crash?
(a) Mohammad Javad Zarif (b) Mohammad Mokhber
(c) Ali Khamenei (d) Hassan Rouhani
226. Recently, Luis Abinader was re-elected for another four-year term as the President of _____.
(a) Morocco (b) Dominic Republic (c) Eritrea (d) Mozambique

227. The Indian Navy ships INS Delhi, INS Shakti, and INS Kiltan arrived in _____ as part of the Operational Deployment of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet to the South China Sea.
(a) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (b) Jakarta, Indonesia
(c) Manila, Philippines (d) Tokyo, Japan
228. Recently, which country Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' won a vote of confidence in Parliament, the fourth within 18 months of taking office?
(a) Nepal (b) Bhutan (c) Bangladesh (d) Seychelles
229. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised the "remarkable" turnaround in the health of India's banking sector after net profit crossed _____ for the first time in FY24.
(a) Rs 1.5 lakh crore (b) Rs 2 lakh crore (c) Rs 3 lakh crore (d) Rs 5 lakh crore
230. What rank did the Indian School of Business (ISB) achieve in the Financial Times (FT) Executive Education Custom Ranking 2024?
(a) 1st globally, 2nd in Asia (b) 2nd globally, 1st in Asia
(c) 26th globally, 1st in Asia (d) 1st globally, 26th in Asia
231. Which city tops the Oxford Economics' Global Cities Index?
(a) Tokyo (b) London (c) New York (d) Paris
232. Name the first woman from Andhra to become a judge in the US?
(a) Jaya Badiga (b) Sunita Rao (c) Aishwarya Mani (d) Deepa Kumari
233. Recently, The market capitalisation of companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has reached a historic _____, marking a fresh high.
(a) \$2 trillion (b) \$3 trillion (c) \$5 trillion (d) \$10 trillion
234. Which of the following entities provided the Swiss franc wholesale central bank digital currency (wCBDC) for settling the digital bond issued by the World Bank?
(a) European Central Bank (ECB) (b) Swiss National Bank (SNB)
(c) International Monetary Fund (IMF) (d) Bank for International Settlements (BIS)
235. In a significant milestone for India-UK defence cooperation Lieutenant Commander _____ became the first Indian Navy officer to conduct training at the Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) in Dartmouth, south-west England.
(a) B Vipul Kasra (b) K Nikunj Hitesh (c) N Dinesh Anand (d) L Mukund Sathwik
236. The SCO Summit 2024 of heads of state is to be held in _____.
(a) Dushanbe (b) Astana (c) Qingdao (d) Bishkek
237. Recently, World's First 6G Device is launched in _____.
(a) China (b) Japan (c) South Korea (d) USA
238. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) warned that a _____ of the world's food supplies were at risk from the deterioration of the world's rangelands – which include savannas, wetlands and deserts as well as grassland.
(a) Second (b) Fourth (c) Sixth (d) Ninth
239. Who among the following recently won his sixth Masters title when he beat first-time finalist in the Italian Open final?
(a) Nicolas Jarry (b) Michael Luashk (c) Andy Murray (d) Alexander Zverev
240. In India, an anti-terrorism day is observed on _____.
(a) 14 May (b) 18 May (c) 21 May (d) 24 May

241. What was India's ranking in the World Economic Forum's "Travel & Tourism Development Index" in 2024?
(a) 35th (b) 39th (c) 42nd (d) 46th
242. Name the project of Indian army that is exploring the epic battles of the Mahabharata and the strategic brilliance of past Indian dynasties, shaping India's rich military heritage.
(a) Project Utkarsh (b) Project Utkrisht
(c) Project Udbhav (d) Project Uthaan
243. Which of the following countries recently joined the International Solar Alliance as its 99th member?
(a) Germany (b) Spain (c) Brazil (d) Australia
244. According to the findings of the first global mangrove assessment, more than _____ of the world's mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapse, with nearly one in five facing severe risk.
(a) 25% (b) 40% (c) 50% (d) 75%
245. During the 7th edition of ongoing Joint Exercise _____, the Indian and French Army shared drills and expertise in jungle survival techniques.
(a) Sewa (b) Shakti (c) Samarth (d) Saksham
246. Which of the following countries is not among which is to recognize a Palestinian state?
(a) Canada (b) Norway (c) Spain (d) Ireland
247. Recently, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari has inaugurated its first-ever Emergency Medical Response System of the Indian Air Force at Command Hospital Air Force in _____.
(a) Hyderabad (b) Lucknow (c) Shimla (d) Bengaluru
248. The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) observatory is the proposed telescope which is being planned to be constructed across the two continents in _____.
(a) USA and Canada (b) Belgium and Canada
(c) South Africa and Australia (d) Mexico and UK
249. World Football Day is celebrated every year on _____.
(a) May 7 (b) May 15 (c) May 19 (d) May 25
250. Who is the winner of the International Booker Prize 2024?
(a) The Details (b) Kairos (c) Crooked Plow (d) What I'd Rather Not Think About
251. According to the Wildlife Institute of India, where is the majority of the Gangetic dolphin population located?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Bihar
252. Which of the following states will soon become the first state in India to introduce an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven traffic management system?
(a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Nagaland (d) Manipur
253. We often find the tragic Komagata Maru incident in news. The Komagata Maru incident is associated with which country?
(a) Australia (b) Canada (c) USA (d) Mexico
254. Name the Pink E-Rickshaw driver from Uttar Pradesh who recently received the Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award, named after the world-renowned human rights barrister, at the Prince's Trust Awards in London.
(a) Deepti (b) Jaya (c) Arti (d) Maya
255. Which of the following smallest Asian countries will soon launch India's RuPay service?
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Laos (d) Singapore

256. Recently, EVR Motors, an _____ based innovator specializing in high power-density electric motors, announced the inauguration of its new greenfield plant in Manesar, Haryana, under its subsidiary, I.EVR Motors.
(a) Indonesia (b) Italy (c) Israel (d) Ireland
257. Which of the following initiated the formation of the inter-ministerial committee to combat transnational cybercrimes targeting Indians?
(a) The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C)
(b) The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
(c) The Intelligence Bureau (IB)
(d) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
258. Which of the following observatories has recently become the first in India to switch to round-the-clock solar-powered operations?
(a) Mumbai's Colaba meteorological observatory
(b) Kolkata's Alipore meteorological observatory
(c) Pune's Shivajinagar meteorological observatory
(d) New Delhi's Safdarjung meteorological observatory
259. The first Asian Relay Championships was recently held in _____.
(a) Manila, Philippines (b) New Delhi, India (c) Bangkok, Thailand (d) Jakarta, Indonesia
260. Who among the following has recently become the world's first triple amputee to reach the Mount Everest Base Camp?
(a) Manoj Kinsukh (b) Deepak Luthra (c) Gautam Riskush (d) Tinkesh Kaushik
261. Name the short film directed by Chidanand Naik, a student of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), which has won the prestigious Cannes' La Cined' Award for Best Short at the 77th Cannes Film Festival in France?
(a) SUNFLOWERS WERE THE FIRST ONES TO KNOW
(b) OUT THE WINDOW THROUGH THE WALL
(c) BUNNYHOOD
(d) THE CHAOS SHE LEFT BEHIND
262. Recently, Members of _____ based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have concluded an agreement under which it will be mandatory for patent applicants to disclose country of origin or source of genetic resource.
(a) Zurich (b) Geneva (c) London (d) Paris
263. Recently, In a big boost to the fiscal position of the government, the central board of the _____ approved a transfer of Rs 2.11 lakh crore as surplus, or dividend, to the Central Government for the year accounting year 2023-24.
(a) PMO (b) NABARD
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) Ministry of Finance
264. Which of the following teams recently won the Football UEFA Women's Champions League 2023-24?
(a) VfL Wolfsburg (b) Frankfurt (c) Lyon (d) Barcelona
265. Recently, Kerala High Court enables 'First Of Its Kind' Mobile E-Sewa Kendra at _____.
(a) Thiruvananthapuram (b) Ernakulum
(c) Idukki (d) Wayanad
266. Recently, The Joint Sword-2024A military exercise was conducted by _____.
(a) Russia (b) North Korea (c) China (d) Thailand
267. Which of the following African countries ruling junta will remain in power for another five years after participants in national talks proposed extending the transition back to democracy by 60 months from July 2024?
(a) Burkina Faso (b) Morocco (c) Somalia (d) The Gambia

