

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



Union Cabinet decisions: Marathi, Assamese, Bengali, Pali, Prakrit get classical language status

- The Union Cabinet approved **conferring the status of classical language to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali languages**. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. **The classical languages serve as a custodian of Bharat’s profound and ancient cultural heritage**, embodying the essence of each community’s historical and cultural milestone. These languages have been essential in preserving and transmitting India’s ancient knowledge systems, philosophies, and values across generations for thousands of years.
- The Government of India decided to **create a new category of languages as “classical languages” declaring Tamil as classical language and thereafter Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia languages were given classical language status**.
- **In 2004, the Government of India, for the first time, created a new category of languages known as Classical Languages**. It set the following as **criteria for the status of Classical Language: 1. High antiquity of its early texts/ recorded history over a thousand years. 2. A body of ancient literature/ texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generation of speakers. 3. The literary tradition must be original and not borrowed from another speech community.**
- **This criterion was revised in 2005 and 2024 based on the recommendations of Linguistic Experts Committees (LEC) under Sahitya Akademi to examine the proposed languages for the status of Classical Language.**
- **The criteria were revised in November 2005 as follows, and Sanskrit was declared a Classical Language:** 1. High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years. 2. A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers. 3. The literary tradition must be original and not borrowed from another speech community. 4. The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
- **The criteria were revised in 2024 as follows:** 1. High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years. 2. A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a heritage by generations of speakers. 3. Knowledge texts, especially prose texts in addition to poetry, epigraphical and inscriptional evidence. 4. The Classical Languages and literature could be distinct from its current form or could be discontinuous with later forms of its offshoots.
- **The 2024 Linguistic Expert Committee also recommended the following languages to be fulfilling revised criteria to be considered as a Classical Language: Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, Bengali.** Six Indian languages namely Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia were earlier accorded the status of Classical Language. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved to confer the status of Classical Language to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali languages on October 03, 2024, thus **bringing the total number of classical languages to 11. The first classical language is Tamil.**

The Ministry of Culture is the Indian government ministry charged with preservation and promotion of art and culture of India. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is the current Minister of Culture and Minister of Tourism since 2024. He is a member of parliament from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) representing Jodhpur in the Lok Sabha. Recently the government has established the National Mission on Libraries India under this ministry.

India as the fifth nation worldwide to operate hydrogen-powered trains

- **Indian Railways has engaged Germany's TUV-SUD to conduct a third-party safety audit for the country's first hydrogen train.** The plan anticipates trial runs to commence in December 2024 for this rolling stock. With this development, **India will join Germany, France, Sweden, and China as the fifth nation worldwide to operate hydrogen-powered trains.**
- **The Indian Railways is embarking on this ambitious project under its "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative, which aims to introduce a total of 35 hydrogen trains.** Each train is estimated to cost around Rs. 80 crore, with an additional Rs. 70 crore allocated for necessary ground infrastructure on various heritage and hilly routes. **The first prototype will be tested on the Jind-Sonipat section in Haryana on an 89 km route, with integration efforts currently taking place at the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai.**

Hydrogen trains basically run on hydrogen fuel cells. These fuel cells combine oxygen and hydrogen to create electricity, which drives the train's motors. Hydrogen trains are more environmentally beneficial than traditional diesel trains as they do not emit dangerous pollutants like nitrogen oxides, carbon dioxide, and particulate. Hydrogen Fuel Cell is an electrochemical cell that converts the chemical energy of hydrogen into electricity. It consists of a positive anode and a negative cathode and uses electrolysis to generate electricity. The fuel cell's core is made of solid or liquid electrolytes to aid the process. Germany was the first country to operate a hydrogen-powered passenger train, which began service in September 2018 in Lower Saxony.

India's foreign minister to visit Pakistan for the first time since 2015

- **India's foreign minister S Jaishankar will attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Pakistan.** This will be the first visit by a high ranking Indian minister to Pakistan in nearly a decade. **The trip comes after Mr Jaishankar's Pakistani counterpart attended a similar meeting of foreign ministers from the SCO in India last year - he was the first senior Pakistani politician to visit since 2011.**
- Relations between the nuclear-armed neighbours have been tense for years and they have fought three wars since they became independent nations in 1947 - two of them over the Himalayan region of Kashmir. The SCO is a political union of countries formed to discuss security and economic matters in Central Asia. The organisation was created by China, Russia and four Central Asian countries in 2001 as a countermeasure to limit the influence of Western alliance's such as Nato. **India and Pakistan joined the group in 2017. While India chaired the SCO in 2023, Pakistan will be hosting this year's summit from 15 October to 16 October.**
- **The last time an Indian foreign minister visited the nation was in 2015, when Sushma Swaraj attended a security conference in Islamabad** and held rare talks with Pakistani officials. Days later, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also made a surprise trip to Lahore where he met then Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. **Ties between India and Pakistan have always been strained but they hit a new low in 2019, when India launched strikes in Pakistani territory, following a militant attack on Indian troops in Indian-administered Kashmir.**
- If Dr. Jaishankar does visit Pakistan for the SCO meeting, it would be in stark contrast to the Modi government's policy on SAARC meetings thus far. **No Indian Minister has attended a multilateral meeting in Pakistan since Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited Islamabad for the SAARC Home Minister's meeting in August 2016, and the last time an External Affairs Minister visited was Sushma Swaraj's visit in December 2015 ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Christmas visit to Lahore the same month. After terror attacks on the Pathankot airbase and the Uri Army camp in 2016, India called off the SAARC Summit in Pakistan and has refused to attend any subsequent meetings in Pakistan.** The only exceptions made by the government in the last few years is for the inauguration of the Kartarpur corridor, where it sent two Union Ministers. In New York, **Dr. Jaishankar defended India's engagement with the SCO. "The SCO was focused much more on countering radicalism and terrorism.**

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. Belarus has become the 10th member state of the SCO in 2024. 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.

Names of 10 geological sites, sent to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- Names of 10 geological sites, sent to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for inclusion in the list of world heritage sites, are under scrutiny. There are about 100 geo-heritage sites, out of which 32 have been recognised as National Geological Monuments.
- The country has excellent geo-heritage sites like Lunar crater in Maharashtra, Bhedaghat in Madhya Pradesh, Columnar Basalt at St. Mary's Island in Karnataka and Gandikota gorge in Andhra Pradesh. Each of these geological monuments offer invaluable insights into the history of Earth science, serving as markers of our planet's evolutionary history. There is another global designation known as International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) sites and some of the sites have been recognised in Sikkim.
- Unlike archaeological sites, there is no legislation to protect geo-heritage sites. But the Geo Heritage Sites and Geo-relics Bill, 2022, which aims to protect India's geological heritage, is under process. All these recognitions should lead to benefits for common people and he requested UNESCO to provide support in getting recognition to some of the Indian sites as UNESCO Global Geopark.
- The UNESCO Global Geopark is the most recent UNESCO site designation that recognises sites that showcase not only the earth's geological past, but celebrate cultural connections to the land, becoming hubs of pride and economic growth for the people who call them home. Adopted under the International Geopark Programme (IGGP) in 2015, UNESCO Global Geoparks recognise and preserve geological heritage of international significance, promoting sustainable development and enhancing local community engagement through geo-tourism and education. At present, there are 213 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 48 countries.

Geo-heritage refers to the geological features which are inherently or culturally significant offering insight into earth's evolution or history to earth science or that can be utilized for education. Sites are designated as Geo-heritage Sites (GHS) by the Geological Survey of India (GSI). India, as a member of the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, safeguards such sites through appropriate legislation, as done by other countries worldwide. The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) recognized the Mawmluh Cave of Meghalaya as India's first geological heritage site. In March 2024, the Rajasthan government officially recognised the 3-km diameter Ramgarh Crater at Baran district formed 165 million years ago due to a meteor impact, as the country's Geo-Heritage Site.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Dedicates Bidkin Industrial Area to the Nation

- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the Bidkin Industrial Area (BIA) in Maharashtra to the nation, marking a significant milestone in India's industrial development. The Bidkin Industrial Area, a transformative project spanning 7,855 acres, has been developed under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) as part of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. Situated 20 km south of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, Maharashtra, this industrial hub holds immense potential to catalyze economic growth in the Marathwada region.

Government to launch revamped Vatsalya Mission portal for integrated child protection services

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development is set to **launch a revamped portal under the Vatsalya Mission that will integrate various child protection services currently spread across multiple platforms.** “In the next few weeks, we are going to launch a revamped portal for the Vatsalya Mission, where all present portals like **Khoya-Paaya, TrackChild, Child Protection Services, and CARINGS will be integrated.**” The move, he said, aims to address gaps, duplications and ambiguities in child protection data, ensuring that decisions in emergency situations can be made more swiftly **and with better coordination.** **The helpline has now been integrated** with the national emergency helpline, 112, and the women’s helpline, creating a comprehensive support network.

Mission Vatsalya is an umbrella scheme for child protection services in the country. Its objective is to secure a healthy and happy childhood for each and every child in the country. To ensure opportunities to enable them to discover their full potential and assist them in flourishing in all respects, in a sustained manner, foster a sensitive, supportive and synchronized ecosystem for development of children, assist States and UTs in delivering the mandate of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It promotes family-based non-institutional care of children in difficult circumstances based on the principle of institutionalization of children as a measure of last resort. **Prior to 2009, the Ministry of women and child development Implemented three schemes for children in need of protection, the juvenile justice programme for children in need of care and protection as well as children in conflict with the law, the integrated programme for street children, the scheme for assistance to children’s homes. In 2010, these were merged into a single plan known as the Integrated Child Protection Scheme. In 2017, it was renamed “Child Protection Services Scheme,” and again in 2021-22 as Mission Vatsalya.**

8th India-Kazakhstan Joint Military Exercise KAZIND-2024 Begins

- The **8th edition of the India-Kazakhstan Joint Military Exercise KAZIND-2024 commenced in Uttarakhand** and is being held from 30th September to 13th October 2024. **The Exercise between India and Kazakhstan was initiated as ‘Exercise PRABAL DOSTYK’ in 2016.** After the second edition, it was upgraded to a company-level exercise and **renamed ‘Exercise KAZIND’.** The exercise aims to enhance joint military capabilities for counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain, focusing on physical fitness, tactical drills, and sharing of best practices under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Chapter VII includes action with respect to threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression.

Kazakhstan is a country in Central Asia; it has borders with Russia in the north, China in the east, and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan in the south. The capital is Nur-Sultan, formerly known as Astana. Kazakhstan is the world’s largest landlocked country and the ninth-largest in the world. Kassym-Jomart Kemeluly Tokayev has been serving as the President of Kazakhstan since 20 March 2019. The tenge is the currency of Kazakhstan.

Bihar CM Dedicates Bapu Tower in Patna on Mahatma Gandhi’s 155th Birth Anniversary

- In Bihar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar dedicated the newly constructed Bapu Tower on the occasion of the 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Patna.** The iconic five-storey building consisting of cylindrical and rectangular structures has several galleries dedicated to the life of the Father of the Nation.
- A special section **on Mahatma Gandhi’s visit to Bihar and Champaran Satyagrah has been aesthetically mounted with audio-visual content for audiences.** The whole campus of Bapu Tower has been spread over seven acres of land of which six acres have been left for park and other amenities.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Launches ‘Cruise Bharat Mission’

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal **launched the ‘Cruise Bharat Mission’ from the Mumbai port.** The Union Minister of State, Shantanu Thakur also attended the launch. The Cruise Bharat Mission aims to excel in India’s vision to become a global hub for cruise tourism and promote the country as the leading global cruise destination. Mr Sonowal said that the **mission aims to propel the country’s cruise tourism industry by doubling cruise passenger traffic by 2029.** He further said that the government is committed to **harnessing the tremendous potential of the Blue Economy of India.**

The Blue Economy refers to the sustainable use and conservation of ocean and marine resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and job creation. It encompasses diverse sectors like fisheries, tourism, shipping, offshore energy, and biotechnology. With the oceans facing unprecedented threats from climate change, pollution, and unsustainable exploitation, there is an urgent need to transition to a Blue Economy model that balances economic development with environmental sustainability. **Blue Economy 2.0 is a step ahead in this direction. Through its multi-pronged approach focused on restoration, adaptation, and expansion of mariculture and coastal aquaculture, the policy aims to promote climate-resilient and sustainable development in India's coastal regions.** In India, the blue economy encompasses a wide range of sectors, including shipping, tourism, fisheries, and offshore oil and gas exploration. **This is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 14), which calls to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.** The total length of the coast line of the mainland including Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep is 7,516.6 km.

Defence major Safran to set up its first electronics unit in India

- **French defence conglomerate Safran Group has indicated to India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval that it is willing to set up its first Defence Electronics unit outside France in India,** pointing out that this is a sign of the strategic relationship between the two countries becoming deeper. **French aircraft manufacturer Dassault Aviation SA has already acquired land to build a full-fledged maintenance, overhaul and repair facility at Jevar in Uttar Pradesh for handling Rafale fighters and civilian aircraft.** France has also decided to jointly develop with India, unmanned sub-surface, surface and aerial systems or underwater drones for submarines apart from supporting India in developing counter-swarm drone and armed drone technology.

The Dassault Rafale is a versatile 4.5 generation multirole combat aircraft serving as the backbone of the French Air Force and Navy. India signed an agreement with France in 2016 for the swift procurement of 36 Rafales to augment the Indian Air Force's depleting fighter squadrons. India's original intention was to procure 126 Rafales as part of its Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) competition initiated in 2007. **The Dassault Rafale is a 4.5 generation, twin-engine, delta wing, multirole fighter manufactured by the French company Dassault Aviation.** It has a maximum speed of Mach 1.8 and a combat radius of 1000+ km. Rafale's advanced avionics provide superior situational awareness and survivability.

Dwarka Expressway to introduce India's First Free Flow Tolling System

- **The Dwarka Expressway in New Delhi is set to become India's first highway to implement Free Flow Tolling, a cutting-edge toll collection system that eliminates the need for traditional toll plazas.** This technology will allow vehicles to pass through toll zones without stopping, greatly enhancing travel efficiency and convenience. **The system will utilize advanced FASTag readers and high-powered cameras mounted on overhead gantries to scan vehicle registration numbers and FASTag tags, even at speeds of up to 100 km/h.** As vehicles pass beneath these gantries, the toll will be automatically deducted from their FASTag accounts, making manual toll payment a thing of the past.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has developed the National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) program to meet the electronic tolling requirements of the Indian market. It offers an interoperable nationwide toll payment solution including clearing house services for settlement and dispute management. Interoperability, as it applies to National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) system, encompasses a common set of processes, business rules and technical specifications which enable a customer to use their FASTag as payment mode on any of the toll plazas irrespective of who has acquired the toll plaza. **FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion.** FASTag (RFID Tag) is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables a customer to make the toll payments directly from the account which is linked to FASTag.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates India's First Modern Gaushala in Madhya Pradesh that Can Produce Natural Gas

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the 'Lal Tipara Gaushala' with Bio-CNG plant in Gwalior and launched various development projects of Rs. 685 crore in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of Swachhta Diwas.** Swachhta Diwas is observed on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti every year.

- The ‘gaushala’, or cow shelter, with the Bio-CNG plant that can produce three tonnes of natural gas per day using 100 tonnes of cow dung, has been set up in collaboration with the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC). It is India’s first modern and self-reliant gaushala. The plant will also produce 20 tonnes of high-quality organic manure, the official said, adding the IOC will assist in the operation and maintenance of the plant. The gaushala was developed at a cost of Rs. 32 crore from the corporate social responsibility fund of the IOC, and an additional one hectare of land has been reserved for its expansion. **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav attended the programme from Bhopal via video conference.**

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. Mohan Yadav is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Shivraj Singh Chouhan served as the longest Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel is the current Governor of Madhya Pradesh.

PM Narendra Modi launches Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand on 2nd October 2024

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand. The scheme has a total outlay of Rs.79,156 crores (Central Share: Rs.56,333 crore and State Share: Rs. 22,823 crore). The Abhiyan will cover around 63,843 villages benefitting more than 5 crore tribal people in 549 districts and 2,911 blocks spread across all tribal majority villages and aspirational blocks in 30 States/UTs. Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan envisions saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, livelihood, through 25 interventions implemented by 17-line ministries of Govt of India by convergence and outreach; and ensures holistic and sustainable development of tribal areas and communities.**

Government approves two agri schemes with outlay of ₹1 lakh crore

- **Union Cabinet approved two major schemes — PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and Krishonnati Yojana — with an expenditure of over Rs. 1 lakh crore to promote sustainable agriculture and ensure food security. The Cabinet approved the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) to promote sustainable agriculture and Krishonnati Yojana (KY) to achieve food security for self-sufficiency. The combined total expenditure will be Rs. 1, 01,321.61 crore. “Cabinet approved rationalisation of all centrally sponsored schemes operating under Ministry of Agriculture into two umbrella scheme”.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announces Mission Amrut, to setup water and sewage treatment plants in cities

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of Mission Amrut, the next phase of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, during an address marking the 10th anniversary of the flagship programme. The new mission aims to further improve urban sanitation by providing cities with modern water and sewage treatment plants, ensuring cleaner and more sustainable living conditions across India. He said that under Mission Amrut, several cities will get water and sewage treatment plants to make cities cleaner. Modi said that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan had become a success and thanked the people of the country for the support he received for the mission.**

The Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) represents a transformative phase in India’s sanitation narrative, driven by a history enriched with ancient innovations and bolstered by contemporary governmental efforts. Initiated in 2014 by the Hon’ble Prime Minister, the mission targeted making India Open Defecation Free (ODF). This massive undertaking successfully mobilized nationwide participation, marking it as the largest behavioral change movement globally. By 2019, the mission celebrated the construction of over 100 million individual household toilets, declaring more than 6 lakh villages ODF, a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary and aligning with SDG Target 6.2. Sikkim was the first state in India to be declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) on May 27, 2016. This declaration was made under the Swachh Bharat Mission, or Clean India Mission, which was launched by the Government of India in 2014.

Nextracker inaugurates India's first center for solar excellence in Hyderabad

- **Nextracker, a global leader in solar tracker technology inaugurated India's first Center for Solar Excellence (CFSE) in Hyderabad.** Spanning 13 acres, the facility is equipped with a 30,000 square foot laboratory and comprehensive solar tracker installation and training facilities. The CFSE is set to advance solar tracker technology and support the region's energy transition. It aims to foster innovation in design, construction, operation, and maintenance of solar trackers, in collaboration with supply chain partners and third-party laboratories.

Government of India notifies new labelling rules for green products

- Recasting its flagship scheme on labelling of eco-friendly products, the **Union Environment Ministry notified the Ecomark Rules, almost a year after its draft rules were notified. Launched in 1991, it is a voluntary and non-binding scheme which promotes labelling of household and consumer products based on the environmental and quality parameters.**
- **The Rules were notified to keep it in line with existing sustainability and environmentally friendly practices and with the Environment Ministry's Mission LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment),** which promotes sustainable consumption. The rules spell out the conditions, procedure, and verification process and compliance mechanism of the scheme. It also contains detailed criteria that manufacturers need to follow for grant of Ecomark.
- **The criteria includes, among others, conditions such as reducing pollution by minimising or eliminating generation of waste and environmental emissions,** using recycled material or making recyclable products, reducing use of pollution energy sources and reducing use of environmentally harmful materials. As part of the Ecomark Rules, the notification has also **spelt out detailed criteria for 17 categories of products ranging from paints, cosmetics, batteries, edible oils, tea, coffee, toilet soaps to coir and paper.**

India becomes affiliate member of International Medical Device Regulators Forum

- **"India has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF),** which will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide". The IMDRF, which was established in 2011, is a group of global medical device regulators whose aim is to speed up the adoption of international medical device regulatory harmonisation and convergence.
- **Its members include national regulatory authorities of the U.S., Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Russia, China, South Korea, Singapore and the World Health Organization (WHO).** "To achieve global alignment in its medical device regulatory system, enhance the competitiveness of the domestic industry and boost transnational prominence, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, applied for Affiliate Membership in the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) in 2024,".

Govt sets aside Rs. 10,000 cr to boost edible oil production

- **The Centre approved the National Mission on Edible Oils–Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds), with a financial outlay of `10,103 crore. India is dependent on imports to meet 58 per cent of its edible oil requirements.** Union Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the **mission aims to increase edible oil production from 12.7 million tonnes to 20.2 million tonnes by 2031.** It will have a financial outlay of `10,103 crore. "The newly approved NMEO-Oilseeds will focus on enhancing the production of key primary oilseed crops such as rapeseed-mustard, groundnut, soybean, sunflower, and sesamum, as well as increasing collection and extraction efficiency from secondary sources such as cottonseed, rice bran, and tree borne oils,". **The government, meanwhile, also reorganised all centrally sponsored schemes under the Agriculture Ministry under two umbrella schemes — the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and the Krishonnati Yojana (KY).**

PM Narendra Modi flags off Mumbai's first underground Metro line

- **Eight years in the making, Mumbai finally got its first underground Metro with PM Narendra Modi inaugurating the first phase of the Aqua Line Metro, a 12.44-km stretch** that will run from Aarey to Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC). The entire 33.5-km-long stretch that will connect Cuffe Parade-BKC-Aarey Colony will be functional by March 2025.

Taking governance closer to people, Assam inaugurates 21 ‘co-districts’

- **The roll-out of a new administrative set-up of ‘co-districts’ within Assam’s district administrations began with the launch of 21 such co-districts across the state by different ministers.** This administrative overhaul, which does away with the existing system of 24 civil sub-divisions, was announced by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma last year, with the aim of bringing governance and administrative work closer to citizens’ homes. These ‘co-districts’ will serve as smaller administrative units below the districts led by an officer of the rank of Assistant District Commissioner. Sarma has stated that the government aims to introduce such co-district offices in all 126 assembly constituencies in the state. This unique initiative, the first in the country, will decentralize district administration. Co-districts will ensure implementation of our vision of minimum government, maximum governance.

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. **Lakshman Prasad Acharya is serving as the current Governor of Assam. Himanta Biswa Sarma is serving as the current Chief Minister of Assam since 2021.**

Railway announces ₹35 crore grants to upgrade RPF Zonal Training Centres

- Union Minister for Railways, **Ashwini Vaishnaw announced a grant of ₹35 crore to modernise Zonal Training Centres of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), with a special focus on facilities for women personnel.** An additional grant of ₹5.5 crore was sanctioned for the Zonal Training Centre for the RPF Dog Squad in Tamil Nadu, aimed at strengthening the specialised training infrastructure. Thirty-three RPF personnel were awarded the prestigious Police Medals for Meritorious Service and Jeevan Raksha Medals for their courageous efforts in saving lives of passengers during 2023 and 2024.
- Mr. Vaishnaw, who was the **chief guest at the 40th Raising Day Parade of the RPF at the Zonal Training Centre, Nashik**, assured that the RPF will be equipped with advanced protective gear, including bulletproof jackets and improved helmets, to ensure the safety and efficiency of its personnel. **The Minister said 5,300 km of new rail lines were built last year and in the last 10 years, 31,000 km of new tracks were laid.** He said 40,000 km of rail lines have been electrified in the past decade, double than what was done in the past 60 years. He said that about 12,500 general class coaches are being manufactured.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Minister of Information and Broadcasting and 2nd Minister of Electronics and Information Technology since 2024 in the Government of India. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Eight products used by Assam tribe granted GI tag

- **The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has granted the GI tag to eight products from the Assam region, including traditional food items and several unique varieties of rice beer.** The application for Geographical Indication tags for three variants of rice beer was filed by the Bodo Traditional Brewers Association.
- **Rice Beer Variants: Bodo Jou Gwran:** This variant has the highest alcohol content at about 16.11% compared to other Bodo rice beers. **Maibra Jou Bidwi:** Known locally as ‘Maibra Jwu Bidwi’ or ‘Maibra Zwu Bidwi,’ this drink is traditionally served as a welcome drink and is made by fermenting half-cooked rice with minimal water and a little yeast source. **Bodo Jou Gishi:** Another traditionally fermented rice beer, reflecting the long-standing tradition of rice beer consumption among the Bodo people, believed to have origins linked to Lord Shiva and used for medicinal purposes.

- **Traditional Food Products: Bodo Napham:** A favorite dish made from fermented fish, prepared anaerobically in a sealed container over a period of two to three months. Various preservation methods like smoking and drying are employed due to heavy rainfall and limited fish availability. The Bodo people preserve fish using different techniques, including smoking, drying, salting, fermentation, and marination. Due to heavy rainfall and the limited availability of fish throughout the year, fermentation is favoured as a method of preserving food. **Bodo Ondla:** A rice powder curry flavored with garlic, ginger, salt, and alkali. **Bodo Gwkha:** Also known as 'Gwka Gwkhi,' this dish is prepared during the Bwisagu festival. **Bodo Narzi:** The fourth specialty given the GI tag is 'Bodo Narzi', a semi-fermented food prepared with jute leaves (*Corchorus capsularis*), a rich source of Omega 3 fatty acids, vitamins and essential minerals, including calcium and magnesium.
- **Textile product: Bodo Aronai:** A beautifully crafted cloth measuring between 1.5-2.5 meters long and 0.5 meter wide, now recognized with a GI tag through the efforts of the Association of Traditional Bodo Weavers. **The Bodo community's unique traditions are evident in their dance, music, festivals, and clothing.** Their textiles often feature designs inspired by nature, reflecting elements such as trees, flowers, mountains, and birds, showcasing their deep connection to the environment.

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.

Cabinet Approves Development of NMHC at Gujarat's Lothal; Approves Construction of 2,280 Km of Roads in Rajasthan & Punjab Border Areas

- Union Cabinet has approved the development of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, Gujarat. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the proposal aims to showcase India's rich and diverse maritime heritage. He said it will be the world's greatest Maritime complex once it is fully developed.
- The project began in March 2022, and is being developed at a cost of Rs. 3,500 crore. It will have several innovative features such as Lothal mini-recreation, which will recreate Harappan architecture and lifestyle through immersive technology. It has four theme parks – Memorial theme park, Maritime and Navy theme park, Climate theme park, and Adventure and Amusement theme park. It will act as a center for learning and understanding India's maritime history. The NMHC is being developed with the aim of displaying India's diverse maritime heritage and also help Lothal emerge as a world-class international tourist destination.
- Mr Vaishnaw said that as per the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to showcase 4,500 years old maritime heritage of India, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterway is setting up a world-class National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal. Mr Vaishnaw said that there are several components in this Complex including the working and experience area Light House Museum and five-dimensional theatre so that the new generation could know about India's rich maritime heritage. The Union Cabinet has approved the construction of 2 thousand 280 kilometre roads in border areas of Rajasthan and Punjab. The project will cost more than four thousand four hundred crore rupees.

Lothal was one of the southern cities of the Indus Valley civilization, located in the Gulf of Khambhat region. Lothal's name comes from two Gujarati words, "Loth" and "thal," which mean "the mound of the dead." Lothal was discovered by SR Rao, an Indian archaeologist, in 1954. Lothal had the world's earliest known dock, which connected the city to an ancient course of the Sabarmati River on the trade route.

India slipped on academic freedom index over the past decade: report

- Over the past 10 years, **India has plummeted on the academic freedom index ranks, according to the “Free to Think 2024” annual report published by the Scholars at Risk (SAR) Academic Freedom Monitoring Project.** SAR is a network of 665 universities across the globe, including Columbia University, Duke University, and New York University.
- The report has looked extensively at India, Afghanistan, China, Colombia, Germany, Hong Kong, Iran, Israel, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Russia, Turkiye, Sudan, Ukraine, the U.K. and the U.S., while documenting 391 attacks on higher education communities in 51 countries between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. **The report notes that India’s academic freedom slipped from 0.6 points to 0.2 points from 2013 to 2023. According to the Academic Freedom Index, India now ranks as “completely restricted”, its lowest score since the mid-1940s.**

National Agriculture Code

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has **begun the process of formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC), on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.** The BIS is the national body which **sets standards for different products across various economic sectors.** In agriculture, it has already set standards for machinery (tractors, harvesters, etc.) and various inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.)
- However, there are still many areas not covered by the BIS standards. For example, there is no standard for agriculture practices like preparation of fields, micro irrigation and water use. **The NAC will cover the entire agriculture cycle, and will also contain a guidance note for future standardisation.** The code will have two parts. The first will contain general principles for all crops, and the second will deal with crop-specific standards for the likes of paddy, wheat, oilseeds, and pulses. The NAC will serve as a guide for farmers, agriculture universities, and officials involved in the field.

The primary sector is associated with activities that involve direct exploitation of natural resources, such as agriculture, dairy, mining, fishing, and forestry. These natural resources form the base for other products. **Agriculture in India is counted as the primary sector.** Economic Survey says that the **Indian agriculture sector provides livelihood support to about 42.3 per cent of the population and has a share of 18.2 per cent in the country’s GDP at current prices.** The sector has been buoyant, which is evident from the fact that it has registered an average annual growth rate of 4.18 per cent at constant prices over the last five years and as per provisional estimates for 2023-24, the growth rate of the agriculture sector stood at 1.4 percent. The last time the agriculture sector accounted for 20% of GDP was in 2003-04. **Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the incumbent Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare.** He was the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh from 2020 to 2023 and previously from 2005 to 2018. He was also elected to 18th Lok Sabha from Vidisha constituency.

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath Unveils Logo of Maha Kumbh-2025 in Prayagraj

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath unveiled the new multi-coloured logo for Mahakumbh 2025 in Prayagraj.** The logo symbolises religious and economic prosperity, with the depiction of the Amrit Kalash, a sacred vessel from the mythological ocean churning. The design features a temple, a seer, an urn, the Akshayvat tree, and an image of Lord Hanuman, representing the confluence of nature and humanity in the Sanatan civilization. It also embodies the continuous flow of self-awareness and public welfare, serving as an inspirational emblem for Mahakumbh 2025.
- **Kumbh Mela, recognized by UNESCO as an ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity,’ is regarded as the world’s largest peaceful gathering of pilgrims. With the motto “Sarvasiddhipradah Kumbhah”.** A live satellite image of the Sangam is clearly visible in the design, symbolizing the eternal flow of these rivers as a representation of life itself. This inclusion highlights the spiritual and geographical importance of Prayagraj in the Maha Kumbh’s rich tradition.
- **Kumbh Mela or Kumbha Mela is a major pilgrimage and festival in Hinduism.** On 4 February 2019, Kumbh Mela witnessed the largest peaceful public gathering of humans ever recorded. **It is celebrated in a cycle of approximately 12 years, to celebrate every revolution Brihaspati (Jupiter) completes, at four river-bank pilgrimage sites: Prayagraj (Ganges-Yamuna-Sarasvati rivers confluence), Haridwar (Ganges), Nashik**

(Godavari), and Ujjain (Shipra). The festival is marked by a ritual dip in the waters. The festival is traditionally credited to the 8th-century Hindu philosopher and saint Adi Shankara, as a part of his efforts to start major Hindu gatherings for philosophical discussions and debates along with Hindu monasteries across the Indian subcontinent.

According to UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, ICH is manifested into five broad domains: 1. Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage. 2. Performing arts 3. Social practices, rituals and festive events 4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe 5. Traditional craftsmanship. With the recent inscription of Garba of Gujarat (2023) on the Representative List of ICH of Humanity, India now has 15 intangible cultural heritage elements on the prestigious UNESCO's Representative List of ICH of Humanity. These are: 1. The tradition of Vedic chanting (2008), 2. Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana (2008) 3. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre (2008) 4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India (2009) 5. Mudiyyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala (2010), 6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan (2010), 7. Chhau dance, semi-classical Indian dance form that is popular in the states of West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Odisha (2010), 8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India (2012), 9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming, and dancing of Manipur (2013), 10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India (2014), 11. Yoga (2016), 12. Nawrouz, Novruz, Nowrouz, Nowrouz, Nawrouz, Nauryz, Nooruz, Nowruz, Navruz, Nevruz, Nowruz, Navruz (2016), 13. Kumbh Mela (2017), 14. Durga Puja of Kolkata (2021) and 15. Garba of Gujarat (2023)

'Satark Park,' India's First Structure Honoring Military Intelligence Operatives inaugurated

- **'Satark Park,' India's first structure dedicated to military intelligence operatives, was inaugurated in Pune.** It aims to highlight the most gallant episodes associated with these unsung heroes. The majority of MI personnel and officers, in whose honor the park has been built, sacrificed their lives in the line of duty in Jammu and Kashmir. **The park has been conceptualised and developed by Roadways Solutions India Infra Ltd (RSIIL) in collaboration with Military Intelligence Training School and Depot (MINTSD).** It features 40 busts of MI personnel who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Each idol is accompanied by a brief description of their heroism.

World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) begun in New Delhi

- **The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24) has begun in New Delhi, India, with calls for consensus, ethical artificial intelligence, and universal connectivity.** The event offers a platform for policymakers, industry leaders, and tech experts to consider global actions to reinforce the ITU's standardisation work, the UN agency for digital technologies.
- **India's Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi inaugurated WTSA-24 alongside the India Mobile Congress at a joint opening ceremony.** He said, **"The objective of WTSA is to work on global standards.** At the same time, the India Mobile Congress plays a very big role in giving services to people. So, from that point of view, with this event that is taking place here, we are working on both standards and services, and both have been brought to one platform today."
- Modi added, **"Whatever standards we set in this field, will set the path of our future. Therefore, security, dignity, and equity—on these principles we have to work and this should be the centre stage of our discussion. Our objective should be that no country, no region, and no community should be left behind in this digital era,"** he emphasized. **Held every four years, WTSA sets priorities for experts worldwide who work year-round to develop the international standards established by the ITU.**
- The opening ceremony highlighted the push for **universal connectivity, the need for ethical artificial intelligence (AI),** the critical importance of consensus, and how digital inclusion can make a meaningful difference in people's lives. **The first WTSA ever held in the Asia-Pacific region will run from 15 to 24 October** and comes at a time when India's government, vibrant tech industry, and research communities have become increasingly engaged in the ITU's standardization work. **ITU's standardization work is driven by the contributions and consensus decisions of its membership, which includes 194 Member States and over 1,000 member companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.** WTSA reviews the

strategy, structure, and working methods of ITU's standardization arm (ITU-T) every four years. The conference also approves the mandates and appoints the leadership teams of ITU-T expert groups for international standardization.

Indian Institute of Foreign Trade to open its first overseas campus in Dubai

- **The iconic India Pavilion at the Expo City in Dubai will host the first overseas campus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT).** IIFT is likely to move into its premises by early 2025 with short and medium-term training programmes, research and eventually with launch of its flagship programme, MBA (International Business). **IIFT, regarded as an academic centre of excellence in international business research, training and education, will establish its first campus outside of India at the former Expo 2020 India Pavilion.** The campus will be a boon for the 3.5 million-strong Indian community residing in the UAE. It will also open doorways for the overseas expansion and recognition of the IIFT brand.
- The MoU between IIFT and Dubai EXPO City builds on a range of bilateral agreements between India and the UAE, including a mechanism to settle trade in local currencies, **the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), Bilateral Investment Treaty and others.** **On 2nd September, 2024, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, inaugurated the campus of IIT Delhi – Abu Dhabi with its the first B Tech Course.**

The Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) was established in 1963 as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to **contribute in the skill building for the external trade sector of India.** The Institute was granted "Deemed to be University" status in 2002. The Institute was granted the prestigious AACSB accreditation on 17th November, 2021. With this the IIFT figures amongst 900+ Business School of the world which have earned this accreditation. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has recognized IIFT as Grade 'A' Institution in 2005 as well as in 2015.

Maritime Exercise Malabar 2024

- **The Opening Ceremony of MALABAR 2024 under the aegis of Eastern Naval Command was held onboard Indian Naval Ship Satpura at Visakhapatnam on 09 Oct 24.** The 28th edition of the multi-national maritime exercise that commenced on 08 Oct 24, would extend till 18 Oct 24. **MALABAR, which was initiated in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the US, gained further traction as a significant maritime engagement, with Japan and Australia joining in subsequently.**
- **The exercise will be conducted in two distinct phases both at Harbour and at Sea.** MALABAR 2024 will witness **live weapon firings, complex surface, anti-air and anti-submarine warfare drills and joint manoeuvres.** The high-tempo event will witness participation by destroyers, frigates, corvettes and fleet support ships along with long range maritime patrol aircraft, jet aircraft, integral helicopters and submarine assets.
- The exercise brings together like-minded nations to further enhance the ability to train and operate jointly, towards establishing the synergy critical to achieve shared objectives. The exercise is aligned with the Indian Government's vision of **Security & Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)** and reflects India's growing engagement with like-minded nations.

Malabar Exercise is a multilateral war-gaming naval exercise that was started in 1992. It began as a bilateral exercise between the navies of India and the United States. Two more editions of the exercise were carried out in 1995 and 1996, after which there was a break until 2002 in the aftermath of India's nuclear tests. From 2002 onward, the exercise has been conducted every year. **Japan and Australia first participated in 2007, and since 2014, India, the US and Japan have participated in the exercise every year.** In 2020 Australia joined the Malabar Exercise on India's request in order to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region. **For the first time in over a decade, Malabar 2020 saw the participation of all four Quad members.** It is aimed to support free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and remain committed to a rules based international order. Over the years, the exercise has been conducted in the Philippine Sea, off the coast of Japan, the Persian Gulf, in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. It is conducted by the Asian and the North American Commands.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended 21st ASEAN-India and East Asia summits

- **The Prime Minister of India recently visited Laos to participate in the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit.** He attended the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit. Laos is the current chair of ASEAN. During the summit, leaders discussed how India and ASEAN could work more closely together. The **discussions focused on connectivity, both physical and digital, between India and ASEAN.** India already has direct flights with seven ASEAN countries and hopes to add two more soon.
- **The Prime Minister of India presented a 10-point plan to boost connectivity:** 1. Celebrate 2025 as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism with a budget of \$5 million for joint activities. 2. Mark the 10th anniversary of the Act East Policy with events like Youth Summits and Start-up Festivals. 3. Organize the ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave. 4. Double scholarships at Nalanda University and add more at Indian agricultural universities. 5. Review the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) by 2025. 6. Allocate \$5 million to enhance disaster resilience. 7. Start a Health Ministers' track to improve health resilience. 8. Establish an ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue for better digital security. 9. Host a workshop on Green Hydrogen. 10. Launch the 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign to encourage climate resilience.
- **Future Plan of Action (2026-2030):** The leaders agreed to create a new ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2026-2030 to strengthen their partnership. Two joint statements were adopted: 1. **Strengthening Partnership: This focuses on enhancing peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.** 2. **Advancing Digital Transformation: This statement acknowledges India's role in digital public infrastructure.**

East Asia Summit (EAS) was established in 2005 as an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-led initiative. The EAS is the only leader-led forum in the Indo-Pacific that brings together all key partners to discuss political, security and economic issues of strategic importance. The EAS operates on the principles of openness, inclusiveness, respect for international law, ASEAN centrality, and ASEAN's role as the driving force. **The idea of an East Asia Grouping was first proposed by then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in 1991. The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005. The EAS comprises 18 members: the 10 ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and eight dialogue partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States).**

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional grouping that aims to promote economic and security cooperation among its ten members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The motto of ASEAN is "One Vision, One Identity, One Community". 8th August is observed as ASEAN Day. ASEAN Secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia. It was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding fathers of ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Italian carrier at Goa holds maiden carrier exercise with Indian Navy

- In a historic maritime engagement, **Indian Navy and Italian Navy carried out the maiden exercise by Carrier Strike Groups (CSG) of both the sides, off Goa coast from October 1 to 6. The sea phase of the exercise, held on October 5 and 6, was led by the carriers INS Vikramaditya and ITS Cavour, along with INS Visakhapatnam and ITS Alpino.**
- The Italian CSG, commanded by Rear Admiral Giancarlo Ciappina, left Italy's Taranto on June 1 and has been on an **operational campaign in the Indo-Pacific region.** It comprises aircraft carrier ITS Cavour, multi-mission frigate ITS Alpino, and multi-purpose patrol boat ITS Montecuccoli. During its operational campaign, the CSG will also make stops at Muscat, Oman and Karachi, Pakistan in its five months of activity, according to the Italian Navy. The Italian CSG includes about 1,200 crew members, divided between the ships Cavour, Alpino and Montecuccoli, with a total of 19 aerial assets – eight F-35B fighters, seven AV-8B+ Harrier jets, three NH-90 helicopters and one EH-101 helicopter.

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 Kumar Tripathi is a serving four star flag officer of the Indian Navy. He is the current and the 26th Chief of the Naval Staff. He took**

over as the 26th CNS succeeding Admiral R. Hari Kumar on 30 April 2024. He previously served as the 38th Vice Chief of the Naval Staff. **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.

Department Of Atomic Energy Installs MACE Observatory in Ladakh

- **The Department of Atomic Energy has installed the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory in Ladakh.** MACE telescope will observe high-energy gamma rays such as supernovae, black holes, and gamma-ray bursts. **This newly installed facility will complement global observatories and is an important feature in strengthening India's position in the field of multi-messenger astronomy.** MACE, which is installed at Hanley in eastern Ladakh is considered as the largest imaging Cherenkov telescope in Asia as well as the highest in the world for being installed at an altitude of 4,300 metre. It is indigenously built by Baba Atomic Research Centre with support from Electronic Corporation of India and other Indian industry partners.

The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) was set up under the direct charge of the Prime Minister through a Presidential Order on August 3, 1954. As per this order, all businesses of the Government of India, related to Atomic Energy and to the functions of the Central Government under the Atomic Energy Act, 1948 (XXIX of 1948) were directed to be transacted in the Department of Atomic Energy. **The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) is an Indian government department with headquarters in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.** DAE was established in 1954 with Jawaharlal Nehru as its first minister and Homi Bhabha as its secretary. Homi Jehangir Bhabha was an Indian nuclear physicist who is widely credited as the “father of the Indian nuclear programme”. He was the founding director and professor of physics at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), as well as the founding director of the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET) which was renamed the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in his honour. He was the first chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission and secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy.

Telangana: Saddula Bathukamma Celebrations Held In Hyderabad

- In Hyderabad, the historic Hussain Sagar turned vibrant with Bathukamma songs, fireworks, and a laser show as the **Telangana government held Saddula Bathukamma celebrations.** It marked the conclusion of the nine-day-long festival of flowers, Bathukamma. **Bathukamma is a Hindu flower-festival celebrated by the women of Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh.**
- Every year this festival is celebrated as per the Sathavahana calendar for nine days starting on Pitru Amavasya, which usually coincides with the months September–October of the Gregorian calendar. **In Telugu, ‘Bathukamma’ means ‘Mother Goddess come Alive’.** Bathukamma is a beautiful flower stack, arranged with different unique seasonal flowers most of them with medicinal values, in seven concentric layers in the shape of a temple gopuram. It is usually brothers who bring flowers to their mother and sisters to arrange bathukamma.