268. In India, Google will soon commence local production of its flagship Pixel smartphones in _____.
(a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Kerala (d) Maharashtra
269. Silkworms are the larva of a moth (*Bombyx mori*) native to _____. They spin a cocoon of silk fiber that has long been used as the source of commercial silk.
(a) Africa (b) Asia (c) Australia (d) South America
270. Each year on _____, Commonwealth Day is commemorated. Commonwealth Day is observed on the birthday of Queen Victoria of England.
(a) 17th May (b) 19th May (c) 21st May (d) 24th May
271. Name the Indian-origin professor of astronomy from the US who will be bestowed the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy for his ground-breaking discoveries about millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects?
(a) Akshat U Rane (b) Shrinivas R Kulkarni
(c) Deepak A Buddhiraja (d) Kunal B Bhaskar
272. Name the airlines that offer travel opportunities for humans and their dogs.
(a) DOG Air (b) JACK Air (c) BARK Air (d) PET Air
273. Name the ship which was **not** part of the concluded operational deployment to South China Sea under the Navy's Eastern Fleet that saw port calls beginning with Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei.
(a) Kiltan (b) Delhi (c) Kavach (d) Shakti
274. Which Indian TV Channel recently deployed two Artificial Intelligence anchors named as 'AI Krish' and 'AI Bhoomi', and can speak in 50 Indian and foreign languages?
(a) DD Kisan (b) DD National (c) Colors (d) Sony TV
275. Recently, Judges at the top United Nations court ordered Israel to immediately halt its military assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, in a landmark emergency ruling in _____ case accusing Israel of genocide.
(a) South Africa's (b) Malaysia's (c) Indonesia's (d) Phillipenes
276. Recently, Gitanas Nausėda was reelected as the President of _____.
(a) Latvia (b) Lithuania (c) Fiji (d) Panama
277. Which of the following countries is **not** part of OPEC+ Group?
(a) Mexico (b) Azerbaijan (c) Sudan (d) India
278. In a historic move, the Government of India has approved the establishment of the first-ever city museum of Madhya Pradesh in _____.
(a) Jabalpur (b) Gwalior (c) Indore (d) Bhopal
279. Name the Indian cricketer who has concluded the 2024 Indian Premier League season with the Orange Cap, awarded to the player with the most runs in the season?
(a) K L Rahul (b) Rohit Sharma (c) Virat Kohli (d) Rinku Singh
280. World Thyroid Day is observed annually on _____ to raise awareness about the thyroid gland and the various conditions that affect it.
(a) May 13th (b) May 19th (c) May 25th (d) May 31st
281. The first state in India to have created a staggering 10 crore Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) IDs under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission is _____.
(a) Bihar (b) West Bengal (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Maharashtra

282. Name the first Indian to recently win the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival for her role in Bulgarian director Konstantin Bojanov's 'The Shameless'.
(a) Ashwini Pandey (b) Meghna Gulzar (c) Anasuya Sengupta (d) Meenal Jain
283. Name the Semiconductor Company which recently launched India's first commercial high-performance SoC (system-on-chip) named Secure IoT.
(a) Bharat Technology (b) Adani Silcos
(c) Mindgrove Technologies (d) Semico Technologies
284. Name the Indian women gymnast who recently became the first from the country to win a gold medal in the Asian Senior Championships in the women's vault event?
(a) Dipa Karmakar (b) Ekta Punia (c) Shraddha Vishwas (d) Meenal Jha
285. In India, The severe cyclonic storm 'Remal' affected _____.
(a) Kerala (b) Gujarat (c) West Bengal (d) Maharashtra
286. Recently, State-owned GAIL (India) Ltd's maiden green hydrogen plant at _____ has been commissioned.
(a) Hisar in Haryana (b) Agra in Uttar Pradesh (c) Bijapur in Karnataka (d) Vijaipur in Madhya Pradesh
287. Recently, A new plant of India's leading pharmaceutical company, Sun Pharma was inaugurated in _____.
(a) Nepal (b) Bangladesh (c) Bhutan (d) Sri Lanka
288. The World's First Museum of Homelessness is in _____.
(a) London (b) Paris (c) New York (d) Amsterdam
289. Name the mission launched by NASA to study heat emissions at the Earth's poles, shedding light on the intricate interplay between these regions and global climate change.
(a) DEEPFIRE (b) ANTIQUE (c) PREFIRE (d) POSTFIRE
290. Which of the following franchise cricket teams recently lifted their third Indian Premier League (IPL) title?
(a) Sunrisers Hyderabad (b) Delhi Capitals
(c) Kolkata Knight Riders (d) Rajasthan Royals
291. Recently, the 77th World Health Assembly started in _____.
(a) Frankfurt (b) New York (c) New Jersey (d) Geneva
292. Which of the following countries is **NOT** among the six NATO nations collaborating to build the "drone wall" neighboring Russia?
(a) Sweden (b) Latvia (c) Poland (d) Norway
293. The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a new 'Investment Round' aiming to raise _____ dollars of funds to support countries to tackle challenges like climate change, displacement, poverty and inequality.
(a) 3 billion (b) 5 billion (c) 7 billion (d) 10 billion
294. Russia will build a small nuclear power plant in _____, the first such project in post-Soviet Central Asia.
(a) Turkmenistan (b) Uzbekistan (c) Kazakhstan (d) Kyrgyzstan
295. How many nations have recently signed the Zero Debris Charter at the ESA/EU Space Council, solidifying their commitment to the long-term sustainability of human activities in Earth orbit?
(a) Three (b) Eight (c) Twelve (d) Fifteen
296. The introduction of the world's newest currency in April 2024 inspired a reggae artist to record a song praising the ZiG, or _____.
(a) Zimbabwe Grow (b) Zanzibar Gold (c) Zimbabwe Gold (d) Zambia Gold

297. India is likely to send four tigers to _____ by November-December to help reintroduce the big cats into its forests.
(a) Laos (b) Cambodia (c) Vietnam (d) Thailand
298. Who has become the first player to win the ‘Most Valuable Player’ award in the Indian Premier League (IPL) thrice?
(a) Sunil Narine (b) Virat Kohli (c) Rohit Sharma (d) Andre Russell
299. Name India’s Para Athlete who won a Gold medal in the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan.
(a) Simran Sharma (b) Anamika Jha (c) Alolika Bannerjee (d) Vineeta Garg
300. The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, _____, is “an international day to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism.”
(a) May 23 (b) May 27 (c) May 29 (d) May 31
301. Name the Indian who will be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjold medal during a solemn ceremony when the UN commemorates the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers.
(a) Naik Dhananjay Kumar Singh (b) Major Gurpreet Singh Sanyal
(c) Captain Ankur Kumar Mittal (d) Naik Vimal Kumar Dwivedi
302. Recently, which country activists have filed a lawsuit challenging a proposal to carry out seabed mineral exploration, saying that authorities have not done sufficient impact assessment of the mining?
(a) Norway (b) Italy (c) USA (d) Belgium
303. Name the portal launched by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) aimed at enhancing regulatory processes, facilitating retail investment, and providing comprehensive data on the fintech sector.
(a) PRAVAAH (b) NEETI (c) DRISHTI (d) DRISHYA
304. Recently, IT services major _____ has entered into a partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, to develop what it said is India’s first quantum diamond microchip imager.
(a) Wipro (b) Infosys (c) Tech Mahindra (d) Tata Consultancy Services
305. The joint military exercise “Golden Dragon 2024” is held between _____.
(a) China-Cambodia (b) Japan-South Korea (c) China-Thailand (d) Laos-Singapore
306. Who has been recently appointed as the Chairperson of Committee A at the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA)?
(a) Apurva Chandra (b) Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
(c) DR. Mubarak Ali (d) Vipul Kumar Mahajan
307. Who among the following recently ended a 92-year drought for Monegasque drivers by winning the Monaco Grand Prix in 2024?
(a) Oscar Piastri (b) Louis Chiron (c) Lando Norris (d) Charles Leclerc
308. What is the theme for World Hunger Day 2024?
(a) Fighting Malnutrition Together (b) Thriving Mothers, Thriving World
(c) Global Unity against Hunger (d) Sustainable Solutions for Food Security
309. The first-ever hotel built on a bridge will recently open in _____.
(a) Seoul (b) Riyadh (c) Amsterdam (d) Venice
310. In a collaborative effort, the Indian Embassy and the National Archives of India (NAI) successfully completed a first-of-its-kind project to archive historical documents of the Indian diaspora in _____.
(a) Jordan (b) Saudi Arabia (c) UAE (d) Oman

311. Which of the following countries assumed the Chair of the Colombo Process for the first time in 2024-26?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) India (c) Bangladesh (d) Thailand
312. Who will receive the prestigious ‘2023 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award’?
(a) Captain Anita Raj (b) Captain Kavita Saroj (c) Major Kapila Rastogi (d) Major Radhika Sen
313. The world’s first wooden satellite has been built by researcher’s of _____.
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) Indonesia (d) Malaysia
314. In a bid to position itself as a global leader in the gaming industry, who recently launched the “DPG 2033”?
(a) New York (b) Dubai (c) Washington DC (d) Helsinki
315. Recently, The Cold Chain and Logistics Summit is organised by the _____ in New Delhi.
(a) NABARD (b) SIDBI
(c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (d) FICCI
316. The ‘World’s first’ recycled container garment factory takes shape in _____.
(a) Thailand (b) New Zealand (c) Kenya (d) Australia
317. Who has topped the Hurun India Art List for the sixth consecutive year?
(a) Gulammohammed Sheikh (b) Jayesh Shah
(c) Anish Kapoor (d) James Lyodd
318. Recently, 71st International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day 2024 is / was celebrated on _____.
(a) May 21 (b) May 27 (c) May 29 (d) May 31
319. The General Assembly designated _____ as the International Day of Potato to raise awareness of the multiple nutritional, economic, environmental, and cultural values of the potato.
(a) May 15 (b) May 21 (c) May 25 (d) May 30
320. What is the primary role of the RudraM-II missile as successfully flight tested by the DRDO?
(a) Air-to-air combat (b) Air-to-surface operations
(c) Surface-to-surface operations (d) Surface-to-air defense
321. An Indian Air Force contingent reached the Eielson Air Force Base of the U.S. Air Force in Alaska, United States of America, to participate in the upcoming edition of the multi-national exercise _____.
(a) Union Flag 24 (b) Alexander 24 (c) Green Flag 24 (d) Red Flag 24
322. _____, a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange, launched the EV and new-age automotive index to track the performance of companies which form a part of the EV ecosystem. This would be the country’s first ever electric vehicle (EV) index.
(a) LSE Indices Ltd (b) NSE Indices Ltd (c) Gift City Indices Ltd (d) BSE Indices Ltd
323. Which of the following has recently launched an initiative to monetize its infrastructure, seeking investments from the UAE to sustain and enhance India’s expanding national highway network?
(a) IRCON International
(b) RITES Limited
(c) National Highways Authority of India
(d) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India
324. Which of the following Indian companies has been named one of the World’s Most Influential Companies by TIME magazine, making its second appearance on the prestigious TIME 100 lists?
(a) Reliance Industries Limited (b) Tech Mahindra
(c) Wipro (d) TCS

325. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an intergovernmental organisation with _____ member countries.
(a) 16 (b) 29 (c) 38 (d) 46
326. Who among the following became the first former US president ever convicted of a crime after a New York jury found him guilty on all charges in his hush money case?
(a) Donald Trump (b) George W Bush (c) Barak Obama (d) Bill Clinton
327. Which IIT startup has recently launched the world's first rocket with a single-piece three-dimensional (3D) printed engine?
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Kharagpur
328. Who among the following recently claimed his second Italian Open title in Men's Singles in May 2024?
(a) Alexander Zverev (b) Nicolas Jarry (c) Thomas Hictor (d) Andy Murray
329. What is the new maximum limit for retirement and death gratuity as revised by the government?
(a) 20 lakh rupees (b) 25 lakh rupees (c) 30 lakh rupees (d) 35 lakh rupees
330. On which date is World No Tobacco Day celebrated annually?
(a) 17 April (b) 31 May (c) 15 June (d) 22 September
331. Name the 1st US state to enact a law requiring fossil fuel companies pay a share of the damage caused by climate change.
(a) Tennessee (b) Nebraska (c) Vermont (d) Ohio
332. Name the justice who became the first person in Goa to register a "living will" – an advance medical directive for his family for when he cannot make his own decisions?
(a) Justice Yogesh Munim (b) Justice J S Musraan
(c) Justice M S Sonak (d) Justice G D Raunak
333. South Korea became the _____ country to own an indigenous space launch vehicle and satellite development technology with the launch of the Nuri rocket in May last year that put a commercial grade satellite in orbit.
(a) Third (b) Fifth (c) Seventh (d) Ninth
334. Recently, The eastern zone bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered an inquiry into the allegedly illegal construction of another commando battalion camp on forest land in _____.
(a) Meghalaya (b) Assam (c) Manipur (d) Mizoram
335. Recently, Adani International Ports Holdings Pte Ltd (AIPH) has signed a 30-year concession agreement to operate and manage Container Terminal 2 at the Dar es Salaam Port in _____.
(a) Eritrea (b) The Gambia (c) Tanzania (d) Oman
336. Who among the following is associated with Software Platform for External Commercial Borrowings and Trade Credits Reporting and Approval (SPECTRA) Project in India?
(a) Reserve Bank of India (b) Ministry of Finance
(c) Ministry of Communication (d) NABARD
337. Recently, India's central bank has moved around a 100 tonnes, or 1 lakh kilograms of gold from the _____ back to its vaults in India.
(a) Japan (b) New Zealand (c) United Kingdom (d) USA
338. India has been exploring the option of sourcing cheetahs from _____ for phase-II of Project Cheetah as it is believed that they would adapt better to India's tropical climate.
(a) Mozambique (b) Zimbabwe (c) Kenya (d) South Africa

339. Recently, The _____ has agreed to become a member of World Boxing, the International Federation established to ensure boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic Movement.
(a) Federation for Boxing in India (FIBI) (b) Boxing Federation of India (BFI)
(c) Bharat Boxer Association (BBA) (d) Indian Boxing Federation (IBF)
340. Which of the following organizations has been awarded with the Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion for 2024 by the World Health Organization (WHO)?
(a) National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS)
(b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
(c) All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi
(d) KGMU, Lucknow
341. India's first astro tourism campaign "Nakshatra Sabha" was inaugurated recently at the George Everest peak in _____.
(a) Dehradun (b) Manali (c) Mussoorie (d) Shimla
342. Who among the following is the chairperson of the reconstituted Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee at the Supreme Court of India?
(a) Justice B.V. Nagarathna (b) Justice Sukhda Pritam
(c) Justice Hima Kohli (d) Justice Meenakshi Arora
343. Recently, Dr Helen Mary Roberts became the first woman from the Christian and minority community to achieve the rank of brigadier in which Indian neighboring Muslim-majority country?
(a) Bangladesh (b) Maldives (c) Pakistan (d) Afghanistan
344. Recently, Halla Tomasdottir, a businesswoman and investor, has won the presidential election of _____.
(a) Iceland (b) Sweden (c) Finland (d) Germany
345. Which of the following political parties has secured maximum number of seats in recent parliamentary election in South Africa?
(a) African National Congress (b) Democratic Alliance
(c) MK Party (d) Republic Party of Africa
346. According to data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), which of the following Indian states has attracted the highest foreign direct investment for the second consecutive year in 2023-24?
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Uttar Pradesh
347. Who currently holds the title of the richest person in Asia according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index?
(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Ratan Tata (c) Gautam Adani (d) Jack Ma
348. Recently, In a first in Indian subcontinent, dog undergoes non-invasive heart surgery at _____ vet hospital.
(a) Dhaka (b) Delhi (c) Singapore (d) Bangkok
349. Who has recently assumed office as the new Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam?
(a) B. Venkatraman (b) Chandrashekhar Gaurinath Karhadkar
(c) Devendra C Chakradhar (d) Vipul Ramesh Karshanbhai
350. On what date is the Global Day of Parents observed each year?
(a) May 1 (b) June 1 (c) July 1 (d) August 1

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan.
2. b Public sector Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) said the government had granted it the 'navratna' status.
3. a Hitachi Payment Services has launched the country's first Upgradable ATM.
4. b Fintech firm PayU has received an in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank to operate as a payment aggregator.
5. b China launched a three-member crew to its orbiting space station as part of its ambitious program that aims to put astronauts on the moon by 2030.
6. d Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was appointed as the country's deputy prime minister.
7. c The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced India legend Yuvraj Singh as an ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 ambassador, which will be played in the West Indies and USA from June 1 to 29.
8. c The world's first Sikh court opens in London.
9. c The 2024 edition of International Jazz Day was celebrated on 30 April in more than 190 countries.
10. b India and Oman will sign a trade deal in the coming months, as New Delhi seeks to expand its ties in the Middle East, where rising tensions are putting major shipping routes at risk.
11. b Alok Shukla, the convener of Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan (CBA), has been awarded the 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize for his work in protecting Hasdeo Arand, a vast forest area in central India, from planned coal mines.
12. a Scotland's first minister, Humza Yousaf, resigned rather than face a no-confidence vote just days after he torpedoed a coalition with the Green Party by ditching a target for fighting climate change.
13. c The MOSS facility, the world's first energy storage project using molten hydroxide salt launched by Hyme Energy, is located in the city of Esbjerg.
14. b The report states that India's imports from China crossed \$101 billion in 2023-24 from about \$70 billion in 2018-19, indicating a 44% increase during this period.
15. b The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has issued a draft notification declaring extent and boundaries of Shergarh Wildlife Sanctuary eco-sensitive zone in Rajasthan.
16. d Releasing the Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR) 2023, ISRO Chairman S Somanath said, "Space Situational Awareness (SSA) is a must in outer space."
17. b Qatar Airways introduced Sama 2.0 as the world's first AI digital human cabin crew, showcasing it at the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) Dubai.
18. c India's Velavan Senthilkumar won his eighth Professional Squash Association (PSA) Tour title by winning the Batch Open, a PSA Challenger event.
19. b Housing & Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) rose on BSE a day after the Department of Public Enterprises (OPE) granted the Navratna status to the company.
20. a The 2024 World Veterinary Day is celebrated on 27th of April and has the theme 'Veterinarians are essential health workers.'
21. c Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi assumed command of the Indian Navy as the 26th Chief of the Naval Staff.
22. a "The Sri Lankan Cabinet has decided to implement the renovation of the Kankesanthurai Port in the Northern Province with India agreeing to grant the entire cost of the project,".

- 23. b** Zimbabwe started circulating a new currency to replace one that has been battered by depreciation and often outright rejection by the people. The ZiG was introduced electronically in early April, but people are now able to use banknotes and coins.
- 24. d** The Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is making it mandatory for Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to have an institutional mechanism for deterrence of potential market abuse, including front-running.
- 25. d** NHPC Limited, the largest organization for hydropower development in India, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with M/s Ocean Sun, a Norwegian company operating as a technology provider to the floating solar industry.
- 26. c** Worldline ePayments India, a player in digital payments received authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator (PA) under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act of 2007.
- 27. c** The Russian space agency, Roscosmos, announced the commissioning of the first satellite system in the world for the observation of the Arctic Circle.
- 28. b** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is likely to undertake an important test under the Gaganyaan mission to check the parachute system of the crew module in the next few days.
- 29. c** Guwahati has been announced as the host city of the BWF World Junior Championships in 2025, the Badminton World Federation announced.
- 30. c** International Labour Day, also known as May Day or Workers Day, is annually observed on May 1 in more than 80 countries, including India, Cuba, China, and many others.
- 31. b** The GI tag for Riyawan garlic was granted to Madhya Pradesh. This recognition highlights the distinctive qualities of Riyawan garlic, such as its bold flavors and higher oil content.
- 32. c** The Shompen tribe, classified as a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG), exercised their votes for the first time in Lok Sabha polls in the Great Nicobar Islands.
- 33. b** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have launched the world's first artificial intelligence (AI) center for automatic processing of the Arabic language, under the name "Arabic Intelligence Center" in Riyadh.
- 34. a** UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Gita Sabharwal of India as the United Nations resident coordinator in Indonesia.
- 35. b** Asia's first spot bitcoin and ether ETFs make lukewarm Hong Kong debut.
- 36. d** The RBI's updated guidance note on operational risk management now extends to both commercial banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), including housing finance companies, as mentioned in the provided information.
- 37. c** Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) system was successfully flight-tested from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- 38. a** Indian Chess Prodigy, Vaishali Ramesh Babu, has officially been awarded the title of Grandmaster by FIDE, the International Chess Federation. This remarkable achievement makes Vaishali the third Indian female Grandmaster, joining Koneru Humpy and Harika Dronavalli.
- 39. b** Bhavi Mehta was awarded the prize for designing the cover of "The Book Beautiful" by Pradeep Sebastian.
- 40. d** The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 to be World Press Freedom Day or just World Press Day, observed to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and marking the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration.
- 41. c** In 2019, the 40th session of UNESCO's General Conference decided to proclaim 5 May of each year as "World Portuguese Language Day".
- 42. d** In Nepal, the Ministry of Health and Population has urged people to wear masks given the increase in air pollution in Kathmandu valley. The air quality in Kathmandu was at the top of the list of cities with 'unhealthy air' in the world.