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. It is a land locked state in India. **Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao** has served as the first Chief Minister of Telangana since 2014. **Revanth Reddy** is the current Chief Minister of Telangana. **Jishnu Dev Varma** is serving as current Governor of Telangana.

Indore on a 100-day mission to become world's first energy-literate city

- **A transformative campaign kicked off in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, aiming to establish the city as the world's first energy-literate community.** This initiative, dubbed the ‘Indore Climate Mission’, will engage approximately 3.5 million residents in efforts to bring down carbon emissions through changes in their daily activities.
- **The Indore Municipal Corporation is partnering with the Energy Swaraj Foundation, an NGO led by Professor Chetan Singh Solanki from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay.** This collaboration aims to educate and empower residents to adopt more sustainable practices over the campaign's duration.
- According to Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava, the first phase of the campaign will unfold over 100 days, focusing on training residents in energy conservation techniques. **The ‘Indore Climate Mission’ has set an ambitious**

target to lower the city's monthly electricity usage by 7 to 10 per cent. This initiative not only aims to enhance environmental awareness among residents but also strives to foster a culture of sustainability in one of India's cleanest cities. Through collective efforts and commitment, Indore hopes to set a precedent for energy literacy and environmental responsibility across the globe. **Indore** is the largest and most populous city in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It is the commercial hub of Madhya Pradesh. **It is consistently ranked as the cleanest city in India.**

149th Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union held in Geneva

- **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is leading a parliamentary delegation to the 149th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Geneva.** Mr. Birla said that during his visit, he addressed the assembly on the theme of **Harnessing science, technology, and innovation for a more peaceful and sustainable future.**
- Mr. Birla highlighted that he participated in the meetings of the IPU's governing council, the highest decision-making body of the IPU. Besides this, he also met his counterparts from other parliaments on the sidelines of the Assembly. During his visit, Mr. Birla also interacted with the Indian diaspora in Geneva. The delegation comprises Rajya Sabha deputy chairman Harivansh Singh, Secretary General of both houses, and various other Members of Parliament. **The IPU has 180 member parliaments and 15 associate members. Members include parliaments from large countries like China, India, and Indonesia, as well as smaller countries like Cabo Verde, San Marino, and Palau.**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organization of national parliaments. What began in 1889 as a small group of parliamentarians, dedicated to **promoting peace through parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue**, has since grown into a truly global organization with 180 Members and 15 Associate Members. **The IPU facilitates parliamentary diplomacy and empowers parliaments and parliamentarians to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development around the world. Our slogan is: 'For democracy. For everyone'.**

President Droupadi Murmu Embarks On 3-Nation Visit to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi

- **President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a three-nation visit to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi.** This is the first ever visit by a President of India to the three African nations and comes a year after the African Union was made a permanent member of G-20 group during India's Presidency. During her visit, the President will hold bilateral meetings and interact with Indian diaspora.
- During the three-day visit in Algeria, **President Droupadi Murmu will hold bilateral meetings with the President of the People Democratic Republic of Algeria, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, and other major leaders.** The President will also visit important cultural and historical sites of Algeria like Maqam Echahid, the Martyrs Memorial, where she will be laying the wreath. The President will also visit the Roman Ruins, Mausoleum, and Hamma Garden. The president is also scheduled to address the India-Algeria Economic Forum.
- **On the second leg of the visit, President Droupadi Murmu will visit Mauritania on the 16th, and in the final leg of her visit, the President will visit Malawi from the 17th to the 19th.** During the visit to these countries, the President is scheduled to hold bilateral meetings with the leadership, and I will also interact with key trade and industry leaders and the Indian diaspora.

Droupadi Murmu has been serving as the 15th president of India since 25 July 2022. She is the first person belonging to the tribal community and also the second woman after Pratibha Patil to hold the office. She is also the youngest person to occupy the post and the first President born in Independent India. Before entering politics, she worked as a clerk in the State Irrigation and Power Department from 1979 to 1983, and then as a teacher in Rairangpur until 1997. **Droupadi Murmu was born to a Santali family on 20 June 1958, in Uparbeda village in the Baidaposi area of Rairangpur, Odisha.** Murmu was sworn in as the Governor of Jharkhand on 18 May 2015, becoming the first woman to hold the position. Prathibha DeviSingh Patil served as the 12th president of India spanning from 2007 to 2012. She is the first woman to become the president of India. K.R. Narayanan was the first Dalit to hold the high office of the President of India from 1997 to 2002. Ramnath Kovind is the 2nd Dalit President of India served from 2017 to 2022.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju Announces Nationwide “Constitution Glorification Campaign” For 75th Anniversary of Indian Constitution

- Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, **announced that the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution, on November 26, will be commemorated with a nationwide “Constitution Glorification Campaign” in every village.** Rijiju highlighted the government’s initiative to construct Constitution buildings in every district. Mr. Rijiju also visited Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s residence and interacted with Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs.
- **Constitution Day, also known as Samvidhan Divas, is celebrated in India on November 26 each year. This day commemorates the adoption of the Constitution of India on November 26, 1949, which came into effect on January 26, 1950.** The Government of India announced the **celebration of Constitution Day in May 2015 to promote constitutional values among citizens.** The year 2015 was also the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chairman of the Constitution’s Drafting Committee.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar famous address to the Constituent Assembly: On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognising the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which is Assembly has to laboriously built up. **The constitution is workable, flexible and strong enough to hold the country together both in peace-time and in war-time.** In his speech, Ambedkar has cautioned that the working of a Constitution does not depend on the document itself. Ultimately, its effect depends on those tasked with implementing it. “...however good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot. However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out to be good if those who are called to work it, happen to be a good lot. Dr. Ambedkar ultimately emphasises that people must not be content with a mere political democracy, but rather strive for a social democracy with underlying principles of equality, liberty and fraternity. **“Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of...social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life.**

India ranked 105th out of 127 countries in Global Hunger Index 2024

- **The 19th Global Hunger Index (GHI) report for 2024 has ranked India 105th out of 127 countries, placing it among nations with ‘serious’ hunger problems.** India lags behind its neighbours Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, while it ranks just above Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- The GHI series tracks hunger worldwide, focusing on areas where urgent action is required. **India’s score of 27.3 in the 2024 report reflects a serious level of hunger.** The report notes a slight increase in the prevalence of undernourishment in India in recent years. **While India’s 2024 score shows some improvement from its 2016 GHI score of 29.3, which also fell under the ‘serious’ category, it is still far behind its neighbours.**
- **There has been considerable progress compared to the scores of 38.4 and 35.2 in 2000 and 2008, respectively, both of which were categorized as ‘alarming’.** The 2024 report is not directly comparable to the 2023 report due to a change in methodology and revised data. However, it provides comparative data for the years 2000, 2008, 2016, and 2024.
- **The 2024 Global Hunger Index score for the world is 18.3, considered moderate, down only slightly from the 2016 score of 18.8.** Little progress has been made on reducing hunger since 2016, and the prospects for achieving Zero Hunger by the target date of 2030 are grim, with 42 countries still experiencing alarming or serious hunger. The wars in Gaza and Sudan have led to exceptional food crises.
- **Somalia, Yemen, Chad, and Madagascar are the countries with the highest 2024 GHI scores; Burundi and South Sudan are also provisionally designated as alarming.** Progress has been notable for example in Bangladesh, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia, and Togo, although challenges remain.

- India's performance remains concerning, in comparison to the South Asian neighbours such as Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, which fall into the “moderate” category. India is listed alongside countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan, which also face severe hunger challenges. The report reveals alarming statistics: 13.7 percent of India's population is undernourished, 35.5 percent of children under five are stunted, 18.7 percent suffer from wasting, and 2.9 percent of children die before their fifth birthday.
- Indicators Used for GHI Ranking are: **Undernourishment:** 13.7% of India's population suffers from inadequate caloric intake, indicating undernourishment. **Child stunting:** 35.5% of children under the age of five are stunted, reflecting chronic under nutrition. **Child Wasting:** India has the highest global rate of child wasting, with 18.7% of children under five showing low weight relative to their height. **Child Mortality:** 2.9% of children in India do not survive past their fifth birthday, highlighting child mortality concerns.

Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for **comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger** at global, regional, and national levels. The index is published by **Concern Worldwide**, an Irish humanitarian organisation, and **Welthungerhilfe**, a German aid agency. **Sustainable Development Goal 2** aims to achieve “**zero hunger**”. It is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015. The official wording is: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”.

Centre Revokes President's Rule in Jammu and Kashmir

- **Union Government revoked the President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, paving the way for forming a new government in the Union Territory.** “In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 73 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 (34 of 2019) read with Articles 239 and 239A of the Constitution of India, the order dated the 31st October 2019 about the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir shall stand revoked immediately before the appointment of the Chief Minister under Section 54 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019,” the notification signed by President Droupadi Murmu. **Prior to October 31, 2019, the President's rule was continuing in the erstwhile state from June 2017** after the resignation of the then chief minister Mehbooba Mufti when the BJP withdrew support to the PDP-led government.
- **President's rule was originally enforced in the former state as Governor's rule for six months. Later, President's rule was enforced for the following six months, and it was extended numerous times with Parliament's permission. Article 356 of the Constitution, which imposes President's control in a state, does not apply in union territories. On October 31, 2019, when Jammu and Kashmir became a union territory, the President's rule over the undivided state was lifted. However, the President then issued a notice indicating that President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir will remain indefinitely under the lieutenant governor (LG).**
- **The Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were conducted for the first time after a gap of 10 years. The National Conference (NC) won 42 seats in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections, while Congress secured just six — five in Kashmir and one in Jammu.** The two parties had formed a pre-poll alliance. Their position is strengthened by the support of four independent MLA-elects and one from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). **The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the second-largest party with 29 seats.** The election, held in three phases on September 18, September 25, and October 1, was the first since Article 370 was revoked, making it a historic event.
- **National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah has staked the claim to form a new government in Jammu and Kashmir. His first term, from 2009 to 2014, when Jammu and Kashmir was a state, was also under the NC-Congress coalition government.** The National Conference – Congress alliance has secured a majority in the recently held assembly elections. **This would be the second tenure of Omar Abdullah as Chief Minister and the first elected government in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A in 2019 and the bifurcation of the erstwhile State into two Union Territories, Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir.**

Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north,

respectively. A resolution to repeal Article 370 was passed by both the houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are now equally applicable to it. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, ‘Jammu and Kashmir’ and ‘Ladakh’, with effect from 31 October 2019. The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is administered under the provisions of Article 239 of the Constitution of India. The Article 239A, originally formulated for the union territory of Puduchery, will also be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor. Omar Abdullah is currently serving as the first Chief Minister of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Trachoma-Free India

- World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that the Government of India has eliminated Trachoma as a public health problem becoming the third country in the South-East Asia Region to achieve this milestone. An official Certification was handed over to Smt. Aradhana Patnaik, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Health Mission by Ms. Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO South East Asia during the WHO’s South East Asia Region, Regional Committee meeting held at New Delhi
- Trachoma, a highly contagious bacterial infection, has been a major cause of preventable blindness worldwide. According to WHO estimated 150 million people worldwide are affected by Trachoma and 6 million of them are blind or at risk of visually disabling complications. Among them the infective stages of trachoma are usually found in children.
- WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus praised India’s commitment to alleviating the suffering caused by trachoma, emphasizing the vital collaboration among the government, healthcare professionals, and international partners that made this milestone possible. India now stands alongside Nepal, Myanmar, and 19 other countries that have also successfully eliminated trachoma as a public health issue. However, the disease continues to be a challenge in 39 other nations, affecting approximately 1.9 million people globally and leading to irreversible blindness in many cases.

Trachoma is a bacterial infection that affects the eyes. It is caused by the bacterium Chlamydia Trachomatis. Trachoma is contagious, spreading through contact with the eyes, eyelids, nose or throat secretions of infected people, if left untreated it causes irreversible blindness. WHO has termed Trachoma as a neglected tropical disease. WHO estimates suggest that 150 million people worldwide are affected by Trachoma and 6 million of them are blind or at risk of visually disabling complications. Trachoma is found in underprivileged communities living in poor environmental conditions. India launched the National Trachoma Control Program in 1963, which was later integrated into the National Program for Control of Blindness (NPCB). India was declared free from infective trachoma in 2017. From 2019 to 2024, India continued to monitor for trachoma cases to ensure the infection didn’t re-emerge.

India, Russia discuss new initiatives for Northern Sea Route

- The India-Russia working group on cooperation in the Northern Sea Route (NSR) held the first meeting and discussed targets for Indian-Russian cargo transit, possible training of Indian sailors for polar navigation and development of joint projects in Arctic shipbuilding, Rosatom state corporation of Russia said. The NSR is the shortest shipping route connecting the western part of Eurasia and the Asia-Pacific region, made possible due to the melting icecaps.
- “One of Rosatom’s strategic goals is to make the NSR an effective shipping artery connecting Europe, Russia and the Asia-Pacific region. Ongoing is the preparation of a federal project to develop the Great Northern Sea Route – a transport corridor from St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad to Vladivostok,” the statement said. The decision to establish a working group on the Northern Sea Route under the bilateral intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation was made during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow in July 2024.

North Sea Route (NSR) is the shortest shipping route for freight transportation between Europe and countries of the Asia-Pacific region, straddles the Four Seas (Barents, Kara, Laptev and East Siberian Sea) of the Arctic Ocean. Running to 5,600 km, the Route begins at the boundary between the Barents and the Kara seas (Kara Strait) and ends in the Bering Strait (Provideniya Bay). It offers potential distance savings of up to 50% compared to traditional routes through the Suez or Panama Canals. The 2021 Suez Canal Blockage heightened interest in the NSR as an alternative trade route. The NSR's potential as a transit route also suits India's trade-heavy economy. The Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor (CVMC) project offers a shorter and efficient trade route, further boosting India's interest in the NSR.

THE World University Rankings 2025: IISc tops among Indian universities

- The Times Higher Education released the World University Rankings 2025. **Indian Institute of Science, IISc Bangalore, topped the Indian universities by securing the 251-300 band in 2025 rankings.** In 2024 ranking, the varsity was placed in 201-250 band. So, IISc has slipped in the rankings this year. Anna University, Mahatma Gandhi University, and Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management were placed in the 501-600 band in 2024 but improved this year by securing a place in the 401-500 band. **IIT Indore has shown a major leap and has secured a place on the list this year.** In 2024, the Institute did not get a rank on the list. UPES has shown drastic improvement this year. Last year, it was placed in the 801-1000 band, and in the 2025 ranking, it is in the 501-600 band. Meanwhile, Jamia Millia Islamia has retained its 501-600 band position this year. Aligarh Muslim University and Banaras Hindu University have also been placed in the same 601-800 band this year.

India withdraws high commissioner to Canada amid escalating diplomatic row

- **India to withdraw its high commissioner to Canada and 'other targeted diplomats and officials.** "The Canadian Charge d'Affaires was summoned by Secretary (East). He was informed that the baseless targeting of the Indian High Commissioner and other diplomats and officials in Canada was completely unacceptable,".
- **"It was underlined that in an atmosphere of extremism and violence, the Trudeau Government's actions endangered their safety.** We have no faith in the current Canadian Government's commitment to ensure their security. Therefore, the Government of India has decided to withdraw the High Commissioner and other targeted diplomats and officials. **The tensions between India and Canada escalated after Ottawa's move to include the Indian high commissioner as 'person of interest' in its probe into the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year.**

Canada is a country located in the northern part of North America. Canada is the world's second-largest country by total area after Russia. Its border with the United States is the world's longest international land border. Charles III (Charles Philip Arthur George) is King of the United Kingdom and the 14 other Commonwealth realms. Its capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Canadian dollar is the currency of Canada. Justin Pierre James Trudeau has been serving as current Prime Minister of Canada since 2015. Canada is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy in the Westminster tradition. The country's head of government is the prime minister, who holds office by virtue of their ability to command the confidence of the elected House of Commons and is "called upon" by the governor general, representing the monarch of Canada, the head of state. The country is a Commonwealth realm and is officially bilingual (English and French) in the federal jurisdiction. **Canada is home to one of the largest overseas communities of Indian origin, which number approximately 1.4 million out of an overall Canadian population of 40 million. About 770,000 people reported Sikhism as their religion in the 2021 census. Canada has the highest population of Sikhs outside their home state of Punjab.** India has often complained to Canada's governments about the activities of Sikh hardliners among the Indian diaspora who, it says, are trying to revive the insurgency. India-Canada relations have previously been tested by events such as the bombing of an Air India aircraft in 1985 by a Canada-based Khalistani separatist group.

India conducts first-ever riverine dolphin population estimation exercise

- **India has conducted its first population estimation of riverine dolphins in the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river systems and its findings will be released soon. The famous Ganges river dolphin is found in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna river system and its tributaries spanning across India, Bangladesh, Nepal and**

Bhutan. A small population of the Indus river dolphin, a close relative of the Ganges river dolphin, is found in the Indus River system in India. **“Under Project Dolphin, we have completed the estimation of riverine dolphins, the first of its kind in the world.** The survey, conducted over two years, covered 8,000 kilometres of the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus rivers.

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.

Omar Abdullah takes oath as first Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir

- **National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah has been sworn in as the first Chief Minister of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.** Omar Abdullah, who previously served as the Chief Minister of the erstwhile state from 2009 to 2014 under an NC-Congress coalition will be administered the oath by lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also administered oath to five other lawmakers from his party - Sakina Masood (Itoo), Javed Dar, Javed Rana, Surinder Choudhary, and Satish Sharma. Mr Abdullah guided his party to a massive victory in the September-October elections, winning 42 seats in the 90-member assembly. It has the support of four Independents and one AAP legislator, besides that of the Congress, which won just six seats - down from 12 in the 2014 election.

Jharkhand government to increase the amount under Maiya Samman Yojana

- **The Hemant Soren-led Jharkhand government has made an important pre-election announcement to increase monthly financial assistance to women under the ‘Maiya Samman Yojana’.** The scheme, which originally provided Rs. 1,000 per month to women aged 18 to 50, will now offer Rs. 2,500, benefiting approximately 53 lakh women. This increase raises the annual amount from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 30,000, and the new payouts will start from December 2024.

Jharkhand (meaning ‘the land of forests’) is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. **The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital.** Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Santosh Kumar Gangwar is serving as the current Governor of Jharkhand. **The state was formed on 15 November 2000, from the territory that had previously been part of Bihar.**

NITI Aayog launches study to evaluate shift to renewable energy sources

- **The NITI Aayog has constituted a body to map India’s ‘just transition’ framework.** ‘Just transition’ refers to the movement away from fossil fuel-linked jobs to those in the renewable energy sector. In many developing countries, including India, the former refer to jobs in the coal mining sector.
- **Coal fuels around 75% of the electricity consumed in India.** India has 643 operational thermal power plant units. In terms of installed capacity, over 50% of the country’s capacity is concentrated in 21 districts in 11 States. The fleet of coal-based thermal power plants in India is relatively young with over three-fourths of the existing capacity under 20 years old.
- **Twenty-five years is considered the average design-life of a thermal power plant. By that metric, nearly a third, or 224 units will be eligible for retirement by 2030. By 2040, two-thirds of the plants will be of retirement age.** To compensate and adjust for India’s expected rise in per capita power consumption, the expectation is that future growth will be powered by renewable sources such as solar and wind. **India has claimed that it will add 500 GW – more than the current installed power capacity – of electric power from non-fossil sources by 2030.**

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. **The Planning Commission was an institution in the Government of India, which formulated India’s Five-Year Plans, among other functions.** After India achieved independence, a formal model of planning

was adopted, and accordingly the Planning Commission, reporting directly to the Prime Minister of India, was established on 15 March 1950, with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as the Chairman. Authority for creation of the Planning Commission was not derived from the Constitution of India or statute; it is an arm of the Central Government of India. The first Five-Year Plan was launched in 1951, focusing mainly on development of the agricultural sector. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current Chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current Vice Chairman is Suman Bery and the current Chief Executive Officer is Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam.

Centre sets up AI hubs for research on health, agriculture, sustainable cities

- The Centre announced setting up of three centres of excellence (CoE) in artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare, agriculture and sustainable cities. While the CoE in healthcare will be led by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi, the IIT in Ropar, Punjab will lead the CoE in agriculture.
- IIT Kanpur has been given the charge of developing CoE in sustainable cities. The CoEs will function with industries and start-ups. Announcing the decision, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the AI-CoEs were going to be solution providers and would create a new generation of employment providers and wealth creators. The Union Budget of 2023-24 had proposed the setting up of AI-CoEs with a financial outlay of ₹990 crore over the period of 2023-24 to 2027-28. To oversee its implementation, an industry-heavy apex committee had also been constituted, co-chaired by Sridhar Vembu.

Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Two River-Linking Projects Worth Rs.15, 710 Crore

- The Maharashtra Cabinet approved the Damanganga-Vaitarna-Godavari river-linking project along with Damanganga-Ekdare-Godavari, which will resolve the problem of water scarcity in North Maharashtra and Marathwada regions.
- Both the river-linking projects are worth 15,710 rupees. For the Damanganga-Vaitarna-Godavari river-linking project, the Cabinet sanctioned a proposal of 13,497 crore rupees. Due to this proposed project, 160.97 MLD of water will be available, and 33,110 hectares of land will be under irrigation. Similarly, for the Damanganga-Ekdare-Godavari river-linking project, a proposal of 2,213 rupees crore had been approved. Due to this project, 100 MLD water will be available, and 12,998 hectares of area will come under irrigation, which will completely transform the Sinnar taluka in Nashik district.
- The Ken Betwa Link Project is the first river interlinking project in India. The National Water Development Agency (NWDA) is the authority for the interlinking of rivers. The river linking project in India aims to enhance water availability across regions, mitigate floods and droughts, improve agricultural productivity, and generate hydroelectric power. By connecting water-surplus Rivers with deficient ones, the project seeks to balance water resources and promote sustainable development.

Maharashtra is India's second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. Nagpur is Maharashtra's second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. Pune is its cultural capital. Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray was former Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Uddhav Thackeray was the first of his family to be the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. His father Bal Thackeray founded the Shiv Sena over five decades ago. Eknath Sambhaji Shinde is serving as the Current Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

CJI Chandrachud names Justice Sanjiv Khanna as his successor

- Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has formally proposed Justice Sanjiv Khanna as his successor. In a communication to the Union government, Chief Justice Chandrachud stated that since he is demitting office on November 11, Justice Khanna would be his successor. Upon approval by the government, Justice Khanna will become the 51st Chief Justice of India. He is set to serve tenure of six months, concluding on May 13, 2025, before his retirement.

The Chief Justice of India is the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of India as well as the highest-ranking officer of the Indian Judiciary. The Constitution of India grants power to the president of India to appoint, in consultation with the outgoing chief justice, the next chief justice, who will serve until they reach the age of sixty-

five or are removed by impeachment. As per convention, the name suggested by the incumbent chief justice is almost always the next senior most judge in the Supreme Court. However this convention has been broken twice. In 1973, Justice A. N. Ray was appointed superseding 3 senior judges. Also, in 1977 Justice Mirza Hameedullah Beg was appointed as the chief justice superseding Justice Hans Raj Khanna. As head of the Supreme Court, the chief justice is responsible for the allocation of cases and appointment of constitutional benches which deal with important matters of law. In accordance with Article 145 of the Constitution of India and the Supreme Court Rules of Procedure of 1966, the chief justice allocates all work to the other judges who are bound to refer the matter back to them in any case where they require it to be looked into by a larger bench of more judges. **The sanctioned judge strength of the Supreme Court is 34 (including Chief Justice of India).**

Centre to establish 3 AI centres of excellence by 2028

- Union minister for education Dharmendra Pradhan said the Centre will establish three Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centres of Excellence (CoE) focused on healthcare, agriculture, and sustainable cities with the support of AIIMS, IIT Delhi, Kanpur and Ropar by 2028.
- The establishment of these centres was announced by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her 2023-24 budget speech as part of the vision to “Make AI in India and Make AI work for India”. The government has approved ₹990 crores for these centres. The initiative will be implemented over five years, from FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28, with the aim of strengthening India’s global position in AI-driven research and innovation.

Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act

- Recently, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act 1955, which permits immigrants from Bangladesh residing in Assam to secure Indian citizenship, as a valid piece of legislation aligned to the Preamble value of fraternity. According to the court, the principle of fraternity cannot be selectively applied to one section living in Assam while another lot are labelled “illegal immigrants”. The petitioning NGO argued to court that Section 6A threatened Assamese people’s right to preserve their political, linguistic, and cultural identity by bringing illegal immigrants and altering its demography.
- In a 4:1 majority ruling, a five-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 (1955 Act) that grants citizenship to immigrants who entered Assam between January 1, 1966, and March 25, 1971. While Justice Surya Kant authored the lead majority verdict on behalf of himself, Justice M.M. Sundresh and Justice Manoj Misra, the Chief Justice penned a concurring opinion. However, Justice J.B. Pardiwala rendered a dissenting opinion declaring the statutory provision to be unconstitutional but with a prospective effect.
- Section 6A is a special provision which was inserted into the 1955 Act in furtherance of a Memorandum of Settlement called the “Assam Accord” signed on August 15, 1985, by the then Rajiv Gandhi government at the Centre and the All Assam Students’ Union following a six-year-long agitation against the entry of migrants from Bangladesh into Assam. Justice Kant, in his opinion, underscored that Section 6A embodies the principle of fraternity. He further observed that accepting the contentions of the petitioners would open the floodgates for similar challenges by residents of other States who might seek to attack inter-state migration under the guise of protecting their indigenous culture. However, he acknowledged that at this stage of the proceedings, the court is not equipped to embark on a microscopic fact-finding exercise to determine whether there has been any cultural erosion as claimed by the petitioners. On the other hand, Justice Pardiwala in his dissent pointed out that even if Section 6A may have been constitutionally valid at the time of its enactment, it has acquired unconstitutionality by the efflux of time because the provision has not been effective enough to redress the problem for which it was adopted. He noted that Section 6A by not setting any temporal limit to its applicability promotes further immigration of illegal migrants into Assam and is thus liable to be struck down.
- The court ruled that Section 6A does not violate Articles 6 and 7 of the Constitution, which set 26th January 1950, as the cut-off for granting citizenship to migrants from East and West Pakistan. Section 6A applies from a much later date, so it operates separately from the earlier constitutional provisions. The cutoff date of 25th March 1971 is justified, as the Pakistani Army initiated Operation Searchlight to suppress the Bangladeshi

nationalist movement in East Pakistan on 26th March 1971. The Court stated that **the petitioners failed to prove that the Assamese people's ability to safeguard their culture** was compromised by Section 6A. The Court emphasised that constitutional and statutory provisions already protect Assam's cultural and linguistic interests.

- **Parliament enacted Section 6A under its powers from Article 246 and Entry 17 of the Union List, which addresses citizenship, naturalization, and aliens.** Assam's special citizenship law does not violate **Article 14 (Equality)**, as the state's migrant situation was distinct from the rest of India. The court affirmed that the **ongoing migration from Bangladesh** has placed a significant **burden on Assam**. It was emphasized that **a nation can simultaneously accommodate immigrants and refugees while focusing on sustainable development** and ensuring an equitable distribution of resources. It was emphasised that Section 6A should not be solely blamed for this situation. The **government's failure to detect and deport post-1971 immigrants** from Bangladesh in a timely manner was a major contributing factor.
- **The court found that the current mechanisms and Tribunals responsible for identifying illegal immigrants in Assam are inadequate.** These systems are not sufficient for the timely enforcement of Section 6A and related laws, such as the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950, and the Foreigners Act, 1946.
- **Section 6A was enacted as part of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 1985, following the Assam Accord of 1985. It grants Indian citizenship to immigrants who entered Assam from Bangladesh before 1st January 1966. Those who entered between 1st January 1966 and 25th March 1971, can be conferred citizenship after fulfilling certain prescribed procedures and conditions.** The section, however, denies citizenship to immigrants who arrived in Assam after 25th March 1971.

The Assam Accord was a tripartite agreement between the Central Government, the State Government of Assam, and the leaders of the Assam Movement. It sought to end the influx of illegal migrants from Bangladesh. It introduced Section 6A into the Citizenship Act, of 1955, exclusively for Assam. This provision addresses the issue of large-scale migration preceding the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. It mandates the detection and deportation of foreigners who entered Assam after 25th March 1971, marking the creation of Bangladesh. The introduction of Section 6A reflects the specific historical and demographic challenges faced by Assam during this critical period.

Nayab Singh Saini sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Haryana

- Bharatiya Janata Party's **Nayab Singh Saini** took oath as new **Chief Minister of Haryana** for the second term, **days after the party successfully retained power in the recently held Assembly election.** In Mr. Saini's new Cabinet thirteen legislators were inducted, including two women. **Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya administered the oath of office and secrecy to all of them at the swearing-in ceremony** held in Haryana's Panchkula, which was attended by a battery of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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

Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in Pune

- **Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Dr Jitendra Singh** inaugurated **India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers** in at **Jejuri in Pune** from New Delhi. The facility has been built by Praj Industries. Dr Jitendra Singh said, **"This 'First-of-its-kind Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in India' is a pioneering effort in developing indigenously integrated technology for the production of Polylactic Acid (PLA) bioplastic.** This marks a pivotal development for India's commitment to sustainable solutions. This demonstrates India's resolve to transition from fossil-based plastics to eco-friendly alternatives, crucial for addressing the global plastic pollution crisis."

Manipur: Mera Hou Chongba Festival Observed To Foster Unity between Hill & Valley Indigenous Communities

- The festival to strengthen the cordial bond between the indigenous communities living in the hills and the valley people of Manipur, the Mera Hou Chongba Festival 2024, was observed in Imphal. The main event was held at the holy site, Kangla, in Imphal, where leaders of indigenous communities from various hill districts joined the valley people in observing the festival, which symbolizes harmony and cultural exchange. The Mera Hou Chongba is the only festival where both hill and valley indigenous communities are observed together in the state.

7th International Solar Alliance Assembly Session to Be Held From Nov 3

- The Seventh Session of the International Solar Alliance Assembly will be held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. The four-day event will continue till 6th of November.
- The ISA Assembly will deliberate on initiatives of the International Solar Alliance, ISA that impact energy access, security and traditions with a **focus on empowering member countries to adopt solar energy and mobilise finance to speed up solar deployment**. Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy and President of ISA Pralhad Joshi said that leaders from across the world will be gathered at the ISA Assembly to promote the widespread adoption of solar power.
- He emphasised that the widespread adoption of solar energy solutions is one of the most powerful weapons in the battle against global warming. He added, that for this the **ISA was established as a joint initiative between India and France to address climate change**.

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. This initiative was first proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a speech in November 2015 at Wembley Stadium (London HA9 0WS, United Kingdom), in which he referred to sunshine countries as *Suryaputra* (“Sons of the Sun”). 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. The ISA is guided by its ‘Towards 1000’ strategy which aims to mobilise USD 1,000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030, while delivering energy access to 1,000 million people using clean energy solutions and resulting in installation of 1,000 GW of solar energy capacity.

President Droupadi Murmu Confers With Honorary Doctorate in Political Science during Her Visit to Algeria

- President Droupadi Murmu who is on a visit to Algeria, as part of her three nation visit was conferred with Honorary Doctorate in Political Science by Sidi Abdellah Science and Technology Pole University in Algiers. Mr. Kamal Baddari, the Algerian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, handed over the Doctorate.
- President Droupadi Murmu addressing the Sidi Abdellah University said that this doctorate is an honour for my country, a country that had stood for peace and prosperous world from time immemorial. She said that education neutralises the inequalities and promotes equal opportunity for all. **She urged the Algerian Govt, Higher Education department and students to avail the benefits of India’s ITEC program and other scholarship programs**. President further said that the youths in both countries will be the strong bridge of people connecting and thus strengthening the existing cordial relation between the nations.

Droupadi Murmu has been serving as the 15th president of India since 25 July 2022. She is the first person belonging to the tribal community and also the second woman after Pratibha Patil to hold the office. She is also the youngest person to occupy the post and the first President born in Independent India. Before entering

politics, she worked as a clerk in the State Irrigation and Power Department from 1979 to 1983, and then as a teacher in Rairangpur until 1997. **Droupadi Murmu** was born to a Santali family on **20 June 1958**, in Uparbeda village in the Baidaposi area of Rairangpur, Odisha. Murmu was sworn in as the **Governor of Jharkhand on 18 May 2015**, becoming the first woman to hold the position. **Prathibha DeviSingh Patil** served as the **12th president of India** spanning from 2007 to 2012. She is the first woman to become the president of India. **K.R. Narayanan** was the first Dalit to hold the high office of the President of India from 1997 to 2002. **Ramnath Kovind** is the **2nd Dalit President of India** served from 2017 to 2022.

Algeria is a country in North Africa. Algeria is the world's tenth largest nation by area, and the largest nation in Africa. The capital and largest city is Algiers. The dinar is the monetary currency of Algeria.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend BRICS summit

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Russia from October 22-23 to attend the BRICS summit**, the Ministry of External Affairs announced during which he is also “expected to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from BRICS member countries and invited leaders.” **The BRICS which came into existence in 2006 saw the addition of five new members in 2024 - Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates and 15 summits have taken so far. The expanded BRICS has a combined population of about 3.5 billion, or 45% of the world's population. Under Russia's chairmanship this year, more than 250 BRICS meetings/events have been proposed by Russia. Two major activities include the integration of the invited countries as full members of BRICS and further development of the BRICS partner country model and a list of prospective partner countries to be reported by the next Summit.**

BRICS is an intergovernmental organization comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates. Originally identified to highlight investment opportunities, the grouping evolved into an actual geopolitical bloc, with their governments meeting annually at formal summits and coordinating multilateral policies since 2009. Bilateral relations among BRICS are conducted mainly based on non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit. **The term “BRIC” is believed to be coined in 2001 by then-chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, Jim O'Neill, in his publication Building Better Global Economic BRICs. But, it was actually coined by Roopa Purushothaman who was a Research Assistant in the original report. The founding countries of Brazil, Russia, India, and China held the first summit in Yekaterinburg in 2009, with South Africa joining the bloc a year later. Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates joined the organisation on 1 January 2024. Saudi Arabia is yet to officially join, but participates in the organisation's activities as an invited nation.**

Inauguration of ‘Aviation Park’ Showcasing India's Aviation Heritage

- **Under the leadership of Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Minister of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Civil Aviation unveiled the Aviation Park within the premises of the Ministry.** Situated amidst a serene waterbody, the park showcases a stunning display of aircraft models, depicting the evolution of planes and the growth of India's Civil Aviation sector. The displays symbolize the ministry's journey towards progress and innovation in the aviation field. A backdrop of free-standing architectural columns, representing various regions of India, celebrates the rich cultural and architectural heritage of the country.

Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is currently serving as the Minister of Civil Aviation since June 2024. He represents Srikakulam in the Lok Sabha constituency as a Member of Parliament. At 36, Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is the youngest minister while 79-year-old Jitan Ram Manjhi is the oldest minister to be inducted in the 18th Lok Sabha. Another young minister is Raksha Khadse (37), an MP from Maharashtra. She won the Raver Lok Sabha seat in Maharashtra. At the age of 29, Agatha Kongkal Sangma is the youngest member of parliament ever in India to be appointed Union Minister in Government of India till date. Sangma was Minister of State for Rural development. She resigned from this post during the cabinet reshuffle in October 2012.

Benami law: Supreme Court recalls 2022 judgment that declared amendments unconstitutional

- A Special Bench of the Supreme Court recalled its August 23, 2022 judgment which declared provisions and amendments made in the benami property law “unconstitutional and manifestly arbitrary.” The Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, referred the case for fresh adjudication. **The amendments, introduced in 2016, had applied retrospectively and could send a person to prison for three years. It had empowered the Centre to confiscate “any property” subject to a benami transaction.**
- The decision to recall and have a re-look at the issue was based on review petitions filed by the Union Government and Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax (Benami Prohibition). **The government was represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta. The top law officer argued that the 2022 judgment had “unsettled 40 years of jurisprudence”.**
- Mr. Mehta said the short legal question raised before the apex court was whether the **Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988, as amended by the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act of 2016, had a prospective effect.** However, the 2022 judgment traversed beyond the ambit of the question raised, to declare Section 3(2) of the unamended 1988 Act “unconstitutional for being manifestly arbitrary.”
- **The verdict under question had found Section 3(2) of the 2016 Act violative of Article 20(1) of the Constitution, which prohibits retrospective punishment.** The judgment had further found Section 5 allowing in rem forfeiture [a general seizure of property by the Government] of the unamended Act of 1988, prior to the 2016 Amendment Act, unconstitutional and manifestly arbitrary.
- The Review Bench said the parties were free to argue on the constitutionality of the benami law provisions before the appropriate Bench to be constituted by the Chief Justice of India in his administrative capacity. **The court made it clear that the arguments which led to the 2022 verdict had not squarely addressed the issue of the constitutional validity of Sections 3(2) and 5.**

Indian navy - royal navy of Oman maritime exercise (naseem al bahr)

- **INS Trikand and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft, participated in the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr with the Royal Navy of Oman Vessel Al Seeb off Goa from 13 to 18 October 24. The exercise was conducted in two phases: with harbour phase from 13 to 15 October 24, followed by the sea phase.** As part of harbour activities, personnel from both Navies engaged in professional interactions, including Subject Matter Expert Exchanges and planning conferences. In addition, sports fixtures and social engagements were also held.
- During the sea phase of the exercise conducted from 16 to 18 Oct 24, both ships carried out various evolutions, including gun firings at surface inflatable targets, close-range anti-aircraft firings, manoeuvres, and Replenishment at Sea Approaches (RASAPS). **The integral helicopter operated from INS Trikand and undertook cross-deck landings and vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with RNOV Al Seeb.**
- Additionally, the Indian Navy’s Dornier aircraft provided **Over-the-Horizon Targeting (OTHT) data with the participating ships. To further enhance interoperability, Indian Navy Sea Riders embarked on RNOV Al Seeb for a day.** The exercise helped strengthen interoperability and enhanced understanding of each other’s best practices. The exercise was a resounding success, achieving its aims of enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding, and strengthening cohesion between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman. This exercise further reaffirms India’s commitment to constructive collaboration and mutual growth with like-minded nations in the Indian Ocean Region.

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.

Prime Minister launches ‘Karmayogi Saptah’ - National Learning Week

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the ‘Karmayogi Saptah’ - National Learning Week at Dr Ambedkar International Centre** in New Delhi. The Prime Minister said that through Mission Karmayogi our goal is to create human resources that would become the driving force of our country’s development.
- He underlined that the new learnings and experiences during the National Learning Week will provide strength and help in improving working systems which will **help us achieve our goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047. Mission Karmayogi was launched in September 2020 envisioning a future-ready civil service rooted in Indian ethos, with a global perspective.** National Learning Week (NLW) will provide fresh impetus towards individual and organisational capacity development for Civil Servants creating a “One Government” message and aligning everyone with national goals and promoting lifelong learning.

Vijaya Rahatkar appointed as Chairperson of National Commission for Women

- **Vijaya Rahatkar has been appointed as the Chairperson of National Commission for Women NCW.** A notification in this regard has been issued by Ministry of Women and Child Development. Ms Rahatkar has served as Chairperson of the Maharashtra State Commission for Women and Mayor of Aurangabad. The Ministry also notified about appointment of Dr Archana Majumdar as Member of the NCW.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) is a statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women. It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act. The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik. The objective of the NCW is to represent the rights of women in India and to provide a voice for their issues and concerns.

Maldivian President decides to introduce India’s UPI in Maldives

- **President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has decided to introduce India’s Unified Payment Interface in the Maldives.** The president’s office announced that the decision was taken on the recommendation of the cabinet. The move is expected to bring significant benefits to the Maldivian economy, including increased financial inclusion, improved efficiency in financial transactions and enhanced digital infrastructure.
- **Indian tourists will be able to make transactions in Indian rupees on UPI-enabled apps without going through the hassle of converting currency.** In this regard, President Muizzu has decided to set up a consortium to introduce UPI in the Maldives. He also suggested that banks, telecom companies, state-owned companies, and fintech companies operating in the country should be included in the consortium.
- During the visit of External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar in August this year, **an MoU was signed between the two countries to implement the Unified Payments Interface in the Maldives. The financial interface operated by National Payments Corporation of India has been operational in several international locations, including UAE, Sri Lanka, France, Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, the UK, and Mauritius.** With the implementation of UPI, India continues its commitment towards sharing developmental experiences with partner nations.
- During his state visit to India earlier this month, **India also launched the RuPay cards in the Maldives to enhance the ease of payments for Indian tourists visiting the island nation as well as for Maldivian nationals visiting India,** in an attempt to foster digital and financial cooperation between the two countries.

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.

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.

Shivraj Chouhan to monitor all PM Modi's schemes for implementation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set up a monitoring group under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan to review implementation of schemes announced by the Prime Minister and in the Union Budget, subordinate legislation and other infrastructure projects. PM Modi has delegated powers to Chouhan to monitor the progress of the announced projects since the first NDA government under him was formed in 2014.
- The inaugural meeting of this newly formed monitoring group took place on October 18 at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The meeting saw participation from all secretaries to the Government of India, including the Chairman of the Railway Board, who attended in a hybrid format. This group, under the leadership of Chouhan, a three-time Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, is set to convene monthly at the PMO, located in South Block, to ensure the effective execution of government initiatives.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan is serving as the current Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and current Minister of Rural Development since 11 June 2024. He was the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh from 2020 to 2023 and previously from 2005 to 2018 and a Member of Legislative Assembly in Madhya Pradesh from Budhni since 2006 to 2024 and previously from 1990 to 1991. He is the longest serving Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. He was also elected to 18th Lok Sabha from Vidisha.

Government to set up a committee to address stark disparity between Farm-Gate Prices & Retail Costs of Horticulture Produce

- Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the government will establish a committee to address the stark disparity between farm-gate prices and retail costs of horticulture produce. He said, while farmers sell vegetables at 5 rupees a kilo, consumers end up paying 50 rupees and this gulf needs to narrow. Mr Chouhan also unveiled plans to launch 'Krishi Chaupal', an initiative aimed at bridging the lab-to-land gap in agricultural research. He emphasised upon the need to optimise the functioning of over 730 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) across India, highlighting concerns about their fragmented management under various authorities, including ICAR, universities, and state governments. The minister called upon states to develop model farms spanning 2 to 2.5 acres to demonstrate best practices in agriculture. Mr Chouhan said, agriculture is India's economic backbone and no progress is possible without strengthening this sector.

Launching Of eShram for Unorganised Workers

- Union Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched "eShram – One Stop Solution" in New Delhi. The platform will act as a mediator to ensure that unorganized workers have easy access to a variety of government schemes. The primary aim of the initiative is to integrate information about beneficiaries of all social security and welfare schemes meant for unorganized workers in an effective manner through a single platform. This initiative will help unorganized workers become aware of the schemes designed for them.

Mansukh Laxmanbhai Mandaviya is serving as Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports since 2024. He is also a Lok Sabha member from Porbandar Gujarat.

Mission BASUNDHARA 3 aims to provide land rights to indigenous people

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 in Guwahati to provide land rights to indigenous people. Under this, steps will also be taken to digitize various land-related services and publish maps for the benefit of the people of the state.

- The Chief Minister also **launched the Revenue Department’s Digidoc, a digital directory for non-registrable and optional registrable documents**. The directory will streamline services, reduce processing time, and enhance public convenience and improve accessibility and efficiency.
- Chief Minister said that immediately after assuming office, **his government decided to provide land rights to indigenous communities in Assam, an exercise undertaken after 75 years of independence**. He said that with this purpose, Mission Basundhara was started in 2021. He further said that the Assam government disposed of eight lakh applications in nine months under Mission Basundhara 1.

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. **Lakshman Prasad Acharya is serving as the current Governor of Assam**. **Himanta Biswa Sarma is serving as the 15th and current Chief Minister of Assam since 2021**.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates airports in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated three airports across the country — in Chhattisgarh’s Surguja, Madhya Pradesh’s Rewa and Uttar Pradesh’s Saharanpur**. The airports have been developed under the **Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik)** of the Central government and flight operations are expected to begin shortly.
- **The RCS- UDAN, a government-backed initiative to improve infrastructure and connectivity in India, especially in remote and underserved regions, completes seven years**. **It is a vital component of India’s National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016, launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) on October 21, 2016, with a 10-year vision**. **The first RCS-UDAN flight was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on April 27, 2017, connecting Shimla to Delhi**. The scheme focuses on improving unserved air routes in underserved regions of the country and fulfilling the aspirations of the common citizens.

Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik (“Let the common citizens of the country fly”), known by its acronym UDAN-Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) is a regional airport development program of the Government of India and part of the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) of upgrading under-served air routes. RCS scheme consists of **setting up Greenfield airports and as well as upgradation of Brownfield airports**. **Its objective is to make air travel more accessible and contribute to economic development in India**. The scheme focuses on improving unserved air routes in underserved regions of the country and fulfilling the aspirations of the common citizens. **The first UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) flight from Shimla to Delhi took off on April 27, 2017 from Jubbarhatti Airport in Shimla**. Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the flight.

PM Narendra Modi visited Russia for BRICS Summit

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently visited Kazan, Russia, to attend the 16th BRICS Summit**. The summit, held under Russia’s chairmanship, focused on several global issues, including economic cooperation, peace and security, climate change, and terrorism. PM Modi held significant bilateral meetings during the visit. India and Russia discussed the ongoing Ukraine crisis, emphasizing peaceful resolutions, and addressed the repatriation of Indian nationals from the Russian Army. **PM Modi also extended an invitation for Putin to visit India for the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit**. The theme of the 2024 BRICS Summit was “Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security.”
- PM called upon BRICS to proactively push for global governance reforms. **Recalling the Voice of Global South Summits hosted by India during its G-20 Presidency, he stressed that the group must give primacy to the concerns of the Global South**. PM noted that the regional presence of the New Development Bank including in GIFT city, India, has created new values and impacts. **He expressed that the BRICS Startup Forum initiated by India which is to be launched this year would add significant value to the BRICS economic agenda**.
- **India and Iran marked the first official engagement since Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian’s election**. They focused on regional stability, economic cooperation, and the importance of the Chabahar Port for

trade links with Central Asia. The meeting between India and China marked the first formal interaction between PM Modi and Xi in five years, following tensions along the India-China border. This meeting followed an agreement to resume regular patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, indicating a potential thaw in relations between the two nations.

- **Kazan Declaration:** This declaration unequivocally condemned terrorism, asserting it should not be associated with any religion, nationality, or ethnicity. PM Modi reiterated the need for collective action against terrorism and its financing.
- Prime Minister elaborated on the recent green initiatives undertaken by India including the International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Mission LIFE and Green Credit initiative announced during COP28. He invited BRICS countries to join these initiatives. Prime Minister congratulated President Putin for successfully hosting the 16th BRICS Summit and conveyed wishes to Brazil as it takes over the presidency of the group. The BRICS leaders had productive discussions including on strengthening multilateralism, countering terrorism, fostering economic growth, pursuing sustainable development and bringing spotlight on the concerns of the Global South. **The leaders welcomed the 13 new BRICS partner countries.** At the conclusion of the Summit, the leaders adopted the 'Kazan Declaration'.

The BRICS countries have agreed to include 13 nations in the category of “partner states” in the association. However, the entry of these countries will not be made official during the summit. According to this definition, the Russian presidency will hold consultations with the partner countries to make membership of the BRICS official. The figure was confirmed earlier by Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov. **The group of countries invited to join the BRICS as “partner states” includes Turkey, Indonesia, Algeria, Belarus, Cuba, Bolivia, Malaysia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Vietnam, Nigeria, and Uganda.** According to diplomatic sources from the Brazilian delegation in Kazan heard by Brasil de Fato, Venezuela was left off the list due to Brazil's veto, which was presented during the preliminary negotiations of the summit.

India Pakistan extend agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for a further period of five years

- **India and Pakistan have agreed to extend the validity of the Agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for a further period of five years.** The Agreement was signed to facilitate the visit of pilgrims from India to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, Narowal, Pakistan through the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor and was valid for a period of five years.
- Ministry of External Affairs in a statement said that **the extension of the validity of this Agreement will ensure uninterrupted operation of the Corridor for use by the pilgrims from India to visit the holy Gurdwara in Pakistan.** In view of the continued requests of pilgrims regarding the removal of 20 dollars service charge levied by Pakistan per pilgrim per visit, India has once again urged Pakistan to not levy any fee or charges on the pilgrims.

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

Supreme Court says secularism a core part of the Constitution

- **The Supreme Court said secularism is an indelible and core part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.** The court made the oral observation while hearing a batch of petitions filed by former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy and others challenging the inclusion of words ‘socialist’ and ‘secular’ in the Preamble of the Constitution.
- **“This court has in a number of judgments held that secularism was always part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.** If one looks right to equality and the word ‘fraternity’ used in the Constitution, there is a clear

indication that secularism has been held as the core feature of the Constitution,” a Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar said.

- **Justice Khanna disagreed with the petitioners’ argument that the term ‘socialism’ would curtail personal liberty and individualism.** “One should not take the meaning adopted in Western countries... Socialism can also mean that there should be equality of opportunity and the wealth of the country should be distributed equally,” Justice Khanna remarked orally.
- Advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, a petitioner, said he was **neither against the words “socialist, secular and integrity” nor their insertion in the Constitution but against the insertion of these words into the Preamble in 1976 and that too with a retrospective effect from November 26, 1949.**
- **The Preamble was amended in December 1976 by the Indira Gandhi government to introduce the words ‘socialist’ and ‘secular’. The phrase “unity of the nation” was replaced with “unity and integrity of the nation”. The changes were made in the Preamble through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment during the Emergency.**
- **Originally, the text of the Preamble declared India as a ‘sovereign, democratic republic’. The words ‘socialist’, ‘secular’ were inserted between ‘sovereign’ and ‘democratic’. The largest Bench in the history of the Supreme Court (13 judges) in the Kesavananda Bharati case had held that the Preamble was an integral part of the Constitution, and was subject to the amending power of the Parliament, provided the basic structure was not tinkered with.**

Preamble declares India to be a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic. The objectives stated by the Preamble are to secure justice, liberty, equality to all citizens and promote fraternity to maintain unity and integrity of the nation. **The date is mentioned in the preamble when it was adopted i.e. November 26, 1949. We, the people of India:** It indicates the ultimate sovereignty of the people of India. **Sovereignty means the independent authority of the State, not being subject to the control of any other State or external power. Sovereign:** The term means that India has its own independent authority and it is not a dominion of any other external power. In the country, the legislature has the power to make laws which are subject to certain limitations. **Socialist:** The term means the achievement of socialist ends through democratic means. It holds faith in a mixed economy where both private and public sectors co-exist side by side. It was **added in the Preamble by 42nd Amendment, 1976. Secular:** The term means that all the religions in India get equal respect, protection and support from the state. It was **incorporated in the Preamble by 42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976. Democratic:** The term implies that the Constitution of India has an established form of Constitution which gets its authority from the will of the people expressed in an election. **Republic:** The term indicates that the **head of the state is elected by the people.** In India, the President of India is the elected head of the state.

International Incoming Spoofed Calls Prevention System launched

- Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia **launched the International Incoming Spoofed Calls Prevention System** in New Delhi. **The Department of Communications and Telecom Services has jointly devised the system to identify and block incoming international spoofed calls from reaching Indian telecom subscribers. The system was made operational, and within 24 hours, about 1.35 crore incoming international calls with Indian phone numbers were identified as spoofed and blocked by telecom service providers.** These spoofed calls have often been used for financial scams, impersonating government officials, and creating panic.
- There have also been cases of cybercrime threatening disconnection of mobile numbers, fake digital arrests, drugs or narcotics in couriers, impersonation of police officials, and arrests in sex rackets, among other issues. **Those who have already lost money or fallen victim to cybercrime can report it at the cybercrime helpline number 1930 or on the website <https://www.cybercrime.gov.in>.** The Ministry of Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, in collaboration with the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), has launched an initiative aimed at protecting Indian citizens from cyber fraud caused by spoofed international calls.

Nine-judge Bench to pronounce verdict on Centre-States’ tussle over industrial alcohol

- A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court is to pronounce its judgement on multiple States’ challenge to the Centre’s position that it has exclusive control over industrial alcohol. **The Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud heard States’ objections to the Centre’s tight grip over industrial**

alcohol, without even letting them have the opportunity to regulate its inflow and clandestine conversion to potable liquor for human consumption, posing a grave threat to public health. “There is a strong possibility of denatured spirit or industrial alcohol being misused for the purpose of human consumption. The State is the guardian of public health. States are concerned about liquor tragedies happening within their jurisdictions.

Articles 256 to 263, Part XI of the Constitution, deal with administrative relations between the Centre and the States. Articles 268 to 293 contained in Part XII of the constitution deal with Centre-state financial relations. Article 131 deals with the ‘original jurisdiction’ of the Supreme Court of India in any dispute that involves a ‘question of law or fact on which the existence of legal right depends’. Under Article 131, the dispute may be: between the Government of India and one or more States, or between the Government of India and any State or States on one side and one or more other States on the other, or between two or more States. A citizen can approach the High Court or the Supreme Court under Article 226 and Article 32, respectively, in case there is a violation of fundamental rights. A State can, meanwhile, invoke Article 131 to approach the Supreme Court in case it feels that its legal rights are under threat or have been violated by another State or the Central government.

PM Narendra Modi launched scheme for the elderly

- On the occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and 9th Ayurveda Day, the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched, inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for multiple projects related to the health sector worth around Rs. 12,850 crore at All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in New Delhi.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM approved a major expansion of the world’s largest public health insurance that offers a cashless cover of up to Rs. 5 lakh per year for hospitalization for all senior citizens aged 70 years and more, irrespective of their socio-economic status. The centre will fund 60% of the scheme. States can expand the scheme or modify it to include other age groups, and some states have already done so, bearing the cost for additional beneficiaries. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister noted the occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and Dhanteras and conveyed his best wishes on the occasion. He conveyed his wishes to all business owners of the country as most people tend to buy something new for their homes, and also extended advanced greetings for Diwali.

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.

Supreme Court pulls up Centre: Every citizen has right to environment free of pollution

- The Supreme Court said that time has come to remind governments that citizens have a fundamental right under Article 21 to live in a pollution-free environment and that the amended Section 15 of the Environment Protection Act-1986 dealing with penalties for violating the Act had been rendered “toothless” owing to the Centre’s failure to create the machinery to support this.
- “Time has come to remind the government of India and state governments that there is a fundamental right vesting in every citizen under Article 21 of the constitution of India to live in a pollution free environment. These are not the matters only of implementing the existing laws. These are the matters of blatant violation of

fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 21 of the constitution of India,” a bench of Justices A S Oka, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, and Augustine George Masih said while hearing a matter related to stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana.

- **The bench pointed out that while the unamended Section 15 made the violation of the Act a penal offence,** the amended section which came into force on April 1, substituted it with provision for recovery of penalty for contravention of provisions of the Act. However, “the provision has been rendered completely ineffective due to inaction on the part of the government of India” it said, adding, “neither rules are framed for supporting the said provisions nor appointment of adjudicating officers has been made though period of more than 6 months has elapsed.
- **As adjudicating officers are not appointed under section 15(c),** Obviously, the law enforcing machineries cannot impose penalty under Section 15.” The court said that “in absence of machinery created by the government of India, Section 15 as amended has become toothless.
- **And there is nothing in the hands of law enforcing authorities to strictly enforce the provisions of Environment Protection Act.** Therefore, those who violate the laws related to environment are now scot free as no action can be taken against them”.

Article 21: Protection of Life and Personal Liberty: No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. List of rights that Article 21: **Right to privacy, Right to go abroad, Right to shelter, Right against solitary confinement, Right to social justice and economic empowerment, Right against handcuffing, Right against custodial death, Right against delayed execution, Doctors’ assistance, Right against public hanging, Protection of cultural heritage, Right to pollution-free water and air, Right of every child to a full development, Right to health and medical aid, Right to education and Protection of under-trials.**

Centre to launch AI-powered chatbot to handle public grievances soon

- With lakhs of public grievances lodged on its centralised portal every year, **the Union government is likely to launch an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered chatbot to help users lodge complaints or appeals.** The chatbot will soon be **launched on the existing Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)** run by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), it is learnt.
- The portal allows users to lodge grievances with any Union or state government ministry or department. **DARPG secretary V Srinivas said that the government is already using AI to categorise the grievances it receives into around 22,000 different categories.** Now, he said, a ChatGPT-like chatbot developed by Bhashni, a division under the Digital India Corporation, will be launched soon. The next generation of CPGRAMS is also in the works and is likely to be completed by June 2025.

A chatbot is a computer program that simulates human conversation with an end user. Not all chatbots are equipped with artificial intelligence (AI), but modern chatbots increasingly use conversational AI techniques such as natural language processing (NLP) to understand user questions and automate responses to them. The next generation of chatbots with generative AI capabilities will offer even more enhanced functionality with their understanding of common language and complex queries, their ability to adapt to a user’s style of conversation and use of empathy when answering users’ questions. Business leaders can clearly see this future: 85% of execs say generative AI will be interacting directly with customers in the next two years, as reported in The CEO’s guide to generative AI study, from IBV.

PM Narendra Modi likely to skip COP29 in Azerbaijan

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi may skip the United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP29, to be held in Azerbaijan next month because of scheduling issues, people familiar with the matter said.** The development rules out the possibility of a meeting between the Indian leader and his Pakistani counterpart Shehbaz Sharif, something that Islamabad was keen on following external affairs minister S Jaishankar’s recent visit to the neighbouring country for a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet. **India’s delegation to COP29, or the Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),** is expected to be led by environment and climate change minister Bhupender Yadav, four people aware of the matter said on condition of anonymity.

The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly known as COP29, will be the 29th United Nations Climate Change conference. COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11 to 22 November, 2024. Mukhtar Babayev will preside COP29, while Samir Nuriyev heads the Organising Committee.

Mizoram govt, Assam Rifles sign pact for relocating force's bases

- The Mizoram government and Assam Rifles have formally signed an agreement for relocating the paramilitary force's bases from the heart of Aizawl to the designated battalion complex at Zokhawsang, about 15 km from the city. Assam Rifles has bases at Zodin Square (Lammual) and Khatla areas in Aizawl. Besides, it also has a DIG residence near Raj Bhavan at Tuikhuahtlang, a commandant bungalow (Loch House) and a church in Tuikual area near Zodin, and plots of land at Babutlang near the chief minister's bungalow and Chitte in the eastern part of the state capital, besides a war memorial and temple at Zodin, among others.

Mizoram is a state in northeastern India, with Aizawl as its seat of government and largest city. Within India's northeast region, it is the southernmost state, sharing borders with three of the Seven Sister States, namely Tripura, Assam and Manipur, and also shares a 722-kilometre border with the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and Myanmar. Aizawl is the capital city and the most populous city of Mizoram, India. **Lalduhoma serves as the 6th Chief Minister of Mizoram** since 8 December 2023. **Kambhampati Hari Babu is the current Governor of Mizoram, being the first person from divided Andhra Pradesh and first Telugu person serving as Governor of Mizoram in North East India.**

ICF unveils Vande Bharat sleeper coaches

- Integral Coach Factory Chennai unveiled the fully airconditioned sleeper coaches, with improved safety features and best-in-class interiors, of its flagship Vande Bharat train. ICF has been making the swanky Vande Bharat Express trains since 2018 and so far, 77 such trains are in operation across the country, albeit with only a chair car facility.
- The ICF unveiled its first Vande Bharat train rake with all AC sleeper coaches for long distances involving night travel. "The coaches have been fitted with best-in-class interiors with GFRP (Glass fiber reinforced polymer) panels, aluminum extrusions berth frame with polyurethane foam cushion, bio-vacuum toilets with touch-free amenities, etc., to make travel not only comfortable but also more pleasant."

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.

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav laid the Foundation Stone for India's First Purpose Built AI Data Center in Madhya Pradesh

- RackBank proudly announces the launch of India's first state-of-the-art, Purpose-Built AI Datacenter. This landmark facility, capable of housing an unprecedented 60,000 GPUs, 80 MW power, positions India at the forefront of the global artificial intelligence revolution. Located near Indore, the AI Datacenter represents a significant leap forward in India's technological infrastructure. Its strategic central location offers unparalleled advantages, including low latency across India, making it an ideal hub for AI and cloud services nationwide.

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.**

India's first 'Writer's village' inaugurated in Dehradun

- India's first 'Writer's village' was jointly inaugurated by former President Ram Nath Kovind, Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen Gurmeet Singh (retd) and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami. Located in Thano village, about 24 km from Dehradun, the 'Writer's village' is the brainchild of former chief minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, a distinguished writer himself.

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.

Bhubaneswar wins the 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024

- Union Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs and Power, Shri Manohar Lal addressed the valedictory session of the three days 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024 at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The UMI has different categories of award in the field of Transport Sector especially in the Urban Transport. The awards are given to the state / city authorities for "Excellence/ best practice projects in Urban Transport".

Government seeks to relaunch National Manuscript Mission, set up autonomous body

- The Union Ministry of Culture is set to "revive and relaunch" the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) and is mulling the formation of an autonomous body to help preserve ancient texts in India. Presently, NMM is a part of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts. The new body, likely to be named the National Manuscripts Authority, will be an autonomous entity under the Ministry.

India's first pod taxi to be launched in Uttar Pradesh

- India is all set to launch its first-ever pod taxi soon, which will run from Noida's Film City to the International Airport in Jewar. Introduction of such taxi transportation will lead to greater transportation ease, improved connectivity, modern infrastructure development, reduced traffic jams and reduced pollution as this system is powered by solar energy and other renewable sources.
- According to the Uttar Pradesh Index, the Yamuna Authority has approved the revised detailed project report (DPR) and bid document for the country's first Personalised Rapid Transit project.

Adityanath launches scholarship scheme for Sanskrit students across Uttar Pradesh

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a scholarship scheme at the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University for all students of Sanskrit across the state. He also announced plans to revive residential Gurukul-style Sanskrit schools across Uttar Pradesh. The chief minister, according to a statement, highlighted Sanskrit's potential as a language for science and technical education, urging students to embrace it seriously. The new initiative aims to extend the benefits to all eligible students.

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

SC status for converts: Government of India extends tenure of Commission till October 2025

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has **extended by a year the tenure of a commission established to examine whether Scheduled Castes (SC) status** can be granted to individuals who have converted to religions other than Sikhism and Buddhism. This decision, formalised through a notification dated November 1, comes as the Commission, initially set to conclude its work on October 10 sought additional time to finalise its report. **The Commission of Inquiry was constituted on October 6, 2022, under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.**
- The inquiry also covers related concerns regarding social justice, rights, and the possible extension of reserved status to converts from religions not traditionally included in SC classifications, such as Christianity and Islam. **Headed by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan, the Commission has been engaging with stakeholders, including sociologists, historians, and representatives from affected communities, to better understand the nuances of caste identity in the context of religious conversion.**

Currently, the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 stipulates that no person professing a religion different from Hinduism, Buddhism or Sikhism can be deemed to be a member of a Schedule Caste. The original order under which only Hindus were classified was later amended to include Sikhs and Buddhists. A batch of petitions were filed in the Supreme Court seeking the inclusion of Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims and the removal of the religion criteria for inclusion as SCs. In August 2022, the Supreme Court had directed the Centre to submit its current position on the issue. **In light of that, the Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment issued a notification in October 2022 to form a three-member Commission to study the matter. The three-member Commission is headed by former Chief Justice of India, Justice K.G. Balakrishnan. Objectives of the commission are: To examine the issue of whether Scheduled Caste (SC) status can be accorded to Dalits who have over the years converted to religions other than Sikhism or Buddhism.** To look into the changes an SC person goes through after converting to another religion and its implications on the question of including them as SCs. These will include examining their traditions, customs, social and other forms of discrimination and how and whether they have changed as a result of the conversion. To examine any other related questions that it deemed appropriate, in consultation with and with the consent of the Central government. The Commission has been given a two-year deadline to submit a report on the issue.

Haryana first state to clear Dalit sub-quotas

- **Haryana will implement a panel recommendation dividing the Scheduled Caste (SC) community into two groups and apply sub-quotas,** chief minister Nayab Singh Saini announced **making the state India's first province to put into action the Supreme Court's landmark verdict on subclassification of Dalit reservations.** The Haryana SC commission had recommended subclassifying the **Dalit communities into two categories – deprived scheduled castes (DSC) comprising 36 groups such as Balmikis, Dhanaks, Mazhabi Sikhs and Khatiks, and other scheduled castes (OSC) comprising castes such as Chamar, Jatia Chamar, Rehgar, Raigar, Ramdasi, Ravidasi and Jatav.**

The Supreme Court of India in review judgment of Punjab and Haryana High Court, **delivered a landmark verdict allowing states the authority to sub-classify reserved category groups, such as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), for the purpose of reservations. This 6-1 majority decision overturns the 2004 ruling in E.V. Chinnaiah vs. State of Andhra Pradesh, fundamentally altering the landscape of reservation policies in India.** The Court ruled that **states are constitutionally allowed to sub-classify SCs and STs based on varying levels of backwardness.** The seven-judge Bench ruled that **states can now sub-classify SCs within the 15% reservation quota to provide better support for the most disadvantaged groups.** The Supreme Court has ruled that the **'creamy layer' principle, previously applied only to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) (as highlighted in Indra Sawhney Case), should now also be applied to SCs and STs.** The Court acknowledged that **systemic discrimination prevents some members of SCs and STs from advancing, and therefore, sub-classification under Article 14 of the Constitution can help address these disparities.**

BRIC-National Agri-Food Biomanufacturing Institute inaugurated in Mohali

- Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, and other key portfolios, **inaugurated the new complex of India’s first biomanufacturing institute—BRIC-National Agri-Food Bio-Manufacturing Institute (BRIC-NABI) at Mohali in Punjab**, both of which are autonomous institutes under the Department of Biotechnology. The facility aims to transform India’s agri-food sector through advanced biotechnology, contributing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of a “Viksit Bharat”.
- **The newly inaugurated BRIC-National Agri-Food Bio-Manufacturing Institute is the result of a strategic merger between the National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI) and the Center of Innovative and Applied Bioprocessing (CIAB). The institute aims to bridge the gap between research and commercialization**, facilitating pilot-scale production and bringing innovative agricultural technologies to the market. Dr. Singh emphasized that this consolidation will enhance agricultural research and development, leading to **the creation of high-yield, disease-resistant crops, as well as biofertilizers and biopesticides**. These advancements align with the government’s goal of doubling farmers’ income and promoting sustainable farming practices.
- Dr. Singh underscored the importance of science and technology within the Modi government’s priorities, citing the **launch of the BioE3 policy, which emphasizes biotechnology’s role in boosting the economy, employment, and the environment**. He also said that **India is one of the first countries to implement an exclusive biotechnology policy**. This shift will promote sustainable, eco-friendly solutions, allowing India to move from traditional manufacturing to synthetic production using advanced, cost-effective technologies. **He credited India’s economic rise from being one of the “fragile five” economies to becoming one of the world’s top five economies to the government’s focus on science-driven growth**.
- During his address, **Dr. Singh also raised concerns about the brain drain of Indian scientists**. He urged **young researchers and entrepreneurs to stay in India, highlighting the country’s growing scientific ecosystem, which he argued now rivals global institutions**. He said that building indigenous expertise would strengthen India’s global influence in science and innovation. **The inauguration of the BRIC-National Agri-Food Bio-Manufacturing Institute marks a significant milestone in India’s journey toward a science-powered economy**. With initiatives like BioE3 and BioNest, **India aims to position itself as a global leader in knowledge and innovation**, contributing to sustainable growth both domestically and internationally.

Home Minister Amit Shah Inaugurates New Passenger Terminal & a Cargo Gate at Petrapole Land Port on India-Bangladesh Border in West Bengal

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has **inaugurated the newly constructed passenger terminal building and a cargo gate named ‘Maitri Dwar’ at the Land Port in Petrapole, on the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal**. The Petrapole Land Port, situated in Uttar 24 Parganas district, is the largest land port in South Asia and serves as a vital gateway for trade and commerce between the two countries. The passenger terminal **aims to facilitate international trade and crossings for citizens of both India and Bangladesh**. It will significantly enhance regional infrastructure, with a handling capacity of 20,000 passengers per day and housing immigration, customs, and security services under one roof. **The ‘Maitri Dwar’ cargo gate is a joint facility agreed upon by both countries**. Mr. Shah laid the foundation stone for this project on May 9 last year.

Haryana Implements ‘Rajya Vishisht Yojana’ To Curb Stubble Burning

- **The Haryana government has implemented a scheme Rajya Vishisht Yojana to curb the incidents of stubble burning**. This scheme provides farmers with financial assistance for managing crop residue, while also setting zero burning targets for panchayats. A government spokesperson said that red zone panchayats will receive an incentive of 1 lakh rupees, while yellow zone panchayats will receive 50 thousand rupees for achieving the zero burning targets. As a result of the steps taken by the government, as of October 28, 83,070 farmers have registered for the management of 7,11,000 acres of paddy area. **The farmers are being given an incentive of 1,000 rupees per acre for managing paddy crop residue**. Meanwhile, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recorded a total of 713 incidents of stubble burning so far in Haryana this year, which is 29 per cent less than last year.

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

India to host first global summit for media and entertainment sector

- India will host the first World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit in November alongside the International Film Festival of India in Goa, with I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw promising to strengthen the ecosystem for the protection of intellectual property rights in the media and entertainment sector.
- Mr. Vaishnaw and Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant made the announcement of the first World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) in Goa from November 20-24 and described it as a visionary initiative by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as India seeks to make a mark in the media and entertainment sector.

Govt set to expand horticulture mission with hydroponics, aquaponics and more to boost modern farming techniques

- The Union Government has reportedly decided to include four new components – Hydroponics, Aquaponics, Vertical Farming, and Precision Agriculture – under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) – a Central Sponsored Scheme (CSS) that promotes the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo.
- The cost norms under the MIDH may see an upward revision of 20 per cent as compared to the existing rates. The cost norms and guidelines were last fixed in April 2014. Since then, the Centre has not revised MIDH guidelines. The Centre supports pre-production, production, post-harvest management, processing, and marketing activities under the MIDH.

Navy Chief Dinesh Tripathi Launches 'Swavlamban 2024' Exhibition to Promote Indigenization

- The third edition of the Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Seminar, Swavlamban – 2024, commenced in New Delhi. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi inaugurated this two-day event at Bharat Mandapam. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will attend the Swavalamban.
- Swavlamban – 2024 is aimed at promoting the innovation and indigenisation endeavours of the Indian Navy. Several companies and start-ups are participating in the Swavalamban 2024 showcasing products of niche technologies such as air and surface surveillance, autonomous systems in surface, aerial, and underwater domains, AI, and quantum technologies.

Replicas of Konark Wheels at Rashtrapati Bhavan to Showcase India's Cultural Heritage

- Four replicas of the Konark wheels, made of sandstone, have been installed at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre and Amrit Udyan in New Delhi. The installation aims to showcase and promote the rich heritage of the country among visitors. This initiative is part of the several steps being taken to introduce traditional cultural and historical elements in Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the culmination of Odishan temple architecture. The Konark wheels are symbols of India's cultural legacy.

Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE Hindu Sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres (22 mi) northeast from Puri city on the coastline in Puri district, Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasingha Deva I of the Eastern Ganga dynasty about 1250 CE. Dedicated to the Hindu Sun-god Surya, what remains of the temple complex has the appearance of a 100-foot (30 m) high chariot with immense wheels and horses, all carved from stone.

India Joins ARIN-AP Steering Committee; to assume presidency and host annual general meeting in 2026

- India, represented by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), has been included in the Steering Committee of the Asset Recovery Interagency Network-Asia Pacific (ARIN-AP), a prominent multi-agency network

dedicated to tackling the proceeds of crime in the Asia-Pacific region and a member of the Global CARIN Network. ARIN-AP was established to facilitate cross-border collaboration on asset tracing, freezing, and confiscation. It includes 28 member jurisdictions and nine observers and serves as an informal yet robust network as part of CARIN Network. It operates through a network of contact points, enabling effective communication and intelligence exchange among member agencies, and of over 100 jurisdictions in CARIN Network with the ED representing India as the nodal agency.

- “Law enforcement agencies across ARIN-AP and CARIN jurisdictions benefit from this network, as it aids in tracing assets related to criminal activities, both movable and immovable, across borders. Through ARIN-AP and the larger CARIN Network, agencies can exchange information on individuals, assets, and companies informally, often expediting the identification and recovery of proceeds of crime,” said the ED. It said the platform had enabled the agency in accessing and sharing intelligence informally, paving the way for formal actions through bilateral or multilateral agreements. “This aligns with India’s priorities under the G-20 framework, particularly with respect to the Nine Point Agenda on tackling fugitive economic offenders and asset recovery...,” the agency said.

Himachal Pradesh’s Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park’ set to become India’s first Zoo with IGBC Certification

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announced that the upcoming **Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park in the Bankhandi area of Kangra’s Dehra assembly constituency will become India’s first zoo to earn certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for sustainable and eco-friendly infrastructure.** The first phase of the project spans 25 hectares and comes with an estimated budget of ₹230 crore. It is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2025. The entire zoological park will be developed at a total cost of Rs. 619 crore, establishing it as a key driver for tourism growth in Kangra and neighboring regions.
- Sukhu also announced that the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has **approved 34 enclosures within the park’s Van Vaibhav Path and Biodiversity Court, which will house 73 animal species, including the Asiatic lion, hog deer, crocodile, monitor lizard, gharial, and various birds.** Notably, the zoo will feature a nocturnal house offering rare glimpses of elusive feline species and a wetland aviary showcasing indigenous bird species in a natural setting. “The park is expected to give a major boost to tourism, creating employment and self-employment opportunities for the youth, thereby strengthening the local economy,” Sukhu added. With its blend of natural beauty, sustainable infrastructure, and unique attractions, the park aims to position Kangra district as a premier tourist destination. **The project aligns with the state government’s focus on promoting eco-tourism and sustainable development, reinforcing Kangra’s status as the “Tourism Capital” of Himachal Pradesh.**

Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card that provides free hospital treatment for all senior citizens above 70 years

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched health insurance coverage for all senior citizens aged 70 and above, without considering their income, as part of the flagship initiative Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).**
- **Regardless of their financial status or income, all people 70 years of age and above are eligible for free health coverage up to Rs. 5 lakh annually under this expanded scheme.** While making this announcement PM Modi also made a significant step by establishing the Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card as part of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

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.

Raksha Mantri virtually inaugurates 'Desh ka Vallabh' statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel & Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khathing 'Museum of Valour' at Tawang

- **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh** virtually dedicated to the nation 'Desh ka Vallabh' statue of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, and **Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khathing 'Museum of Valour'** at Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh. Raksha Mantri carried out the inauguration from 4 Corps Headquarters in Tezpur, Assam. Shri Rajnath Singh paid glowing tributes to **Sardar Patel**, also known as the **Iron Man of India**, acknowledging his instrumental role in unifying over 560 princely states post-independence, a feat that stands as a testament to his indomitable resolve and commitment to a unified India.
- "This statue 'Desh Ka Vallabh' will inspire people reminding them of the strength in unity and the unwavering spirit required to build a nation as diverse as ours," he said. Raksha Mantri also paid homage to Major Bob Khathing, an extraordinary figure who made invaluable contributions to the Northeast region and national security. "Major Khathing not only led the peaceful integration of Tawang into India but also established essential military and security frameworks, including the Sashastra Seema Bal, Nagaland Armed Police, and the Naga Regiment.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an Indian independence activist and statesman who served as the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India from 1947 to 1950. He acted as the Home Minister during the political integration of India and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947. **The Statue of Unity is the world's tallest statue, with a height of 182 metres (597 feet), located near Kevadia in the state of Gujarat, India.** It depicts Indian statesman and independence activist Vallabhbhai Patel. **Ralengnao Khathing also known as Bob Khathing, was an Indian soldier, civil servant and diplomat and the first person of tribal origin to serve as an Ambassador for India.** The Government of India honoured him in 1957 with the award of Padma Shri, the fourth highest Indian civilian award for his services to the nation. **Khathing led the first armed forces into Tawang that established Indian control in the region under the direct supervision of the then Assam governor Jairamdas Daulatram.**

Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24

- **The Indian Army contingent comprising 25 personnel departed for Cijantung, Jakarta, Indonesia to take part in the 9th edition of India-Indonesia Joint Special Forces Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24.** The Exercise is being conducted from 1st to 12th of November 2024. The Indian contingent is being represented by troops from The Parachute Regiment (Special Forces) and Indonesian contingent comprising 40 personnel is being represented by Indonesian Special Forces Kopassus.
- **The aim of Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 is to acquaint both the sides with each other's operating procedures, enhance mutual understanding, cooperation and interoperability between the Special Forces of both armies.** The Exercise is designed to develop bilateral military cooperation and strengthen bond between two armies through conduct of discussions and rehearsal of tactical military drills. The Exercise will involve planning and execution of special operations, orientation to advance Special Forces skills, sharing of information on weapon, equipment, innovations, tactics, techniques & procedures.
- **Joint Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 will also involve jointly practicing Special Forces Operations in Jungle terrain, strikes on terrorist camps and a Validation Exercise integrating basic and advance special forces skills** apart from gaining an insight into the lifestyle and culture of both countries to foster military cooperation. The Exercise will provide an opportunity to both the contingents to strengthen their bond and share best practices. It will also act as a platform to achieve shared security objectives and foster bilateral relations between two friendly nations.
- India and Indonesia have robust cooperation in the area of defence and security. **For the first time, the 'India-Indonesia Defence Industry Exhibition-cum-Seminar was organised in Jakarta in 2024 by Embassy of**

India, Ministry of Defence, Government of India and Ministry of Defense, Republic of Indonesia to mark the 75th year of diplomatic ties.

Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It consists of over 17,000 islands, including Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, and parts of Borneo and New Guinea. Indonesia is the world's largest island country and the 14th-largest country by area. With about 270 million people, Indonesia is the world's fourth-most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world's most populous island, is home to more than half of the country's population. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia. Jakarta formerly known as Batavia until 1949 is the de jure capital and largest city of Indonesia. In 2019, the then President Joko Widodo announced plans to move the capital from Jakarta to the planned city of Nusantara, in the province of East Kalimantan on the island of Borneo.

Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has released the Operational Guidelines of Central Sector Scheme "NAMO DRONE DIDI"

- The Government has approved the Central Sector Scheme 'Namo Drone Didi' for providing Drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores. The scheme aims to provide drones to 14500 selected Women SHGs during the period from 2024-25 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose (application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides for the present). The Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has released the Operational Guidelines this scheme and all the stakeholders have been requested to make meaningful use of these operational guidelines to ensure prompt roll out and implementation of the 'Namo Drone Didi' Scheme.
- The Scheme will be governed at the Central level by the Empowered Committee of the Secretaries of Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Department of Rural Development, Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Implementation and Monitoring Committee headed by the Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development and having representation from all other stakeholders will be responsible for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme.
- A Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of ₹ 8.0 lakhs will be provided to the women SHGs for purchase of drones as a package. The Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) of SHGs/SHGs may raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as loan under National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF). Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will be provided to the CLFs/SHGs. One of the members of the women SHGs will be selected for 15 day training comprising of mandatory drone pilot training and additional training for agriculture purpose for nutrient and pesticide application.

HM Amit Shah inaugurated Gujarat's Largest Waste to Energy Plant in Ahmedabad

- Gujarat's largest waste-to-energy plant that can process 1000 metric tonnes of waste daily and can generate 15 Megawatt (MW) of electricity per hour has been set up at Piplaj in Ahmedabad. This Rs.375 crore plant, set up by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) under the PPP mode with Jindal Urban Waste Management Limited, was inaugurated by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The plant utilises RDF-based Martin Reverse Grate Firing Technology, incinerating municipal solid waste in boilers to generate 65 TPH of steam. India has a total of 600 MW of waste-to-energy projects of which a majority 354 MW are off-grid projects. Among the leading states having maximum installed capacity of waste-to-energy projects are Uttar Pradesh (114 MW), Andhra Pradesh (83 MW), Telangana (60 MW) and Maharashtra (60 MW).

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

from Gujarat from 2017 to 2019. **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel served as the country's first Home Minister during the country's political unification and the 1947 Indo-Pakistani War.**

Digital India Common Service Center Project launched to bridge digital divide in rural India

- In a significant step toward bridging the digital divide and ensuring that essential digital services reach every corner of the country, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has announced the launch of the **Digital India Common Service Center (DICSC) project**. This ambitious initiative aims to establish 4,740 Digital India Common Service Centers (DICSCs) across India, with a focus on rural areas, especially in districts like Pilibhit and Gorakhpur.
- The DICSC project is an effort to bring e-governance, financial services, education, and telemedicine closer to village communities. Each DICSC will be equipped with high-speed internet and essential digital infrastructure, empowering rural citizens with access to digital services that were previously inaccessible or difficult to obtain. The project aims to create model centres in nearly every gram panchayat within selected districts, which include Pilibhit and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Pilibhit is set to receive 720 DICSC centres, while Gorakhpur will see the establishment of 1,273 centres. **Managed by CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, these centres will operate under a six-month budget of approximately Rs. 31.6 crore**, with an option to extend the project to nine months. This funding will be allocated to provide high-speed broadband, computers, and infrastructure needed to deliver essential services, making each centre a one-stop shop for digital services.

Indian Army Contingent Departs For 15th Edition of India-US Joint Exercise

- The Indian Army contingent departed for the 15th edition of India-US joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR. The exercise is being conducted from November 2 to November 22 at the Orchard Combat Training Centre in Idaho, US. The last edition of the same exercise was conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya.
- This will be the second exercise of the year between the Indian and the US Army. The previous exercise, YUDH ABHYAS 2024, was conducted in Rajasthan in September 2024. The Defence Ministry said contingents of both countries taking part in the joint exercise will comprise 45 personnel each.
- The Indian Army contingent will be represented by Special Forces units, and the US Army contingent will be represented by Green Berets of the US. The aim of Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR is to promote military cooperation between India and the US through enhancement of interoperability, jointness, and mutual exchange of special operations tactics. It will enhance combined capabilities in executing joint Special Forces operations in desert and semi-desert environments. The exercise will focus on a high degree of physical fitness, joint planning, and joint tactical drills.

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

International



Austria's Freedom Party Claims First Far-Right National Election win since World War II

- The Freedom Party secured the first far-right national parliamentary election victory in post-World War II Austria, finishing ahead of the governing conservatives after tapping into anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other issues. But its chances of governing were unclear.
- Preliminary official results showed the Freedom Party finishing first with 29.2% of the vote and Chancellor Karl Nehammer's Austrian People's Party was second with 26.5%. The center-left Social Democrats were in third place with 21%. The outgoing government – a coalition of Nehammer's party and the environmentalist Greens – lost its majority in the lower house of parliament. Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021, wants to be chancellor. But to become Austria's new leader, he would need a coalition partner to command a parliamentary majority.

Austria is a landlocked country in Central Europe, lying in the Eastern Alps. It is a federation of nine states, one of which is the capital, Vienna, the most populous city and state. Alexander Van der Bellen is serving as the twelfth President of Austria since 2017. Karl Nehammer has been the 29th chancellor of Austria since 2021. Euro is the official currency of it.

Britain to become first G7 country to end coal power as last plant closes

- Britain will become the first G7 country to end coal-fired power production with the closure of its last plant, Uniper's Ratcliffe-on-Soar in England's Midlands. It will end over 140 years of coal power in Britain. In 2015 Britain announced plans to close coal plants within the next decade as part of wider measures to reach its climate targets. At that time almost 30% of the country's electricity came from coal but this had fallen to just over 1% last year.
- The drop in coal power has helped cut Britain's greenhouse gas emissions, which have more than halved since 1990. Britain, which has a target to reach net zero emissions by 2050, also plans to decarbonise the electricity sector by 2030, a move which will require a rapid ramp-up in renewable power such as wind and solar. Coal power still makes up more than 25% of Germany's electricity and more than 30% of Japan's power.

China ranks first in driving world economic growth from 1979 to 2023

- Over the past 75 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the country's economic strength, scientific and technological capabilities, and overall national power have significantly increased, and its international influence has greatly expanded, according to a report from the National Bureau of Statistics.
- From 1979 to 2023, China's economic growth averaged 8.9 percent annually, far exceeding the average global economic growth of 3 percent during the same period. China's average annual contribution to world economic growth was 24.8 percent, ranking first in the world.