- 43. b** The Supreme Court directed the SCBA to reserve one-third of its posts for women, including the treasurer's post and specific positions within the executive committee.
- 44. c** The first Vande Bharat Metro was rolled out from the Rail Coach Factory in Punjab's Kapurthala.
- 45. c** The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board has joined hands with Starscapes, a leading astro-tourism company, to introduce Nakshatra Sabha, a new initiative to provide a comprehensive Astro Tourism experience to people.
- 46. a** As artificial intelligence (AI) technology takes the industries by storm, the world has got its first AID diplomat who will represent Ukraine.
- 47. c** NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), entered into an agreement with the Bank of Namibia (BoN) for developing an instant payment system like Unified Payment Interface (UPI) for the African nation.
- 48. a** A Hindu marriage is a 'samskara' or sacrament and cannot be recognised under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 "unless performed with ceremonies in the proper form", the Supreme Court has ruled.
- 49. a** The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, through the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), will host the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 46) and the 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP 26) in Kochi, Kerala.
- 50. c** UNESCO awarded its world press freedom prize to all Palestinian journalists covering the war in Gaza, where Israel has been battling Hamas for more than six months.
- 51. c** India ranks 159th in the 2024 world Press Freedom Index published annually by Reporters without Borders (RSF). Pakistan is ranked 152 while Sri Lanka 150. India's ranking was 161 out of 180 countries last year.
- 52. c** China has launched its Chang'e-6 mission, aiming to become the first country to collect rock and soil samples from the far side of the Moon.
- 53. a** Solomon Islands lawmakers selected a new prime minister, choosing foreign minister Jeremiah Manele, who has pledged to continue the Pacific Island nation's foreign policy that drew it closer to China.
- 54. c** Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh was chosen as the second site for the reintroduction of cheetahs last year.
- 55. d** Constitution Park, a collaborative effort between the Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group, saw its grand opening in Pune.
- 56. a** Denmark's government said it is relaxing its restrictions on abortion for the first time in 50 years to make it legal for women to terminate pregnancies up to the 18th week from the previous 12th week.
- 57. a** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the re-appointment of Atanu Chakraborty as the Part Time Chairman of HDFC Bank for a period of three years.
- 58. c** The conversion of the propulsion system began with INS Beas, a Brahmaputra-class frigate.
- 59. b** International Firefighters' Day is observed on 4th May every year. This day provides an opportunity to express gratitude and appreciation towards firefighters worldwide for their unwavering dedication and service to society.
- 60. d** In his recently published memoir, "Just a Mercenary?: Notes from My Life and Career," former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Duvvuri Subbarao takes readers on a captivating journey through his distinguished career, spanning diverse roles from sub-collector to finance secretary and ultimately, the helm of the central bank.
- 61. a** Assam's Purnima Devi Barman Receives 'Green Oscar' Whitley Gold Award 2024.
- 62. a** Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh had the highest AQI recorded at 346, indicating severe pollution levels.
- 63. a** Sadiq Khan registered a decisive victory to secure a record third term as Mayor of London, as the local election results from England and Wales continued to reflect a strong swing in favour of the Opposition Labour Party.

- 64. a** Chandigarh University has become the first Indian university to start a Harvard University collaborative business management program by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States based prestigious university to provide aspiring business students international exposure and perspective.
- 65. b** Nepal announced the printing of a new NPR100 currency note with a map that shows the controversial territories of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, already termed as “artificial enlargement” and “untenable” by India.
- 66. d** Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), India’s largest private port operator, is eyeing the Philippines’ Bataan for its port development plan.
- 67. b** The Indian Army and the Air Force are planning to jointly deploy MQ-9B Predator drones at air bases in Sarsawa and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- 68. a** India and Ghana are working to link their payment systems - Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Ghana Interbank Payment and Settlement Systems (GHIPSS) respectively to permit users to make instant, low-cost fund transfers on a reciprocal basis.
- 69. c** World Athletics Day is organized by the IAAF (International Amateur Athletic Federation) on May 7 every year.
- 70. a** The Indian Super League (ISL) is the men’s highest level of the Indian football league system. Mumbai City FC lifts ISL Cup, beats Mohun Bagan Super Giants by 3-1.
- 71. a** UNICEF India announced Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan as its new National Ambassador.
- 72. b** Togo’s ruling party has won a majority of seats in the West African nation’s parliament, the election commission said as it announced provisional results that was rejected by the opposition as part of a move to extend President Faure Gnassingbe’s tenure.
- 73. a** FLiRT, a group of new Covid-19 variants belonging to Omicron’s JN.1 lineage is spreading fast in US, raising concern about a new wave of infections in summer.
- 74. c** Coal Miner’s Day is celebrated on May 4 each year. It honours the hard work and sacrifices of coal miners around the world.
- 75. d** Renowned veteran actor Shabana Azmi is set to receive the prestigious Freedom of the City of London Award.
- 76. c** ARTPARK, India’s pioneering AI and robotics hub established in 2020 within the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) campus, Bengaluru, aims to foster inclusivity and equitable access to technology.
- 77. c** The Army is working on creating a new unit that can simulate the role of an adversary during military exercises and war game training. Plans for the new unit — OPFOR, or “opposing forces” — are currently under discussion and will be implemented after final approval from the Army hierarchy.
- 78. c** Israel ordered the local offices of Qatar’s Al Jazeera satellite news network to close escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s hard-line government as Doha-mediated ceasefire negotiations with Hamas hang in the balance.
- 79. b** 23 participating countries, including Russia, Zimbabwe, and Nepal, but Brazil is not listed among them.
- 80. c** China’s victory in the Uber Cup final against Indonesia marked its 16th win in the tournament, highlighting its supremacy in women’s badminton.
- 81. c** The Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks (CGPDTM) has bestowed the Geographical Indication (GI) certificate upon the traditional artisans of ‘Kutch Ajrakh,’ hailing from the vibrant region of Kutch in Gujarat.
- 82. c** Every year, World Athletics Day is observed on May 7.
- 83. c** India’s first-ever ‘hybrid pitch’ was unveiled at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium in a grand ceremony.
- 84. d** India has registered its protest with Beijing against China’s “illegal attempts” to “alter facts on the ground” in the Shaksgam valley of occupied Kashmir, which faces the Siachen glacier.

- 85. a** ICICI Bank has rolled out a new facility allowing its non-resident Indian (NRI) customers to make Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions in India using their international mobile numbers.
- 86. a** IIT Madras students have broken new ground and bagged a record by conducting India's very first block chain technology-based election, using in-house developed software for transparent, tamper-proof, vote-from-anywhere student council elections.
- 87. c** Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman administered the oath of integrity and secrecy to retired Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as the President of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), in New Delhi.
- 88. c** The University of Tokyo Atacama Observatory (TAO) is the highest astronomical observatory in the world as certified by the Guinness World Record. TAO sits at an altitude of 5,640m on the summit of a mountain in northern Chile's Atacama Desert.
- 89. a** IIT-Madras startup Mindgrove launches first India-made microcontroller chip.
- 90. d** The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), India concluded #PlayTrue Campaign, with turnout of more than 12,133 participants.
- 91. c** Indian Army's Kharga Corps, under the aegis of Army's Western Command, successfully conducted a three-day joint exercise with the IAF at multiple locations in Punjab. The Gagan Strike-II exercise, which incorporated Apache and ALH-WSI helicopters, Unarmed Aerial Vehicles and special forces of Indian Army.
- 92. b** Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of Odisha, India, approximately 150 kilometres (93 mi) east of the state capital Bhubaneswar.
- 93. a** McLaren's Lando Norris emerged victorious over Max Verstappen of Red Bull Racing in a thrilling showdown at the Miami Grand Prix (GP).
- 94. b** Renowned fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee made history by becoming the first Indian designer to grace the prestigious Met Gala carpet.
- 95. c** Vladimir Putin sworn in as Russia's President for fifth term.
- 96. b** According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), India received over \$111 billion in remittances in 2022, making it the largest recipient in the world and the first country to surpass the \$100 billion mark.
- 97. b** Chinese President Xi Jinping has appointed Xu Feihong as the new Ambassador to India, succeeding Sun Weidong, amid strained relations between the two countries over the Ladakh standoff.
- 98. a** Pakistan's maiden lunar mission, ICube Qamar (ICUBE-Q), has embarked on its voyage, hitching a ride aboard China's Chang'e-6 orbiter.
- 99. c** India's First Net-Zero Business Park Launched in Chennai.
- 100. a** World Cartoonist Day, observed annually on May 5, is a cherished occasion dedicated to celebrating the remarkable contributions of cartoonists across the globe.
- 101. b** World Red Cross Day and Red Crescent Day are celebrated on 8 May every year, marking the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant, the founder of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and to honor the humanitarian efforts of the organization worldwide.
- 102. c** The Pulitzer Prizes are two-dozen annual awards given by Columbia University in New York for achievements in the United States in "journalism, arts and letters." They were established in 1917 by the will of Joseph Pulitzer, who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher.
- 103. b** India's Tejaswin Shankar clinched victory in the men's High Jump event at the USATF Festival in Tucson, Arizona, USA.
- 104. a** The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Secretary General, Indra Mani Pandey will be on two day visit to India.