Claudia Sheinbaum sworn in as Mexico's first female president

- Claudia Sheinbaum was sworn in as Mexico's first woman president vowing to bolster women's rights and ensure Latin America's No. 2 economy remains a secure destination for international investment. Sheinbaum, a 62-year-old scientist and former mayor of Mexico City, took the oath of office and received the presidential sash in a boisterous ceremony in Mexico's Congress, which marks the start of her six-year term.

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

Tanzania suspends newspaper over animations featuring president

- **Tanzania suspended the online operations of a leading newspaper after it released cartoons featuring the president and referencing recent abductions and killings of dissidents.** One of the animated videos released online by The Citizen showed President Samia Suluhu Hassan watching news broadcasts of dissidents and victims of state repression. Ms. Hassan has faced mounting domestic and international criticism over allegations that the security forces are behind the kidnapping and murder of opposition figures. Her government has banned two major rallies by the opposition Chadema party since August, briefly detaining its leaders.

Tanzania is a country in East Africa within the African Great Lakes region. The shilingi is the currency of Tanzania. Samia Suluhu Hassan is serving as the current president of Tanzania. She is the first woman to serve in the position. She previously served as vice-president of Tanzania from 2015 to 2021, from which she ascended to the presidency following the death of her predecessor, John Magufuli.

WETEX 2024 Begins In Dubai

- **The 26th Water, Energy, Technology and Environment Exhibition (WETEX) 2024 began at the Dubai World Trade Centre,** featuring a strong Indian presence with 29 leading companies participating in the Indian pavilion. **The event, organized by Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), will continue till the 3rd of this month, showcasing cutting-edge innovations in renewable energy, water treatment, and environmental technologies.**
- The robust Indian presence at WETEX reflects the flourishing UAE-India economic relationship, which has gained momentum since the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in May 2022. **Trade volume between the two nations reached an impressive \$84.5 billion from April 2022 to March 2023, with projections suggesting it could hit \$100 billion by 2027.**
- **The UAE has emerged as a significant investor in India, ranking seventh with investments totalling \$18 billion in 2023.** WETEX 2024 features 16 international pavilions from 14 countries, underscoring its global significance in promoting sustainable technologies and fostering international partnerships.

Sri Lanka reaches debt-restructuring agreement

- **The Sri Lankan government has announced a long-delayed debt restructuring agreement with its sovereign bondholders, in a major relief to the cash-strapped island nation.** It reached an agreement with representatives of its international and local holders of International Sovereign Bonds (ISB). The IMF made external debt restructuring conditional to the \$2.9 billion four-year facility clinched in March 2023 by the Ranil Wickremesinghe administration. Sri Lanka has already obtained three tranches of about \$360 million each under the Extended Fund Facility.

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. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya is a Sri Lankan academic, activist, and politician serving as Prime Minister of Sri Lanka since 2024. She is the third woman to hold this office. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, commonly referred to by his initials AKD, is a Sri Lankan politician currently serving as the tenth President of Sri Lanka since 2024.

Italy and Switzerland Agree To Redraw Their Border in Alps

- **Italy and Switzerland have agreed to redrawn their borders.** The decision was taken as the glaciers that mark the boundary melt. **The border will be changed near the iconic Matterhorn Peak. Notably, it is the highest summit in the Alps.** A large section of the border between Italy and Switzerland is defined by glaciers and snow

fields. **“With the melting of the glaciers, these natural elements evolve and redefine the national border”.** The changes in the border were agreed in 2023. The impact on glaciers has been significant in Europe, the world’s fastest-warming continent.

Switzerland, officially the Swiss Confederation, is a landlocked country located at the confluence of Western, Central and Southern Europe. It is bordered by Italy to the south, France to the west, Germany to the north and Austria and Liechtenstein to the east. Bern is the de facto capital of Switzerland. The Swiss franc is the currency of Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Viola Amherd serves as President of the Swiss Confederation. Italy is a country that consists of a peninsula delimited by the Alps and several islands surrounding it. Italy is located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, in Southern Europe. A unitary parliamentary republic with Rome as its capital. Euro is the currency of it. Sergio Mattarella is the current President of Italy. Giorgia Meloni has been serving as the Prime Minister of Italy since 22 October 2022, the first woman to hold this position.

Kazakhstan vote on the first nuclear power station in country

- **Kazakhstan voted in a referendum on building the country’s first nuclear power station as the world’s top uranium producer looks to boost its power generation capacity.** The result is expected to be in favour despite lingering resentment over massive radiation exposure as a result of Soviet-era nuclear tests. **China, France, Russia, and South Korea are in the process of building the new power station, which is to be located on the shores of Lake Balkhash.** The issue of nuclear power, however, is sensitive in Kazakhstan. Between 1949 and 1989, the USSR carried out around 450 nuclear tests there, exposing 1.5 million people to radiation.

Kazakhstan is a country in Central Asia; it has borders with Russia in the north, China in the east, and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan in the south. The capital is Nur-Sultan, formerly known as Astana. Kazakhstan is the world’s largest landlocked country and the ninth-largest in the world. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has been serving as the President of Kazakhstan since 20 March 2019. The tenge is the currency of Kazakhstan.

Indigenous Amazon activist in Columbia takes his fight to the UN biodiversity forum

- **Ecuadoran activist Alex Lucitante has never shied away from the fight against land-grabbing miners and armed groups in his restive part of the Amazon jungle bordering Colombia.** He will take his battle to world leaders at the United Nations, as one of several Indigenous representatives to the **COP-16 biodiversity conference in the Colombian city of Cali.** Mr. Lucitante, the 31-year-old son of a shaman, is of the Cofan Avie ethnic group. He has **spearheaded his community’s fight against illegal gold miners,** notably setting up an Indigenous guard and a drone surveillance system. At the same time, he has fought in court. In 2018, the Cofan Avie won a legal victory over mining companies in Ecuador, where courts annulled 52 gold mining concessions that had been awarded without any consultation with the community. In 2022, Mr. Lucitante and fellow activist Alexandra Narvaez were awarded the Goldman Prize, the equivalent of a Nobel for environmentalists, for their activism. But all their efforts have not stopped gold prospectors churning up the river beds for gold.

France to help set up an aeronautical campus and industry cluster in India

- **France will be setting up a Franco-Indian campus on aviation and space apart from an aeronautical cluster in India.** The French delegation comprising 100 high-level representatives from over 60 companies is in India to meet their counterparts to look for opportunities to grow their market as well as enhance co-operation in the aerospace sector.
- **It is made up of seven prime contractors, 20 equipment manufacturers, 29 MSMEs and four start-ups covering the entire spectrum of the French civil, space and defence aeronautics industry.** French majors such as Airbus, Dassault Aviation, Safran, and Thales are prominent among them. **“France is closely associated with India. 55% of French exports to this country are in the aeronautical sector amounting to €2.7 billion for the first part of 2024. These are exports by GIFAS companies,”** said Mr. Mathou, adding that defence companies too were not only strengthening their footprint in India but helping integrate Indian companies with the global supply chain. He said there is an emergence of a Franco-Indian ecosystem in the aerospace sector in India, and France planned to replicate the same in the field of outer Space.

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. 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.

Nepali becomes youngest to climb world's 8,000 m peaks

- An 18-year-old Nepali mountaineer Nima Rinji Sherpa broke the record for the youngest person to summit all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre peaks. Nima Rinji Sherpa reached the summit of Tibet's 8,027-metre-high (26,335 feet) Shisha Pangma, completing his mission to stand on the world's highest peaks. Summiting all 14 "eight-thousanders" is considered the peak of mountaineering aspirations. Climbers cross "death zones" where there is not enough oxygen in the air to sustain human life for long periods. "This summit is not just the culmination of my personal journey, but a tribute to every Sherpa who has ever dared to dream beyond the traditional boundaries set for us". Mr. Sherpa is no stranger to the mountains, hailing from a family of record-holding mountaineers, who also now run Nepal's largest mountaineering expedition company. **The record was previously held by another Nepali climber, Mingma Gyabu 'David' Sherpa. He achieved it in 2019, at the age of 30.**

Tunisia's president wins landslide second term after cracking down on opponents

- Tunisia's president, Kais Saied, has secured a second five-year term with a landslide victory, although the election had one of the lowest turnouts in the North African country's history. The Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE) declared that Saied had won 90.7% of the vote, on a turnout of 27.7%.

Tunisia is the northernmost country in Africa. Tunis is the capital and largest city of the country. The dinar is the national currency of Tunisia.

Russia, China conduct joint navy patrol in the Pacific

- Russian and Chinese navy ships have carried out a joint patrol in the northeast of the Pacific Ocean. The vessels "proceeded with manoeuvres" to practice anti-submarine tactics, it said. The patrol came after the two countries held joint military drills, as the allies deepen ties that have seen NATO dub Beijing an "enabler" of Moscow's war in Ukraine.
- From the Russian side, the large anti-submarine destroyers Admiral Panteleyev and Admiral Tributs of the Pacific Fleet participated. China was represented by the destroyers Xining and Wuxi, the frigate Linyi and the integrated supply ship Taihu.
- In early September, China said that the two sides would participate in a joint maritime patrol and that China would also participate in Russia's "Ocean-2024" strategic exercise. In July, the two countries held joint drills in the waters and airspace around Zhanjiang, a city in southern China's Guangdong province. Russia and China have ramped up military and economic cooperation in recent years, with both railing against "Western hegemony", particularly what they see as US domination of global affairs.

UNGA Elects 18 Members to Human Rights Council

- The UN General Assembly elected 18 members to the 47-member Human Rights Council for the 2025-2027 terms. The 18 countries, including Benin, Bolivia, Colombia, Cyprus, Qatar, and Thailand, were elected by a secret ballot. **The elected members will serve three-year terms beginning on January 1 next year.** The new members' election will enhance the Council's efforts in addressing pressing human rights issues and will be vital for future dialogues and resolutions. As the world faces ongoing human rights challenges, the work of the Human Rights Council remains essential for fostering accountability and protecting vulnerable populations globally.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world. It is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations system, responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world. **The Council has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms** on a regional group basis. **The headquarters of the Council are at the United Nations Office at Geneva in Switzerland.** The Council investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in United Nations

member states and addresses thematic human rights issues like freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women’s rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities. **The Council was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 to replace the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR, herein CHR).**

Bolivia joins South Africa ICJ ‘genocide’ case against Israel

- **Bolivia has joined South Africa’s case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that alleges the Israeli Gaza offensive breaches the U.N. Genocide Convention.** The South American country is the latest of several nations, including Colombia, Libya, Spain and Mexico, to add their weight to the case against Israel, which vehemently denies the accusations. Bolivia already announced in November it was severing diplomatic ties over what it described as the “disproportionate” attacks on Gaza by Israel. At the time, Israel slammed the move as surrender”.

Bolivia is a landlocked country located in central South America. The seat of government is La Paz, which contains the executive, legislative, and electoral branches of government, while the **constitutional capital is Sucre**, the seat of the judiciary. **Luis Arce has been serving as the President of Bolivia since November 8, 2020. Boliviano is the currency of Bolivia.**

China launches world’s first AI hospital

- **China has launched the world’s first AI-powered hospital, named “Agent Hospital,” representing a major leap forward in healthcare.** Located in Beijing and developed by Tsinghua University researchers, this pioneering facility features 14 AI doctors and four virtual nurses, aimed at revolutionizing medical care delivery.

World University Rankings 2025

- Discover the top universities worldwide with the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025. This year, we have ranked more than 2,000 institutions from 115 countries and territories. **Oxford holds on to the top spot for the ninth consecutive year, bolstered by significant improvements in industry engagement and teaching. MIT rises to second place, overtaking Stanford, which drops to sixth**
- The rankings show a thriving, diverse global research community, with many more universities across the world publishing world-class research, a much more even distribution of excellence across the continents and a global levelling up of excellence between the dominant West and the rising East – as well as the steady rise of the Global South. The ranking has grown from 200 universities in 2004 to over 2,000 in 2025. **The US makes up 8% of all ranked institutions (down from 31% in 2004) while the UK takes 5% (down from 15%).** The 2025 edition includes 115 countries, compared to 29 countries in 2004. India now matches the UK’s total tally of ranked universities, with 107, while China takes 94 places and Hong Kong six. Pakistan has 47 places.

Nile nations agree on water-sharing without Egypt’s nod

- **A regional partnership of 10 countries signed an agreement on the equitable use of water resources from the Nile River basin has come into force despite the notable opposition of Egypt.** The legal status of the “cooperative framework” was formally confirmed by the African Union after South Sudan joined the treaty.
- **Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania have ratified the accord. Egypt and Sudan declined to sign, while Congo abstained.** Kenya has not yet deposited its ratification documents with the African Union. The accord, which came into force, “is a testament to our **collective determination to harness the Nile River for the benefit of all, ensuring its equitable and sustainable use for generations to come,**” the Nile Basin Initiative said in its statement. Tensions in the region have increased, **stemming in part from Ethiopia’s construction of a \$4 billion dam on the Blue Nile, a key tributary of the Nile River.** Egypt fears the dam will have a devastating effect on water and irrigation supplies downstream unless Ethiopia takes its needs into account.

The Nile River is a major north-flowing river in northeastern Africa. It flows into the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile is the longest river in Africa. It has historically been considered the longest river in the world. About 6,650 km long, its drainage basin covers eleven countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan, and Egypt. In particular, the Nile is the primary

water source of Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan. **The Nile is an important economic driver supporting agriculture and fishing. The Blue Nile and White Nile meet at the city of Khartoum in Sudan.** The Blue Nile and White Nile are the two main tributaries of the Nile River. The confluence of the two rivers in Khartoum is a critical water source. At the confluence, the two rivers change their names and become the Nile, which flows north towards Egypt and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. **The location where the two Niles meet is known as al-Mogran.**

Three-party coalition govt. in Iceland collapses

- **Iceland's three-party coalition government collapsed over disagreements on policy issues, Prime Minister Bjarni Benediktsson said, with new elections to be held in November.** Mr. Benediktsson, head of the conservative Independence Party, told presspersons that tensions had mounted within the left-right coalition on issues ranging from foreign policy to asylum seekers and energy.
- The coalition had been **made up of the Independence Party, the Left-Green Movement and the centre-right Progressive Party.** The issues “were less discussed in the last election than need to be discussed now”, Mr. Benediktsson said, emphasising “how different the (Left-Green) Movement’s vision for the future is, compared to what I want to stand for”.

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. Halla Tomasdóttir is serving as the current President of Iceland.

Italy Delivers First Migrants to Albania under New Deal

- **A ship carrying the first group of migrants to be processed in Albania under a deal with Italy arrived in the port of Shengjin,** setting in motion Rome’s controversial plan to process thousands of asylum seekers abroad. **Italy has built two reception centres in Albania, in the first scheme by a European Union nation to divert migrants to a non-EU country.**
- The plan aims to deter irregular arrivals to Italy, but has been criticised by rights groups who say it restricts migrants’ right to asylum. **The facilities in Shengjin and Gjader will be staffed by Italian personnel.** Under the deal, **the total number of migrants present at one time in Albania cannot be more than 3,000.**
- **Italy has said only “non-vulnerable” men coming from countries classified as safe would be sent to Albania, to a limit of 36,000 migrants a year.** At present there are 21 such nations on the Italian list. Last year, 56,588 migrants arrived in Italy from just four of them — Bangladesh, Egypt, Ivory Coast and Tunisia. Most abscond from reception centres and head to wealthier northern Europe.

Albania is a country in Southeast Europe. It is in the Balkans, on the Adriatic and Ionian Seas within the Mediterranean Sea, and shares land borders with Montenegro to the northwest, Kosovo to the northeast, North Macedonia to the east and Greece to the south. **Tirana is the capital and largest city in the country. The lek is the currency of Albania. Edi Rama has been serving as the incumbent Prime Minister of Albania since 2013. Bajram Begaj is the incumbent President of Albania.**

Ethiopia president replaced after falling out with PM

- **Ethiopia’s parliament has approved the appointment of a new president to replace the country’s first female head of state, Sahle-Work Zewde.** Taye Astike Selassie, foreign minister since February, has taken up the largely ceremonial role. **In Ethiopia, political power lies with the Prime Minister - currently Abiy Ahmed. Sahle-Work had reportedly fallen out with Abiy in recent years.** The prime minister’s backing of her initial appointment in 2018 was hailed as a breakthrough for gender equality in Ethiopian politics.

Saudi Arabia launches digital platform to ensure wage protection, human rights of expat workers

- **Saudi Arabia is getting ready to ensure a more secure working condition for foreign workers,** including those from India. A group of officials from the Human Resources and Social Development Ministry presented the Saudi plans for **meeting the Vision 2030 of the Saudi government and said the Kingdom’s plans regarding**

the expat workers would secure workers' rights and cut down on illegal immigration. The new labour rules in Saudi Arabia — under a digital platform called Musaned — will benefit at least 10 African countries like Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Egypt and Kenya as well as nine Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vietnam, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Saudi Arabia is a country on the Arabian Peninsula in Western Asia. It is bordered by the Red Sea to the west; Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait to the north; the Persian Gulf, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the east; Oman to the southeast; and Yemen to the south. Bahrain is an island country off the east coast. Its capital and largest city is Riyadh. The Saudi riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia. Mohammed bin Salman is the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is King of Saudi Arabia, reigning since 2015. Petroleum was discovered in 1938 and followed up by several other finds in the Eastern Province. Saudi Arabia has since become the world's second-largest oil producer (behind the US) and the world's largest oil exporter, controlling the world's second-largest oil reserves and the fourth-largest gas reserves.

In a first, India extends rupee-denominated line of credit to Mauritius for water pipeline project

- **India has extended its first-ever rupee-denominated Line of Credit (LOC) under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) to the Government of Mauritius.** Valued at INR 487.60 crores, this LOC will finance the replacement of approximately 100 kilometers of obsolete water pipelines in Mauritius, marking a new milestone in India's economic and diplomatic outreach.
- **This unprecedented rupee-denominated LOC is a critical development for India, signifying a broader shift in its foreign assistance program, traditionally dominated by dollar-denominated loans.** The LOC will be financed by the State Bank of India at concessional terms, further bolstering India's position as a trusted partner for development projects in the Global South. The water pipeline replacement project will address an urgent infrastructure need in Mauritius.
- **As the existing water supply network in many areas of the country has aged, the replacement of approximately 100 kilometers of outdated pipelines is expected to significantly improve water access and management across the island nation.** This project will not only enhance the reliability of water distribution but also contribute to public health outcomes by ensuring a more stable and safe water supply.

Mauritius is an island nation in the Indian Ocean about 2,000 kilometres off the southeast coast of the African continent. Port Louis is the capital city of Mauritius. The rupee is the currency of Mauritius. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth is serving as the Prime Minister of Mauritius since January 2017. Ameenah Gurib was the first woman to ever hold the title of President of Mauritius. The main island of Mauritius, where most of the population is concentrated, hosts the capital and largest city, Port Louis. The islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues, along with nearby Réunion (a French overseas department), are part of the Mascarene Islands.

First ASEAN-India Track 1 Cyber Policy Dialogue Held in Singapore

- **The First ASEAN-India Track 1 Cyber Policy Dialogue was held in Singapore.** During the Dialogue, both sides exchanged views on cyber threat landscape, national cyber policies, threat assessment, and the recent developments in the ICT domain at the United Nations.
- **The Dialogue explored cooperation in capacity building and training to identify specific areas of activities.** It contributed to strengthening ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership through implementation of ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation issued during the ASEAN – India Summit.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional grouping that aims to promote economic and security cooperation among its ten members: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The motto of ASEAN is "One Vision, One Identity, One Community". 8th August is observed as ASEAN Day. ASEAN Secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia. It was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding fathers of ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Quad partners take part in back-to-back naval war games

- The Quad group of countries — India, Australia, Japan and the U.S. — held back-to-back naval war games, deepening interoperability and honing, in particular, their anti-submarine warfare skills. ‘Exercise Malabar’, comprising the four countries, concluded off the coast of Visakhapatnam. Earlier, the four countries were part of the multilateral ‘Exercise Kakadu’ hosted by the Royal Australian Navy from September.
- The Indian Navy termed Exercise Malabar 2024, held from October 8 to 18, as the “most comprehensive” of all editions so far, incorporating complex operational scenarios. The Harbour Phase’ was held in Visakhapatnam, followed by the Sea Phase in the Bay of Bengal. “Malabar 2024 Sea Phase serves as a testament to the commitment of participating nations towards enhancing understanding, collaboration and engagement in the maritime domain as the world grapples with increasingly complex maritime security challenges,” the Indian Navy said. Exercise Malabar, which began in 1992 as a bilateral naval drill between India and the U.S., has evolved into a key multilateral event aimed at “enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding, and addressing shared maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific region,” it noted.

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), colloquially the Quad or QUAD, is a strategic security dialogue between the United States, India, Japan and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries. The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with the support of U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, Australian Prime Minister John Howard, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The dialogue was paralleled by joint military exercises of an unprecedented scale, titled Exercise Malabar. The diplomatic and military arrangement was widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power, and the Chinese government responded to the Quadrilateral dialogue by issuing formal diplomatic protests to its members, calling it “Asian NATO”.

Indonesia’s new President Prabowo Subianto announces largest-ever Cabinet with 109 members

- Newly inaugurated President Prabowo Subianto announced Indonesia’s largest-ever cabinet, with 109 members representing his pledge for a strong government. He named his Cabinet of Ministers, Vice-Ministers and head of national agencies the “Red and White Cabinet”, referring to the colours of Indonesia’s flag. Mr. Subianto became the eighth president of Southeast Asia’s largest economy. The Cabinet of Mr. Subianto’s predecessor Joko Widodo had 34 Ministers and head of government agencies. Mr. Subianto has said earlier that he needs a strong administration, even though analysts said that his “fat” Cabinet would bloat the bureaucracy.

Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It consists of over 17,000 islands, including Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, and parts of Borneo and New Guinea. Indonesia is the world’s largest island country and the 14th-largest country by area. With about 270 million people, Indonesia is the world’s fourth-most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world’s most populous island, is home to more than half of the country’s population. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia. Jakarta formerly known as Batavia until 1949 is the de jure capital and largest city of Indonesia. In 2019, the then President Joko Widodo announced plans to move the capital from Jakarta to the planned city of Nusantara, in the province of East Kalimantan on the island of Borneo.

Bangladesh SC reinstates Supreme Judicial Council, reverses parliament’s power to remove judges

- Bangladesh’s Supreme Court reinstated the Supreme Judicial Council with authority to investigate allegations of judicial misconduct, while upholding its previous ruling that declared the 16th constitutional amendment, which transferred the power of removing judges to parliament, as “illegal.” The order was passed by a six-member bench of the Supreme Court’s apex Appellate Division led by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed.”. The verdict also meant scrapping of the 16th constitutional amendment, passed during deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s regime, giving the task of impeaching judges to Parliament instead of the Supreme Judicial Council comprising apex court judges. The 16th Amendment was passed in January 2014, relieving the Supreme Judicial Council of its authority of removing judges for incompetence or misconduct. However, a three-member High Court bench in May 2016 declared the 16th Amendment unconstitutional.

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. Sheikh Hasina served as the tenth Prime Minister of Bangladesh from June 1996 to July 2001 and again from January 2009 to August 2024. She is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh. She served as the longest-serving Prime Minister in history of Bangladesh. Muhammad Yunus has been serving as Chief Adviser (interim head of government) of the interim government of Bangladesh since 8 August 2024. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for founding the Grameen Bank and pioneering the concepts of microcredit and microfinance. India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh (4,096-kilometer).

Moldova narrowly votes to secure path toward EU membership after accusing Russia of interference

- Moldovans voted by a razor-thin majority in favor of securing the country's path toward European Union membership, electoral data showed after the pro-Western president accused foreign interference and "criminal groups" of trying to undermine the vote in the former Soviet republic. The "No" vote appeared to be ahead until the last few thousand votes were counted from the large diaspora of Moldova, whose authorities have accused Russia of trying to destabilize the country. With 99.41% of votes counted in the EU referendum, the "Yes" vote stood at 50.39% and the "No" vote at 49.61%, according to the Central Electoral Commission.

Moldova is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe, on the northeastern corner of the Balkans. Chisinau is the capital and largest city of Moldova. The leu is the currency of Moldova. Dorin Recean has been serving as Prime Minister of Moldova since February 2023. Maia Sandu has been serving as the current President of Moldova.

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.

China has recently completed the world's first fully unmanned road resurfacing project, covering an impressive 157.79 kilometres of expressway

- In a remarkable feat of engineering and automation, China has recently completed the world's first fully unmanned road resurfacing project, covering an impressive 157.79 kilometres of expressway without the involvement of a single human construction worker. This innovative achievement showcases China's rapid advancements in construction technology and its commitment to pushing the boundaries of what's possible in infrastructure development.
- The project utilised a fleet of autonomous road construction vehicles, including drones and robots, to carry out the entire resurfacing process. This cutting-edge approach marks a significant departure from traditional road construction methods, which typically rely heavily on human labour.

Prabowo Subianto Takes Over As President of Indonesia

- **In Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto took over as president of the world’s third-largest democracy.** Prabowo will officially become the eighth president of the world’s most populous Muslim majority nation. The 73-year-old former Special Forces commander won the February 14 contest with nearly 60 per cent of the vote after sweeping the country’s election with policies like free meals for school children.

Commonwealth leaders to push for slavery reparation conversation

- **Commonwealth heads of government are to push for a “conversation” on reparations for the transatlantic slave trade when they meet for the association’s first summit in two years.** But CARICOM, a group of 15 Caribbean countries, has indicated it will push the UK government on the issue at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa.
- **Members of the Commonwealth comprised of 56 nations that were mostly former territories of the British Empire.** King Charles III is the ceremonial head of the Commonwealth, and 14 of its members, including several in the Caribbean. He is also attending the summit. CHOGM, which takes place every two years, will see Commonwealth leaders select a new secretary-general nominated from an African country, in line with regional rotations of the position.

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal countries. The Commonwealth of Nations, often simply referred to as the Commonwealth, is an international association of 56 member states, the vast majority of which are former territories of the British Empire from which it developed. They are connected through their use of the English language and historical-cultural ties. **The current Commonwealth of Nations was formally constituted by the London Declaration in 1949,** which modernised the community and established the member states as “free and equal”. **The Head of the Commonwealth is Charles III. He is king of 15 member states, known as the Commonwealth realms, whilst 36 other members are republics,** and five others have different monarchs. Our member governments have agreed to shared goals like development, democracy and peace. **The last two countries to join the Commonwealth were Gabon and Togo in 2022.** In 2022, Togo, a former French mandate territory, and Gabon, a former French colony, joined the Commonwealth, despite never having been under British rule. **Gabon was partially suspended from the Commonwealth in September 2023 following a military coup,** with two years given by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group for the country to hold new elections before a full suspension of Commonwealth membership would be considered.

Vietnam Elects Luong Cuong as President

- **Luong Cuong, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee and permanent member of the CPV Central Committee Secretariat,** has been elected as **Vietnam’s President.** The ongoing 8th session of the 15th-tenure National Assembly (NA) elected Cuong as President for the tenure until 2026.
- **All 440 deputies present at the meeting, equivalent to 91.67 per cent of the total number of NA deputies, voted in favor of Cuong replaces To Lam,** who remained president even after he was formally appointed as the general secretary of the ruling Communist Party in August. The new President pledged to fulfil the tasks assigned by the party, the state, and the people. The role of the general secretary is the most powerful position in Vietnam while the presidency is mostly ceremonial and involves meeting foreign dignitaries.

Construction of ‘world’s biggest building’ begins in Saudi Arabia

- In an ambitious move to reshape its urban landscape, **Saudi Arabia has launched a staggering \$50 billion project known as the ‘Mukaab’.** Located in the capital city of Riyadh, construction has commenced on the ‘Mukaab’, a monumental skyscraper set to become the largest building in the world.
- **This extraordinary cubical structure will stand at an impressive height of 1,300 feet (approximately 396 metres) and span 1,200 feet (about 366 metres) in width.** The developer, New Murabba Development Company and funded by Saudi Arabia’s central Public Investment Fund (PIF), said groundworks at the site are now 86 per cent complete. **The ‘Mukaab’ is designed to incorporate cutting-edge technology and luxurious amenities that redefine modern living.**

India stands at 98 out of 142 countries in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index

- For the seventh year in a row, the rule of law has eroded in a majority of countries, according to the World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index 2024. In the last year, the rule of law declined in 57% of countries surveyed. However, India is among the minority of countries to see its WJP Rule of Law Index score increase this year. **India's overall rule of law score increased by less than 1% in this year's Index. It ranks 79th out of 142 countries worldwide. India ranks 79 out of 142 in the 2024 Rule of Law Index by the World Justice Project.**
- **Top-ranked countries are Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Germany while Venezuela, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Haiti, and Myanmar rank the lowest in terms of law and order.** The index assesses eight indicators: government constraints, corruption absence, open government, fundamental rights, security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, and criminal justice. India performs moderately in government constraints (60) and open government (44), reflecting its focus on governance. Poor scores in fundamental rights (102), security (98), and criminal justice (82) highlight issues with policing, rights protection, and delayed justice systems. According to a recent report published by the WJP has evaluated countries based on different factors, including constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government, fundamental rights, order and security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, and criminal justice.

Brazil secures £30 billion settlement with BHP, Vale over 2015 dam disaster

- **Brazil has finalised a 170 billion reais (£30 billion) compensation deal with mining companies BHP, Vale, and Samarco over the 2015 Mariana dam collapse.** This incident, one of Brazil's most significant environmental disasters, saw a tailings dam near Mariana in southeastern Brazil fail, releasing a flood of mine waste that tragically claimed 19 lives, displaced hundreds, and severely polluted the Doce River. Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva attended the signing ceremony in Brasília, where officials outlined the agreement's terms, including an initial payment of 5 billion reais due within 30 days.

Brazil is the largest country in both South America and Latin America. Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country by area and the sixth most populous. Brasília is the federal capital of Brazil and seat of government of the Federal District. Brazilian real is the official currency of Brazil. Brazil is the only country that passes through both the equator and Tropic of Capricorn.

India-Albania Held Bilateral Consultations in Tirana

- **India and Albania held bilateral consultations in Tirana.** During the consultations, both sides undertaken a comprehensive review of bilateral, regional, and international issues. Bilateral discussions included political relations, trade, cultural relations, and people-to-people contacts. Discussions also covered cooperation between the two countries in the international arena. Both sides exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Albania is a country in Southeast Europe. Tirana is the capital and largest city in the country. The lek is the currency of Albania. Edi Rama is serving as the incumbent Prime Minister of Albania. Bajram Begaj is the incumbent President of Albania.

Georgia ruling party wins polls

- **Georgia's ruling party has won the country's parliamentary elections,** the central election commission said after the opposition decried the results as fraudulent. Brussels had seen as a crucial test of democracy in the Caucasus country, would determine the EU-candidate's chances of joining the bloc. Official results from more than 99% of precincts showed the ruling Georgian Dream party winning **54.08% of the votes, while a union of four pro-Western opposition alliances garnered 37.58%.** The results would give Georgian Dream 91 seats in the 150-member parliament – enough to govern but short of the 113-seat “constitutional majority” it had sought to institute a ban on all main opposition parties.

Georgia is a transcontinental country in Eastern Europe and West Asia. Tbilisi is the capital and largest city of Georgia. The lari is the currency of Georgia. Irakli Kobakhidze is serving as the current Prime Minister of Georgia. Salome Zourabichvili is currently serving as the President of Georgia.

Australia unveils world-first floating turtle islands for conservation

- **Australia has introduced the world’s first turtle islands.** The floating islands are made of PVC, featuring a central platform with a raised nesting box and ‘vegetation pods’ to support turtle breeding. **The first island was placed near Maitland, NSW, providing a sanctuary for the endangered Hunter River Turtle.**
- **The second island was installed in the Springfield wetland near Gosford.** The innovative island were created by animal preservation project Aussie Ark and Dr. Ricky Spencer of Western Sydney University. The floating islands offer a safe breeding site, protecting turtle nests from predators like feral foxes, which threaten 95% of freshwater turtle nests.

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

Brazil Not to Join China’s Multi-Billion-Dollar Belt and Road Initiative

- **Brazil has decided not to join China’s multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).** It has become the second country after India in the BRICS bloc to reject Beijing’s mega project. The prevailing opinion in Brazil is that joining China’s flagship infrastructure project would not only fail to bring any tangible benefits for Brazil in the short term, but could also make relations with a potential Trump administration more difficult.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) known within China as the One Belt One Road is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in more than 150 countries and international organizations. It is considered a centerpiece of the Chinese leader Xi Jinping’s foreign policy. The BRI forms a central component of Xi’s “Major Country Diplomacy” strategy, which calls for China to assume a greater leadership role for global affairs in accordance with its rising power and status. It has been compared to the American Marshall Plan. The Silk Road derives its name from the highly lucrative trade of silk textiles that were produced almost exclusively in China. The Silk Road Economic Belt is the ‘Belt’ part of the One Belt One Road initiative (also known as the BRI). It is part of an ambitious plan by the Chinese government to promote infrastructural development and connectivity and stimulate economic integration across the Eurasian region.

Saudi Arabia’s futuristic mega-city project, NEOM

- **Saudi Arabia’s futuristic mega-city project, NEOM, has taken a significant step towards reality with the unveiling of its first physical showcase—Sindalah, a luxury island in the Red Sea.** Spanning over 840,000 square meters (approximately 200 acres), Sindalah is designed to accommodate up to 2,400 guests daily by 2028, according to a statement released by NEOM. NEOM is best known for “The Line,” a pair of 170-kilometer-long, mirror-encased skyscrapers set to extend from the Red Sea coast inland.

Spain’s PM launches India’s first military aircraft plant

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez inaugurated the Tata Advanced Systems Ltd. (TASL)-Airbus facility in Vadodara, Gujarat.** This facility will manufacture the C295 aircraft for the Indian Air Force, marking India’s first private sector plant to produce military aircraft. This collaboration aligns with India’s “Make in India, Make for the World” initiative, aiming to boost India’s defense manufacturing capabilities and strengthen the India-Spain partnership. **C-295 Aircraft is built by Airbus for light-medium transport with a range of mission capabilities.**
- **Strategic importance:** The C295 plant marks a milestone in India’s defense sector by enabling local, private-sector-led manufacturing. **Production:** Of 56 C295 aircraft for the Indian Air Force, 16 will be from Spain, with 40 produced in Vadodara. **Job creation:** Expected to generate over 10,000 jobs and support MSMEs by sourcing 18,000 indigenous parts. **Versatility:** C295 aircraft serve multiple missions like medical evacuations, disaster response, and maritime patrols. **Cultural diplomacy:** Highlights shared cultural interests between India and Spain; **introduces 2026 as the India-Spain Year of Culture, Tourism, and AI.**

- **India’s defense ministry signed an agreement of \$2.5 billion (€2.3 billion) for 56 cargo and troop-carrying C295 aircraft from Airbus Defense and Space in 2021.** Of these, 16 will be assembled in Seville in Spain — with the first deliveries made last year — the 40 remaining will be produced in India. The Indian manufacturing unit in Vadodara will complete the first “Made in India” C295 aircraft in 2026.

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.

Scientists Document Lost Mountain Cities on Silk Road in Uzbekistan

- **In the mountains of Uzbekistan, archaeologists aided by laser-based remote-sensing technology have identified two lost cities that thrived along the fabled Silk Road trade route from the 6th to 11th centuries AD – the bigger one a center for the metal industry and the other reflecting early Islamic influence.** The fortified highland cities, located three miles (5 km) apart at around 6,560-7,220 feet (2,000-2,200 meters) above sea level, **are among the largest known from the mountainous sections of the Silk Road,** the sprawling web of overland trade routes linking Europe and the Middle East to East Asia. “These cities were completely unknown. We are now working through historical sources to find possible undiscovered places that match our findings,” said archaeologist Michael Frachetti of Washington University in Saint Louis, lead author of the study published in the journal Nature.
- **The bigger of the two, called Tugunbulak, covered about 300 acres (120 hectares),** with a population perhaps in the tens of thousands, the researchers said. It was one of the largest cities of its time in its region of Central Asia, rivaling even the famed trade hub Samarkand situated about 70 miles (110 km) away. It existed from around 550 to 1000 AD. “Tugunbulak is many times larger and more enigmatic than other highland castles or settlements that have been documented in high-elevation Central Asia,” Frachetti said.
- **The other city, Tashbulak, was only a tenth the size of its neighbor, with a population perhaps in the thousands, the researchers said, lasting from around 730-750 to 1030-1050 AD.** Founded in early medieval times in what is now southeastern Uzbekistan, the cities were eventually abandoned and forgotten until archaeologists came across the first evidence of them while scouring a rugged mountain area, with deep ravines, steep ridge lines and forests. They deployed drone-based lidar remote scanning to map the scale and layout of the sites. “Lidar is a technology that floods the landscape with lasers to measure the topography, in this case, in highly refined detail,” Frachetti said. **It revealed evidence of numerous structures, plazas, fortifications, roads, habitations and other urban features.**
- **Silk Road, ancient trade route, linking China with the West, that carried goods and ideas between the two great civilizations of Rome and China.** Silk went westward, and wools, gold, and silver went east. China also received Nestorian Christianity and Buddhism (from India) via the Silk Road. **The Silk Road enabled economic, cultural, religious and political exchanges between East and West,** as the caravans that traversed its pathways toled not only a panoply of products but also people and ideas. **It linked cosmopolitan Chinese cities such as Xi’an to destinations including the Byzantine capital Constantinople and the sophisticated Islamic metropolis Baghdad.**

Countries Launch Nature Coalition at UN COP16 Talks, Warn Of Human Extinction

- **Colombia at the U.N. COP16 biodiversity launched a coalition with 20 other countries seeking to make “peace with nature,”** as leaders warned that the rapid destruction of the environment risks humanity’s own extinction. **The summit of nearly 200 countries under way in the mountain-ringed city of Cali is tasked with figuring out how to halt the decline of nature by 2030,** as humans drive habitat loss, climate change, pollution and other activities that destroy biodiversity.
- **The coalition includes countries from four continents including Mexico, Sweden, Uganda and Chile, although none from Asia-Pacific.** The coalition is open to countries that agree to a set of principles aimed at **changing humanity’s relationship with nature, to live in harmony with the environment.** That includes marshaling money toward conservation and sustainable development, cooperating internationally and mobilizing all of their society toward preserving nature. At the opening of COP16 meeting with six presidents and more than 100 government ministers, leaders warned that by destroying nature, humanity is killing itself.

- Leaders said COP16 could be a turning point for conservation as the summit seeks to **implement 23 goals to stop nature loss by 2030 laid out in the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, that includes mobilizing \$200 billion annually for conservation and **preserving 30% of the Earth**. “Nature is life. And yet we are waging war against it. A war where there can be no winner,” said U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Venezuela recalls ambassador to Brazil over BRICS veto

- **Venezuela’s foreign ministry had recalled its ambassador to Brazil for consultations, after Brazil’s government vetoed Venezuela’s application to join the BRICS group of emerging economies.** The move by the government of left-wing **Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva infuriated Venezuela’s socialist strongman Nicolas Maduro, who views Brazil as a natural ally.**
- The opposition meanwhile claimed that its candidate **Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia won by a landslide, publishing detailed polling station results. Brazil has yet to recognize Maduro’s reelection, saying it wants first to see a detailed breakdown of results.** Several other Latin American countries, such as Argentina and Peru, have joined the United States in backing the opposition’s victory claim. Mr. Lula was a close ally of Maduro’s predecessor, revolutionary socialist leader Hugo Chavez, but has been critical of Maduro’s government, calling it a “very unpleasant regime” with an “authoritarian bias.”

Venezuela is a country on the northern coast of South America. The capital and largest urban agglomeration is the city of Caracas. The bolivar is the official currency of Venezuela. Venezuela’s President Nicolas Maduro launched the petro cryptocurrency in 2018 to circumvent US sanctions. However, the petro was never widely adopted and was involved in a corruption scandal. In 2020, Maduro tried to revive the petro by making it mandatory to pay for some state services and airplane fuel, but its use remained limited. **On January 15, 2024, all crypto wallets on the Patria Platform were shut down and any remaining petros were converted to bolivars, Venezuela’s local currency.**

Climate and Health Africa Conference (CHAC) 2024 opens in Zimbabwe

- **Representatives of African countries and global research experts are meeting in Zimbabwe’s capital, Harare, for the inaugural Climate and Health Africa Conference (CHAC 2024),** a meeting that brings Africa into the global dialogue on the intersection of climate change and health.
- **CHAC 2024 serves as a platform for sharing innovations, best practices, and solutions that enhance climate resilience in health.** More specifically, CHAC 2024 seeks to incorporate cutting-edge research evidence into understanding climate-health mechanisms, the health impacts, effective adaptation and mitigation intervention strategies, equitable climate research, and discuss how to effectively translate research into policy.

Botswana’s president concedes defeat in election, ending ruling party’s 58 years in power

- **Botswana’s President Mokgweetsi Masisi conceded defeat in the general election in a seismic moment of change for the county that ended the ruling party’s 58 years in power.** Mr. Masisi’s concession came before final results were announced, with his Botswana Democratic Party trailing in fourth place in the parliamentary elections. **The main opposition Umbrella for Democratic Change held a strong lead in the partial results, making its candidate, Duma Boko, the favourite to become president of a southern African country that is one of the world’s biggest producers of mined diamonds.**

Botswana is a landlocked country in Southern Africa. Gaborone is the capital and largest city of Botswana. The pula is the currency of Botswana. **Duma Gideon Boko is currently serving as President of Botswana.**

Kenya’s new deputy president sworn in as his predecessor challenges his impeachment in court

- **Kenya’s new Deputy President Kithure Kindiki was sworn in on November 1, 2024 after a court lifted orders barring his inauguration** following weeks of legal challenges by his predecessor, who was impeached by parliament last month. **The Senate voted to remove Rigathi Gachagua, the previous Deputy President, from office in October on charges including gross violation of the constitution and stirring ethnic hatred — accusations that he rejects and has dismissed as politically motivated.**

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.

Joint Russia Sea drills signal start of Indonesian foreign policy shift

- Indonesia's first joint military drills with Russia signal that new President Prabowo Subianto will seek a bigger role for Jakarta on the world stage as part of a significant foreign policy shift, analysts say. Indonesia has long maintained a neutral foreign policy and refuses to take sides in the Russia-Ukraine conflict or US-China rivalry, but Prabowo has called for stronger ties with Moscow despite Western pressure on Jakarta.
- "It is part of a broader agenda to elevate ties with whoever it may be, regardless of their geopolitical bloc, as long as there is a benefit for Indonesia," said Pieter Pandie, a researcher at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. The Southeast Asian ASEAN bloc, which Indonesia is a member of, held joint exercises with Russia in 2021, but Jakarta has never held drills alone with Moscow.

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.

Lahore air pollution hits historic high

- Unprecedented air pollution levels in Pakistan's second-largest city of Lahore prompted authorities to take emergency measures including issuing work-from-home mandates and closing primary schools. The city held the top spot on a real-time list of the world's most polluted cities after recording its highest ever pollution reading of 1900 near the Pakistan-India border, based on data released by the provincial government and Swiss group IQAir.
- Delhi was identified as the capital city with the poorest air quality, according to a new report by World Air Quality Report 2023. It is published by the Swiss organisation IQAir. It included data from 7,812 locations in 134 countries, regions, and territories. With an average air annual particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5) concentration of 54.4 micrograms per cubic metre, India had the third worst air quality. India was better than only two of its neighbouring countries, Bangladesh and Pakistan. While Bangladesh remained the most polluted country in the world, with an average PM2.5 concentration of 79.9 micrograms per cubic metre, Pakistan was second, with a level of 73.7. It also identified Delhi as the most polluted capital city in the world for the fourth consecutive time. Bihar's Begusarai was termed the world's most polluted metropolitan area. Ten out of the top 11 most polluted cities in the world are from India, the other being Lahore in Pakistan. 96 percent of the Indian population experiences PM2.5 levels more than seven times the WHO annual PM2.5 guideline.

Moldovans choose president

- Moldova's pro-Western President Maia Sandu has won a second term in a pivotal presidential runoff against a Russia-friendly opponent, in a race that was overshadowed by claims of Russian interference, voter fraud, and intimidation in the European Union candidate country. With nearly 99% of votes counted in the second round of the presidential election held, Sandu had 55% of the vote, according to the Central Electoral Commission, or CEC, compared to 45% for Alexandr Stoianoglo, a former prosecutor general who was backed by the pro-Russia Party of Socialists.

Moldova is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe, on the northeastern corner of the Balkans. Chisinau is the capital and largest city of Moldova. The leu is the currency of Moldova.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

India jumps 42 spots in 9 years, ranks 39th in Global Innovation Index 2024

- **India's ranking in the Global Innovation Index has improved by 42 positions over the last 9 years, with the country now ranked first among the 38 lower-middle-income economies.** According to the index released, **India holds the 39th position** in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2024, a remarkable improvement from its 81st position in 2015. This leap in ranking reflects India's commitment to fostering a robust innovation ecosystem that is underpinned by strong policies, investment in research and development (R&D), and a collaborative environment for startups and industries.
- In a span of nearly a decade, **India has made tremendous strides in the GII rankings, rising from the 81st position in 2015 to 39th in 2024.** This steady climb reflects the country's focused approach towards nurturing innovation across various sectors, driven by strong governmental support and a robust intellectual property framework. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed India's rise to the 39th position in the GII rankings as a "remarkable feat."** He emphasized that this achievement reflects the government's dedication to building a vibrant innovation ecosystem that can transform opportunities for the nation's youth.
- This achievement highlights India's growing leadership in innovation, especially as the country ranks 1st among 10 economies in Central and Southern Asia and 1st among lower-middle-income economies. **Furthermore, India ranks 4th globally in the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Science & Technology (S&T) Cluster Ranking, with key cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, and Chennai listed among the World's Top 100 S&T clusters.** Additionally, India stands 7th globally in intangible asset intensity and excels in innovation outputs, ranking 33rd, marking a notable improvement from the previous year. This recognition underscores India's continued dominance and leadership in innovation across multiple sectors.
- **The index evaluates the innovation performance of around 133 global economies, showcasing their strengths and weaknesses in fostering innovation.** One of the most notable achievements in the index is India's position as the top-ranked country among the 38 lower-middle-income economies. This recognition highlights India's growing leadership in innovation, particularly among developing economies, where it stands out as a driving force for technological and economic progress. **In the 2024 edition of the GII, Switzerland, Sweden, the United States, Singapore, and the United Kingdom have emerged as the world's most innovative economies.** However, India, along with China, Turkey, Vietnam, and the Philippines, has been recognized as one of the fastest-rising economies in terms of innovation over the past decade. **Angola is the least innovative country in the WIPO's Global Innovation Index (GII) 2024.**

The Global Innovation Index serves as a key reference for evaluating the performance of an economy's innovation ecosystem. It is published annually by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and acts as a valuable benchmarking tool for policymakers, business leaders, and other stakeholders. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) serves as the global forum for Intellectual Property (IP) services, policy, information, and cooperation. It is a self-funding agency of the United Nations, comprising 193 member states. WIPO's mandate, governing bodies, and procedures are outlined in the WIPO Convention, which was established in 1967. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

World Green Economy Forum Launched In Dubai

- **The World Green Economy Forum was launched in Dubai, bringing together global leaders and experts to address pressing environmental challenges.** Under the patronage of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, the forum's theme, "Empowering Global Action: Unlocking Opportunities and Advancing Progress," set the stage for discussions on international cooperation and innovative solutions for climate change and sustainability.
- A highlight of the forum was a panel discussion on aviation and the green economy, which examined the future of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). **Panelists discussed the ambitious goal of scaling up SAF production from the current 200,000 tonnes to 300 million tonnes by 2050.** They also explored various CO₂ sources for SAF production and emphasized the importance of stakeholder collaboration and capital investment. **The UAE government's target of 1% SAF use by 2031 was noted as a key driver for change in the region.**

Kerala secures first rank in Urban Governance Index

- **Kerala has secured first rank in the Urban Governance Index (UGI), a two year-long study conducted across several cities in India by the Praja Foundation.** While the State scores high on fiscal empowerment, it still has a long way to go in empowerment of the city administration.
- **The State scored 59.31 out of a possible score of 100 in various metrics, while Odisha came second with 55.10. In fiscal empowerment, Kerala managed to have high score of 23.22 out of 30, with Maharashtra coming second with 21.15.** Although it ranked only 20th place in the empowerment of city administration, the report notes that Kerala is the only State to give the Mayor the authority to write an 'Annual Confidential Report' of the Commissioner. **Only four States (Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Mizoram, and Odisha) mandate that every councillor should be part of at least one deliberative committee.** The report highlights technological advancements in local governance in many States. Despite these advancements, a significant concern is the high vacancy rate in sanctioned posts within Municipal Corporations.

NITI Aayog Launches First State Chapter of Women Entrepreneurship Platform

- **NITI Aayog has launched its maiden State Chapter of Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in association with WE Hub and the Telangana government.** With over 30 thousand registered women entrepreneurs and associations, the WEP has over 400 mentors from different industry sectors. WE Hub will be the nodal agency for all WEP activities in the State. The platform aims at promoting and supporting women entrepreneurs across sectors, providing those resources, tools, and a robust network to enhance their business growth. The WEP will offer customised support like digital skilling, access to financial services, mentorship, and market linkages.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. The Planning Commission was an institution in the Government of India, which formulated India's Five-Year Plans, among other functions. After India achieved independence, a formal model of planning was adopted, and accordingly the Planning Commission, reporting directly to the Prime Minister of India, was established on 15 March 1950, with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as the Chairman. Authority for creation of the Planning Commission was not derived from the Constitution of India or statute; it is an arm of the Central Government of India. The first Five-Year Plan was launched in 1951, focusing mainly on development of the agricultural sector. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current Chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current Vice Chairman is Suman Bery and the current Chief Executive Officer is Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam.

FSSAI Signs MoU with Brazil's Ministry Of Agriculture And Livestock In The Area Of Food Safety

- **The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAPA) of Brazil in the area of food safety.** The MoU was signed by Agriculture and Livestock Minister, Brazil Carlos Henrique Baqueta Fávaro, and CEO of FSSAI, G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, on the sidelines of the Global Food Regulators Summit in New Delhi.

- FSSAI also conducted a bilateral meeting with the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) on the sidelines of the Global Food Regulators Summit. The meeting focused on the implementation protocol of the agreement signed between India and BFDA this year during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This Agreement underscores a mutual commitment to enhance food safety by aligning regulatory frameworks, simplifying the Food Import Procedure, and fostering technical collaboration.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is a statutory body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India. FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety. The FSSAI is headed by a non-executive chairperson, appointed by the Central Government, either holding or has held the position of not below the rank of Secretary to the Government of India. The FSSAI has its headquarters at New Delhi. The authority also has 6 regional offices located in Delhi, Guwahati, Mumbai, Kolkata, Cochin, and Chennai.

India set to become \$1 tn digital economy by 2028

- With government's digital initiatives, India's financial ecosystem has undergone a paradigm shift over the last few years. A recent report by Ask Capital says with enablers like deep internet penetration efficient and cheap 4G and 5G services along with government digital initiatives India is set to become a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2028. India has become a global example of real-time payments, benefiting from home grown technological innovations like UPI. India's digital transformation will be a game changer for the economic development.

Government Launches PM E-DRIVE Scheme to Boost Electric Vehicle Innovation

- In a boost for the electric vehicle (EV) adoption in the country, the total EV registrations reached 1.59 lakh units in September 2024. According to the government's VAHAN data, EV registrations saw a significant 23 per cent increase (year-on-year). In the first half of the current fiscal, EV volumes increased 20 per cent compared with the same period last year. Total EV registrations across all segments rose to 8.93 lakh units compared with 7.45 lakh units in the same period last year. Meanwhile, the government launched the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) scheme that has a financial outlay of Rs. 10,900 crore over a period of two years. The PM-Drive scheme was approved by the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to promote electric mobility in the country. The PM E-DRIVE scheme will play a pivotal role in accelerating EV adoption and building critical charging infrastructure nationwide, contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable future.
- It has been launched to replace FAME II. It offers fiscal incentives to around 25 lakh electric two-wheelers, 3 lakh electric three-wheelers, and 14,000 electric buses through demand incentives. Automakers can claim reimbursements for eligible electric vehicle (EV) sales, similar to the previous FAME-II scheme. However, electric cars are notably excluded from the subsidy. Installation of Electric vehicle public charging stations (EVPCS) in selected cities and on selected highways. Test agencies to be modernised to deal with the new and emerging technologies to promote green mobility.

The FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) policy aimed to reduce vehicular emissions, decrease fuel consumption, and encourage sustainable transportation. It was introduced in 2015 under the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP). FAME I (2015-2019): Focused on providing incentives for the purchase of electric and hybrid vehicles and supported the development of charging infrastructure. It aimed to promote cleaner mobility in public and private sectors. FAME II (2019-2024): Expanded the scope, providing USD 1.19 billion to encourage the adoption of electric vehicles, particularly in public transport (e-buses, 2-wheelers, and 3-wheelers). It also emphasised building a robust charging infrastructure and targeted reducing emissions from commercial fleets.

US-based Rx Benefits is setting up its first global capability centre (GCC) in India

- US-based Rx Benefits is setting up its first global capability centre (GCC) in India in Hyderabad, with plans to create 300 jobs over the next couple of years. This was announced by IT & industries minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu's office after the minister met the company's leadership team. The Hyderabad GCC of Rx

Benefits, which supports its pharmacy clients by helping them increase profits, will oversee global product engineering operations.

Union Cabinet Approves India to Join International Energy Efficiency Hub by Signing Letter Of Intent

- **The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the signing of ‘Letter of Intent’ thus enabling India to join the ‘Energy Efficiency Hub’.** India will join the International Energy Efficiency Hub (Hub), a global platform dedicated to **fostering collaboration and promoting energy efficiency worldwide.** This move solidifies India’s commitment to sustainable development and aligns with its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By joining the Hub, India is taking a significant step towards a more sustainable future. The country’s participation in this global platform will help accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy and improve energy security.
- **Established in 2020 as the successor to the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC), in which India was a member, the Hub brings together governments, international organizations, and private sector entities to share knowledge, best practices, and innovative solutions.** By joining the Hub, India will gain access to a vast network of experts and resources, enabling it to enhance its domestic energy efficiency initiatives. **As of July, 2024, sixteen countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Russia, Saudi Arabia, United States and United Kingdom) have joined the Hub. As a member of the Hub, India will benefit from opportunities for collaboration with other member states, sharing its own expertise and learning from international best practices.** The country will also contribute to global efforts to address climate change by promoting energy-efficient technologies and practices.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), the statutory agency, has been designated as the implementing agency for the Hub on behalf of India. BEE will play a crucial role in facilitating India’s participation in the Hub’s activities and ensuring that India’s contributions align with its national energy efficiency goals. By joining the Hub, India is taking a significant step towards more sustainable future. The country’s participation in this global platform will help to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy and improve energy security.

‘India’s energy demand to triple by 2050’

- **With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 7% and power demand rising by over 8% this year,** India is now the third-largest power market globally, and its energy demand is set to triple by 2050. India’s role in the global energy transition is becoming increasingly prominent as its economy has overtaken the UK, surpassed France, and is on track to overtake major markets like Germany and Japan within the next five to ten years.
- **However, 70% of India’s power still comes from coal, with 50 GW of coal and 10 GW of nuclear expected by 2030.** In a net-zero scenario, electrification would need to exceed 50%, a crucial focus for India as it balances its development of fossil fuel and electric economies in parallel to meet its growing energy demands.

In a first, India’s forex reserves breach \$700 billion mark

- **India’s forex reserves jumped \$12.58 billion on week, breaching \$700 billion mark for the first time, standing at \$704.88 billion** according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). India’s forex reserves have surged by \$87.6 billion in 2024, surpassing last year’s total increase of nearly \$62 billion. In the week ending September 27, the reserves increased by \$12.6 billion, marking the **largest weekly rise** since mid-July 2023. **India is now the fourth-largest economy globally to have forex reserves exceeding \$700 billion, following China, Japan, and Switzerland.**

Foreign Exchange Reserves are assets denominated in a foreign currency that are held on reserve by a central bank. Reserve Bank of India Act and the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 set the legal provisions for governing the foreign exchange reserves. **Composition of Forex of India (in descending order): Foreign Currency Assets>Gold Reserves>Special Drawing Rights (SDR)>Reserve Position in IMF.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) aims to build a forex buffer to protect against market volatility. The RBI also uses its forex reserves to manage exchange rates and monetary policies.

DigiLocker Partners With UMANG App For Seamless Access To Government Services

- **The National e-Governance Division has announced the integration of the UMANG app with DigiLocker to provide citizens seamless access to a wide range of government services.** The Electronics and IT Ministry said that this collaboration will allow users to manage multiple services through a single platform.
- **It said the UMANG app is accessible to all Android users, and its services can be accessed through the DigiLocker app.** The Ministry said DigiLocker is a flagship initiative under the Digital India program aimed at providing secure cloud-base storage of essential documents. **The UMANG app provides a single platform for all Indian citizens to access pan-India e-government services ranging from central to local government bodies.**

US continues to be largest source of FDI in India: RBI census

- **The US continued to be the largest source of FDI in India, followed by Mauritius, Singapore and the UK,** according to an annual census of the Reserve Bank of India. Out of the 41,653 entities, which responded in the latest census, 37,407 reported foreign direct investment (FDI) and/or overseas direct investment (ODI) in their balance sheets for March 2024. Of these entities, 29,926 had also reported in the previous census round and 7,481 have newly reported in the current round, according to Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Entities for 2023-24.

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.

Record Solar Power Capacity Reached Globally in 2023

- **In 2023, the world achieved an unprecedented milestone in solar energy, adding a record 347 gigawatts (GW) of solar power capacity—marking a 74% surge compared to the previous year.** This remarkable growth, driven by falling solar panel costs and favorable government policies, demonstrates the growing momentum of the global shift toward renewable energy.
- **According to a report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), the solar sector has emerged as a key player in the transition to cleaner energy. China led the charge in this solar boom, accounting for a staggering 63% of the newly installed capacity.** The country added 216.9 GW of solar power, further cementing its position as the global leader in renewable energy. **Other major contributors included the United States, Germany, Brazil, India, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, and Australia, which collectively added 83.4 GW of solar capacity.**

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is an intergovernmental organization mandated to facilitate cooperation, advance knowledge, and promote the adoption and sustainable use of renewable energy. It is the **first international organisation to focus exclusively on renewable energy, addressing needs in both industrialised and developing countries.** It was founded in 2009 and its statute entered into force on 8 July 2010. The agency is **headquartered in Masdar City, Abu Dhabi.** The **Director-General of IRENA is Francesco La Camera, a national of Italy.** IRENA is an official United Nations observer.

IMF cuts penalty surcharges for world's most indebted nations like Argentina, Egypt, Ukraine, and Ecuador

- **The International Monetary Fund reduced borrowing costs for some of the world's most indebted nations, making a concession to partners that have ramped up criticism of fees that they see as unjustly punitive at a time of higher interest rates.** The IMF's executive board has agreed to cut what are known as surcharges, fees imposed on top of regular interest payments for countries that borrow more than their allotted share or take longer to repay IMF loans. **The burden of those fees has been carried mainly by a handful of the fund's biggest borrowers including Argentina, Egypt, Ukraine and Ecuador. Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said that the move will lower IMF borrowing costs for members by 36%, or \$1.2 billion every year.** The number of countries paying surcharges in fiscal year 2026 will fall to 13 from 20.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 190 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 190 countries that make up its near-global membership. Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, from Bulgaria, is Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of International Monetary Fund (IMF) from October 1, 2019. Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first woman to occupy the top post at the global lender. The latest currency that was added to the basket of currencies by the International Monetary Fund to determine the value of XDR is the Chinese renminbi in 2016. The other international currencies in the basket of currencies are British Pound, Japanese Yen, US Dollar, and Euro. XDR is the currency code of Special Drawing Rights. Andorra has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to become its 190th member.

IFSC's First Finance Company for Power & Infrastructure lending i.e. PFC Infra Finance IFSC Limited to commence operations – Receives approval from IFSCA

- **PFC Infra Finance IFSC Limited (PIFIL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC), has received approval from International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) to commence business as a Finance Company in IFSC GIFT City Gujarat.**
- **PIFIL, part of India's largest non-banking financial company (NBFC) group, will be the first finance company in IFSC dedicated to power and infrastructure lending.** PFC Infra Finance IFSC Limited aims to provide lending in India and in other countries in foreign currency, catering to both government and private players. The establishment of PIFIL will position PFC as a global brand and contribute to strengthening India's position as a global financial hub.

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) is the regulatory body for the Indian special economic zones such as the GIFT International Financial Services Centre for International Financial Services and commodity markets under the ownership of the Government of India. It was established in 2020, under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. **The International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) is located in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).**

Hong Kong Regains Title as World's Freest Economy from Singapore

- **Hong Kong resumed its half-century run as the world's freest economy, wresting the title from rival Singapore.** Hong Kong's score of 8.58 edged out Singapore's 8.55, according to the Fraser Institute's latest Economic Freedom of the World report, covering 2022. Last year, the researcher announced that Hong Kong had ceded the top spot for the first time since the ranking's inception but after revising its data, the city ranked No. 1 all throughout. Coming in at No. 3 was Switzerland, followed by New Zealand and the US. At 165th place, Venezuela ranked last with a score of 3.02.

World Chain: The First Human-Centric Blockchain

- **The highly anticipated World Chain is officially live, marking a major milestone in blockchain innovation.** With over 15 million World ID holders and World App users already migrating to the new platform, World Chain

is the first blockchain designed with a vision to benefit humans. With the backing of leading blockchain service providers such as Optimism, Alchemy, Uniswap, Safe, Dune, and Etherscan, World Chain seeks to put the needs of people first in order to guarantee that blockchains ultimately serve people.

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.

Mormugao becomes India’s pioneering port to implement Green Ship Incentives under the ESI

- **Mormugao Port Authority has gained global recognition by being listed as an incentive provider on the Environment Ship Index (ESI) portal, acknowledged by the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH). This achievement highlights the port’s commitment to promoting environmentally friendly practices for seagoing vessels.**
- **Mormugao Port is India’s first port to introduce Green Ship Incentives through the ESI, aligning with global efforts to reduce air emissions in shipping. The port’s incentive program, ‘Harit Shrey,’ launched in October 2023, offers discounts on port charges based on ESI scores, rewarding ships with higher environmental performance. In August 2024, the Secretary General of IAPH praised Mormugao Port’s efforts in joining the ESI Programme and raising awareness of green shipping incentives in the region.**
- **Mormugao stands out in Asia alongside Japan and Oman, which also offer similar incentives. Since the introduction of the “Harit Shrey scheme,” many ships have benefited from the incentives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This initiative supports the broader goal of achieving long-term emission reductions in maritime operations. The port authority has also submitted the scheme for the IAPH Sustainability Awards under the World Port Sustainability Programme (WPSP), emphasizing its dedication to sustainable practices.**

India’s first coal exchange to be set up soon

- **Union minister G Kishan Reddy said that India’s first coal exchange would be set up soon. A coal exchange is likely to facilitate more sellers and buyers to trade coal as a commodity. Reddy, who is coal and mines minister, said that coal exchange is likely to come up soon. The plan for setting up the coal exchange was discussed in a recent meeting, the minister said further.**
- **According to the coal ministry’s action plan for 2024-25, the establishment of a coal trading exchange in the country would open up the coal market through an online trading platform, along with clearing and settlement mechanism and provide easy availability of dry fuel in the market. The draft note for the Cabinet for setting up of coal exchange in the country was circulated for inter-ministerial consultations.**

India extends its first-ever Rupee denominated Line of Credit under IDEAS

- **India has extended a new Line of Credit for INR 487.60 Crores to the Government of Mauritius for financing of a water pipeline replacement project. This is the first-ever Rs. denominated Line of Credit to have been extended by India for project financing to any country under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS).**
- **The project envisages replacement of approx. 100 km of obsolete water pipeline in Mauritius. The GOI-supported Line of Credit will be financed by the State Bank of India at concessional terms. This is yet another reflection of India’s long-standing commitment to overall socio-economic development of countries in the Global South. India’s development projects continue to be driven by the aspirations and needs of its partner countries.**

Spanish PM, Modi to inaugurate TASL-Airbus aircraft assembly line in Vadodara

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Mr Pedro Sanchez jointly inaugurated the TATA Aircraft Complex for manufacturing of C-295 aircraft at TATA advanced systems limited (TASL) Campus in Vadodara, Gujarat on October 28, 2024.** This facility will manufacture the C295 aircraft for the Indian Air Force, marking India's first private sector plant to produce military aircraft. This collaboration aligns with India's "Make in India, Make for the World" initiative, aiming to boost India's defense manufacturing capabilities and strengthen the India-Spain partnership.
- **In September 2021, Ministry of Defence had signed a Rs. 21,935-crore contract with Airbus Defence and Space SA, Spain for supply of 56 aircraft - 16 to be brought in fly away condition from Spain and 40 to be built in India by TASL.** Of the 16 aircraft, six have already been inducted into IAF at 11 Sqn based at Vadodara. The last would be delivered by August 2025. The first Made-in-India C-295 is expected to be rolled out of the Final Assembly Line facility at Vadodara by September 2026 and the remaining by August 2031..
- **TASL is responsible for making 40 aircraft in India.** This facility becomes the first private sector Final Assembly Line (FAL) for military aircraft in the country. It will involve the full development of a complete ecosystem from the manufacture to assembly, test and qualification, to delivery and maintenance of the complete lifecycle of the aircraft. **The Prime Minister had laid the foundation stone of C-295 aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara in October 2022.** The pre-FAL production will start from December 2024 and the FAL assembly will start from October 2025.

'World's first' lithium-sulfur battery gigafactory to be built in the US

- **Silicon Valley startup Lyten has announced plans to build a lithium-sulfur battery gigafactory in Nevada, US.** They have described the plant, which is being funded by a US\$1 bn investment from Chrysler-parent Stellantis, as the "world's first". **It is expected to produce up to 10 GWh of batteries, enough to power around 150,000 electric vehicles (EVs).** Lyten has developed a "supermaterial" by converting greenhouse gases into solid carbon and hydrogen. The hydrogen is converted into clean fuel while the carbon builds Lyten 3D Graphene, used in the production of the company's lithium-sulfur batteries. The factory will manufacture cathode active materials (CAM) and lithium metal anodes, producing both cylindrical and pouch-shaped batteries.

Tarun Plus Offers Loan Ranging From 10 To 20 Lakhs For Entrepreneurs

- **The Government of India has increased the loan limit under the Prime Minister Mudra loan scheme from 10 lakhs rupees to 20 lakhs rupees.** This decision was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as part of the Union Budget for 2024-2025 in July.
- The Department of Financial Services (DFS) in a social media post said that the new Tarun Plus category has been created under the Scheme. **This category will offer loans ranging from 10 lakh rupees to 20 lakh rupees for entrepreneurs who have repaid their previous Tarun loans.** The Department further emphasized that this initiative reflects the government's ongoing commitment to fostering a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. **It added that loans up to 20 lakhs rupees will now be covered under the Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU),** further facilitating access to funding for small businesses. **Tarun Plus offers loans ranging from 10 to 20 lakhs for entrepreneurs.**

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) was launched by the government in 2015 for providing loans up to Rs. 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro-enterprises. MUDRA, which stands for Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd., is a financial institution set up by the Government. Loans under this scheme are collateral-free loans. MUDRA has created three products i.e. 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun' as per the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit. Shishu: Covering loans up to Rs. 50,000. Kishore: Covering loans above Rs. 50,000 and up to Rs. 5 lakh. Tarun: Covering loans above Rs. 5 lakh and up to Rs. 10 lakh.

U.S., France, Armenia emerge as India's top three defence export customers

- **Amid a growing push to increase exports of indigenous defence equipment, the U.S., France and Armenia have emerged as the top three customers for Indian military exports.** India is presently exporting military

equipment to more than 100 nations across the world. **The top three countries in the last financial year include the U.S., France and Armenia.** The contribution of the private sector in this value of production is 21%.

- The sources said the **exports to the U.S. include a significant number of parts of aircraft and helicopters manufactured by Indian firms for global defence majors like Lockheed Martin and Boeing. The exports to France include a lot of software and electronic equipment, while the exports to Armenia include ATAGS artillery guns, Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher systems, Swathi weapon locating radars and other important systems.** The major defence platforms produced in the country include the LCA Tejas fighter jets, aircraft carriers, warships, submarines, Dhanush artillery gun system, MBT Arjun, advanced towed artillery gun system, high mobility vehicles, weapon-locating vehicles, weapon-locating radar, 3D tactical control radar, software-defined radios, and Akash missile system. **The contribution of the private sector in this value of production is 21%.**

In a first, NHAI will rope in a bank to collect user fee on a highway stretch

- In a first, **NHAI will rope in a bank to collect user fee on a highway stretch, marking a paradigm shift in the tolling system in the country.** It has invited bids for selecting an acquirer bank for country's first multi-lane free flow (MLFF) toll collection on the recently-opened Dwarka Expressway.
- The MLFF tolling stretch will have no physical plaza. **The tolling system will consist of field equipment and sensors mounted on gantries, which will capture information from passing vehicles.** This data will be transmitted to the electronic toll payment system for the deduction of user fee.

Sebi proposes 30-day deadline for MF deployment of NFO proceeds

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) **proposed changes in the regulatory filing procedure of new fund offers (NFOs) by mutual funds in a move aimed at protecting the innovative ideas being proposed by a fund house in its new scheme.**
- As per a proposal, if a fund house comes out with an innovative scheme with new features, **the regulator will allow it to maintain the secrecy and the scheme information document (SID) will be available in the public domain only five working days before the scheme's launch.**
- In a consultation paper issued, **Sebi proposed that the asset management company (AMC) can submit the initial draft of SID only to the Sebi.** The existing system has led to concerns that it allows competitors to replicate the investment ideas. Currently, an AMC has to upload the so-called draft SID ahead of the launch of NFO. The SID contains all the vital information of the new fund.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the regulatory body for securities and commodity market in India under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It was established on 12 April 1988 and given Statutory Powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992. SEBI has its headquarters at the business district of Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. Madhabi Puri Buch is the current chairman of SEBI. Madhabi Puri Buch took charge of chairman on 1 March 2022, replacing Ajay Tyagi, whose term ended on 28 February 2022. Madhabi Puri Buch is the first woman chairperson of SEBI.

Banks in News

India Becomes Fourth Nation to Cross 700 Billion Dollar in Forex Reserves

- **India has become the fourth economy in the world to surpass 700 billion US dollars in foreign reserves**, joining China, Japan, and Switzerland. India's foreign exchange reserves surged by 12.588 billion dollars to touch a new all-time high of 704.885 billion dollars.
- In the previous week ended September 20, the forex reserves jumped by 2.8 billion to 692.3 dollars. **The sharp increase in forex reserves strengthened India's ability to cushion against global economic uncertainties and provides greater stability to its currency in the face of volatile international markets.** According to the latest RBI data released India's gold reserves rose 2.184 billion to 65.796 billion dollars. The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund increased by 8 million to 18.547 billion dollars.

Foreign Exchange Reserves (also called Forex Reserves) are reserve assets held by a central bank in foreign currencies. These may include foreign currencies, bonds, treasury bills, and other government securities. Reserves are denominated and expressed in the US dollar, which is the international numeraire for the purpose. **RBI is the custodian of the Foreign exchange reserves in India. India's foreign exchange reserves comprise of;** 1. **Foreign currency assets (FCAs):** These are maintained in currencies like the US dollar, euro, pound sterling, Australian dollar and Japanese yen. 2. **Gold.** 3. **SDR (Special Drawing Rights):** This is the reserve currency with IMF. 4. **RTP (Reserve Tranche Position):** This is the reserve capital with IMF. **The biggest contributor to India's Forex reserves is foreign currency assets, followed by gold.** The purpose of foreign exchange reserves are: They are used to back liabilities on their own issued currency, support the exchange rate and set monetary policy. To ensure that RBI has backup funds if their national currency rapidly devalues or becomes altogether insolvent. If the value of the Rupee decreases due to an increase in the demand of the foreign currency, then RBI sells the dollar in the Indian money market so that depreciation of the Indian currency can be checked. A country with a good stock of forex has a good image at the international level because the trading countries can be sure about their payments. A good forex reserve helps in attracting foreign trade and earns a good reputation with trading partners.

RBI enters into Currency Swap Agreement with Maldives Monetary Authority

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) entered into a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2024-27** in New Delhi. Under the agreement, **the MMA is eligible for financing support from the RBI amounting to \$400 million under the U.S. Dollar/ Euro Swap Window and Rs. 30 billion under the INR Swap Window.** The agreement would be valid till June 18, 2027.
- **The SAARC Currency Swap Framework came into operation on November 15, 2012, to provide a backstop line of funding for short term foreign exchange liquidity requirements or short-term balance of payments stress till longer term arrangements are made.** Seeking to strengthen bilateral ties, India and the Maldives inked a currency swap agreement, a move that would help the archipelago nation overcome foreign exchange reserve issues. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu also launched Rupay card in the Maldives, inaugurated the new runway at the Hanimadhoo International airport and agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations that had hit a rocky patch last year.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. SAARC comprises of eight Member States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Secretariat of the Association was set up in Kathmandu on 17 January 1987. The objectives of the Association as outlined in the SAARC Charter are: to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life; to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realize their full potentials; to promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia; to contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems; to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields; to strengthen cooperation with other developing countries; to strengthen cooperation among themselves in

international forums on matters of common interests; and to cooperate with international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes. **Ambassador Mr. Md. Golam Sarwar of Bangladesh assumed office of the Secretary General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on 25 October 2023.**

RBI Deputy Governor Rajeshwar Rao gets one-year extension

- **The government has extended the term of RBI Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao for a period of one year, according to sources. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect or until further orders. The ACC is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.** The current four Deputy Governors of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are: Dr. M.D. Patra, Shri M. Rajeshwar Rao, Shri T. Rabi Sankar and Shri Swaminathan J.

Bank of Baroda appoints Sachin Tendulkar as global brand ambassador

- **Bank of Baroda said it had signed Sachin Tendulkar as its global brand ambassador.** “The partnership comes at an opportune time with Bank of Baroda poised to script the next phase of its transformation journey as it pursues a faster growth trajectory, leveraging Sachin’s brand aura”. “Sachin is a global icon who has always led by example, inspiring us through his actions both on and off the field”.

Bank of Baroda (BOB or BoB) is an Indian government Public sector bank headquartered in Vadodara, Gujarat. It is the third largest public sector bank in India after State Bank of India. Based on 2023 data, it is ranked 586 on the Forbes Global 2000 list. **The Maharaja of Baroda, Sayajirao Gaekwad III, founded the bank on 20 July 1908 in the princely state of Baroda, in Gujarat. The Government of India nationalized the Bank of Baroda, along with 13 other major commercial banks of India, on 19 July 1969.**

RBI Announces Scholarship Scheme for Faculty Members From Academic Institutions

- **The Reserve Bank of India has announced a Scholarship Scheme for faculty members from academic institutions.** Under the scheme, full-time faculty members teaching economics or finance at any UGC or AICTE-recognized universities or colleges in India are eligible to apply for short-term research.
- **The areas included for the scholarship are monetary and financial economics, banking, real sector issues and other topics of interest to RBI.** The scheme aims to enhance awareness of the RBI’s activities among faculty and students while providing exposure to various operational areas within the RBI. A maximum of five scholarships will be awarded to candidates shortlisted based on their curriculum vitae, a research proposal of no more than 1,000 words, and an interview conducted by a selection panel.

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.

Kotak Bank to acquire StanChart India’s personal loan portfolio

- **Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB) said it had entered into an agreement to acquire the personal loan book of Standard Chartered Bank, India to strengthen its position further in the retail credit market.** “The transaction is expected to be completed over the next three months, subject to regulatory and other approvals and the satisfaction or waiver of customary closing conditions. KMB will acquire the loan book, which will be outstanding closer to the completion date”. The proposed transaction, as of September 30, 2024, includes a total outstanding loan amount of about ₹4,100 crore comprising loans classified as ‘standard loans’ as per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines.

SBI named Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine

- **State Bank of India (SBI) was recognised as the Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine** of the US at its 31st Annual Best Bank Awards event held during the sidelines of Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in Washington. SBI Chairman CS Setty received the award in recognition of the bank's unwavering commitment to providing exceptional services and promoting financial inclusion nationwide by winning the trust of its customers.

Kerala: Federal Bank Installs India's First QR Code-Based Coin Vending Machine

- **India's first QR code-based coin vending machine (QCVM) has been installed in the Federal Bank's Puthiyara branch in the Kozhikode district of Kerala.** This machine is set up in Kozhikode as a solution for those who want coins. Coins of Rs. 1, 2, 5, and 10 are now available through this machine.
- Even if digital payment facilities come, we need coins for some use. If you need coins, you can collect if from the coin vending machine as easily as taking money from the ATM. **You can scan the QR code from the QR code-based coin vending machine and get the coin very easily.** The process of taking coins from the machine is simpler than the ATM. So it can also be used by the common man.
- It is a cashless coin delivery system that allows customers to make UPI transactions by scanning the QR code on the machine on their mobile phone. The QR code-based coin vending machine has been launched to help people solve the coin shortage. If you scan the QR code and make the required payment, the coins will be available through the machine.
- Although there were traditional coin vending machines in the past, these only issued coins after accepting currency notes. However, if the payment is made by scanning the QR code in the QR code-based coin vending machine without giving currency notes, the coin will be received. RBI has decided to install QR code-based coin vending machines in 2023. Now this became true by installing a coin vending machine at the Kozhikode Puthiyara branch of the Federal Bank.

HSBC appoints Pam Kaur as first female CFO

- In a historic move by the 160-year-old corporate and institutional banking giant **HSBC Holdings, insider Pam Kaur was named the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) —the bank's first female executive in this position.** HSBC Holdings said it would combine some of its commercial and investment banking operations in a major overhaul under new CEO Georges Elhedery, which will see it cut costs while trying to improve returns. A new leadership structure, which includes the appointment of Pam Kaur as the lender's first female chief financial officer, would “unleash our full potential and drive success into the future”.

HSBC Holdings plc (The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) is a British universal bank and financial services group headquartered in London, England, with historical and business links to East Asia and a multinational footprint. It is the **largest Europe-based bank by total assets, ahead of BNP Paribas,** with US\$2.919 trillion as of December 2023. **Sir Mark Edward Tucker currently serves as group chairman of HSBC.**

Firms in News

Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd Becomes 14th Maharatna CPSE

- The government has approved the upgradation of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to 14th Maharatna, Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). The Department of Public Enterprises said that Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has approved the upgradation of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to Maharatna CPSE. It said the proposal had earlier been recommended by the Inter-Ministerial Committee headed by the Finance Secretary and the Apex Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is a Department of Defence Production, CPSE with an annual turnover of 28 thousand 162 crore rupees and net profit of over seven thousand five hundred crore rupees in 2023-24.

The CPSEs meeting the following criteria are eligible to be considered for grant of Maharatna status. **1. Having Navratna status 2. Listed on Indian stock exchange with minimum prescribed public shareholding under SEBI regulations 3. An average annual turnover of more than Rs. 25,000 crore during the last 3 years 4. An average annual net worth of more than Rs. 15,000 crore during the last 3 years 5. An average annual net profit after tax of more than Rs. 5,000 crore during the last 3 years 5.** Should have significant global presence/international operations. Maharatna CPSEs 1. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited 2. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited 3. Coal India Limited 4. GAIL India Limited 5. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited 6. Indian Oil Corporation Limited 7. NTPC Limited 8. Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited, 9. Power Finance Corporation 10. Power Grid Corporation of India Limited 11. Steel Authority of India Limited 12. Rural Electrification Corporation Limited 13. Oil India Ltd 14. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited

Mark Zuckerberg now fourth richest in the world: Net worth crosses \$200 billion

- Meta founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg's net worth shot up almost sixfold to \$201 billion in less than two years after the company's shares rose to a record high, according to a Bloomberg report, which added that he's now at fourth place on the world's 500 richest people list behind Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Bernard Arnault. He trails No. 1 Elon Musk (\$259.6 billion), No. 2 Larry Ellison (\$203.8 billion) and No. 3 Jeff Bezos (\$200.9 billion) on the real-time billionaires list. LVMH chief Bernard Arnault, who was in the billionaire list's top three for several months before a string of reductions to his net worth, is now No. 5 on the list with a \$185.6 billion estimated net worth.

Meta Platforms, Inc., doing business as Meta, and formerly named Facebook, Inc., and it is an American multinational technology conglomerate based in Menlo Park, California. The company owns and operates Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and WhatsApp, among other products and services. Meta is one of the world's most valuable companies and among the ten largest publicly traded corporations in the United States. It is considered one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Google parent company Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft. Mark Zuckerberg is an American business magnate, computer programmer, internet entrepreneur and philanthropist. He is known for co-founding the social media website Facebook and its parent company Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook, Inc.), of which he is the executive chairman, chief executive officer, and controlling shareholder.

Reliance forays into Bhutan to set up largest solar plant in the country

- Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has entered Bhutan, announcing plans to develop 1,270 megawatts of solar and hydroelectric power projects in the country. The group has signed a partnership with Druk Holding and Investments Ltd (DHI), the commercial arm of the Bhutanese government, to boost investments in renewable energy. Reliance has set up a new company, Reliance Enterprises, for this venture, which will be jointly promoted by Reliance Infrastructure Ltd and Reliance Power Ltd. The company will focus on green energy, including solar and hydro projects, and explore new green technologies.

BPCL and Mumbai Port Authority to launch India's first green fuel ecosystem

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Mumbai Port Authority (MhPA) and the Mumbai Port Sustainability Foundation (MPSF) to create a state-of-the-art green fuel ecosystem at Mumbai Port. This MoU represents a crucial advancement in India's shift toward

cleaner energy alternatives. **With a focus on innovations in green fuel**, the initiative seeks to significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions, thereby supporting the nation's climate objectives. **“BPCL, MbPA, and MPSF are dedicated to pioneering sustainable practices that align with India's commitment to environmental stewardship.**

Utkarsh SFB introduces credit card, WhatsApp banking

- **Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Ltd. (Utkarsh SFB), has introduced two new products: superCard (Credit Card) and WhatsApp Banking for the convenience of customers.** The launch of WhatsApp Banking and superCard is tailor-made to enhance customer experience and provide for convenient banking services.”

Partha Pratim Sengupta takes charge as MD, CEO of Bandhan Bank

- **Bandhan Bank Ltd. has announced that Partha Pratim Sengupta has taken charge as Managing Director & CEO of the bank**, effective November 1. Ratan Kumar Kesh, who was presiding as the interim MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank since 10 July 2024, will resume his role as the executive director and chief operating officer, with the joining of Sengupta. **Bandhan Bank Ltd. is a banking and financial services company, headquartered in Kolkata.**

National Internet Exchange of India unveils new office at World Trade Centre, New Delhi along with its new initiatives

- **The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) celebrated the grand inauguration of its new office at the World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi.** This event marked a significant step in NIXI's ongoing efforts to strengthen India's internet infrastructure and foster digital growth. **National Internet Exchange of India unveils new office at World Trade Centre, New Delhi along with its new initiatives.** The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) celebrated the grand inauguration of its new office at the World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi.
- The event was presided over by Sh. S Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Chairman, NIXI along with Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar, Additional Secretary, MeitY, Shri Sushil Pal, Joint Secretary, MeitY, and Shri Rajesh Singh, Joint Secretary and Financial Adviser, MeitY. This event marked a significant step in NIXI's ongoing efforts to strengthen India's internet infrastructure and foster digital growth. **MeitY also unveiled a few of the initiatives undertaken by NIXI, such as a Festive Offer for in Accredited Registrars, aimed at accelerating the adoption of the in domain across the users.** He mentioned that NIXI has a very important role to play in the field of Internet, not just at national level but also globally. NIXI is ready to make a difference in this field as its role is being redefined right now.

NSE Launches Mobile App & Websites in 8 Additional Languages

- **The National Stock Exchange has launched a mobile app as well as websites in eight additional languages to commemorate 30 years of operations.** Trading in the equities market commenced on the NSE on 3rd November 1994. These languages include Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu, bringing the total number of languages supported by the NSE to twelve.

Government infuses Rs. 1,650 crore in Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited

- **“The government has infused around Rs. 1,650 crore in State-owned Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), gripped with operational and financial issues,”** according to an official document. “The government is also taking various measures to keep RINL as a going concern,” the Ministry of Steel said in a note.
- **“In this regard, the Government of India has infused Rs. 500 crore towards equity on September 19, 2024, and a working capital loan of Rs. 1,140 crore on September 27, 2024,”** according to the document. SBICAPS, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the State Bank of India (SBI), is preparing a report on the sustainability of RINL. **“In January 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave its ‘in-principle’ approval for 100% disinvestment of government stake in RINL, also called Visakhapatnam Steel Plant or Vizag Steel,** along with RINL's stake in its subsidiaries/joint ventures through strategic disinvestment by way of privatisation.