- 105. b** India surpassed Japan to become the world's third-largest solar power generator in 2023, according to the report by Ember. This indicates that India ranked third in terms of solar power generation in that year.
- 106. a** The World Bank's recent report, "Recipe for a Livable Planet: Achieving Net Zero Emissions in the Agrifood System", has emphasized on significant potential for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the agrifood sector, which currently accounts for about a third of all global emissions.
- 107. c** Zomato unveils 'India's first' crowd-supported weather infrastructure.
- 108. a** Former Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama was sentenced to one year in prison for perverting the course of justice, with a judge finding he used his political clout to shut down a police investigation.
- 109. c** West Nile Fever is a viral infection transmitted primarily by mosquitoes, caused by the West Nile virus (WNV).
- 110. b** The International Cricket Council (ICC) specifies Bangladesh as the host country for the tournament.
- 111. c** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami launched the Pirul Lao-Paisa Pao in the Rudraprayag district.
- 112. a** Cary Fowler, the US special envoy for Global Food Security, and Geoffrey Hawtin, an agricultural scientist from the United Kingdom and executive board member at the Global Crop Diversity Trust, will be awarded the annual prize this fall in Des Moines, Iowa, where the food prize foundation is based. They will split a \$500,000 award.
- 113. a** Veteran actors Vyjayanthimala Bala and Konidela Chiranjeevi were bestowed the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian honour awarded for exceptional and distinguished service.
- 114. c** In 2024, World Migratory Bird Day will be celebrated on two days, 11 May and 12 October, aligning with the cyclic nature of bird migration in different hemispheres.
- 115. a** Tata Steel became the first Indian steel company to undertake a fully loaded voyage from East Coast of Australia to India.
- 116. d** In Nagaland, ambassador of Japan to India, Hiroshi Suzuki and Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio jointly inaugurated the Kohima Peace Memorial and laid the foundation stone of Eco Park Kohima.
- 117. b** The New York City has continued to maintain its position as the world's wealthiest city in 2024, as indicated by the findings of Henley & Partners in collaboration with New World Wealth.
- 118. b** Scotland's Parliament approved John Swinney, a political veteran from the Scottish National Party (SNP), to lead the country as the first minister, succeeding Humza Yousaf.
- 119. b** On a Norwegian island in the Arctic Circle. The vault is situated on the island of Svalbard, specifically chosen for its remote location and stable environment, ensuring the safety of the seeds stored within.
- 120. a** European Union (EU) countries gave the green light to the bloc's first law devoted to combatting violence against women.
- 121. c** The Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Act has been notified in a gazette and has been enforced with effect from May 10.
- 122. c** India and France are set to conduct the 7th edition of the Joint Military Exercise 'Shakti' from May 13-26 in Meghalaya's Umroi region.
- 123. b** Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah said in a televised speech that he has dissolved parliament.
- 124. b** Camp David Accords, agreements between Israel and Egypt signed on September 17, 1978, that led in the following year to a peace treaty between those two countries, the first such treaty between Israel and any of its Arab neighbours. Brokered by U.S. Pres.
- 125. b** Reduction in the number of parts and weld joints. The passage states that the new PS4 engine design has reduced the number of parts from 14 to a single piece and eliminated 19 weld joints, which signifies a significant advancement in simplifying the engine structure.

126. c Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati researchers have developed the innovative materials and methodology for improving the performance of supercapacitors.
127. b Aman Sehrawat made history by becoming the first Indian male wrestler to secure a quota place for the 2024 Paris Olympics.
128. c Ashok Malik secured the gold medal in the Men's up to 65 Kg category with a personal best lift of 197 kg.
129. b Ruskin Bond was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship at his Mussoorie home.
130. c World Thalassaemia Day is being observed on 8 May annually to raise awareness among people about the prevention and treatment of thalassaemia.
131. c Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd to conduct two Pilot Projects under the Drone Didi Yojana.
132. c Following his swearing-in ceremony as the Russian President, Vladimir Putin moved ahead with the reappointment of his former Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin to the post.
133. a Nepali Sherpa climber Kami Rita has scaled Everest for the 29th time, surpassing his own record of 28 ascents.
134. b Assam government's proposed plan to construct Greenfield Airport at Doloo in Silchar using part of a tea garden has been halted after the Supreme Court of India issued its order setting aside the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) clearance.
135. b China emerged as India's largest trading partner in the fiscal year 2023-24, with a two-way commerce of USD 118.4 billion, slightly edging past the United States, according to the data from the economic think tank GTRI.
136. b Apollo Cancer Centre achieved a milestone by conducting India's first Robotic CRS with HIPEC, revolutionizing the treatment of peritoneal surface cancer, particularly Pseudomyxoma Peritonei (PMP).
137. c Sri Lanka Cricket has announced that Indian milk producer Amul has been appointed as the 'Official Sponsor' of the Sri Lanka Men's Team for the duration of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.
138. b The word Kallakkadal means 'a sea that comes suddenly like a thief'. The word is derived by combining two Malayalam words: 'Kallan' (thief) and 'Kadal' (sea).
139. c The United Nations designated 12 May the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect biodiversity and the environment, and boost economic development.
140. c Idashisha Nongrang is a 1992-batch IPS officer who has been appointed as Meghalaya's next DGP, making her the first woman to hold this position in the state.
141. a The Mahalaxmi Jatra is a traditional festival celebrated in honor of the goddess Mahalaxmi, blending religious traditions with cultural festivities in the Kathmandu Valley.
142. a Under Operation Sadbhavana, the Indian Army's Trishakti Corps demonstrated unwavering support for North Sikkim's remote communities in Naga and Rangrang villages.
143. a 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.
144. c While Emad al al-Atiqi, Anwar Ali al-Mudhaf, and Abdullah Ali al-Yahya retained their posts as ministers, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah is the one who heads the newly formed cabinet.
145. b India participated in the 19th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), held at the UN Headquarters in New York.
146. c India is set to sign an agreement with Iran to manage Chabahar Port for the next 10 years.
147. a 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.

- 148. a** Lauren Price becomes Wales' first female world champion boxer.
- 149. a** Venezuela is believed to be the first nation in modern times to have completely lost all of its glaciers
- 150. b** 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.
- 151. a** Assam is set to witness India's first river terminal in Guwahati.
- 152. c** The State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest commercial bank, has announced that it has become the first bank to join the India International Bullion Exchange's Trading Cum Clearing (TCM) programme.
- 153. c** Russian President Vladimir Putin replaced Sergei Shoigu as Defence Minister in a Cabinet shakeup. The other options are incorrect as they pertain to different positions or individuals in the Russian government. Sergei Lavrov is the Foreign Minister, Dmitry Medvedev has served in various capacities including Prime Minister, and Mikhail Mishustin is the current Prime Minister.
- 154. d** Indonesia's Ibu volcano erupted spewing thick columns of grey ash several kilometres into the sky.
- 155. a** Britain's King Charles handed over a senior military role to his son Prince William at a ceremony, marking a rare joint appearance for the pair as the king steps up his return to public duties after his cancer diagnosis. Charles presented William with the title of Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Air Corps.
- 156. a** Hero MotoCorp has become the first auto company in India to integrate with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).
- 157. a** Melinda French Gates, the billionaire ex-wife of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, announced that she is stepping down from her role as co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- 158. b** Researchers have discovered a new "fiery, glowing red" exoplanet displaying intense volcanic activity similar to Jupiter's moon Io.
- 159. a** Japan managed to end a 37-year wait to lift the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup (PSAS) for the first time after defeating Pakistan 4-1 on penalties in the final action of the 30th edition of the tournament in Ipoh.
- 160. c** The International Day of Families is observed annually on 15 May, following a resolution passed by the General Assembly in 1993.
- 161. c** International Nurses Day is an international day observed around the world on 12 May each year.
- 162. b** The World Wildlife Crime Report 2024 was launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna, Austria. This is the third report in a series following the 2020 and 2016 publications.
- 163. a** HDFC Bank has launched a new digital credit card called Pixel Play Credit Card.
- 164. d** Aarogya Maitri Cubes, the world's first disaster hospital packed in 72 cubes that can be airlifted, had its test run by the Indian Air Force at Agra.
- 165. a** After over a century of absence, the majestic sei whales have returned to the waters off Argentina's Patagonian coast.
- 166. b** Three Indian literary masterpieces have been added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Regional Register. The inclusion of the 'Ramcharitmanas', 'Panchatantra', and 'Sahṛdayāloka-Locana' in the register highlights the significance of preserving and celebrating diverse narratives and artistic expressions that shape our shared humanity. 'Sahṛdayaloka-Locana', 'Panchatantra', and 'Ramcharitmanas' were authored by renowned figures such as Acharya Anandvardhan, Pt. Vishnu Sharma, and Goswami Tulsidas, respectively.
- 167. b** Manika Batra becomes first Indian woman to break into top-25 of world table tennis singles rankings.
- 168. d** AIIMS New Delhi has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University of Bolton Institute of Medicine to collaborate in the field of medical research, innovation and education.