Adani starts India's biggest hydrogen blending in natural gas programme

- **Adani group has started blending green hydrogen in natural gas that is supplied to households for cooking purposes in parts of Ahmedabad, with a view to cut emissions and meet net-zero targets.** Adani Total Gas Ltd, the group's city gas joint venture with French energy giant TotalEnergies, has started blending 2.2-2.3 per cent of green hydrogen in piped natural gas supplies in Shantigram in Ahmedabad.
- **Hydrogen produced through clean pathways is injected into natural gas pipelines, and the resulting blends are used to generate heat and power with lower emissions than using natural gas alone.** The firm has started producing green hydrogen by using renewable energy sources like wind or solar power, to split water into hydrogen and oxygen through a process called electrolysis. This hydrogen is blended in natural gas that is currently piped to households for cooking purposes and industries.

GAIL, AMG to explore setting up of 2.5 GW hybrid renewable projects

- **State-owned GAIL (India) and AM Green B.V. (AMG) have signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly explore setting up of solar/wind hybrid renewable projects up to 2.5 GW across the country.** The two entities envisage to undertake studies for long-term supply of around 350 KTA carbon dioxide generated by GAIL in its gas processing plants to produce environmental friendly eMethanol that can reduce carbon emissions and promote a circular economy. GAIL will have an equity option to invest in the proposed eMethanol project.

CNG motorcycle launched in Chandigarh

- **Leading two-wheeler maker Bajaj Auto launched India's first CNG motorcycle.** Chandigarh Administration, unveiled the bike, Freedom 125. The motorcycle offers 50% cost savings by significantly reducing fuel expenses, as compared to similar petrol motorcycles. The CNG tank provides a range of over 200 km on just 2 kg of CNG fuel. Additionally, it has a 2-litre petrol tank which performs as a range extender, offering over 130 km of range in case the CNG tank empties, ensuring an uninterrupted journey.

After JP Morgan & Bloomberg, FTSE Russell to include Indian bonds in EMGB index from Sept 2025

- Global index provider FTSE Russell announced that it will include **Fully Accessible Route (FAR)-eligible Indian government bonds in its FTSE Emerging Markets Government Bond Index (EMGBI) starting September 2025.** Additionally, **the Indian bonds will be included in the regional FTSE Asian Government Bond Index (AGBI) and the FTSE Asian-Pacific Government Bond Index (APGBI).**
- This would be the third global bond index to include Indian bonds after JP Morgan Chase & Co and Bloomberg. "As a result of the reclassification of India's Market Accessibility Level from 0 to 1, **Indian government bonds will be added to the EMGBI and regional Asian government bond indices over a six-month period, commencing with September 2025 index profiles,**" FTSE Russell, the London-based index provider, said.

UPI Lite wallet limit hiked

- In order to encourage wider adoption of UPI payments, **the Reserve Bank of India has decided to increase the UPI Lite wallet limit to Rs. 5,000 and per-transaction limit to Rs. 1,000 from Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 500 respectively.** UPI Lite functions without utilizing a remitter bank's core banking systems in real-time, while providing adequate risk mitigation.
- **Further, the RBI has also decided to enhance the per-transaction limit to Rs. 10,000 in the case of UPI123 Pay from Rs. 5,000.** This facility is now available in 12 languages. The RBI has proposed to introduce a 'beneficiary account name look-up facility' to enable remitters in RTGS and NEFT to verify the name of the beneficiary account holder before initiating funds transfer. Remitters can input the account number and the branch IFSC code of the beneficiary, following which the name of the beneficiary will be displayed.

Unified Payments Interface, commonly known as UPI is a mobile-first payment system developed in India by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It makes it easy to send and receive by just scanning a QR code or using a user's phone number. Unlike most digital payment systems, the amount gets directly debited to the linked bank account. UPI can be used on BHIM, a first-party app. It can also be accessed via third-party platforms such as Google Pay, Amazon Pay, PhonePe, BharatPe, and a lot more. Most banks that officially operate in India support UPI payment, and unlike a credit or debit card payment, there is no charge involved in UPI

payment. To prevent fraudulent activities, NCPI has thought of various features like how the account is directly linked to the phone number, and if the SIM card is removed, UPI ceases to work, and at times, one might also face downtime due to service issues. **To solve that, NCIP came up with UPI Lite, which does not require a PIN or internet to make transactions. However, there is a limit of Rs. 500 per transaction and Rs. 4,000 limit per day.**

Ratan Tata passes away

- **Ratan Tata died at a Mumbai hospital late on October 9, 2024. The chairman emeritus of the Tata group was 86. Tata was admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital in south Mumbai on Monday (October 7, 2024) owing to age-related issues, and to control his blood pressure.** His legacy continues through his family, many of whom are prominent in business and various industries. The Tata family has been a driving force behind several key ventures and its members continue to hold important roles across different sectors. His death is seen a major loss for the Tata family and the country, as people remember him for his vision, kindness and role in India's development.
- **Ratan Naval Tata served as the chairman of Tata Group and Tata Sons from 1991 to 2012 and he held the position of interim chairman from October 2016 to February 2017.** In 2000, he received the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian honour in India, followed by the Padma Vibhushan, the country's second highest civilian honour, in 2008.
- **Ratan Tata was the son of Naval Tata, who was adopted by Ratanji Tata, son of Jamshedji Tata, the founder of the Tata Group.** He graduated from Cornell University College of Architecture with a bachelor's degree in architecture. He joined the Tata Group in 1962, starting on the shop floor of Tata Steel. He later succeeded J. R. D. Tata as chairman of Tata Sons upon the latter's retirement in 1991. During his tenure, the Tata Group acquired Tetley, Jaguar Land Rover, and Corus, in an attempt to turn Tata from a largely India-centric group into a global business.

Ratan Tata's successor: Noel Tata appointed chairman of Tata Trusts

- **Noel Tata was appointed as chairman of the Tata group's philanthropic arm Tata Trusts.** The announcement comes after the Tata Trusts board met earlier and took an unanimous decision on Noel's appointment. **He will be succeeding his half-brother Ratan Naval Tata who passed away earlier at the age of 86 in Mumbai, after a brief illness.**

Adani Energy inks pact to operate electricity transmission lines in Kenya

- **Indian billionaire Gautam Adani-led conglomerate has signed a pact to build and operate key electricity transmission lines in Kenya for 30 years.** Adani Energy Solutions Ltd signed a project agreement with the Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Ltd (Ketraco). "This agreement marks the beginning of a transformative initiative to develop, finance, construct, operate, and maintain key transmission lines and substations across Kenya".

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.

BEML to build India's first bullet train

- **State-owned BEML will build India's first indigenously manufactured bullet trains for Rs. 866.87 crore.** BEML said it has been awarded a contract for design, manufacturing, and commissioning two high-speed train sets. Each train will have eight cars (coaches) in this order placed by Indian Railways production unit, Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai.

Named as Shinkansen E5 will be India's first bullet train for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor. Shinkansen E5 can reach a maximum speed of 350 km/hr. The bullet train will primarily operate at 320 km/hr, and will reduce travel times between Mumbai and Ahmedabad significantly. The first train is expected to arrive in India after 2026. **The Shinkansen E5 will be manufactured in Japan, and India will place orders for the trains after negotiations with the Japanese manufacturers are finalized.**

Nvidia overtakes Apple to become the world's most valuable company, for the second time this year

- **Nvidia overtook Apple as the most valuable public company on the planet with its \$3.39 trillion market capitalization topping Apple's \$3.36 trillion valuation by midafternoon.** Shares of Nvidia rose 2% and shares of Apple fell 0.2% Monday, continuing the 2% gain Friday for Nvidia and 1% loss for Apple. Helping boost Nvidia will replace Intel in the blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average, while Apple shares were dinged by one of its largest shareholders, the Warren Buffett-led Berkshire Hathaway, disclosing this weekend another major sale of its Apple stock. **Nvidia dethroned Apple as the world's most valuable company** following a record-setting rally in the stock powered by an insatiable demand for its new supercomputing AI chips. **In June 2024, Nvidia briefly became the world's most valuable company, before it was overtaken by Microsoft and Apple.**

Tata Group, U.K.'s Somerville College to construct building in honour of Ratan Tata

- **Tata Group and Somerville College, University of Oxford, have announced the construction of a building in honour of the late Ratan Tata Building on the college campus in England.** "This building represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to expand Somerville's teaching and learning space, support research with global impact and articulate the college's vision of a sustainable and forward-looking academic community.
- The construction will begin in Spring 2025," Tata Group and Somerville College said. The project is made possible by the decade-long friendship between Somerville College and Chairman Emeritus of the Tata Group, Mr. Ratan Tata. The plans envisage a space that is both inclusive and equitable. New seminar rooms and offices will exist alongside spaces for shared study and interdisciplinary collaboration, reception rooms and accommodation for visiting academics.

New Logo of BSNL Unveiled

- Union Minister for Communication Jyotiraditya Scindia has said that since the **beginning of the rollout of 4G, the subscribers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) have increased from 75 lakh to 1.8 crore in the last six months.** Unveiling the new logo and seven services of BSNL in New Delhi, the Minister said that India is among the six countries in the world to develop its own 4G telecom network, which will soon migrate to 5G.
- **BSNL's new logo symbolizes strength, trust, and accessibility.** The green and white arrows surrounding India emphasize the company's expansive nationwide reach, while the vibrant orange backdrop signifies warmth and inclusivity. **The bold tagline 'Connecting Bharat' highlights BSNL's unwavering mission to bridge the digital divide by offering a modern, reliable telecom network that connects both urban and rural India.** On the occasion, Mr Scindia also launched the seven services of BSNL. These are a Spam-Free Network, National Wi-Fi Roaming, Intranet Fiber TV, Anytime SIM Kiosks, Direct-to-Device Service, Public Protection and Disaster Relief, and the First Private 5G in Mines.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) (India Communications Corporation Limited) is an Indian central public sector undertaking, under the ownership of Department of Telecommunications, which is part of the Ministry of Communications, Government of India with its headquarters in New Delhi, India. The central public sector undertaking was established on 1 October 2000 by the Government of India. It provides mobile voice and internet services through its nationwide telecommunications network across India. It is the largest government-owned-wireless telecommunications service provider in India. Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia is the current Union Minister of Communications and the Minister of Development of North Eastern Region since 2024.

Adar Poonawalla to acquire 50% of Karan Johar's Dharma Productions for Rs. 1,000 crore

- **Adar Poonawalla-led Serene Productions has announced that it has entered into a binding agreement to invest Rs. 1,000 crore into Karan Johar's Dharma Productions and Dharmatic Entertainment.** Through this investment, Serene Productions will hold a 50% stake in Dharma, with Karan Johar retaining the remaining 50% ownership. Karan Johar as the executive chairman will spearhead the company's creative vision. As the chief executive officer, Apoorva Mehta will work with Karan Johar in steering the strategic direction and overseeing the organisation's operational excellence.

Paytm gets NPCI nod to onboard new UPI users

- **The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has granted approval to Paytm to onboard new UPI users,** subject to the adherence to all procedural guidelines and circulars, according to the company. The move is expected to come as a relief to Paytm, which had suffered a blow following the Reserve Bank of India's restrictions earlier this year on associate company Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) in on boarding new UPI users on the Paytm app. In March, the NPCI gave approval to Paytm to participate in UPI as a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP). The NPCI allowed the company to continue UPI transactions through four banks - SBI, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank and YES Bank.

Paytm ("pay through mobile") is an Indian multinational technology company that specialises in digital wallet, e-commerce, payment system and financial technology company, based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. Paytm was founded in August 2010 with an initial investment of \$2 million by its founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Noida, a region adjacent to India's capital New Delhi. It started off as a prepaid mobile and DTH recharge platform, and later added data card, postpaid mobile and landline bill payments in 2013. On 31 January 2024, Reserve Bank of India, the banking regulator in India, ordered Paytm Payments Bank Ltd to stop the bulk of its activities from 29 February 2024.

NTPC & Indian Army to set up Solar Hydrogen Microgrid in Ladakh

- **NTPC has partnered with the Indian Army to establish a solar hydrogen-based microgrid at Chushul, Ladakh.** This step will provide a stable power supply using green hydrogen in off-grid Army locations. NTPC has designed this solar hydrogen-based microgrid system to operate independently, using hydrogen as an energy storage medium. This system will replace existing diesel generators at off-grid Army locations, providing a sustainable power supply despite harsh winter conditions.

OpenAI appoints Aaron Ronnie Chatterji as first chief economist, an Indian-American

- **OpenAI has appointed Aaron "Ronnie" Chatterji, a business and public policy professor from Duke University, as its first-ever Chief Economist.** This move comes as the company aims to explore the economic implications of artificial intelligence (AI) on global markets, job creation, and growth across industries.
- Chatterji brings vast experience from both academia and government, having served under the Obama and Biden administrations. **Prior to joining OpenAI, Chatterji played a key role in the Biden administration as the CHIPS coordinator, managing the \$52 billion CHIPS and Science Act.** His background includes serving as Chief Economist for the US Department of Commerce and contributing to economic strategy on President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers. Given his strong expertise in innovation and economic development, his appointment is seen as critical to OpenAI's ambitions.

OpenAI is an American artificial intelligence (AI) research organization consisting of the non-profit OpenAI, Inc. registered in Delaware and its for-profit subsidiary OpenAI Global, LLC. OpenAI researches artificial intelligence with the declared intention of developing "safe and beneficial" artificial general intelligence, which it defines as "highly autonomous systems that outperform humans at most economically valuable work". OpenAI has also developed several large language models, such as ChatGPT and GPT-4, as well as advanced image generation models like DALL-E 3, and in the past published open-source models. The organization was founded in December 2015 by Ilya Sutskever, Greg Brockman, Trevor Blackwell, Vicki Cheung, Andrej Karpathy, Durk Kingma, Jessica Livingston, John Schulman, Pamela Vagata, and Wojciech Zaremba, with Sam Altman and Elon Musk serving as the initial board members. In November 2023, OpenAI's board removed Sam Altman as CEO,

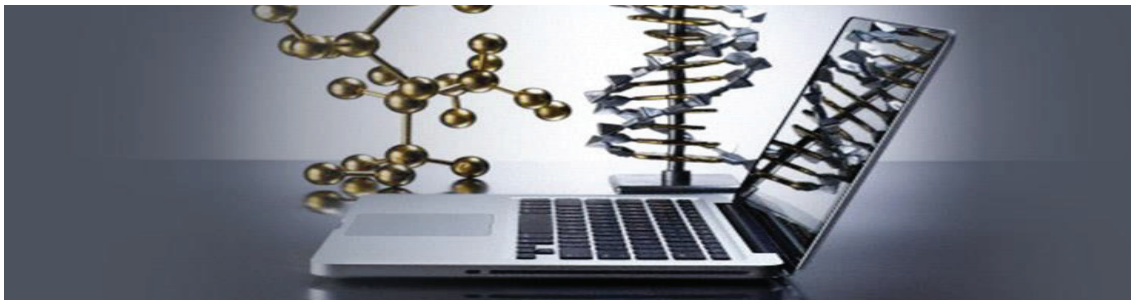
citing a lack of confidence in him, and then reinstated him five days later after negotiations resulting in a reconstructed board. Bret Steven Taylor is the current Chairman of OpenAI.

Air India becomes first Indian Airline to Get DGCA Design approval for Aircraft Interior upgrades

- Air India has achieved a major milestone by receiving the Design Organisation Approval (DOA) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) under the CAR 21 regulations. This makes Air India the first airline in the country with this level of certification, allowing it to make design changes and interior modifications in-house. In a move to further boost its self-reliance, Air India teamed up with Tata Technologies to enhance the interiors of its fleet under CAR 21 guidelines. With DOA in place, Air India is all set to upgrade its engineering and maintenance capabilities, aiming to keep its fleet in top shape while improving customer experiences.

Air India is the flag carrier airline of India, headquartered at New Delhi. It is owned by Talace Private Limited, a Special-Purpose Vehicle (SPV) of Tata Sons, after Air India Limited's former owner, the Government of India, completed the sale. The airline was founded by J. R. D. Tata as Tata Airlines in 1932; Tata himself flew its first single-engine de Havilland Puss Moth, carrying air mail from Karachi's Drigh Road Aerodrome to Bombay's Juhu aerodrome and later continuing to Madras (currently Chennai). After World War II, it became a public limited company and was renamed as Air India. On 21 February 1960, it took delivery of its first Boeing 707 named Gauri Shankar and became the first Asian airline to induct a jet aircraft in its fleet. Air India's mascot is the Maharajah (Emperor) and the erstwhile logo consisted of a flying swan with the wheel of Konark inside it, before being replaced by a new logo inspired by the airline's Jharokha window pattern in 2023. Natarajan Chandrasekaran is the chairman of Tata Sons. He was chief operating officer (COO) and executive director of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), where in 2009, he became chief executive officer (CEO).

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



SpaceX launches rescue mission for Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore from ISS

- **SpaceX launched a rescue mission for the two stuck astronauts at the International Space Station sending up a downsized crew to bring them home but not until next year.** The capsule rocketed into orbit to fetch the test pilots whose Boeing spacecraft returned to Earth empty earlier this month because of safety concerns.
- **The switch in rides left it to NASA's Nick Hague and Russia's Alexander Gorbunov to retrieve Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams.** Since NASA rotates space station crews approximately every six months, this newly launched flight with two empty seats reserved for Wilmore and Williams won't return until late February. There wasn't a way to bring them back earlier on SpaceX without interrupting other scheduled missions.

Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) is an American spacecraft manufacturer, launcher, and a satellite communications corporation headquartered in Hawthorne, California. It was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk with the stated goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars. The company manufactures the Falcon 9, Falcon Heavy, and Starship launch vehicles, several rocket engines, Cargo Dragon and Crew Dragon spacecraft, and Starlink communications satellites. SpaceX is developing a satellite internet constellation named Starlink to provide commercial internet service. In January 2020, the Starlink constellation became the largest satellite constellation ever launched, and as of December 2022 comprises over 3,300 small satellites in orbit

India's first sub-machine gun to be developed indigenously by the private sector

- **Lokesh Machines Limited has successfully delivered the first major order for its 9x19 mm submachine gun (SMG) Asmi, which is India's first sub-machine gun to be developed indigenously by the private sector, to the Northern Command of the Indian Army.** The order for 550 SMGs to the Indian Army was executed on time and in full, the company said, adding that this was a major achievement as it was the **first time that a private 100% indigenous manufacturer** had accomplished such a feat.
- **The Indian Army has got the delivery of country's first domestically developed sub-machine guns - ASMI - designed, developed and manufactured in less than three years.** ASMI, short for Asmita, which means pride in Sanskrit, has outperformed many renowned international rivals, including 'Uzi' from Israel Weapon Industries and 'MP5' from German Heckler & Koch, in terms of accuracy and reliability. **ASMI weighs under 2.4 kg and is 10-15% lighter than its global competitors. With a price tag of under Rs. 1 lakh, the guns are nearly 30% cheaper than the imported ones.** In contrast to Uzi that was designed in 1940s, ASMI sports a modern design with the use of aluminium and carbon fibre, making a perfect balance between weight and performance.

Annular solar eclipse 2024: Why 'ring of fire' solar eclipse won't be visible in India

- It is **only visible from some parts of the world, especially in the annular form, when the moon comes between the earth and the sun with a ring of fire surrounding it.** Unfortunately, the maximum eclipse of 2024's annular solar eclipse, that takes place on October 3 at the Indian time of 12.15 am, won't be visible from any part of the country in any shape or form as the event happens during night time.
- **The phenomenon of the moon coming between the sun and the earth is called a solar eclipse.** As the moon is much smaller than the sun, even when it is completely covered, especially when the moon is farther away from the Earth, it will leave the outer edge of the sun visible, which will make it look like a 'ring of fire' around the

moon, and hence the name. When the moon fully covers the sun, it is considered a total solar eclipse. The next solar eclipse will not arrive until 2026.

India Becomes 3rd Largest Supplier of Health & Nutrition Support to UNICEF

- The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has said that Indian suppliers are the third largest provider of organisation’s health and nutrition support to children globally. Indian businesses have supplied goods and services worth nearly six billion dollars to UNICEF for its global work.
- UNICEF’s supply division Director, Leila Pakkala, who was on her first official visit to India, said that Indian suppliers of life-saving goods and services for children are key to UNICEF’s work for children globally. She also mentioned that UNICEF values these contributions which are central to its mission of saving the lives of the most vulnerable children not only in India but around the world.

UNICEF, originally called the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund in full, now officially United Nations Children’s Fund, is an agency of the United Nations responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide. The agency is among the most widespread and recognizable social welfare organizations in the world, with a presence in 192 countries and territories. UNICEF’s activities include providing immunizations and disease prevention, administering treatment for children and mothers with HIV, enhancing childhood and maternal nutrition, improving sanitation, promoting education, and providing emergency relief in response to disasters. UNICEF is the successor of the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund, created on 11 December 1946, in New York, by the U.N. Relief Rehabilitation Administration to provide immediate relief to children and mothers affected by World War II. Catherine Mary Russell is an American who is currently serving as Executive Director of UNICEF.

Govt mulls setting up Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute

- The Indian government is looking to set up an artificial intelligence safety institute (AISI) that could help set standards, frameworks and guidelines for AI development without acting as a regulatory body or stifling innovation. The consultation, helmed by Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) additional secretary Abhishek Singh who oversees India AI, was a preliminary meeting that sought to seek inputs on how the Indian AISI should be structured, what should be its mandate, and how it could work with other AISIs across the world.
- The UK became the first country in the world to announce an AISI during the AI Safety Summit held in Bletchley Park in November 2023 with an initial investment of £100 million (~ ₹1,100 crore). It was closely followed by the USA which established it as a part of its National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Japan launched its AISI in February 2024.

DRDO announces completion of development trials of man-portable air defence system

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) announced the completion of the development trials of the ingeniously developed 4th Generation miniaturised Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORAD) after three successful consecutive flight tests at Pokhran Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan.
- The VSHORAD is a critical requirement for the Indian Army which has attempted to replace the legacy Iгла systems for some time but the efforts didn’t make progress. In recent years, Army procured small volumes of Iгла-S under emergency procurement. “The development of VSHORADS missiles has been completed and two production agencies have been engaged in the Development cum Production Partner (DcPP) mode.
- The VSHORAD is a man portable air defence system designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and DcPPs. The three Services have been associated with the project right from the beginning and participated during the developmental trials.

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.

Bihar to develop Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary as tiger reserve

- The Bihar government will develop the Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS) as the state's second tiger reserve. Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR), which is the state's only national park, has reached its capacity, and now the state government was finalising modalities for translocating the big cats to KWLS. The Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary is spread over an area of 1,504.96 sq km.

Indian Army rolls out first overhauled 'T-90 Bhishma' tank

- The Indian Army has achieved a significant milestone in its modernisation efforts with the successful overhaul of the T-90 Bhishma tank. The Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME) carried out the overhaul at the 505 Army Base Workshops in Delhi Cantonment. The process involved a complete disassembly of the tank, stripping it down to its smallest parts.

World's first commercial space station Haven-1 unveiled

- A US-based aerospace company unveiled the final design of Haven-1, touted to be the world's first commercial space station. Though the exterior body looks like any other space station, the minimalistic interior architecture is simply stunning, on par with a 5-star hotel. It has a minimalist design with visually pleasing decor and beautiful lighting set-up across the rooms.

ShakthiSAT mission to train 12k girls from 108 nations; aims satellite launch under Chandrayaan-4

- Aerospace startup Space Kidz India has launched "ShakthiSAT", a global mission to train about 12,000 girls across 108 countries on space technology, aiming for a satellite launch under ISRO's Chandrayaan-4 mission, fostering international collaboration in space exploration. President Droupadi Murmu will unveil the official poster of ShakthiSAT in November 2024. "The mission includes 120 hours of online training for high school girl students (aged 14-18) to teach them about various aspects of space technology, payload development, and spacecraft systems,".

India launches its first reusable hybrid rocket 'RHUMI-1'

- India launched its first reusable hybrid rocket 'RHUMI- 1', developed by the Tamil Nadu-based start-up Space Zone India with Martin Group, from Thiruvudandhai in Chennai. The rocket, carrying 3 Cube Satellites and 50 PICO Satellites, was launched into a suborbital trajectory using a mobile launcher.
- These satellites will be collecting data for research purposes on Global warming and Climate change. The RHUMI Rocket is equipped with a generic-fuel-based hybrid motor and electrically triggered parachute deployer, RHUMI is 100% pyrotechnic-free and 0% TNT.
- The mission RHUMI is led by Anand Megalingam, the founder of the Space Zone, under the mentorship of Dr. Mylswamy Annadurai Former Director of ISRO Satellite Centre (ISAC). The RHUMI-1 rocket combines the advantages of both liquid and solid fuel propellant systems to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs.
- Space Zone India is an aero-technology company in Chennai that aims to provide low-cost, long-term solutions in the space industry. Space Zone India (SZI) provides hands-on training experience on Aerodynamic principles, Satellite Technology, Drone Technology and Rocket Technology. It also creates awareness of the career options in this industry.

L&T Launches Multi-Purpose Vessel for Indian Navy

- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) launched a first-of-class Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) for the Indian Navy from its Kattupalli Shipyard near Chennai. The MPV, a highly specialised, multi-role platform, is envisaged to be trial a platform for the development of next generation weapons and sensors for the Indian Navy.
- It will also perform other roles such as, launch and recovery of surface and aerial targets, maritime surveillance and patrolling, humanitarian assistance, combating sea pollution, etc. The MPV is 107m long, 18.6m wide and has a displacement over 3,750 tonnes. It has been designed and constructed in-house by L&T in keeping with Government of India's 'Make in India' initiative and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' vision. The vessel, christened INS Samarthak, was launched.

Google to buy nuclear power for AI datacentres in ‘world first’ deal

- **Google has signed a “world first” deal to buy energy from a fleet of mini nuclear reactors to generate the power needed for the rise in use of artificial intelligence.** The US tech corporation has ordered six or seven small nuclear reactors (SMRs) from California’s Kairos Power, **with the first due to be completed by 2030 and the remainder by 2035.** Google hopes the deal will provide a low-carbon solution to power datacentres, which require huge volumes of electricity. The company, owned by Alphabet, said nuclear provided “a clean, round-the-clock power source that can help us reliably meet electricity demands”.

Leading Indian woman scientist is International Brain Research Organisation’s president-elect

- **A leading Indian woman scientist, Shubha Tole has been appointed as the president-elect of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO).** She is the **first scientist from a developing country** to be appointed to the top position. **The IBRO governing council represents 69 scientific societies and federations from 57 countries worldwide** It recently elected new officers during its annual assembly in Chicago, USA. Ms. Tole, currently serves as the dean of graduate studies at Mumbai’s premier scientific research institute – Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. **The International Brain Research Organization is the global federation of neuroscience organizations which promote and support neuroscience around the world through training, teaching, collaborative research, advocacy and outreach.**

India launches 4th nuclear-missile submarine

- In the midst of a diplomatic spat with Canada, **India quietly launched its fourth nuclear powered ballistic missile (SSBN) submarine at Ship Building Center (SBC) in Visakhapatnam to strength its nuclear deterrence against its adversaries.** While **India’s second SSBN INS Arighaat** was commissioned by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on August 29, 2024, the **third SSBN INS Aridhaman** will be commissioned next year.
- Although the Modi government is tight-lipped on nuclear deterrence, **the fourth SSBN, codenamed S4*, was launched after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated Very Low Frequency Naval Station in Damagundam forest area of Vikarabad district in Telangana for command, control and communications with strategic assets of the Indian Navy.** The **other three nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines are INS Arihant, INS Arighaat and INS Aridhaman.**
- **The newly launched S4* SSBN has nearly 75% indigenous content and is equipped only with 3,500 km range K-4 nuclear ballistic missiles,** which can be fired through vertical launching systems. **While the first of its class INS Arihant carries 750 km range K-15 nuclear missiles,** its successors are all upgrades of the previous ones and carry only K-4 ballistic missiles. With unlimited range and endurance, the SSBN is constrained only by food supplies, crew fatigue and maintenance. Both INS Arihant and INS Arighaat are already on deep sea patrols and a nuclear powered attack submarine of Russian Akula class is set to join the force on lease in 2028.
- **A nuclear-powered attack submarine of the Russian Akula class is set to join the force on lease in 2028. INS Chakra,** an Akula class vessel, was taken on lease from **Russia in 2012.** The government plans the construction of **three more advanced diesel attack submarines** at Mazagon Dockyards in collaboration with the **French Naval Group.** A nuclear submarine uses a nuclear reactor for propulsion, providing unlimited range and endurance.

Submarines are specialised watercrafts capable of independent underwater operations using onboard power and systems for extended periods. They play a vital role in naval warfare due to their stealth and agility. Submarines use a variety of propulsion systems, such as battery-electric propulsion, diesel-electric engines, Air-independent propulsion, and nuclear reactors. Submarines navigate through the ocean virtually blind due to limited light penetration. They use GPS for surface navigation, and inertial guidance systems for underwater navigation. Submarines use radio communication systems at Very Low Frequency (VLF) and Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) to transmit and receive messages. Based on propulsion technology, submarines can be categorised into two types - Diesel-powered conventional attack submarines (SSKs) and Nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs and SSBNs).

ISRO inks agreements for space biotech research

- The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to co-operate in space biotechnology research. There are 5 experiments that are underway, according to scientists, of which 2-3 biotech related projects may be included in the joint ISRO-NASA effort to the International Space Station (ISS) next year. “A couple of these experiments will be on the Axiom 4 (ISRO ISS Mission), then they will be on the uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan and the idea is to use these for the crewed Gaganyaan mission also.

Google to develop AI that takes over computers, code-named Project Jarvis

- Alphabet’s Google is developing artificial intelligence technology that takes over a web browser to complete tasks such as research and shopping. Google is set to demonstrate the product code-named Project Jarvis as soon as December with the release of its next flagship Gemini large language model.

India cleared to build first nuclear-powered attack submarines

- India is set to construct its first two nuclear-powered attack submarines, known as nuclear sharks, marking a significant advancement in its naval capabilities. Expected to possess immense endurance, speed, and stealth, these submarines represent a crucial step for India, which currently lacks such vessels possessed by China. Sanctioned at around Rs. 40,000 crore, these submarines are the start of a series intended to expand India’s naval dominance.
- The submarines shall be built at Ship Building Centre in Visakhapatnam and will include major private sector firms including Larsen & Toubro. According to reports, the first submarine will take 10-12 years to be launched with a 190 MW pressurised light-water reactor and a displacement of almost 10,000-tonnes. The maximum speed will be over 30 kn (56 km/h; 35 mph). The submarines will feature an indigenous content of 95% and foreign assistance will include design consultancy only.

India’s first exposure to nuclear submarine operations came in the late 1980s on lease from the Soviet Union Navy. The Charlie-I class SSN INS Chakra served in the Indian Navy from 1987 to 1991. INS Chakra-II Lease: In 2012, India signed a \$1 billion deal to lease a more modern Akula-II class SSN from Russia for 10 years. This 8,140-tonne submarine, INS Chakra-II, joined the Indian fleet in 2012. INS Chakra-III: It is an Akula-class nuclear-powered attack submarine that India has leased from Russia. It is expected to be delivered to the Indian Navy by 2025. **India presently has one nuclear-powered ballistic submarine (SSBN) named INS Arihant (S2). S3 (INS Arighat) is in the developing phase.** India’s SSBNs are under the direct control of the PMO and the Strategic Nuclear Command, which oversee their construction, testing and status. The Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project was launched in the 1980s, and marked India’s place in designing and building nuclear-powered submarines, leading to the creation of the Arihant-class submarines. **Arihant Class SSBNs (S2): India’s first indigenous nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) designed and developed under the ATV program.** Launched in 2009 and commissioned in 2016 features a double-hull with advanced sensors, periscopes, and various weapon systems.

A Hong Kong University Launched the World’s First Large-Scale AI Model Earth Observation Satellite

- In late September, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) launched an artificial intelligence (AI)-equipped Earth observation satellite, named the “Hong Kong Youth Science and Technology Innovation Satellite” with support from the ADA Space, a company that is associated with China’s central government and its military-civilian fusion strategy. **This cutting-edge satellite – billed by the CUHK as “the world’s first large-scale AI model scientific satellite” – showcases Hong Kong’s growing role in China’s space ambitions and highlights the city’s strategic importance in technological development.**

China launches Shenzhou-19; new crew arrives at space station in sign of growing influence in space

- A Chinese spaceship carrying a three-person crew docked with its orbiting space station as the country seeks to expand its exploration of outer space in competition with the United States, even as it looks for cooperation from other nations. **The team of two men and one woman will replace the astronauts who have lived on the**

Tiangong space station for the last six months, conducting a variety of experiments and maintaining the structure. They are expected to stay until April or May of next year. **The new mission commander, Cai Xuzhe, went to space in the Shenzhou-14 mission in 2022**, while the other two, Song Lingdong and Ms. Wang Haoze, are first-time space travellers. Mr. Song and Ms. Wang were born in the 1990s and are graduates of the third wave of Chinese astronaut recruitment, having undergone a rigorous testing and training process taking years.

China publishes world's first international standard for stem cell data

- **The world's first international standard for stem cell data, ISO8472-1, has been officially released, the Institute of Zoology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences said.** The standard is expected to enhance global stem cell data management and make contributions to the advancement of stem cell research and applications, according to the institute. As biotechnology advances rapidly worldwide, stem cell data is proliferating. However, the lack of international standards for stem cell data has resulted in issues such as unregulated data management and low efficiency in data sharing and application.
- **ISO8472-1, co-formulated by experts from China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Germany, the United Kingdom, the U.S., France and other countries, stipulates a framework for the interoperability of stem cell data.** It is applicable to related databases, data management systems, web interfaces and more in the field of stem cell research. The release of ISO8472-1 will provide standard and guidance for data management in the field of stem cells and offer a systematic framework for the development of subsequent international standards for stem cell data.

ISRO Launches India's First Analog Space Mission in Leh

- **The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) announced the launch of its first analog space mission, to study the challenges of extraterrestrial conditions that will help in future space missions.** The mission, which includes a compact, inflatable habitat named **Hab-1 will simulate life in an interplanetary habitat.** It is being held in Leh, in Ladakh. Even as India plans to launch several space missions, the new mission will help understand the challenges that future astronauts may encounter on missions beyond Earth. Hab-1 is equipped with essentials like a hydroponics farm, kitchen, and sanitation facilities. It provides a self-sustaining environment, offering valuable data as India is planning long-duration space missions to the Moon, Mars, and beyond.

Green Space: Japan Set to Test World's First Wooden Satellite

- **Scientists in Japan are set to test the world's first wooden satellite. The LignoSat was developed by a team from Kyoto University and homebuilder Sumitomo Forestry.** It will be launched next week atop a SpaceX rocket, bound for the International Space Station. Former Japanese Space Shuttle astronaut Takao Doi was part of the Kyoto team: LignoSat – named after the Latin word for wood – will be released from the space station in the coming weeks. It will orbit for six months, testing how well the material can withstand the extreme environment.

Inventions/Discoveries/Health

Small rocky planet detected in orbit about nearby Barnard's star

- **Barnard's star is a red dwarf, the smallest type of regular star and much smaller and less luminous than our sun. At about 6 light years away, it is the closest single star - one not orbiting with other stars - to our solar system.** It is, in cosmic terms, in our neighbourhood. Because of this, scientists eager to study nearby potentially habitable worlds are excited by the discovery of the first confirmed planet orbiting Barnard's star, a rocky one with a mass about 40% that of Earth.
- While this planet, **orbiting very close to Barnard's star, has a surface temperature too high to be suitable for life, the researchers found what they called "strong hints" of three other planets around Barnard's star** that might be better candidates. The confirmed planet, called **Barnard b, has a predicted diameter about three-quarters that of Earth, so about 6,000 miles (9,700 km).**
- **Among planets in our solar system, only Mars and Mercury are smaller. Barnard b, with a surface temperature around 275 degrees Fahrenheit (125 degrees Celsius), orbits Barnard's star in just three Earth days at a distance 20 times closer than our solar system's innermost planet Mercury is to the sun.**
- **Planets beyond the solar system are called exoplanets.** Scientists searching for exoplanets that possibly could harbor life look at those residing in the "habitable zone" around a star, where it is not too hot and not too cold and liquid water can exist on the planetary surface.
- **The researchers used an instrument called ESPRESSO on the European Southern Observatory's Chile-based Very Large Telescope to detect this planet.** The three other potential planets orbiting Barnard's star all apparently are rocky and smaller than Earth, ranging from 20-30% of Earth's mass.
- The hope is that at least one of these may be in the vicinity of the habitable zone. If confirmed, this would be the only known star with a multi-planet system entirely comprised of planets smaller than Earth. **Barnard's star, in the constellation Ophiuchus, has a mass about 16% of the sun's, a diameter 19% of it and is far less hot. It also is estimated to be more than twice as old as the sun.**

Rwanda's Marburg disease outbreak

- **Rwanda is currently battling Marburg virus disease outbreak, a highly fatal hemorrhagic fever.** On 27 September 2024, **Rwanda reported its first MVD outbreak.** While Marburg virus disease has been found in several African countries over the years, this is the first time it has been reported in Rwanda, in east-central Africa. This week, concerns spread to Germany when a medical student who had contact with an infected patient in Rwanda fell ill.
- **Marburg virus disease is clinically similar to Ebola that causes severe illness in humans. There are no vaccines or antiviral treatments for Marburg.** It can only be treated with early supportive care like hydration and symptom management. MVD is a severe disease in humans and, although uncommon, it has the potential to cause epidemics with significant case fatality. All recorded MVD outbreaks to date have originated in Africa. MVD is not an airborne disease and is considered not to be contagious before symptoms appear. Direct contact with the blood and other body fluids of infected people and animals or indirect contact with contaminated surfaces and materials like clothing, bedding and medical equipment is required for transmission.

Government doubles monthly nutrition support for tuberculosis patients to Rs.1,000

- The Union Health Ministry **doubled the monthly nutrition support under Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY) for tuberculosis (TB) patients under treatment from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000.** Additionally, all household contacts of TB patients will be covered under the **Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (PMTBMBA)** and will be eligible to receive social support from the community.
- **Although elimination of tuberculosis is one of the sustainable development targets to be achieved by 2030 by the world, India has set the target of 2025.** India has been engaged in TB control activities for more than 50 years, yet the disease continues to be the country's severest health crisis. TB kills an estimated 4,80,000 Indians every year. The Ministry has introduced **Energy Dense Nutrition Supplementation (EDNS) for all patients**

with BMI<18.5 and has permitted the expansion of scope and coverage of Ni-kshay Mitra initiative under PMTBMA to the family members (household contacts) of TB patients.

- Additionally, all TB patients will now receive nutritional support of **Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 6,000** under NPY. The enhancement of NPY support will benefit **25 lakh TB patients in a year**, introduction of EDNS would cover approximately 12 lakh underweight patients (BMI less than 18.5 kg/m² at the time of diagnosis). EDNS would be provided to all eligible patients for the first two months of their treatment.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), is an Indian government ministry charged with health policy in India. It is also responsible for all government programs relating to family planning in India. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was the first Health Minister of India, serving from 1947 to 1957. **Jagat Prakash Nadda has been serving as the current Minister of Health, current Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers since 2024** and 11th President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2020 and the member of the Rajya Sabha representing Gujarat since 2024.

Mumbai's Cama India's 1st public hospital to have uro-gynaec centre

- **State-run Cama Hospital near CSMT inaugurated the country's first uro-gynaecology centre in a public hospital, catering to the needs of female patients.** The centre is housed in a previously abandoned and roofless structure that has undergone a significant transformation with a Rs. 6-crore funding raised through CSR.

ISRO's AstroSat, NASA's space observatories capture dramatic eruptions from stellar wreckage

- **India's AstroSat and NASA's space observatories have captured dramatic eruptions from stellar wreckage around a massive black hole.** A massive black hole has torn apart one star and is now using that stellar wreckage to pummel another star or smaller black hole that used to be in the clear — **this discovery was made using NASA's space observatories — Chandra, HST, NICER, Swift — and ISRO's AstroSat.** Once shredded, the star's remains began circling the black hole in a disk in a type of stellar graveyard. The star in this comparison is like the diver and the disk is the pool, and each time the star strikes the surface it creates a huge 'splash' of gas and X-rays. As the star orbits around the black hole, it does this over and over again.

AstroSat is the first dedicated Indian astronomy mission aimed at studying celestial sources in X-ray, optical and UV spectral bands simultaneously. The payloads cover the energy bands of Ultraviolet (Near and Far), limited optical and X-ray regime (0.3 keV to 100 keV). One of the unique features of AstroSat mission is that it enables the simultaneous multi-wavelength observations of various astronomical objects with a single satellite. **AstroSat with a lift-off mass of 1515 kg was launched on September 28, 2015 into a 650 km orbit inclined at an angle of 6 deg to the equator by PSLV-C30 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.**

NASA research hints at possible alien presence on the red planet

- The possibility of extraterrestrial life has confounded mankind for centuries. With technological advancements, astronomers and scientists are indeed using the best of innovation to trace any signs of life, but nothing has bore fruit yet. However, some new research seems to state that we may be closer to cracking this mystery of a lifetime. **The new Nasa research suggests that conditions for photosynthesis may exist below the dusty ice at Mars' mid-latitudes regions. For the uninitiated, mid-latitudes of Mars are essentially areas between 30 degrees and 60 degrees latitude in both hemispheres.**
- These regions are believed to contain a lot of water ice in the subsurface, preserved under lithic materials that can be thick by several meters. Photosynthesis is essentially a process that lets plants, algae, and some bacteria convert sunlight into carbon dioxide, and water into oxygen and glucose. Photosynthesis is responsible for generating much of Earth's atmospheric oxygen. **The research proposes that an adequately thick layer of ice on Mars may work as a shield against the Sun's harsh radiation at the same time allowing enough light for photosynthesis leading to the creation of 'radiative habitable zones'.**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. Bill Nelson was sworn in as the 14th NASA administrator on May 3, 2021, tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration's vision for the agency.