- 169. b** For the first time, India has set up its own pavilion, at the World Hydrogen Summit 2024, being held in Rotterdam, Netherlands.
- 170. b** Magnus Carlsen won the 2024 Superbet Poland Rapid & Blitz tournament, showcasing his prowess in both rapid and blitz formats.
- 171. c** The seventh edition of the Indo-U.S. joint counter terrorism exercise ‘Tarkash’ between the elite National Security Guard (NSG) and the U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) commenced.
- 172. b** The CJJ was speaking at the J20 Summit (of heads of Supreme Courts and constitutional courts of G20 members) in Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro.
- 173. c** Egypt received \$14 billion from the United Arab Emirates as a second payment for the development of Ras al-Hikma peninsula.
- 174. d** Cape Town: The world’s first big city to run out of water.
- 175. c** NASA appointed David Salvagnini as the agency’s first chief artificial intelligence (AI) officer, in an extension of his current role as the chief data officer.
- 176. c** PhonePe announced that it has enabled UPI payment acceptance in collaboration with LankaPay.
- 177. b** India has emerged as the country with the highest data center capacity in the Asia-Pacific region, surpassing other major countries like Australia, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Singapore, and Korea.
- 178. b** The Army is all set to begin receiving another set of Russian Igla-S very short range air defence systems (VSHORAD), filling a critical void in the air defence requirements which has been repeatedly delayed.
- 179. c** FIFA has confirmed that the inaugural edition of the Women’s Club World Cup tournament will feature 16 teams.
- 180. c** The International Day of Light is celebrated on 16 May each year, the anniversary of the first successful operation of the laser in 1960 by physicist and engineer, Theodore Maiman.
- 181. b** India’s First WhatsApp Park in UP. The renowned tourist destination in Lucknow city, formerly known as Gautam Buddha Park, has been rebranded as Happiness Park or WhatsApp Park.
- 182. c** The historic Shore Temple in Mamallapuram, a renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site, has achieved a significant milestone by becoming India’s first Green Energy Archaeological Site.
- 183. a** The United Arab Emirates has launched a 10-year Blue Residency visa for individuals who have made ‘exceptional efforts and contributions to protecting the environment, whether marine or land’.
- 184. a** Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Kapil Sibal won the election to the post of the president of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).
- 185. c** Singapore’s deputy leader Lawrence Wong was sworn in as the nation’s fourth prime minister in a carefully planned political succession designed to ensure continuity and stability in the Asian financial hub.
- 186. c** Norges Bank, the central bank of Norway, has excluded Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) from its Government Pension Fund Global, over the ‘unacceptable risk’ the company contributes to human rights violations during the times of war and conflicts.
- 187. d** Forbes released its ninth edition of the “30 Under 30 Asia” list, celebrating 300 young entrepreneurs, leaders, and trailblazers under 30 who are driving innovation and transforming industries across the Asia-Pacific region. The list also features India’s Akshit Bansal and Raghav Arora, Co-founders of Statiq and Bhagya Shree Jain, Founder of The Disposal Company. Bansal and Arora founded Sharify Services, under the brand Statiq, which offers a nationwide network of charging stations for electric vehicles.
- 188. c** The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) announced certain changes in the Infosys Prize. The upper age limit for prize winners is being revised from 50 years to 40 years.

- 189. d** Indian football legend Sunil Chhetri has announced his retirement after a distinguished career with the national team.
- 190. c** Every year, the world observes May 17 as World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.
- 191. a** Brazil will host the 2027 Women's World Cup after a vote of FIFA's 211 members chose the South American bid over a joint bid from Belgium, Netherlands and Germany.
- 192. b** Cristiano Ronaldo topped the Forbes list of highest-paid athletes for the fourth time, earning \$260m over the past 12 months.
- 193. b** Sela Tunnel has been officially recognised as the highest tunnel in the country by the International Book of Honour, England.
- 194. b** Four border villages seized by Armenia in the 1990s will be returned to Azerbaijan. This signifies a significant development in the efforts to resolve long-standing disputes between the two nations.
- 195. c** With 93 per cent of students and 83 per cent of employees actively engaging with the technology, India ranks first in the adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) across Asia-Pacific, a report released by Deloitte India.
- 196. c** Andrej Plenkovic has been elected for his third consecutive term as Prime Minister, leading the conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) in the newly inaugurated government.
- 197. d** The James Webb Telescope has discovered the most distant merger of two gigantic black holes dating to the time of 740 million years after the universe-forming Big Bang.
- 198. b** The Supreme Court told authorities in Rajasthan that there cannot be any mining activity within 1-km radius of critical tiger habitats.
- 199. d** World's highest competition pool has been opened in Bhutan.
- 200. c** International Museum Day is an international day held annually on or around 18 May, coordinated by the International Council of Museums.
- 201. c** World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20.
- 202. c** Roderick Townsend, an American athlete, clinched the gold medal in the men's T47 high jump final at the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan, with a jump of 2.05 meters. Therefore, the correct answer is option (c).
- 203. c** Junta-run Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have finalised plans to form a confederation after turning their backs on former colonial ruler France to seek closer ties with Russia. Their Foreign Ministers met in Niger's capital Niamey to agree on a text establishing the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).
- 204. a** Ludhiana gets India's first metaverse-powered virtual model polling booth.
- 205. a** Shyam Benegal's masterpiece 'Manthan' was screened at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. India's first crowdfunded film joined their ranks, receiving a standing ovation at the festival.
- 206. b** Blue Origin's mission, which marked the return of space tourism after a two-year hiatus, was named NS-25. This mission was significant as it demonstrated the company's readiness to resume its space tourism operations after overcoming setbacks from an unsuccessful uncrewed test flight.
- 207. b** Constitution bench is the name given to the benches of the Supreme Court of India which consist of at least five judges of the court which sit to decide any case "involving a substantial question of law as to the interpretation" of the Constitution of India or "for the purpose of hearing any reference" made by the President of India under Article 143.
- 208. b** The 33rd Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna. This is where the heads of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Interpol, and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) convened to discuss the issue.
- 209. a** Vietnam has nominated its Public Security Minister To Lam as its new President.
- 210. a** Mahamat Idriss Deby was declared the winner in Chad presidential election after the Council reviewed and reaffirmed vote counts.

- 211. c** The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2023 is a report produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the five United Nations regional commissions.
- 212. b** Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian have died in the helicopter crash.
- 213. c** Lai Ching-te assumed the role of Taiwan’s new president facing deeply suspicious China that believes he is a “separatist” and a divided parliament with an opposition ready to challenge his leadership.
- 214. b** Gopichand Hinduja and his family have secured the top spot on the Sunday Times Rich List with a net worth of £37.2 billion.
- 215. a** Elon Musk traveled to Indonesia’s resort island of Bali to launch Starlink satellite internet service in the world’s largest archipelago nation.
- 216. c** A \$500-million credit line has been extended by International Finance Corporation to HDFC Bank to provide finance to women through microloans in rural areas.
- 217. c** International Tea Day is observed annually on May 21, according to the United Nations.
- 218. b** India and Britain have reaffirmed their commitment to conclude a mutually beneficial free trade agreement (FTA) at the annual U.K.-India Strategic Dialogue in London.
- 219. a** America’s first Black astronaut candidate finally rocketed into space 60 years later, flying with Jeff Bezos’ rocket company. Ed Dwight was an Air Force pilot when President John F. Kennedy championed him as a candidate for NASA’s early astronaut corps.
- 220. c** India’s star men’s doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued its dream run as it secured the Thailand Open Super 500 title by outwitting Chen Bo Yang and Liu Yi of China.
- 221. d** Manchester City created English football history, overcoming West Ham 3-1 to win their fourth straight Premier League title and break Arsenal’s hearts as Jurgen Klopp made an emotional Liverpool exit.
- 222. c** AI Holding and Seetha Mahalaxmi Healthcare (SML) launched Hanooman AI, an Indian large language model (LLM) designed with the Indian demographic in mind.
- 223. d** Italy is hosting the G-7 Summit meeting from June 13-15, while the Ukraine peace summit will be held in Switzerland from June 15-16.
- 224. b** To strengthen the existing regulatory framework for long gestation period financing for projects such as infrastructure, non-infrastructure and commercial real estate sectors, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued draft regulations for consultation.
- 225. b** Mohammad Mokhber assumed the role of Iran’s interim president after Ebrahim Raisi’s unfortunate death in a helicopter crash. This transition of power occurred due to Mokhber’s position as vice president since 2021 and his close ties to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.
- 226. b** Dominican Republic President Luis Abinader was re-elected for another four-year term, an endorsement of his handling of the economy and tough policies toward migration from Haiti.
- 227. c** Indian Navy ships INS Delhi, INS Shakti, and INS Kiltan arrived in Manila, Philippines, as part of the Operational Deployment of the Indian Navy’s Eastern Fleet to the South China Sea.
- 228. a** Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’ won a vote of confidence in Parliament, the fourth within 18 months of taking office, amidst sloganeering by the main Opposition Nepali Congress that abstained from the voting.
- 229. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised the “remarkable” turnaround in the health of India’s banking sector after net profit crossed Rs 3 lakh crore for the first time in FY24.
- 230. a** ISB secured the number one position globally in the Financial Times Executive Education Custom Ranking 2024 and the second spot in Asia.