Ladakh aurorae validate space weather tracking efforts

- **Ladakh's recent sightings of aurora, marked by reddish or greenish light in the night sky and usually observed in the far northern regions, is a validation of our efforts in space weather monitoring,** a team of astrophysicists that predicted the activity about 48-72 hours prior said.
- **All-sky cameras of the Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) at Hanle and Merak in Ladakh captured the aurorae throughout the night.** "The aurora sightings are a validation that we are on the right track. It boosts our confidence to predict extreme weather events in space that can potentially endanger all kinds of satellite based services on Earth, bringing modern society to a standstill." **Space agencies and organisations such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), US, monitor space weather to provide timely information of disruptions from the Sun,** that can possibly cause communication blackouts and satellite outages. While aurorae are known for their scenic beauty, their occurrence in lower-latitude regions like Ladakh is an indication of heightened solar activity in the form of solar storms known as coronal mass ejections (CMEs).

An aurora also commonly known as the northern lights (aurora borealis) or southern lights (aurora australis), is a natural light display in Earth's sky, predominantly seen in high-latitude regions (around the Arctic and Antarctic). Auroras display dynamic patterns of brilliant lights that appear as curtains, rays, spirals, or dynamic flickers covering the entire sky. **Auroras are the result of disturbances in the Earth's magnetosphere caused by the solar wind.** Major disturbances result from enhancements in the speed of the solar wind from coronal holes and coronal mass ejections. These disturbances alter the trajectories of charged particles in the magnetospheric plasma. These particles, mainly electrons and protons, precipitate into the upper atmosphere (thermosphere/exosphere). **The aurora phenomenon is a natural light display in the Earth's sky. It's caused by the interaction between charged particles from the sun and Earth's magnetic field.**

A brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago is actually twins circling each other

- **A celestial object discovered decades ago is actually twins orbiting each other, a new study confirms.** Scientists have puzzled over the object known as Gliese 229B, the first known brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago. **Brown dwarfs are sometimes called failed stars because they're lighter than stars, but heavier than gas giant planets.** This object appeared too dim for its mass. Astronomers collected light and chemical clues using the Very Large Telescope in Chile and observed it's a duo circling close to each other. Astronomers have spotted brown dwarf pairs before, but these two whip around at much closer range. **They orbit each other every 12 days, less than the time it takes for the moon to circle the Earth. The twins' discovery means there could be other lurking brown dwarfs with a hidden partner.**

A dwarf planet is a small planetary-mass object that is in direct orbit around the Sun, massive enough to be gravitationally rounded, but insufficient to achieve orbital dominance like the eight classical planets of the Solar System. The prototypical dwarf planet is Pluto, which for decades was regarded as a planet before the "dwarf" concept was adopted in 2006. Dwarf planets are capable of being geologically active, an expectation that was borne out in 2015 by the Dawn mission to Ceres and the New Horizons mission to Pluto. Planetary geologists are therefore particularly interested in them.

Kerala is detecting 'brain eating amoeba' cases like never before – and saving its patients too

- **An alert medical fraternity and public, aggressive investigation, and a standard operating procedure – these are the major reasons why Kerala has been able to bring down mortality rate in the rare primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), commonly called the "brain eating amoeba",** from the 97 percent globally to 26 percent in Kerala.
- **Amoebic meningoencephalitis is caused by Naegleria fowleri, a free-living amoeba found in warm, fresh water and soil, and infects people when it enters the body through the nose.** According to the data submitted by Kerala health minister Veena George in the state Assembly early this week, of the 29 PAM cases that Kerala has reported so far in 2024, only five have died.

Moonlight programme, Europe's mission for lunar explorations

- **The European Space Agency (ESA) at the International Astronautical Congress launched its Moonlight Lunar Communications and Navigation Services (LCNS) programme.** The ESA is said to be developing infrastructure to assist with future lunar missions. **With this, the ESA aims to offer critical support for over 400 moon missions planned by space agencies and private companies in the next 20 years.** The programme will have a constellation of about five lunar satellites that will allow accurate autonomous landings, high-speed communication, and surface mobility.
- These satellites will reportedly **enable data transfer over 2,50,000 miles or 4,00,000 kilometres between the Earth and the Moon.** The agency is taking a crucial step in supporting the future of the commercial lunar market as well ongoing and future lunar missions. **As part of the programme, the first step will be the launch of Lunar Pathfinder, a communications relay satellite built by Surrey Satellite Technology LTD, in 2026.**
- **The programme begins with the launch of Lunar Pathfinder, a communications relay satellite built by Surrey Satellite Technology LTD, planned for 2026.** Initial services are expected to begin by the end of 2028, with full operational capabilities by 2030. **Target Areas: The Moon's South Pole will be a primary focus due to its unique lighting conditions and the potential presence of water ice in permanently shadowed craters.**
- **Collaboration: ESA will work alongside global space agencies, including NASA's Artemis programme, and the Artemis Gateway project, to foster cooperation and build shared lunar infrastructure. Future Impact: Moonlight's communications infrastructure is expected to reduce the need for standalone communication systems, allowing mission teams to concentrate more on mission operations such as astronaut safety and robotics.**

Astronomers just found complex carbon molecules in space

- **A team led by researchers at MIT in the United States has discovered large molecules containing carbon in a distant interstellar cloud of gas and dust.** This is exciting for those of us who keep lists of known interstellar molecules in the hope that we might work out how life arose in the universe. Furthermore, the molecules held together until after the formation of Earth. This is important for our understanding of the early origins of life on our planet. The molecule in question is called pyrene, a polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon or PAH for short. The complicated-sounding name tells us these molecules are made of rings of carbon atoms.

NASA unveils new telescope to study gravitational waves in space

- **The US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) unveiled a newly developed prototype of a telescope that can be used to study gravitational waves in outer space.** The telescope was built as part of a joint mission with the European Space Agency (NSA) called Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA).
- **The main objective of the LISA mission is to study gravitational waves by putting three spacecrafts into the Earth's orbit and positioning them in a triangular format with 1.6 million miles on each side.** Each of the three spacecrafts will carry two telescopes to detect infrared laser beams from the other spacecraft.
- Researchers expect to detect a gravitational wave when one of the three spacecrafts alter their characteristic pattern. **"The primary mirror is coated in gold to better reflect the infrared lasers and to reduce heat loss from a surface exposed to cold space** since the telescope will operate best when close to room temperature," Nasa said on its website. **"The prototype is made entirely from an amber-colored glass-ceramic called Zerodur, manufactured by Schott in Mainz, Germany.** The material is widely used for telescope mirrors and other applications requiring high precision because its shape changes very little over a wide range of temperatures".
- **First discovered by Albert Einstein in 1916, gravitational waves are known to be created due to two black holes colliding with each other. In 2016, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO) Scientific Collaboration comprising National Science Foundation, Caltech, and MIT researchers detected the first gravitational waves ever, proving Einstein's theory right.** By detecting and studying gravitational waves, scientists hope to enhance humanity's understanding of the universe and less-explored phenomena such as black holes and the Big Bang that may not be easy to analyse using other tools, Nasa said.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Cyclone Dana: Odisha on red alert, aims for ‘100% evacuation’, ‘zero casualty’

- **Cyclone Dana made landfall along the Odisha-West Bengal coast between Puri and Sagar Island**, the Odisha government has announced a goal of “100 percent evacuations” from potentially impacted areas. Director of IMD Bhubaneswar, announced that rainfall activity is set to commence, with a red alert issued for coastal districts, including Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, and Bhadrak. It’s been 25 years since the ‘Super Cyclone’ ravaged the coastal state of Odisha on Oct 29, 1999 and the state is bracing itself for another cyclonic storm, Dana, this year.
- It is the **third cyclone to form in the North Indian Ocean region and the second to make landfall along the Indian coast in 2024 after Cyclone Remal**. It is the first cyclone in the post monsoon cyclone season. The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) states that Cyclone Dana was named by Qatar. **In Arabic, “Dana” signifies ‘generosity’ and also refers to ‘the most perfectly sized, valuable, and beautiful pearl.’**

Colombian scientists develop supplement to protect bees from pesticides

- Scientists in Colombia say they have **developed a novel food supplement that protects bees’ brains from pesticides, keeping the insects safe from neurological damage caused by agricultural chemicals**. Bees, as pollinators, are considered essential for the preservation of natural ecosystems and food production.
- **The plant-based supplement developed at Colombia’s private Rosario University in Bogota, in partnership with the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Arizona and Colombian Universidad Javeriana**, allows bees to cope with neurotoxins commonly used in agriculture and avoid having their motor system and memory harmed by the chemicals.

COP16 Begins In Colombia, Nearly 200 Countries to Participate

- The two-week **United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) started in Colombia to assess historic commitments to halt and reverse the loss of nature**. Environmental leaders from nearly 200 countries are expected to participate, where 196 countries signed an ambitious global treaty, **the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to protect biodiversity**.
- **At COP 16, governments will be tasked with reviewing the state of implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**. Parties to the Convention are expected to show the alignment of their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) with the Framework.
- COP 16 will further develop the monitoring framework and advance resource mobilization for the Global Biodiversity Framework. Among other tasks, **COP 16 is also due to finalize and operationalize the multilateral mechanism on the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources**. This is going to be a great opportunity for one of the most biodiverse nations in the world.

Ahead of UN Climate Change Conference, developed nations want more countries to scale up financial contributions for climate action

- **Being forced to scale up their financial contributions for climate action, as mandated under the 2015 Paris Agreement, rich and developed countries have proposed that other high-income nations must also be asked to share the burden**. Ahead of the annual climate change conference, this time being held in Baku in November, the developed countries have suggested an income criterion that can be used to rope in more countries to contribute money for climate action.
- The responsibility for mobilising climate finance rests mainly on a **set of about 40 rich and developed countries named in Annexure II of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, the mother agreement under which climate negotiations are taking place. These countries were found to have maximum historical responsibility for emissions of greenhouse gases and were also economically well off. Under the UNFCCC, these countries are mandated to provide “new and additional financial resources” to help developing countries in taking climate action.

- **Between 2020 and 2025, the developed countries were supposed to mobilise at least \$100 billion every year for this purpose.** The Paris Agreement requires that this amount be scaled upwards in the post-2025 period to a more realistic figure. Several estimates suggest that the money required to take effective climate action requires several trillions of dollars every year.
- **In Baku, countries are supposed to finalise a comprehensive agreement on climate finance that will have a new target in place of \$100 billion.** The latest draft of this agreement includes the various suggestions that have been made for this scaled-up amount, being called New Cumulative Quantified Goal (NCQG) on finance. **The suggested options range between \$1 and \$2 trillion every year.**

The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly known as COP29, will be the 29th United Nations Climate Change conference. COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11 to 22 November, 2024. Mukhtar Babayev will preside COP29, while Samir Nuriyev heads the Organising Committee.

Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched 21st Livestock Census Operation

- **Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, launched the 21st Livestock Census Operation in New Delhi. The Census will be conducted till February next year in collaboration with States and Union Territories.** Around one lakh field officials who are mostly veterinarians or para-veterinarians will be involved in the enumeration process. **The initiative aims to strengthen the animal health infrastructure in India.** Fifteen species of livestock will be covered under the survey. These are cattle, buffalo, mithuns, yaks, sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, dogs, rabbits, and elephants. A headcount of poultry birds will also be taken.

COP-16 unveils world's first Global Ecosystem Atlas

- **The Global Ecosystems Atlas, introduced at the 16th Conference of Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on October 22, 2024 in Cali, Colombia, is an innovative tool developed by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the atlas aims to facilitate the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of ecosystems — an essential task in tackling global environmental challenges. Monitoring these ecosystems is crucial for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, an international agreement designed to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.** Despite increasing threats to biodiversity, many key questions about our ecosystems remain unanswered due to inconsistencies in existing data. So far, only about half of the world's ecosystems have been mapped, and although global indicators exist for ecosystem monitoring, there is no standardised method for compiling data on a global scale.
- **It is designed to map, monitor, and evaluate ecosystems across the globe, offering valuable insights to support biodiversity, address climate change impacts, and manage land degradation. The Atlas combines national ecosystem data, advanced Earth observation technology, artificial intelligence, and field data to create a cohesive global picture. It provides consistent information for various ecosystems, including terrestrial, freshwater, and marine environments, aligning with the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Global Ecosystem Typology.** This integration ensures accurate data for ecosystem health, extent, and risks, offering a vital resource for sustainable management. By providing tools to monitor and track ecosystem health, the Atlas helps nations meet their commitments under international frameworks like the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Governments can use it to track biodiversity indicators, such as ecosystem status and protected area coverage, ensuring compliance with global biodiversity and sustainability targets.

Kirti Vardhan Singh Launches India's Updated NBSAP At COP 16 Meeting

- **Minister of State for Environment, Kirti Vardhan Singh, launched India's updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) at the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 16) in Colombia.** During the launch event, the Minister highlighted **India's 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approach in updating its NBSAP.** The updated biodiversity strategy acknowledges environmental challenges and outlines strategies to address them. It addresses the challenges through ecosystem restoration, species recovery programs, and community-driven conservation efforts.

- The Minister said the updated biodiversity strategy focuses on the restoration of degraded ecosystems, protection of wetlands, and on the sustainable management of marine and coastal areas. Mr. Singh also said that the **action plan is a vital roadmap to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, with a longer-term vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050**. The document was released on the 30th of last month.

More than a third of the world's trees face extinction

- A new global assessment reveals that **over a third of the world's tree species are threatened with extinction in the wild, surpassing the combined threat levels faced by birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians**. This alarming update, **published by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, was released at the UN biodiversity summit, COP 16, in Cali, Colombia, where world leaders are evaluating progress on a global conservation pledge.
- More than 1,000 scientists contributed to the report, **which found that 38% of tree species are endangered**. According to BGCI's Emily Beech, the primary threats to trees globally are land clearing for agriculture, logging, pests, and diseases, which are especially prevalent in temperate regions. Iconic species like magnolias, oaks, maples, and ebonies are among the most endangered, reflecting a global biodiversity crisis impacting entire ecosystems.

Western Ghats: Expert panel to visit Goa over demand for exclusion of some villages from eco-sensitive zone

- The Union Environment Ministry-appointed expert committee, which is tasked with **examining views and objections of state governments on eco-sensitive areas (ESA) in the Western Ghats**, is likely to visit Goa soon to deliberate on the state's submissions. **The committee, which is headed by Sanjay Kumar, former director-general of forest, will verify along with the state government whether its demands to omit villages marked as ESA are justified**.
- Early in August, the Centre had issued the sixth iteration of a draft notification declaring **56,825.7 sqkm of the Western Ghats as ecologically sensitive area, for protection of the contiguous, biodiverse hotspot spanning Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala**. The Centre had provided the states a 60-day window as per law seeking their views and objections on the villages demarcated as ESA.

Climate change and how hurricane Milton became a Category 5 storm

- **Hurricane Milton became one of the most rapidly intensifying storms on record as it went from barely hurricane strength to a dangerous Category 5 storm in less than a day on a path across the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida**. With sustained winds that reached 180 mph and very low pressure, it also became one of the strongest Atlantic storms. Milton's winds dipped to Category 4 strength early on Oct. 8, but forecasters warned that it would still be an extremely dangerous hurricane at landfall.

Kaziranga becomes first in India to adopt Swachhata green leaf rating for eco-friendly tourism

- **Kaziranga has become the first National Park and Tiger Reserve in India to implement the Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Index for resorts and homestays**. This initiative is in collaboration with the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation and the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Index promotes sustainability in solid and liquid waste management. It also supports eco-friendly tourism practices, playing a crucial role in preserving Kaziranga's rich biodiversity and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

With Western Ghats' fragility in mind, environment ministry's expert panel to review pumped hydro projects

- With the fragile ecology of the Western Ghats in mind, a Union Environment Ministry expert panel has **decided that it will not grant final clearances to pumped hydropower projects proposed in the region without site visits to ascertain their impact on the environment**.
- **The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) on river valley and hydroelectric projects, one of the 11 sectoral panels that grant prior environmental permissions, took this decision**. The panel noted that the ministry had

granted terms of reference (ToR) or preliminary permissions to 15 pumped storage projects (PSPs) in the Western Ghats. The preliminary permissions spell out the scope of the environmental impact assessment studies that are to be carried out for mandatory public hearings before the projects are considered for final environmental clearance.

- **The panel’s decision is significant as some of the PSPs fall in villages identified as eco-sensitive areas in the government’s draft notification on the protection of the Western Ghats.** Members of the panel discussed the impact that many PSPs may have on the biodiversity and forests in the fragile Western Ghats and decided that site visits should be carried out to ensure thorough scrutiny.

Climate change impact harsher on poorer farmers in India: FAO report

- **Poor households globally lose 5% of their total income in an average year due to heat stress and 4.4% due to floods compared** with households that are relatively better off, the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations** said in a report, warning about the negative impacts of climate change on the farming population in India. Senior FAO economist Nicholas Sitko presented the report **“The unjust climate. Measuring the impacts of climate change on rural poor, women, and youth”** at an event in New Delhi.
- The report said on-farm income sources of the rural poor in India were affected in different ways depending on the type of climate stress. **In case of droughts or such events, poor households dedicated more time and resources to agricultural production to sustain them, as off-farm employment opportunities reduced.** The total incomes of poor households reduce compared with those of families that have not been exposed to a significant climate stressor, it said.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and improve nutrition and food security. Its Latin motto, fiat panis, translates to “let there be bread”. It was founded on 16 October 1945. The FAO comprises 195 members, including 194 countries and the European Union. Its headquarters is in Rome, Italy. The director-general, as of 2024 Qu Dongyu of China, serves as the chief administrative officer.

International Film Festival on Environment & Wildlife ‘Vatavaran’ Inaugurated

- **International Film Festival and Forum on Environment and Wildlife, Vatavaran Was inaugurated at Paryavaran Bhawan in New Delhi.** The theme for the three-day film festival is **“Wetlands for Life”**, focusing on the awareness and conservation of the wetlands eco-system.
- **He added that around 6 per cent of Indians are directly dependent on Wetlands for livelihood, which makes their conservation even more vital.** Mr Kumar has hoped that the film festival can host discussions on meaningful issues and formulate conservation strategies. The Climate and Environment Head of the Department at the German Embassy to India, Taina Dyckhoff said the bilateral cooperation between India and Germany has been very successful in Environment and Wetlands conservation.

New study reveals five genetically-distinct populations of Asian elephants in India

- **The existence of five genetically-distinct populations of Asian elephants in India, more than previously thought, has been revealed in a recent study published in Current Biology.** “Divergence and serial colonisation shape genetic variation and define conservation units in Asian elephants”, authored by Uma Ramakrishnan’s group at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, in collaboration with Raman Sukumar and others at the Indian Institute of Science, have uncovered new insights into the genetic history of India’s Asian elephants.
- **“India is home to 60% of the global population of Asian elephants, found across South and Southeast Asia.** Asian elephant habitats in India are fragmented, surrounded by farmland, human settlements, commercial plantations, and linear transport infrastructure. This has resulted in widespread and often severe human-elephant conflicts.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Jadeja seventh Indian to take 300 Test wickets

- **Ravindra Jadeja became the seventh Indian to take 300 Test wickets when he dismissed Khaled Mahmud in the second game against Bangladesh.** The other Indian bowlers who have taken 300 Test wickets or more include table leader Anil Kumble (619), R Ashwin (524), Kapil Dev (434), Harbhajan Singh (417), Ishant Sharma (311) and Zaheer Khan (311).

Tennis: Carlos Alcaraz Defeats Jannik Sinner to win First China Open Title

- **In tennis, second-seeded Spain's Carlos Alcaraz beat defending champion and world No. 1 Jannik Sinner, winning 6-7 6-4 7-6 to claim his first China Open title.** Meanwhile, China's Zheng Qinwen stormed into the quarterfinals of the women's singles after defeating Amanda Anisimova of the United States. Aryna Sabalenka secured her place in the quarterfinals by overcoming Madison Keys of the United States. Sabalenka will face the Czech Republic's Karolina Muchova.

Sachin Tendulkar joins America's National Cricket League ownership group

- **Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has joined the ownership group of the National Cricket League (NCL) in the United States, aiming to boost the sport. He will present the championship trophy at the inaugural tournament featuring global cricket stars, mentoring new talent and promoting cricket's growth in America.** This season, the NCL brings together cricket legends like Sunil Gavaskar, Zaheer Abbas, Wasim Akram, Dilip Vengsarkar, Sir Vivian Richards, Venkatesh Prasad, Sanath Jayasuriya, Moin Khan and Blair Franklin. The cricketing heroes will mentor and coach the next generation of players. It will also feature top-tier players from around the world, including Shahid Afridi, Suresh Raina, Dinesh Karthik, Shakib Al Hasan, Robin Uthappa, Tabraiz Shamsi, Chris Lynn, Angelo Mathews, Colin Munro, Sam Billings, Mohammad Nabi and Johnson Charles. Headquartered in Dallas, the NCL has introduced an innovative Sixty Strikes format, a fast-paced version of the game.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar unveils logo, mascot for Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024

- **Bihar CM Nitish Kumar unveiled the logo and mascot, Gudiya, for the Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024 in Rajgir.** The event, occurring in November, is a joint venture by Hockey India and the Bihar government. Six countries, including India and China, will participate. The mascot symbolizes women's empowerment and the state's cultural heritage. The Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024 is a joint venture of Hockey India and the Bihar government and will be held at the newly developed Rajgir Hockey Stadium.

India's Ayhika, Sutirtha get historic 1st ever medal in women's doubles

- **Ayhika Mukherjee and Sutirtha Mukherjee achieved another first for Indian table tennis by assuring themselves of a medal at the Asian Championships.** Ayhika plays with an anti-spin rubber that helps her slow down the game for Sutirtha, who uses a short pimped rubber, to attack on the following return.

Puducherry SSP becomes first IPS officer to win gold at Commonwealth powerlifting

- **IPS officer Anita Roy, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Puducherry, has made history by becoming the first IPS officer to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth International Classic Bench Press Competition.** The event took place in Sun City, South Africa lifted 70 kg to secure her win against competitors from 43 countries.

Tennis Legend Rafael Nadal Announces Retirement From Professional Tennis

- **Spain's tennis legend Rafael Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam singles champion, has announced his retirement from professional tennis.** He shared the news through a video on social media, expressing his gratitude for the support throughout his career.
- Nadal's final tournament will be the Davis Cup finals this November in Malaga, marking a fitting conclusion to his illustrious journey. **Nadal has a total of 92 ATP singles titles to his name, including 36 Masters titles as well as an Olympic gold medal. He also holds the unique record of being one of three men in tennis history to complete the Career Golden Slam in singles.** He won his last Roland Garros title in 2022 and left the Paris clay with a jaw-dropping 112-4 win-loss record.
- He has been **ranked world No. 1 in singles by the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) for 209 weeks,** and has finished as the year-end No. 1 five times. **Nadal has won 22 Grand Slam men's singles titles, including a record 14 French Open titles. He has won 92 ATP-level singles titles,** including 36 Masters titles and an Olympic gold medal, with 63 of these on clay courts. **His 81 consecutive wins on clay constitute the longest single-surface win streak in the Open Era.** For more than a decade, Nadal has been a leading figure in men's tennis, alongside Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic, collectively known as the Big Three.

India Beat Taipei to Win Women's Single Bendigo International Challenge Badminton Tournament

- **India's Tanya Hemanth beat Tung Ciou-Tong of Taipei in straight games to win the women's singles title at the Bendigo International Challenge badminton tournament in Bendigo, Australia.** This was 21-year-old Tanya's third international title and first of the year. She finished runner-up at the Polish Open and Azerbaijan International in 2024. She won titles at the India International in 2022 and Iran Fajr International in 2023. In the men's doubles final, the top-seeded Indian pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi lost to the Taipei duo of Chen Cheng Kuan and Po Li-Wei 17-21, 14-2.

Jannik Sinner wins Shanghai Masters to extend Djokovic's wait for 100th title

- **Novak Djokovic's bid to add a 100th singles title to his trophy cabinet was dashed after he was beaten by world number one Jannik Sinner in the Shanghai Masters final.** The Serb had been hoping to become only the third man to win 100 singles titles on the tour in the professional era after Jimmy Connors (109) and rival Roger Federer (103), who was watching on from the stands alongside four-times Grand Slam champion Carlos Alcaraz.

Captain Ashalata Devi will become the first Indian woman footballer to play 100 international matches

- **Captain Ashalata Devi will become the first Indian woman footballer to play 100 international matches** when she takes the field in the SAFF Championship opening match against Pakistan.

ISSF World Cup Final: Vivaan Kapoor Wins Silver in Trap Event

- In the ISSF World Cup Final Shooting, **India's Vivaan Kapoor claimed the silver medal in the trap event at the ISSF World Cup Final in New Delhi.** Vivaan shot 44 in the final to finish behind gold medal winner Ying Qi of China, while Turkey's Tolga N. Tuncer won the bronze medal with a score of 35. Earlier, Anantjeet Singh Naruka bagged the bronze medal in the Skeet Final Shotgun event. China remained at the top of the medal tally with a total of 8 medals, which included five gold and three bronze. Meanwhile, India stands in 9th place with a total of 4 medals, which included two silver and two bronze.

Neetu David, Alastair Cook and Ab de Villers inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame

- Former Indian women's cricketer Neetu David has been inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. Along with her former England opener Alastair Cook and former South African middle-order batter AB de Villiers too were given the accolade for 2024. She became only the second Indian woman after Diana Edulji to receive that honour.

Virat Kohli creates history again by becoming fourth Indian to score 9000 test runs

- During India's first Test against New Zealand at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, Virat Kohli surpassed the 9000-run milestone in Test cricket. He achieved this after scoring a half-century while batting at No. 3 in India's second innings. In his 536th match, Kohli also surpassed MS Dhoni's 535 matches for India, making him the second-most capped Indian player behind Sachin Tendulkar (664 matches). In the recent Bangladesh series, Kohli became the fastest to 27,000 international runs, doing so in 594 innings.

Arjun Erigaisi Wins WR Chess Masters Cup

- India's Arjun Erigaisi has won the WR Chess Masters Cup after defeating Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the finals at London. By winning this 16-player knockout tournament, Arjun is now leading the FIDE Circuit. He will next compete in the European Chess Club Cup, starting in Serbia.

Bala Devi Makes History to Be First Indian to Net 50 International Goals

- Bala Devi, often referred to as the "goal machine" of Indian women's football, reached an exceptional milestone by becoming the first Indian woman to score her 50th international goal during the 2024 SAFF Women's Championship in Nepal, in a match against Pakistan.

Kiwi Women Clinch Maiden T20 Cricket World Cup Defeating South Africa

- In the Women's T20 Cricket World Cup, New Zealand scripted history as the Sophie Devine-led side clinched their maiden Women's T20 World Cup title after beating South Africa by 32 runs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai. Chasing a target of 159 runs set by New Zealand, South Africa made 126 runs for the loss of nine wickets in the stipulated twenty overs. Amelia Kerr was declared Player of the Series and Player of the Match. This was the Kiwis' third-ever final of the showpiece event and after two successful attempts, they finally have their hand on the coveted trophy.

National Para-Swimming Championship; Rajasthan Bags Gold In Men's S4 100m Freestyle

- Rajasthan's Lakhan Singh bagged a gold medal in the men's S4 100m freestyle event at the National Para-Swimming Championship in Panaji. While Kamalkant from Odisha won Silver, Haryana's Balraj clinched a bronze medal. Odisha's Narhari secured a distinguished win in the S5 100m freestyle, narrowly beating Andhra Pradesh's Lakshmarao and Bihar's Shams Aalam, who claimed silver and bronze medals. Maharashtra's standout, Chaitanya Vishwas, dominated the S6 100m freestyle by winning gold. Further, Karnataka marked a strong presence in the S7 and S8 categories, with Tejas and Shridhar taking gold. The S9 and S10 categories saw remarkable performances from Karnataka's Sahil Rajaram and Kapil Kumar from the Services, winning golds.

India's Deepika Kumari wins sixth Archery World Cup Final medal with silver in Mexico

- Indian archer Deepika Kumari won her sixth World Cup Final medal. Kumari won the silver medal in the Archery World Cup final with a 0-6 loss against Chinese Li Jiaman in the final in Tlaxcala, Mexico. In the semis, Kumari edged out Tokyo Olympics mixed team bronze medalist and Paris Olympics women's team bronze medallist Alejandra Valencia of Mexico 6-4. Kumari had scored a 6-0 win over Chinese Yang Xiaolei in the quarters.

LeBron James makes history with son Bronny by becoming NBA's first father-son duo to play together

- LeBron James has made plenty of history in his long career, but even by those lofty standards, he crafted a first that was special to him: he and his son Bronny became the first father and son to play in the NBA together.

India's Vishvajit More Wins Bronze at Under-23 Wrestling World Championship

- In wrestling, India's Vishvajit Ramchandra More bagged the bronze medal at the Under-23 world championship in Tirana, Albania. This is India's first medal in the championship. Ali Abdollah Ahmadi Vafa of Iran won the gold, Rashad Mammadov won the silver, and Kohel Yamagiwa of Japan shared the bronze with more.

Manika Batra Becomes First Indian To Reach Quarterfinals Of The World Table Tennis Champions Event

- Manika Batra has made table tennis history as she became the first Indian to qualify for quarter-finals at a WTT Champions event. Indian paddler Manika defeated Bernadette Szocs of Romania 3-1 in the round of 16 in Montpellier, France. Manika will next face China's Qian Tianyi. Manika had also beaten the Romanian at the 2024 Paris Olympics earlier this year with a scoreline of 3-2. She had become the first table tennis player from India to reach the last 16 in the singles table tennis competition in an Olympics. Batra, a multiple Commonwealth Games medallist.

Sukant Kadam Bags Gold and Silver at Japan Para Badminton International

- At the Japan Para Badminton International 2024, India's star shuttler Sukant Kadam, won a gold medal in men's singles and a silver medal in men's doubles alongside his partner Dinesh Rajaiah. In the singles final, Sukant faced off fellow Indian shuttler Tarun, dominating the match with a powerful 21-12, 21-10 victory.

Arjun Erigaisi crosses 2800, makes history

- Arjun Erigaisi has been doing inexplicable things. He lived dangerously playing a bunch of open tournaments at the risk of losing rating points after he wasn't invited to top closed super tournaments. They played out two draws in the classical before Arjun won in the Armageddon to pick up 27.84 Fide Circuit points and race into the lead. Arjun became only the second Indian player to cross the 2800 mark, after five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand. Fellow Indian and World Championship challenger D Gukesh is on the brink of joining him. It's a marker of how far Indian chess has travelled. The 2800 club is a rarefied one. Only 14 players in history have crossed 2800 Elo in published ratings.

Liz Young win Women's Indian Open golf

- England's Liz Young won the Women's Indian Open 2024 golf tournament to register her second win on the Ladies European Tour (LET). Young, who won her maiden LET title at the Swiss Ladies Open two years back, carded two-under 286 over the four rounds at the DLF Golf and Country Club in Gurugram, Haryana to claim her second crown.

Table Tennis: Indian Duo of Yashaswini- Krittwika Clinch Women's Doubles Title

- In Table Tennis, India's Yashaswini Ghorpade and Krittwika Roy clinched the women's doubles title at the WTT Feeder Cagliari 2024 table tennis tournament in Italy.

Ballon d'Or 2024 awards: Rodri pips Vinicius Jr. to win men's football player of the year

- Spain and Manchester City midfielder Rodri won the 2024 Ballon d'Or award in the male category during the ceremony at the Theatre du Chatelet in Paris, France. The 28-year-old, who was a leading figure in Manchester City's English Premier League title triumph, also played a pivotal role in Spain's European Championship triumph. While Real Madrid were named as the men's club of the year, Carlo Ancelotti finished as the best manager in the men's division.

Krishna Verma Clinches Gold Medal At U19 World Boxing Championships

- India's Krishna Verma clinched a gold medal at the U19 World Boxing Championships in Colorado, USA. However, five other Indian boxers in contention for the gold medals went down in their respective final. Krishna defeated Lerika Simon of Germany 5-0 to win the gold medal. Chanchal Chaudhary, however, went down to Ruby White of England in the female 48 kg category final as the Indian boxer was disqualified, forcing her to settle for the silver medal.

- In the female 57 kg category, Anjali Singh, who put up impressive shows through the tournament, succumbed to a 0-5 defeat to Mia-Tiah Ayton of England in the final. Rahul Kundu, competing in the male 75 kg category, also settled for a silver medal as he lost to the USA's Joseph Awinongya 1-4 in the final of his category.
- In the female 60 kg category, Vini put up a solid fight but was edged out by Ella Lonsdale 3-2. Also losing in the final was Akansha Phalaswal in the female 70 kg category. Akansha lost to Lilly Deacon of England 4-1. As a result of this defeat, Akansha also settled for the silver medal. Five more female boxers, including Nisha (51 Kg), Supriya Devi Thokchom (54 Kg), and Parthavi Grewal (65 Kg), will be in contention for the gold medals. In the men's section, Hemant Sangwan (90 Kg) will compete for the gold medal as he takes on the US boxer Rishon Sims in the final.

Ravindra Jadeja becomes India's fifth-highest wicket-taker in Tests

- With his 314th Test wicket, Ravindra Jadeja has overtaken Zaheer Khan and Ishant Sharma to become India's sixth-highest wicket-taker in Test cricket. With 314 wickets, Jadeja now stands just behind Harbhajan Singh, who claimed 417 wickets across 103 Tests. His achievement marks an impressive chapter in his decade-long Test career, during which he has consistently played a dual role for India as both a bowler and a batsman. Earlier in this series, he also became only the third Indian player to reach a double of 3,000 runs and 300 wickets, a feat previously achieved by Kapil Dev and Ravichandran Ashwin. Notably, Jadeja is the second-fastest to achieve this milestone after England's Ian Botham.

Sport Events

Mumbai's 15th Irani Cup triumph

- The 62nd Irani Cup edition was completed at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow with 2023-24 Ranji Trophy champions Mumbai defeating the Rest of India (RoI). Hosted as an annual red-ball match between the Ranji Trophy winners and a RoI team, the Irani Cup was first held in the 1959-60 domestic season as a one-off contest to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Ranji Trophy.

Railways retains the title after fighting win over IOC

- Indian Railways team gained 5-3 victory over Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) in the final of the 95th MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup all-India hockey tournament. Railways, the defending champion, had been dominant throughout and in the summit clash, it was more so, as it didn't allow IOC - comprising quite a few Olympians and Internationals - to settle down.

India Secures SAFF Under-17 Championship Title

- In Football, India secured the SAFF Under-17 Championship title defeating Bangladesh 2-0 in the final played at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu, Bhutan. In the fifth minute of stoppage time, Nazmul Huda Faysal extended India's lead with a powerful strike from the edge of the box.

ISSF Junior World Championship: Indian Pair Clinched Bronze In Shooting

- In Shooting, the Indian pair of Gautami Bhanot and Ajay Malik clinched Bronze after defeating Croatia 17-9 in the Air Rifle mixed event in the ISSF Junior World Championship in Lima, Peru. In the same event, China defeated France to win gold. In the Air Pistol mixed event, India's Lakshita and Pramod defeated Kanishka Dagar and Mukesh Nellavani 16-8 to win another Bronze in the tally. Germany won the gold medal, while Ukraine settled for silver. With this, India retained its top spot in the ISSF Junior World Championship. India has a total of five medals, two Gold and three Bronze.

India to host first-ever Kho Kho World Cup in 2025

- The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI), in association with the International Kho Kho Federation, announced that the first Kho Kho World Cup in 2025 will take place in India. The event will witness the participation of 24 countries from 6 continents and will feature 16 men's and 16 women's teams who will come together to celebrate the spirit of Kho Kho and foster global unity. The sport that started in the mud and has gone to the mat now has a global presence, with 54 countries playing the sport across the world.

Rupa Bayor becomes first Indian taekwondo player to break into World Top 10

- Rupa Bayor became the first Indian taekwondo player to break into the top of the World Poomsae Rankings. Rupa, who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, is currently ranked 9th in the world rankings.

Sri Lanka appoint Sanath Jayasuriya as permanent head coach till 2026

- Former Sri Lanka captain Sanath Jayasuriya has been appointed as the permanent coach of the Sri Lankan men's national side. Jayasuriya, who was holding an interim position as head coach, overlooked Sri Lanka's recent series against India, England and New Zealand. While the Lankans endured a 2-1 Test series defeat in England and in the T20Is against India, Jayasuriya's side stunned Rohit Sharma's men in the 50-over format in August. Sri Lanka also proceeded to blank New Zealand in the two-match Test series at Galle, improving their stand in the current World Test Championship cycle. Jayasuriya's permanent role has come to effect from October 1 and runs until March 31, 2026, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) confirmed.

India to Participate In Iconic Hong Kong Sixes Tournament for First Time Since 2012

- Hong Kong Sixes, the iconic cricket tournament, is all set to return for the first time since 2017. Team India will be featuring in Hong Kong Sixes for first time since 2012. India will be represented in the competition set to be played from November 1 to November 3 this year. Notably, the tournament features a unique format unlike T20s or T10 and had been an annual affair. However, since 2012, it has only been conducted once. Notably, India is one of the 11 nations participating in the competition.

- As far as the tournament itself is concerned, **the first edition of the tournament was staged way back in 1992.** Several greats of the game like Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara have taken part in this format where each team is allowed to field only six players. Barring the bowler and the keeper only four fielders are allowed. Barring the keeper, everyone has to bowl an over which means it comes down to five overs per side.

India makes history in Kazakhstan, secures first women's team medal in Asian Table Tennis C'ships

- The Indian women's team made history by securing a monumental bronze medal during the Asian Table Tennis Championships. This is country's first-ever medal in the women's team category** since the Asian Table Tennis Union started organising the event since 1972. During the semifinals, India registered a 1-3 loss to Japan while in the other semifinal, China lost to Hong Kong by 3-0. In this competition, both losing semifinalists are awarded bronze medals.

Uttarakhand to host 38th National Games

- The 38th National Games will take place in Uttarakhand from January 28 to February 14 next year.** The complete program for the National Games will be unveiled during the general assembly meeting of the Indian Olympic Association.
- In addition to the National Games, **Uttarakhand will also host the Winter National Games. The Chief Minister assured that Uttarakhand is fully prepared to host the 38th National Games,** emphasizing that the event will be organized on a grand scale. He also highlighted the commitment to providing excellent facilities for athletes and visitors travelling from across the country.

2026 Commonwealth Games Organisers Drop Prominent Sports, Event to Feature Only 10 Sports

- The organisers of 2026 Commonwealth Games, has decided to remove several prominent sports like hockey, badminton, wrestling, cricket, squash and shooting from the event.** The next edition of the Games will include only 10 sports, striking a balance between ensuring the event has a multi-sport feel and the need to manage financial and operational risk. The 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place in Glasgow, Scotland from 23rd of July to 2nd of August in 2026, across four venues. Around 3,000 athletes from 74 Commonwealth nations and territories, including India, will compete in the Games.

Zimbabwe World Record: Team scores highest ever total in T20I vs Gambia

- Zimbabwe Cricket Team put Gambia under the sword by thumping the team for 344/4, which is the new world record in T20Is. **Zimbabwe's world-record setting score came in an ICC Men's T20 World Cup Sub-Regional Africa Qualifier Group B match.** Zimbabwe then wrapped up the Gambia team in 54 runs, thereby winning the match by a margin of 290.

Aizawl to host India's first urban downhill race

- Mizoram's capital, Aizawl, is gearing up to host India's first-ever "Urban Downhill Race" marking a significant milestone for the country's adventure sports scene. Organized under the globally renowned Red Bull Downhill series,** the event will feature elite Downhill Mountain biking in an urban setting, combining the sport's signature intensity with the unique challenge of city landscapes.

Cricket at 2028 Olympics moved out of Los Angeles

- In a bid to gain the viewership of Indians, **the 2028 LA Olympics will likely see the cricket event moved to the state of New York.** The inclusion of cricket in the LA 2028 Games programme was largely done to cater to South Asian audiences and give the International Olympic Committee leverage to demand bigger broadcast deals, especially at the sub-continent – a move that will be further strengthened if the broadcast timing aligns, should the move to New York happen.

Bengaluru hosts the world's first '11K Footpath Run'

- "An average of 5-6 obstacles were reported over 11 kilometers by 60 finishers."** People from all walks of life turned up. **The youngest participant was 10-year-old Veeksha, a skater, who flagged off the run and skated for a brief distance.**

India to Host Junior World Cup of Shooting in 2025

- The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) President Luciano Rossi confirmed that **India will host the ISSF Junior World Cup in 2025.**

Chhattisgarh: 27th All India Forest Sports Festival from Oct 16 To 22

- **The 27th All India Forest Sports Festival has officially commenced in Chhattisgarh and concluded on October 22.** This year's festival features an impressive lineup of 23 sports disciplines and approximately 300 competitions, bringing together around 3,000 participants. Among the guests attending the opening and closing ceremonies are Olympic bronze medalist Manu Bhaker, Indian T20 cricket captain Suryakumar Yadav, and other prominent dignitaries. The event, which was initiated in 1992 under the leadership of the then Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, aims to promote sports and foster mutual coordination among employees of the forest department at all levels.
- **The 27th All India Forest Sports Meet concluded in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The host state emerged as the overall champion, securing a total of 174 medals.** Kerala claimed second place with 103 medals, while Madhya Pradesh finished third with 88 medals. The five-day event saw participation from nearly three thousand athletes representing various states and Union Territories.

KKFI Unveils Logo and Tagline for First-Ever Kho Kho World Cup

- **Kho Kho Federation of India, KKFI, unveiled the logo and tagline for the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup which will be held in New Delhi next year.** The tournament will be organised between 13th and 19th January at Indira Gandhi Stadium. Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Nikhil Khadse said, with 24 countries from 6 continents, this global event will proudly showcase India's sporting prowess on an international stage.