- 231. c** New York ranks first on the index, followed by London, San Jose, Tokyo, Paris, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Melbourne, and Zurich.
- 232. a** Vijayawada native Jaya Badiga has been appointed judge of Sacramento county superior court in California, the first woman from Andhra to become a judge in the US.
- 233. c** The market capitalisation of companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has reached a historic \$5 trillion, marking a fresh high.
- 234. b** The wCBDC was provided by the SNB for settling the digital bond, demonstrating collaboration between international entities and central banks to integrate digital currencies into capital markets.
- 235. c** In a significant milestone for India-UK defence cooperation Lieutenant Commander N Dinesh Anand became the first Indian Navy officer to conduct training at the Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) in Dartmouth, south-west England.
- 236. b** Senior Indian diplomat Dammu Ravi participated in the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation member states in Astana in the Kazakh capital.
- 237. b** A Japanese consortium has unveiled the prototype of what is touted to be the world's first high-speed 6G device, promising data transfer rates at lightning speed.
- 238. c** The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) warned that a sixth of the world's food supplies were at risk from the deterioration of the world's rangelands – which include savannas, wetlands and deserts as well as grassland.
- 239. d** Alexander Zverev warmed up for the French Open by winning his sixth Masters title when he beat first-time finalist Nicolas Jarry in the Italian Open final.
- 240. c** The P.V. Narasimha Rao-led Congress government, which came to power after the 1991 election, declared 21 May as an anti-terrorism day to pay tribute to Rajiv Gandhi and to promote awareness about the consequences of terrorist activities.
- 241. b** India climbed to the 39th position in the latest World Economic Forum's "Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024". This indicates an improvement in India's travel and tourism sector compared to previous years, showcasing its resilience post-pandemic.
- 242. c** The Indian Army's Project Udbhav is exploring the epic battles of the Mahabharata and the strategic brilliance of past Indian dynasties, shaping India's rich military heritage.
- 243. b** Spain recently became the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance, joining other nations in a collaborative effort to promote the deployment of solar energy technologies.
- 244. c** More than half of the world's mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapse, with nearly one in five facing severe risk, according to the findings of the first global mangrove assessment.
- 245. b** During the 7th edition of ongoing Joint Exercise Shakti, the Indian and French Army shared drills and expertise in jungle survival techniques.
- 246. a** Spain, Ireland and Norway said that they would recognise a Palestinian state on May 28, a step toward a long-held Palestinian aspiration that came amid international outrage over the civilian death toll and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip following Israel's offensive.
- 247. d** Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari has inaugurated its first-ever Emergency Medical Response System of the Indian Air Force at Command Hospital Air Force in Bengaluru.
- 248. c** The first prototype dish antenna which will be replicated towards building the world's largest radio telescope has achieved results from the first light. Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Observatory is the proposed telescope which is being planned to be constructed across the two continents, in South Africa and Australia.
- 249. d** In recognition of this milestone, on May 7, 2024, the General Assembly passed Resolution proclaiming May 25 as World Football Day.

- 250. b** German writer Jenny Erpenbeck and translator Michael Hofmann have won the International Booker Prize. Kairos is the winner of the International Booker Prize 2024.
- 251. b** The Wildlife Institute of India estimates that Uttar Pradesh is home to around 2,000 Gangetic dolphins, which is more than half of the total population found in India. This highlights the significant responsibility Uttar Pradesh holds in conserving and promoting the Gangetic dolphin population.
- 252. b** Sikkim will soon become the first state in India to introduce an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven traffic management system.
- 253. b** Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau termed the tragic Komagata Maru incident as a “dark chapter” in the country’s history and asked Canadians to work together to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive country for everyone.
- 254. c** An rickshaw driver from a village in Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh is overjoyed on meeting King Charles III at Buckingham Palace after she collected a prestigious women’s empowerment award in London. Arti received the Amal Clooney Women’s Empowerment Award, named after the world-renowned human rights barrister, at the Prince’s Trust Awards in London followed by a meeting with the 75-year-old monarch.
- 255. b** Maldives will soon launch India’s RuPay service “to bolster the Maldivian Rufiyaa”.
- 256. c** EVR Motors, an Israel-based innovator specializing in high power-density electric motors, announced the inauguration of its new greenfield plant in Manesar, Haryana, under its subsidiary, I.EVR Motors.
- 257. b** Rajesh Kumar, the CEO of the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), mentioned that the MHA initiated the establishment of the committee, indicating its involvement in addressing the issue of cybercrimes.
- 258. c** Pune’s Shivajinagar meteorological observatory. This observatory has become the first in India to completely switch to round-the-clock solar-powered operations, marking a significant step towards green energy adoption.
- 259. c** The first Asian Relay Championships was held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- 260. d** Tinkesh Kaushik, a man from Goa, has become the world’s first triple amputee to reach the Mount Everest Base Camp located 17,598 feet above sea level, a private disability rights body has claimed.
- 261. a** In a historic moment for Indian cinema, “SUNFLOWERS WERE THE FIRST ONES TO KNOW,” a short film directed by Chidanand Naik, a student of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), has won the prestigious Cannes’ La Cinf Award for Best Short at the 77th Cannes Film Festival in France.
- 262. b** Members of Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have concluded an agreement under which it will be mandatory for patent applicants to disclose country of origin or source of genetic resources if the claimed invention is based on those materials or associated traditional knowledge.
- 263. c** In a big boost to the fiscal position of the government, the central board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved a transfer of Rs. 2.11 lakh crore as surplus, or dividend, to the Central Government for the year accounting year 2023-24.
- 264. d** Barcelona ended its losing streak against the game’s most successful club beating Lyon 2-0 to clinch its third Women’s Champions League title in four years.
- 265. c** Kerala High Court Enables ‘First Of Its Kind’ Mobile E-Sewa Kendra At Idukki.
- 266. c** Following China’s Joint Sword-2024A military exercise around Taiwan, US experts analysed that Beijing has an intent to make large-scale military drills around the island a regular move with the China Coast Guard (CCG) to play a more important role in a blockade. The latest Joint Sword-2024A military exercise conducted by China around Taiwan showed Beijing has an intent to make large-scale military.
- 267. a** Burkina Faso’s ruling junta will remain in power for another five years after participants in national talks proposed extending the transition back to democracy by 60 months from July.
- 268. b** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced that Google will soon commence local production of its flagship Pixel smartphones in the state. The manufacturing facility will be set up near Chennai in collaboration with Foxconn, a leading contract electronics manufacturer.

- 269. b** Silkworms are the larva of a moth (*Bombyx mori*) native to Asia. They spin a cocoon of silk fiber that has long been used as the source of commercial silk.
- 270. d** Each year on 24th May, Commonwealth Day is commemorated. Commonwealth Day is observed on the birthday of Queen Victoria of England, who was born on 24th May, 1819, and is observed by all countries which were once a colony of the British Empire.
- 271. b** Shrinivas R Kulkarni, an Indian-origin professor of astronomy from the US will be bestowed the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy for his ground-breaking discoveries about millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects.
- 272. c** BARK Air, a new airline that offers travel opportunities for humans and their dogs, is now off the ground. BARK Air, launched by a dog toy company BARK in partnership with a jet charter service, is a luxury airline for dogs of all sizes along with their owners.
- 273. c** In the latest such engagement, three Indian Navy ships – destroyer Delhi, fleet tanker Shakti and anti-submarine corvette Kiltan – concluded an operational deployment to South China Sea under the Navy’s Eastern Fleet that saw port calls beginning with Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei.
- 274. a** DD Kisan deployed two Artificial Intelligence anchors as part of the initiative to present the television channel in a new avatar. The anchors have been named as ‘AI Krish’ and ‘AI Bhoomi’, and can speak in 50 Indian and foreign languages.
- 275. a** Judges at the top United Nations court ordered Israel to immediately halt its military assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, in a landmark emergency ruling in South Africa’s case accusing Israel of genocide.
- 276. b** Lithuania’s President Gitanas Nausėda won re-election in a vote marked by defence concerns over neighbouring Russia.
- 277. d** The OPEC+ group of oil producers, comprising the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies led by Russia, has pushed back its output policy meeting and will convene online.
- 278. d** In a historic move, the Government of India has approved the establishment of the first-ever city museum in Bhopal.
- 279. c** Star batter Virat Kohli has concluded the 2024 Indian Premier League season with the Orange Cap, awarded to the player with the most runs in the season.
- 280. c** World Thyroid Day is observed annually on May 25th to raise awareness about the thyroid gland and the various conditions that affect it.
- 281. c** In a significant milestone, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India to have created a staggering 10 crore Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) IDs under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.
- 282. c** Kolkata-born Anasuya Sengupta has made history by winning the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival. The honour has come in the Un Certain Regard section for Sengupta’s role in Bulgarian director Konstantin Bojanov’s ‘The Shameless’.
- 283. c** Mindgrove Technologies has launched India’s first commercial high-performance SoC (system-on-chip) named Secure IoT.
- 284. a** Top Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar became the first from the country to win a gold medal in the Asian Senior Championships as she clinched the yellow metal in the women’s vault event.
- 285. c** The storm hit the land between Sagar Islands in Bengal’s South 24 Parganas district, which was the hardest hit, and Khepupara in Bangladesh near Mongla.
- 286. d** State-owned GAIL (India) Ltd’s maiden green hydrogen plant at Vijaipur in Madhya Pradesh has been commissioned, making a major step for the nation’s largest natural gas transmission and distribution firm’s foray into new and alternate energy.
- 287. b** High Commissioner of India in Bangladesh Pranay Verma and Investment Adviser of Bangladesh Prime Minister Salman Fazlur Rahman jointly inaugurated a new plant of India’s leading pharmaceutical company, Sun Pharma, near Dhaka.
- 288. a** The World’s First Museum of Homelessness opens in London.

- 289. c** NASA successfully launched the first of a pair of small climate satellites from the Rocket Lab’s Launch Complex 1 in Mahia, New Zealand. The mission, dubbed PREFIRE (Polar Radiant Energy in the Far-InfraRed Experiment), aims to study heat emissions at the Earth’s poles, shedding light on the intricate interplay between these regions and global climate change.
- 290. c** Kolkata Knight Riders lifted their third Indian Premier League (IPL) title with an eight-wicket thrashing of Sunrisers Hyderabad in a lop-sided final in Chennai.
- 291. d** The 77th World Health Assembly Starts in Geneva.
- 292. a** The countries mentioned are Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Finland, Lithuania, and Norway.
- 293. c** The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a new ‘Investment Round’ aiming to raise 7 billion dollars of funds to support countries to tackle challenges like climate change, displacement, poverty and inequality.
- 294. b** Russia will build a small nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan, the first such project in post-Soviet Central Asia,
- 295. c** Twelve nations have signed the Zero Debris Charter at the ESA/EU Space Council, solidifying their commitment to the long-term sustainability of human activities in Earth orbit.
- 296. c** The introduction of the world’s newest currency in April inspired a reggae artist to record a song praising the ZiG, or Zimbabwe Gold.
- 297. b** India is likely to send four tigers to Cambodia by November-December to help reintroduce the big cats into its forests.
- 298. a** Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) all-rounder Sunil Narine has become the first player to win the ‘Most Valuable Player’ award in the Indian Premier League (IPL) thrice after beating the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the final of the 2024 season.
- 299. a** India’s Simran Sharma has won a Gold medal in the World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan.
- 300. c** The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, May 29, is “an international day to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism.
- 301. a** Naik Dhananjay Kumar Singh, who served with the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), will be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjöld medal during a solemn ceremony on May 30 when the UN commemorates the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers.
- 302. a** Environmental activists have filed a lawsuit at an Oslo court challenging Norway’s proposal to carry out seabed mineral exploration, saying that authorities have not done sufficient impact assessment of the mining.
- 303. a** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched three major initiatives namely the PRAVAAH portal, RBI Retail Direct mobile application and FinTech Repository as earlier announced in April 2023, April 2024 and December 2023 respectively.
- 304. d** IT services major Tata Consultancy Services has entered into a partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, to develop what it said is India’s first quantum diamond microchip imager.
- 305. a** Ongoing China-Cambodia “Golden Dragon 2024” joint military exercise involves the participation of 1,315 Cambodian military personnel and 760 Chinese soldiers. The Golden Dragon exercises have been held on a regular basis since 2016, around the same time that Cambodia canceled similar exercises with the United States known as Angkor Sentinel.
- 306. a** Apurva Chandra is the Union health secretary of the Government of India, has been appointed as the Chairperson of Committee A at the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA), as announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- 307. d** Charles Leclerc, the Ferrari driver, achieved a remarkable feat by winning the Monaco Grand Prix in 2024, becoming the first Monegasque driver to do so since Louis Chiron in 1931.
- 308. b** Thriving Mothers, Thriving World theme emphasizes the pivotal role of women in securing food access for their families and communities, highlighting the importance of empowering women to combat hunger.
- 309. a** Seoul will open the first-ever hotel built on a bridge, connecting the northern and southern parts of the city.

- 310. d** In a collaborative effort, the Indian Embassy in Muscat and the National Archives of India (NAI) successfully completed a first-of-its-kind project to archive historical documents of the Indian diaspora in Oman.
- 311. b** India assumed the Chair of the Colombo Process for the first time since its inception in 2024-26. This development underscores India's commitment to promoting safe, orderly, and legal migration in the South and Southeast Asian regions.
- 312. d** Major Radhika Sen, who served with the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), will receive the prestigious '2023 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award' from Mr. Guterres during a ceremony at the world body's headquarters marking the International Day of UN Peacekeepers.
- 313. a** The world's first wooden satellite has been built by Japanese researchers who said their tiny cuboid craft is scheduled to be carried into space off on a SpaceX rocket in September.
- 314. b** In a bid to position itself as a global leader in the gaming industry, Dubai has launched the Dubai Gaming Visa under the ambitious Dubai Program for Gaming 2033 (DPG 2033).
- 315. d** The Cold Chain and Logistics Summit is organised by the FICCI in New Delhi.
- 316. c** 'World's first' recycled container garment factory takes shape in Kenya.
- 317. c** London-based Indian origin artist Anish Kapoor has topped the Hurun India Art List for the sixth consecutive year.
- 318. c** Nepal Celebrates 71st International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day 2024, commemorating man's first ascent of Mt. Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa in May 29, 1953.
- 319. d** The General Assembly designated 30 May as the International Day of Potato to raise awareness of the multiple nutritional, economic, environmental, and cultural values of the potato.
- 320. b** The RudraM-II missile is an indigenously-developed air-launched missile system meant for air-to-surface roles, designed to neutralize various types of enemy assets. The successful flight test from a Su-30 MKI jet demonstrates its capability in air-to-surface operations.
- 321. d** An Indian Air Force contingent reached the Eielson Air Force Base of the U.S. Air Force in Alaska, United States of America, to participate in the upcoming edition of the multi-national exercise Red Flag 24.
- 322. b** NSE Indices Ltd, a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange, launched the EV and new-age automotive index to track the performance of companies which form a part of the EV ecosystem. This would be the country's first ever electric vehicle (EV) index.
- 323. c** The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched an initiative to monetize its infrastructure, seeking investments from the UAE to sustain and enhance India's expanding national highway network.
- 324. a** Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has been named one of the World's Most Influential Companies by TIME magazine, making its second appearance on the prestigious TIME 100 lists.
- 325. c** The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an intergovernmental organisation with 38 member countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. It is a forum whose member countries describe themselves as committed to democracy and the market economy, providing a platform to compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practices, and coordinate domestic and international policies of its members.
- 326. a** Donald Trump became the first former US president ever convicted of a crime after a New York jury found him guilty on all charges in his hush money case, months before an election that could see him yet return to the White House.
- 327. a** IIT Madras' startup, Agnikul Cosmos, has launched the world's first rocket with a single-piece three-dimensional (3D) printed engine.
- 328. a** Alexander Zverev put on a serving clinic in a win over Nicolas Jarry to claim his second Italian Open title and earn his biggest trophy since tearing his ankle apart two years ago.
- 329. b** The government has increased the maximum limit for both retirement and death gratuity from 20 lakh rupees to 25 lakh rupees. This revision will come into effect from 1st January 2024.

- 330. b** Although initially proposed to be observed on 7 April 1988, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution in 1988 calling for the celebration of World No Tobacco Day every year on 31 May.
- 331. c** US: Vermont becomes 1st state to require oil companies pay for damage from climate change.
- 332. c** Justice M S Sonak, who serves on the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court became the first person in Goa to register a “living will” – an advance medical directive for his family for when he cannot make his own decisions.
- 333. c** South Korea became the seventh country to own an indigenous space launch vehicle and satellite development technology with the launch of the Nuri rocket in May last year that put a commercial grade satellite in orbit.
- 334. b** The eastern zone bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered an inquiry into the allegedly illegal construction of another commando battalion camp on forest land in Assam.
- 335. c** Adani International Ports Holdings Pte Ltd (AIPH) has signed a 30-year concession agreement with the Tanzania Ports Authority to operate and manage Container Terminal 2 at the Dar es Salaam Port in Tanzania.
- 336. a** The RBI said it has finalised a strategic action plan for 2024-25 and envisaged liberalisation of external commercial borrowing (ECB) framework and ‘Go-live’ for phase I of software platform for ECBs and trade credits reporting and approval (SPECTRA) project.
- 337. c** India’s central bank has moved around a 100 tonnes, or 1 lakh kilograms of gold from the United Kingdom back to its vaults in India.
- 338. c** India has been exploring the option of sourcing cheetahs from Kenya for phase-II of Project Cheetah as it is believed that they would adapt better to India’s tropical climate since a part of Kenya is located in the northern hemisphere.
- 339. b** The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has agreed to become a member of World Boxing, the International Federation established to ensure boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic Movement.
- 340. a** The Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion is established by the World Health Organization (WHO) to recognize outstanding contributions to health promotion. NIMHANS, Bengaluru, was awarded this prestigious accolade in 2024.
- 341. c** India’s first astro tourism campaign “Nakshatra Sabha” was inaugurated at the George Everest peak in Mussoorie.
- 342. c** Justice Hima Kohli, a Supreme Court judge, serves as the chairperson of the reconstituted committee.
- 343. c** Dr Helen Mary Roberts, serving in the Pakistan Army Medical Corps, has made history by becoming the first woman from the Christian and minority community to achieve the rank of brigadier in the Muslim-majority country.
- 344. a** Halla Tomasdottir, a businesswoman and investor, has won Iceland’s presidential election, topping a crowded field of candidates in which the top three finishers were women.
- 345. a** The African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority in a historic election result that puts South Africa on a new political path for the first time since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule 30 years ago.
- 346. b** According to data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Maharashtra emerged as the top recipient of FDI for the second consecutive year in 2023-24, receiving Rs. 1,25,101 crore.
- 347. c** As per the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Gautam Adani has overtaken Mukesh Ambani as the richest person in Asia.
- 348. b** In a first in Indian subcontinent, dog undergoes non-invasive heart surgery at Delhi vet hospital.
- 349. b** Chandrashekhkar Gaurinath Karhadkar has recently assumed office as the new Director of IGCAR, Kalpakkam. He succeeded B. Venkatraman, who retired recently.
- 350. b** The Global Day of Parents is observed annually on June 1. This date was established by the United Nations General Assembly to honor parents and to raise awareness about the importance of their role in the development of their children, as well as the challenges they face and the need for support and resources.