AWARDS



Legendary Actor Mithun Chakraborty honoured with Dada Saheb Phalke Award

- **Legendary Actor Mithun Chakraborty honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony.** The Dadasaheb Phalke Selection Jury decided for this top award in Indian cinema for Mr Chakraborty for his iconic contribution to Indian Cinema. **Veteran Asha Parekh was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2020.** Veteran actor **Waheeda Rehman** was conferred with the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India’s highest film honour for the year 2021.**

Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India’s highest award in cinema. It is presented annually at the National Film Awards ceremony by the Directorate of Film Festivals, an organisation set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. **The recipient is honoured for their “outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema”** and is selected by a committee consisting of eminent personalities from the Indian film industry. The award comprises a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion, a shawl, and a **cash prize of Rs. 1,000,000 (US\$13,000).** It was first presented in 1969 and the first recipient of the award was actress **Devika Rani**; the award was introduced by the Government of India to commemorate **Dadasaheb Phalke’s contribution to Indian cinema.** Phalke is popularly known as and often regarded as “the father of Indian cinema”, was an Indian filmmaker who directed India’s first full-length feature film, **Raja Harishchandra (1913).**

Venezuelan opposition figure Machado wins top European rights prize

- **The Council of Europe awarded its 2024 rights prize to Venezuelan opposition figure Maria Corina Machado for her struggle for democracy under President Nicolas Maduro’s iron-fisted rule.** Ms. Machado said she was “deeply moved, honoured and grateful” to be the first Latin American to win the award, named after the late Czech dissident, playwright and post-communist president **Vaclav Havel.**
- **She is currently in hiding in Venezuela in the wake of presidential elections Mr. Maduro claims to have won, an outcome furiously contested by the opposition.** The award was received on her behalf at Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg by her daughter Ana. **Previous winners include the 2023 laureate, the Turkish philanthropist and civil society activist Osman Kavala, who remains in prison after his arrest in November 2017, and 2022 winner the Russian activist Vladimir Kara-Murza.**
- **The EU award, named for Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov, was created in 1988 to honour individuals or groups who defend human rights and fundamental freedoms.** Sakharov, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, died in 1989. It’s the second straight year EU lawmakers used the Sakharov Prize to send a message to the Kremlin. Imprisoned Russian opposition leader **Alexei Navalny** won it last year. **The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, commonly known as the Sakharov Prize,** is an honorary award for individuals or groups who have dedicated their lives to the defence of human rights and freedom of thought. Named after Russian scientist and dissident **Andrei Sakharov,** the prize was established in December 1988 by the European Parliament.

IIFA 2024: Shah Rukh Khan and Rani Mukerji win big; Animal bags 5 awards

- **While host Shah Rukh Khan won the Best Actor award for his performance in Jawan, Rani Mukerji took home the trophy for Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway, and the Best Director award went to Vidhu Vinod Chopra**

for the **Vikrant Massey-starrer 12th Fail**. The other big winner was Ranbir Kapoor's much-talked-about film **Animal**. While Anil Kapoor won the Best Supporting Actor award, Bobby Deol got the Best Actor in Negative Role award. The movie also bagged the Best Music award, Best Lyrics award, and Bhupinder Babbal won the Best Singer Male award for his song "Arjan Vailly".

UP govt to honour individuals with 'Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Samman' for contributions to silk industry

- **The UP government will honour individuals, who have made exceptional contributions to the Silk Industry and related fields with the "Pandit Deen Dayal Updhyayay Samman" award.** The award will be presented for the year 2024-25 by the state's Sericulture Department. The awards will be presented in eight different categories with an aim to encourage innovation, production, and design within the silk industry.

Medicine Nobel 2024 awarded to Victor Ambros, Gary Ruvkun for discovery of microRNA

- **Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun have been jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology 2024**, the Nobel Academy at the Karolinska Institutet announced. They were awarded the prestigious prize **for the discovery of microRNA and its role in post-transcriptional gene regulation.**
- **"Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun were interested in how different cell types develop. They discovered microRNA, a new class of tiny RNA molecules that play a crucial role in gene regulation"**. Both Ambros and Ruvkun are **American biologists**. Ambros currently works at the Programme in Molecular Medicine at the University of Massachusetts in the U.S. Ruvkun is a professor of genetics at the Harvard Medical School and researches microRNA and RNA interference mechanisms at the Ruvkun Lab at Massachusetts General Hospital. Ambros and Ruvkun's groundbreaking discovery revealed a completely new principle of gene regulation that turned out to be essential for multicellular organisms, including humans.
- **MicroRNAs, or miRNAs, are small, non-coding molecules of RNA.** They are typically around 19-24 nucleotides long and play an important role in determining how much messenger RNA (mRNA), which carries genetic information, eventually gets translated into protein. Protein synthesis is a multi-step, complex cellular process that occurs in two stages – transcription and translation. In the transcription phase, the gene's DNA sequence is copied into mRNA in the cell nucleus. The mRNA then enters the cell fluid and attaches itself to the ribosome which is the site of protein synthesis.
- **Translation step is next, where another type of RNA, transfer RNA (tRNA) molecules bring specific amino acids to the ribosome where they are linked together in a particular order as instructed by the mRNA,** resulting in the formation of protein. The mRNA acts as a template for protein synthesis during this step. MiRNAs act between the transcription and translation steps, thereby regulating the final production of protein. Even though the genetic information stored in our DNA is the same in different cell types, these cells are capable of producing unique kinds of proteins and thereby perform specialised functions, which is possible because of miRNAs.
- **Last year the Nobel Prize for Physiology was jointly awarded to Katalin Karikó and Drew Weissman for their "discoveries concerning nucleoside base modification that enabled the development of effective mRNA vaccines against COVID-19",**

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine administered by the Nobel Foundation is awarded yearly for **outstanding discoveries in the fields of life sciences and medicine**. It is **one of five Nobel Prizes established in his will in 1895 by Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel**, the inventor of dynamite. The **first one was awarded in 1901 to the German physiologist Emil von Behring, for his work on serum therapy and the development of a vaccine against diphtheria**. The **first woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, Gerty Cori, received it in 1947 for her role in elucidating the metabolism of glucose**. The **first Indian to receive award in Medicine was Har Gobind Khorana for research that showed the order of nucleotides in nucleic acids, which carry the genetic code of the cell and control the cell's synthesis of proteins. He shared the 1968 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with Marshall W. Nirenberg and Robert W. Holley for research that showed the order of nucleotides in nucleic acids, which carry the genetic code of the cell and control the cell's synthesis of proteins.**

Nobel Prize 2024 in Physics awarded to John J. Hopfield & Geoffrey E. Hinton

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics to John J. Hopfield and Geoffrey E. Hinton “for foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks.” The two Nobel Laureates used tools from physics to develop methods that are the foundation of powerful machine learning. John Hopfield created an associative memory that can store and reconstruct images and other types of patterns in data. Geoffrey Hinton invented a method that can autonomously find properties in data, and perform tasks such as identifying specific elements in pictures. When we talk about artificial intelligence, we often mean machine learning using artificial neural networks.
- This technology was originally inspired by the structure of the brain. “In an artificial neural network, the brain’s neurons are represented by nodes that have different values. These nodes influence each other through connections that can be likened to synapses and which can be made stronger or weaker. The network is trained, for example by developing stronger connections between nodes with simultaneously high values. This year’s laureates have conducted important work with artificial neural networks from the 1980s onward.

The first Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to physicist Wilhelm Rontgen in recognition of the extraordinary services he rendered by the discovery of the remarkable rays (or x-rays). Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman carried out ground-breaking work in the field of light scattering, which earned him the 1930 Nobel Prize for Physics. He was the first Asian and first non-white to receive any Nobel Prize in the sciences. Before him Rabindranath Tagore (also Indian) had received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2024: David Baker, Demis Hassabis, and John Jumper awarded for protein innovations

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced that the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry will be awarded with one half going to David Baker, and the other half jointly to Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper, for their groundbreaking contributions to protein science. David Baker of the University of Washington, Seattle, USA, was awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in Chemistry “for computational protein design,” while Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper of Google DeepMind, London, UK, were awarded “for protein structure prediction.”
- “One of the discoveries being recognised this year concerns the construction of spectacular proteins. The other is about fulfilling a 50-year-old dream: predicting protein structures from their amino acid sequences. Both of these discoveries open up vast possibilities”. David Baker has achieved the extraordinary feat of designing entirely new proteins, while Demis Hassabis and John Jumper have developed an artificial intelligence (AI) model to solve a 50-year-old challenge: predicting the complex three-dimensional structures of proteins.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry is awarded annually by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences to scientists in the various fields of chemistry. It is one of the five Nobel Prizes established by the will of Alfred Nobel in 1895. The first Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded in 1901 to Jacobus Henricus van’t Hoff, of the Netherlands, “for his discovery of the laws of chemical dynamics and osmotic pressure in solutions”.

Mumbai’s ‘Museum of Solutions’ Wins Europe’s ‘Hands On! Children in Museums’ Award, Becomes First In India To Win The Coveted Trophy

- The Museum of Solutions (MuSo) became the first Indian museum to win the prestigious ‘Hands On! Children in Museums’ Award. The museum competed against 32 museums from 17 different countries, with six finalists, to win this award.
- The 13th edition of the award came with a cash prize of 7500 Euros with a bronze statue of Miffy, the world-famous children’s character created by Dick Bruna. Launched over a year ago, MuSo has rapidly established itself as a leading institution that aims to inspire curious young minds into future changemakers. This award comes after MuSo’s inclusion in TIME magazine’s list of the Top 100 Places in the World.

The 2024 Nobel peace prize has been awarded to Nihon Hidankyo

- **The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2024 to the Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo.** This grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also known as Hibakusha, is receiving the Peace Prize for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again.
- **In response to the atomic bomb attacks of August 1945, a global movement arose whose members have worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons.** Gradually, a powerful international norm developed, stigmatising the use of nuclear weapons as morally unacceptable. This norm has become known as “the nuclear taboo”. The testimony of the Hibakusha – the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – is unique in this larger context.
- These historical witnesses have helped to generate and consolidate widespread opposition to nuclear weapons around the world by drawing on personal stories, creating educational campaigns based on their own experience, and issuing urgent warnings against the spread and use of nuclear weapons. **The Hibakusha help us to describe the indescribable, to think the unthinkable, and to somehow grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffering caused by nuclear weapons.** The Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes nevertheless to acknowledge one encouraging fact: No nuclear weapon has been used in war in nearly 80 years. **The extraordinary efforts of Nihon Hidankyo and other representatives of the Hibakusha have contributed greatly to the establishment of the nuclear taboo.** It is therefore alarming that today this taboo against the use of nuclear weapons is under pressure.

Jean Henry Dunant and Frederic Passy were the first winners of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1901. The Nobel Peace Prize 1901 was divided equally between Jean Henry Dunant “for his humanitarian efforts to help wounded soldiers and create international understanding” and Frederic Passy “for his lifelong work for international peace conferences, diplomacy and arbitration.” The Institute of International Law awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1904 and it was the first organization to win the Nobel Peace Prize. In 2014, Kailash Satyarthi was the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Malala Yousafzai, “for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education.” He is the founder of multiple social activist organizations, including Bachpan Bachao Andolan, Global March Against Child Labour, Global Campaign for Education and Kailash Satyarthi Children’s Foundation. Malala Yousafzai is also the world’s youngest Nobel Prize laureate and second Pakistani. Mahatma Gandhi was nominated in 1937, 1938, 1939, 1947 and, finally, a few days before he was murdered in January 1948. The omission has been publicly regretted by later members of the Nobel Committee; when the Dalai Lama was awarded the Peace Prize in 1989, the chairman of the committee said that this was “in part a tribute to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi”.

South Korean author Han Kang awarded 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature

- **The 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to South Korean author Han Kang “for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life.”** Since 1901, a total of 116 Nobel Prizes in Literature have been awarded. Of these, four have been shared between multiple laureates. So far, 17 women have received this prestigious literature prize.
- **The short story writer and novelist is best known overseas for her Man Booker Prize-winning “The Vegetarian”, her first novel translated into English.** The 53-year-old, who also became the first Asian woman author to win the Nobel, was chosen “for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life”, the Swedish Academy said
- **Han Kang began her career in 1993 as a poet, but has since written mainly novels and short stories.** In her oeuvre, she confronts historical traumas and invisible sets of rules and, in each of her works, exposes the fragility of human life. She has a unique awareness of the connections between body and soul, the living and the dead, and in her poetic and experimental style has become an innovator in contemporary prose. Among her works are The Vegetarian, Human Acts and We Do Not Part.

The Nobel Prize in Literature is a Swedish literature prize that has been awarded annually, since 1901, to an author from any country who has, in the words of the will of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, produced “in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction”. It is one of the five Nobel Prizes

established by the 1895 will of Alfred Nobel, which are awarded for outstanding contributions in chemistry, physics, literature, peace, and physiology or medicine. The first Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded in 1901 to Sully Prudhoe of France. In 2017, the Swedish Academy awarded Kazuo Ishiguro the Nobel Prize in Literature. Rabindranath Tagore was the first Indian citizen to be awarded Nobel Prize in Literature for his poem Gitanjali and Mother Teresa is the only woman in the list.

Five trailblazing women win UNHCR's Nansen Refugee Awards for their life-changing work

- Five trailblazing women – a nun, an activist, a social entrepreneur, a volunteer aid worker, and an advocate for ending statelessness – will be honoured as winners of the 2024 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.
- This year's global laureate, Sister Rosita Milesi, is a Brazilian nun, lawyer, social worker and movement builder who has championed the rights and dignity of people on the move for nearly 40 years. The four others have been named regional winners. The four regional winners to be honoured this year are:
- **Maimouna Ba (Africa)**, an activist from Burkina Faso who helped more than 100 displaced children return to the classroom and put over 400 displaced women on a path to financial independence.
- **Jin Davod (Europe)**, a social entrepreneur who drew on her own experience as a Syrian refugee to build an online platform that has connected thousands of trauma survivors with licensed therapists providing free mental health support.
- **Nada Fadol (Middle East & North Africa)**, a Sudanese refugee who has mobilized essential aid for hundreds of refugee families fleeing to Egypt in search of safety.
- **Deepti Gurung (Asia-Pacific)**, who campaigned to reform Nepal's citizenship laws after learning that her two daughters had become stateless – opening a path to citizenship for them and thousands more in similar straits.

Hon'ble Union minister of Jal Shakti announces 5th National Water Awards

- Hon'ble Union minister of Jal Shakti Shri CR Paatil announced the list of winners of 5th National Water Awards, at Shram Shakti Bhawan New Delhi. The Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD &GR), under the Ministry of Jal Shakti announced the 38 winners, including joint winners, for the 5th National Water Awards, 2023, in 09 categories viz Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best School or College, Best Industry, Best Water User Association, Best Institution (other than school or college), and Best Civil Society.
- In the category of Best State, the first prize has been conferred upon Odisha, with Uttar Pradesh securing the second position, and Gujarat and Puducherry jointly securing the third position. Each award winner will be conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prizes in certain categories.

Nobel Peace Prize 2024 awarded to Japanese NGO Nihon Hidankyo for efforts towards 'a world free of nuclear weapons'

- The 2024 Nobel Prize for Peace has been awarded to Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo for its "efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again".
- "Nihon Hidankyo has provided thousands of witness accounts, issued resolutions and public appeals, and sent annual delegations to the United Nations and a variety of peace conferences to remind the world of the pressing need for nuclear disarmament." Nihon Hidankyo is a grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also known as Hibakusha, which arose in response to the atomic bomb attacks of August 1945.

Jean Henry Dunant and Frederic Passy were the first winners of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1901. The Nobel Peace Prize 1901 was divided equally between Jean Henry Dunant "for his humanitarian efforts to help wounded soldiers and create international understanding" and Frederic Passy "for his lifelong work for international peace conferences, diplomacy and arbitration." The Institute of International Law awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1904 and it was the first organization to win the Nobel Peace Prize. In 2014, Kailash

Satyartha was the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Malala Yousafzai, “for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education.” He is the founder of multiple social activist organizations, including Bachpan Bachao Andolan, Global March Against Child Labour, Global Campaign for Education and Kailash Satyartha Children’s Foundation. Malala Yousafzai is also the world’s youngest Nobel Prize laureate and second Pakistani. Mahatma Gandhi was nominated in 1937, 1938, 1939, 1947 and, finally, a few days before he was murdered in January 1948. The omission has been publicly regretted by later members of the Nobel Committee; when the Dalai Lama was awarded the Peace Prize in 1989, the chairman of the committee said that this was “in part a tribute to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi”.

Mohanji honored with Humanitarian Award at 2024 Conscious Companies Awards in Johannesburg, South Africa

- **Mohanji, renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader, was honored with a special recognition for his global humanitarian leadership at the 9th Conscious Companies Awards held in Johannesburg, South Africa.** The prestigious annual event celebrates ethical and visionary leaders who demonstrate conscious leadership within their organizations, aligning people, profit, and purpose in the service of all stakeholders to create a better world.
- **The Conscious Companies Awards are dedicated to recognizing individuals and organizations that promote ethical behavior and sustainable practices,** fostering leadership that not only prioritizes profits but also enhances the well-being of people and the planet. Mohanji’s award is a testament to his enduring contributions to humanity through his teachings and commitment to the highest human values of compassion, kindness, and non-violence.

2024 Nobel Prize winners in Economic

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the **Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2024 to Daron Acemoglu,** Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA, **Simon Johnson,** Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA, **James A. Robinson,** University of Chicago, IL, USA “**for studies of how institutions are formed and affect prosperity**”.
- Their work highlighted how societal institutions—whether inclusive or extractive—significantly influence the economic outcomes of nations. Their research sheds light on global inequality and provides insights into why some nations remain poor while others grow wealthy. **They examined historical events like colonization to show how the type of institutions established during such periods has long-lasting effects on whether a country becomes prosperous or remains trapped in poverty.**

Nobel Prize in Economics is an award for outstanding contributions to the field of economics, and generally regarded as the most prestigious award for that field. The award’s official English name is **The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel.** The prize was established in 1968 by a donation from Sweden’s central bank the Riksbank to the Nobel Foundation to commemorate the bank’s 300th anniversary. As it is not one of the prizes that Alfred Nobel established in his will in 1895, it is not a Nobel Prize. However, it is administered and referred to along with the Nobel Prizes by the Nobel Foundation. It was first awarded in 1969 to the Dutch and Norwegian economists Jan Tinbergen and Ragnar Frisch, “for having developed and applied dynamic models for the analysis of economic processes”. Amartya Sen was awarded the Nobel Prize “for his contributions to Welfare Economics” in the year 1998. Abhijit Banerjee is an Indian-born American economist who, with Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer, was awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize for Economics (the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel) “for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty”.

Nepal’s Urmila Chaudhary Wins Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024

- **Urmila Chaudhary of Nepal won the Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024 which was presented by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken.** This award honours six civil society leaders for their exceptional courage, leadership, and commitment to advancing racial equity, justice, and human rights.

- **Urmila Chaudhary is an abolitionist and labour activist who was rescued from child servitude at age 17. She co-founded the Freed Kamlari Development Forum and established 42 cooperatives to empower former bonded labourers.** She is currently studying law to further her fight against injustice. Urmila Chaudhary is honoured for her dedication to advancing the rights of marginalized castes and ethnic communities in Nepal and for combating systemic racism and intersectional abuses. Under the Kamlari system practised in Western Terai of Nepal, girls and young women were sold by their parents into indentured servitude under contract for periods of one year to richer and higher-caste buyers.
- **On 10 September 2006, the Supreme Court of Nepal affirmed that this practice known as kamlari was illegal, and that former kamlaris were entitled to governmental compensation, education and rehabilitation.** However, the interim government of Nepal in 2006 failed to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling, and the practice continued to exist.
- **The suspicious death of 12-year-old Kamlari girl Srijana Chaudhary in March 2013, revived the movement and saw mass protests taking place to demand the practice's immediate end.** In June 2013, the government officially abolished the Kamlari system and agreed to a 10-point plan involving compensation, rehabilitation and justice for victims of abuse.

Sadhguru honoured with Global Indian Award 2024 by Canada India Foundation

- **Spiritual leader Sadhguru was conferred with the CIF Global Indian Award by the Canada India Foundation for his “unparalleled contributions towards creating a conscious planet” and his leadership in tackling environmental challenges.** The event celebrates individuals of Indian origin who have made a profound global impact. Sadhguru is an Indian guru and founder of the Isha Foundation, based in Coimbatore, India.

Kriti Sanon wins Best Actor at Bazaar Women of the Year Awards

- **Actor Kriti Sanon received the Best Actor honour at the Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards 2024.** The Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards were based on a unique feature this year. The event aimed at creating a 'chain of empowerment' for women by letting every winner present the trophy to the winner of the next category.

Ganderbal wins Best District Award at 5th National Water Awards

- **Ganderbal has been honored as the Best District at the 5th National Water Awards, 2023.** The award, recognizing excellence in Water Conservation and Management, was presented by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, at a ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Uttar Pradesh Bags Second Position In Water Conservation and Management

- **Uttar Pradesh has been conferred with the prestigious National Water Award for its outstanding work in water management and conservation.** The state has secured the second position in water conservation and management in the country. **Banda received the Best District award for showcasing exceptional efforts in water management and conservation.** The state bagged the award for achieving a remarkable feat in 2023 by providing tap water connections to more than 17,900 villages, setting a record for the fastest implementation of the Har Ghar Nal Se Jal scheme.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Honoured with Fiji's Highest Civilian Award

- **The Republic of Fiji has bestowed its highest civilian award, the "Honourary Officer of the Order of Fiji," on Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.** This recognition, presented by Fiji's President, Ratu Wiliame M. Katonivere, acknowledges Sri Sri's contributions to promoting peace, unity, and uplifting communities globally. Sri Sri expressed his gratitude on social media, saying, "Honoured to receive Fiji's highest civilian award." Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of **The Art of Living Foundation**, has also received top civilian honors from five other countries, recognizing his global humanitarian impact. Established in 1981, The Art of Living focuses on initiatives in mental health, education, environment, and empowerment and now operates in over 180 countries.

Francis Ford Coppola to Receive 50th AFI Life Achievement Award

- **Oscar-winning filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola is set to be honored with the AFI Life Achievement Award, marking its 50th installment, at a ceremony on April 26, 2025, at Hollywood’s Dolby Theatre. At 86, Coppola’s recognition comes on the heels of his latest film, Megalopolis, which struggled at the box office but highlights his ongoing contributions to the film industry.** The tribute will air on TNT, with encore presentations on Turner Classic Movies, and proceeds from the event will support the American Film Institute’s education and arts initiatives. The AFI Life Achievement Award recognizes individuals whose work has significantly advanced the art of film. Kathleen Kennedy, chair of the AFI board of trustees, praised Coppola as a “peerless artist” who has produced seminal works in American cinema and inspired generations of filmmakers with his independent spirit.

Bibhab Talukdar Wins IUCN’s Top Conservation Leadership Award

- **Assam-based conservation scientist Bibhab Kumar Talukdar has been awarded the prestigious Harry Messel Award for Conservation Leadership by the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Abu Dhabi.** This honor, awarded during the 5th IUCN SSC Leaders’ Meeting, acknowledges his groundbreaking contributions to species conservation, particularly for Asian rhinos, through both leadership and on-ground initiatives. Talukdar has been an influential conservationist associated with IUCN SSC since 1991 and became Chair of the Asian Rhino Specialist Group in 2008.



PERSONS IN NEWS

Vice Admiral Arti Sarin is first woman to head Armed Forces Medical Services

- **Vice Admiral Arti Sarin was appointed as the next Director General of the Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS).** She has become the first woman officer ever to take over as the head of the Tri-service Armed Forces Medical Services and is also the highest ranking woman officer ever to have served in the Indian Armed Forces. The DGAFMS is directly responsible to the Ministry of Defence for overall medical policy matters related to the Armed Forces.

Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh takes over as new Indian Air Force Chief

- **Acc test pilot Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh took over as the new Indian Air Force chief.** He is succeeding Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari who is superannuating after completing his tenure of three years. Air Marshal A.P. Singh is presently the Vice Chief of the Air Staff and will be assuming his new appointment as the rank of Air Chief Marshal with effect from the afternoon of September 30.

Justice Manmohan takes oath as Chief Justice of Delhi High Court

- **Justice Manmohan took oath as the chief justice of the Delhi High Court.** Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena administered the oath to the 61-year-old judge at a ceremony at the Raj Niwas, the Lieutenant Governor's secretariat.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer names new Chief of Staff in Downing Street shake-up

- **British Prime Minister Keir Starmer named a new Chief of Staff after a high-profile resignation** amid a wider shake-up of his top team at 10 Downing Street to mark his Labour Party government's first 100 days in office. **Sue Gray, previously a top civil servant appointed by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson's to investigate the partygate scandal of COVID lockdown law breaching parties** within the then Tory government, resigned as Mr. Starmer's top aide saying the "intense commentary around my position risked becoming a distraction to the government's vital work of change".
- **Morgan McSweeney, the Labour Party's former campaign director who masterminded July's general election landslide for the party, will replace Gray as the new chief of staff.** His appointment comes alongside political director Vidhya Alakeson and director of government relations Jill Cuthbertson being promoted to deputy chiefs of staff.

Prakash Man Singh Raut appointed as new Chief Justice of Nepal

- **Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel appointed Prakash Man Singh Raut as the new Chief Justice of the country.** Mr. Paudel administered the oath of office and secrecy to Chief Justice Raut at a special ceremony organised at Sheetal Niwas, the President's Office. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by high-ranking officials, including Vice President Ramsahay Prasad Yadav, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, Speaker Devraj Ghimire, and Chairman of the National Assembly Narayan Prasad Dahal. Mr. Raut's name was recommended for the post by the Constitutional Council. His appointment comes after the retirement of outgoing Chief Justice Bishowambhar Prasad Shrestha, who reached the mandatory retirement age of 65. Nin Pandit, the director of the Downing Street policy unit until now, has been appointed principal private secretary to Mr. Starmer, while former journalist James Lyons will join to head up a new strategic communications team.

Arjun Vajpai becomes First Indian to Scale Mt. Shishapangma in China

- **Arjun Vajpai, the youngest person to climb Mt. Everest has made India proud once again.** On 9th October 2024, when Arjun Vajpai stood on top of Mt. Shishapangma, he completed his 8th successful summit and registered a total of 4 records all together. Arjun Vajpai who embarked on this journey of scaling all 14 at the age of 16 in 2010, has successfully summited 8 of the 14 peaks till date.
- **On Completing all 14, Vajpai will become the the 1st Indian to be a part of the elite list of mountaineers.** With his historical feat of scaling Mt. Shishapangma, he has become the 1st Indian to ascent Mt. Shishapangma and broken the record for the fastest ascent of Mt. Shishapangma which includes Base camp to

Summit and back to Base camp in less than 72 hours. He became the 1st Indian to successfully stand on the top of eight 8000 m mountains and made the record for the fastest Indian ascent of a 8000 m peak in China.

Rashmika Mandanna is national ambassador to promote cyber safety

- Actor Rashmika Mandanna has been appointed as the national brand ambassador of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), an initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India to combat cybercrimes. Last year, Rashmika Mandanna was a victim of a deepfake video posted online on the Internet, sparking discussions about digital safety.
- As the ambassador, Ms. Rashmika will spearhead nationwide cyber awareness campaigns designed to inform the public about cybercrimes including deepfake technology, malicious AI-created content, cyber bullying, financial frauds and other online scams. The I4C was set up by the MHA to provide a framework and eco-system for law-enforcement agencies to deal with cybercrime in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

Isha Ambani wins Harper's Bazaar Icon of the Year

- Isha Ambani, the managing director of Reliance Retail won the 'Icon of the Year' award at Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards 2024. The award was presented by celebrated interior designer and entrepreneur Gauri Khan. The Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards, launched in 2007, is a global celebration of prominent female talent from a variety of fields like film, television, art, culture and literature.

First woman from India to scale Mount Cho Oyu

- Twenty-nine year old Sheetal Raj from Pithoragarh district has scripted history by becoming the first woman from India to scale Mount Cho Oyu, the sixth-highest mountain in the world. She achieved the feat on Oct 8. Raj, who in 2019 became the youngest woman from Uttarakhand to climb Mount Everest, has now added this remarkable achievement to her growing list of mountaineering successes, which also includes summits of Mt Kanchenjunga and Mt Annapurna.

LARA: The England Chronicles

- The book Lara, The England Chronicles, which he co-authored with Phil Walker, provides insights into those marathon innings and how the mind of a genius works. The book, as the title indicates, is largely about Lara's adventures in or against England. It is not surprising that he has chosen to focus on his experiences with England. Both those massive Test innings were against England, the incredible 501 not out came in a match in England, for the county team Warwickshire.
- Lara's career is punctuated by extraordinary achievements that seem almost mythical:
- A score of 375 in Test cricket
- An unbeaten 400 in Tests
- A staggering 501 not out in a First Class match
- These numbers aren't just statistics; they represent the zenith of batting prowess in cricket. The sport would indeed be fortunate to witness another batsman capable of such Herculean feats.

MS Dhoni appointed brand ambassador for Jharkhand assembly election

- Former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been appointed as the brand ambassador for the upcoming Jharkhand election by the Election Commission. The former cricketer has given the Election Commission permission to use his photo for the assembly election. Under the cause of voter mobilisation, MS Dhoni will work towards increasing awareness among voters under the SWEEP (Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation) program.
- He represented the Indian cricket team and was the captain of the side in limited overs formats from 2007 to 2017 and in test cricket from 2008 to 2014. Dhoni has captained the most international matches and is the most successful Indian captain. He has led India to victory in the 2007 ICC World Twenty20, the 2011 Cricket World Cup, and the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy, being the only captain to win three different limited overs ICC tournaments.

Justice Yahya Afridi to Become Next Chief Justice of Pakistan

- **Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari appointed Supreme Court Justice Yahya Afridi as the next Chief Justice of Pakistan.** The Press Wing of the President’s Office said that the appointment, which is for a fixed term of three years, will be effective from the 26th of this month.

Rachel Gupta Becomes India’s First ‘Miss Grand International’

- **Rachel Gupta, a 20-year-old diva from Jalandhar, has made India proud by becoming the first Indian to win the Miss Grand International 2024 title.** Her stunning beauty, intelligence, and grace have captivated the world.

Diljit Dosanjh crafts history as 1st Indian artiste to feature on Billboard Canada

- **Singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh has officially made history as the first Indian artiste to be featured on the cover of Billboard Canada.** The inaugural print edition of the magazine will showcase exclusive photos of the Punjabi superstar, along with behind-the-scenes content and stories from his groundbreaking Dil-Luminati tour. The announcement was shared via Billboard Canada’s official Instagram account, with the caption, “Diljit Dosanjh will make global history as the first Indian artist to be featured cover-to-cover in a special edition of Billboard (@billboardca).”

Justice Sanjiv Khanna appointed next Chief Justice of India

- **The President has appointed Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the next Chief Justice of India. The appointment will come into effect from November 11. Justice Khanna, the second-most senior judge of the Supreme Court, will be the 51st Chief Justice of India and will have tenure of 6 months in office before retiring on May 13, 2025.** Justice Khanna had enrolled as an advocate with the Bar Council of Delhi in 1983. He initially practiced at the district courts at the Tis Hazari complex and later moved to the High Court of Delhi and tribunals.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Ranks Top Central Banker by US Magazine

- **Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das has been ranked the top central banker by the US-based Global Finance magazine.** This is the second consecutive year that he has been ranked as the top central banker globally.

Preeti Chandrashekhar appointed as first woman president of Institute of Actuaries of India

- **The Institute of Actuaries of India (IAI) appointed Preeti Chandrashekhar as its first woman president. Chandrashekhar has become the 11th president since IAI became a statutory body in 2006.** She holds an MPhil in statistics from the University of Delhi and is a certified Pensions Actuary. Her extensive background positions helped IAI strengthen its role in emerging fields such as data science, climate finance, and economic forecasting, equipping members to address evolving market demands. “A seasoned professional with over 34 years of experience, Chandrashekhar is recognised for her exceptional contributions to the insurance and pensions sectors, as well as her strong leadership in risk management and consulting.”

Bibek Debroy, chairman of PM’s Economic Advisory Council, no more

- **Noted author and economist Bibek Debroy, who has been the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council chairman since 2017, has passed away.** Mr. Debroy was also a member of the Niti Aayog, which had replaced the erstwhile Planning Commission, till mid-2019, and had wide-ranging interests beyond economics. He was also a Sanskrit scholar who had translated the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, Puranas and Upanishads into English.

MISCELLANEOUS

Jhansi's 'Jal Saheli' Volunteers for Rejuvenating Ghurari River

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the water volunteers called 'jal saheli' of Jhansi district whose efforts transformed the river Ghurari of Babina area in the district.** The women of the group from Simrawari village of Jhansi district said that earlier the water got wasted because there was no check dam. People also used to witness the scarcity of drinking water in summers. After which they decided to work collectively for the rejuvenation of the river.

PM Modi Inaugurates and Lays Foundation for over ₹11,200 Crore Projects in Maharashtra

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone, inaugurated, and dedicated various projects in Maharashtra worth over 11,200 crore rupees** via video conferencing. He inaugurated the Pune Metro section from the District Court to Swargate, marking the completion of Phase I of the Pune Metro Rail Project. The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for the Swargate-Katraj Extension of the Pune Metro. He highlighted various projects and stated that Pune, the land of inspiration for great personalities, is witnessing a new chapter in Maharashtra's development. He emphasised the need to make cities like Pune centres of progress and urban development.

Ahmednagar will now be Ahilyanagar

- **The Union Home Ministry has given approval for changing the name of Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra to Ahilyanagar.** Ahilyabai Holkar, the 18th-century ruler of Indore (in Madhya Pradesh), hailed from the district. Earlier, the Eknath Shinde government had changed the names of Aurangabad and Osmanabad to Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Dharashiv, respectively.

Nagaland Partners With Wales for 25th Hornbill Festival

- **Nagaland government has signed Wales as one of the Country Partners for the upcoming 25th Edition of the Hornbill Festival.** Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, who is on an official visit to Wales, announced the signing of the agreement with the Welsh Government, the British Council, and Wales Arts International representatives in Cardiff.

World's first ropeway over jungle to come up in Tadoba reserve

- **The world's first ropeway wildlife safari is launched in Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Maharashtra** in October 2024. This is a major development for wildlife tourism. Located in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra, the reserve is made up of two forested rectangles of the Tadoba and Andhari range. The name "Tadoba" comes from the god "Tadoba" or "Taru", worshipped by the tribal people who live in the area. "Andhari" refers to the Andhari river that flows through the forest.

Rajasthan set to be first State in India to bring in an innovative way to acquire land

- **Rajasthan is all set to become first State in India to bring in land aggregation through a legal mechanism. This aims to assist industries and help the farmers.** Government will aggregate private land from the interested person(s) and develop it. **Once the land is developed, the original landowner will get a minimum of 25 per cent of the developed land as compensation.** This developed land can be used by the original owner for his own use, or he/she can let out/lease/sell it to third parties to fetch the maximum returns.

Centre sets up panel to address air pollution in Indo-Gangetic Plain

- With the entire Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP) staring at yet another winter besieged by air pollution, **the Centre has set up a coordination committee for air quality management in the region.** The ten-member panel will work on comprehensive mitigation measures to check air pollution across eight states and union territories (UTs) - Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- **A new coordination committee has been established by the Centre to manage air quality across eight states and union territories in the Indo-Gangetic Plain.** This committee will create and monitor an airshed

management plan. It involves officials from various relevant organizations and aims to integrate state action plans to reduce air pollution.

Astro Tourism campaign Nakshatra Sabha's second event held at Jageshwar, Uttarakhand

- **Nakshatra Sabha, an Astro Tourism campaign by Starscapes and the Uttarakhand Tourism Board, are holding its second event in Jageshwar, Uttarakhand, from October 4th to 6th.** Following the success of its first event at George Everest, Mussoorie in June, the Jageshwar edition saw participation from astronomy enthusiasts, adventurers, and travelers from across India. The event has been sold out with more than 100 participants coming from Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai besides Delhi / NCR. The event was inaugurated by renowned scientists Shylaja B and Dr. T V Venkateswaran. Shylaja, a distinguished astronomer and scholar, is known for her expertise in Indian astronomical history and celestial events.
- Dr. Venkateswaran, a senior scientist at Vigyan Prasar, has over two decades of experience in science communication, making complex scientific concepts accessible to the public. **Nakshatra Sabha is a year-long campaign running until mid-2025, featuring a series of immersive events at dark sky locations across Uttarakhand, including Benital, Pithoragarh, Nainital, and the famous Kartiswamy temple at Rudraprayag.**
- Each location for Nakshatra Sabha is carefully chosen to bring out the uniqueness of each region. Jageshwar, the current site of the event, is a perfect example of this. Nestled in the hills of Uttarakhand, Jageshwar is renowned for its rich heritage and spiritual significance. The town is home to over 100 ancient temples dedicated to Lord Shiva and other deities. These temples, constructed in the Nagara style of architecture, **are set against the breathtaking backdrop of dense deodar forests and the serene Jataganga River, creating a tranquil and mystical atmosphere. This historic and spiritual ambience makes Jageshwar an ideal location for a campaign like Nakshatra Sabha.**

India's first Airport based self-powered indoor air quality monitoring facility in Kerala

- Union Minister of State for Science and Technology (Independent Charge) **Dr Jitendra Singh unveiled Pavana Chitra, India's first Airport based self-powered indoor air quality monitoring facility at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport.** The off-grid air quality monitor is powered by indigenous indoor solar cells developed by CSIR-NIIST, crafted from locally available materials. Union Minister, while attending the event, released two books published as part of Science Heritage Project. The minister also launched six community projects under the Tribal Heritage Project of BRIC-RGCB and felicitated award winning farmers.

Government and Meta Launch 'Scam Se Bacho' Campaign To Combat Online Scams

- **Government of India and Meta have joined forces for the "Scam se Bacho" campaign to tackle the rising threat of online scams.** During the launch of the campaign in New Delhi, Information and Broadcasting Secretary Sanjay Jaju delivered the keynote address, describing the initiative as a timely and essential step toward safeguarding citizens from the increasing danger of online fraud. **This initiative by Meta is launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre. It aims to combat the growing menace of scams and cyber fraud.**

Kerala launches India's first mobile app feature to report traffic violations in real time

- **Kerala has introduced a mobile application that allows public to report traffic violations in real time.** This project is the first of its kind in India, enabling citizens to take an active role in improving road safety. To use the app, individuals can download the 'NextGen mParivahan' application from the Play Store.

The 2nd National Lighthouse Festival began with 'Lighthouse Tourism Conclave 2024'

- **On the day one of 2nd National Lighthouse Festival, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW) hosted the Lighthouse Tourism Conclave 2024 in Puri, with over 100 participants, including government officials, tourism experts, and conservationists, in attendance.** The event aimed to explore the vast potential of lighthouse tourism and strategies for preserving these maritime structures, blending tourism development with heritage conservation. Each lighthouse has become a beacon of both heritage and recreation, with modern

amenities such as museums, amphitheatres, children’s parks, and more. **In Odisha, five lighthouses—Gopalpur, Puri, Chandrabhaga, Paradip, and False Point—have been developed as part of this initiative to promote lighthouse tourism.**

Government Launches Kanda Express from Nashik to Delhi to Meet Onion Demand

- **The Government launched the Kanda Express Train from Nashik to Delhi to meet the onion demand before Diwali.** Upon arrival, the onion consignment will be distributed to wholesale mandis across Delhi-NCR. The Secretary added that more Kanda Express trains will soon be departed to Lucknow, Varanasi and different parts of North-East. **The government is in talks with e-commerce platforms and retail chains for retail distribution of onions.**

PM Narendra Modi participated in International Abhidhamma Divas

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the International Abhidhamma Divas celebration at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. The event also celebrated the recognition of Pali as a classical language by the Union government.** Abhidhamma Divas commemorates Lord Buddha’s descent from the celestial realm after delivering his teachings on the Abhidhamma, a core component of Buddhist philosophy.
- **The event, organized by the Government of India in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation brought together academicians, monks, and scholars from 14 countries.** Additionally, young experts in Buddha Dhamma from various Indian universities will participate. This year’s celebration holds special significance due to the recognition of Pali—the language of Buddha’s teachings—as a classical language.

15th Edition of ITU Kaleidoscope Academic Conference held in New Delhi

- **The 15th edition of the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) Kaleidoscope Academic Conference will begin in New Delhi.** The three-day event, themed Innovation and Digital Transformation for a Sustainable World, aims to bring together the brightest minds of academia, industry, and government to discuss cutting-edge developments in 5G, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, quantum communications, and other transformative technologies.
- **Under the theme, Kaleidoscope 2024 stands out as a key platform for fostering innovation and collaboration in digital transformation and telecommunications.** The event is being held as part of the ongoing ITU-World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly. This year’s Kaleidoscope Academic Conference not only highlights India’s advancements in 5G deployment but also underscores the country’s role in developing indigenous technologies for global markets.

Indore to get its first double-decker bus soon

- **A double-decker bus service will soon be introduced in Madhya Pradesh’s Indore, its mayor said, claiming that it will be a first for a tier-two city in the country. Bhargava claimed it is the first such bus in Madhya Pradesh and any tier-two city in the country.** With a capacity to carry 60 passengers, the bus will be operated by Atal Indore City Transport Services Limited (AICTSL), he said.

Developed India by 2047 & Third-Largest Economy by 2030-31 Likely To Dominate NDTV World Summit

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the ‘NDTV World Summit 2024 – The India Century’ in New Delhi.** Mr Modi said, he is looking forward to addressing the summit. Prime Minister said, India’s growth trajectory has truly captured global attention and our Yuva Shakti is taking our nation to new heights.
- **Mr Modi said, he will be talking about India’s key strides and why we remain a global bright spot. His vision for a developed India by 2047 and the third-largest economy by 2030-31 is likely to dominate his opening address.** The summit will also see the participation of Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley and former UK Prime Minister David Cameron among others.

Ayodhya Sets Guinness World Record with 25 Lakh Diyas Lit And 1,121 Vedacharyas Performing Aarti Together

- **Festival of lights Diwali is being celebrated with religious fervour in Uttar Pradesh. The state witnessed the Grand Deepotsav on the banks of Saryu River in Ayodhya.** Union Minister of culture and tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Chief Minister of state of Yogi Adityanath and other dignitaries along with thousands of devotees were present at the occasion.
- **Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that this year is special and divine for Ayodhya, as the 500-year wait ended this year on January 22 and Lord Ram returned to the newly constructed temple.** This is a moment for us to remember those who dedicated their entire life for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said that perspective of world towards India has changed. The pace at which the nation has progressed, the whole world is looking towards India.
- Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat offered prayers at Shri Ram temple and participated in Saryu aarti. Before Deepotsav, they also launched the tourism app and released the **book written by Ayodhya Mayor. State government created a world record by lighting more than 25 lakh earthen lamps or diyas at the ghats of Saryu River in Ayodhya.**

AP CM Chandrababu Naidu Launches Deepam 2.0 Scheme, Provides Free Gas Cylinders to Eligible Families

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu launched the Deepam 2.0 scheme in Edupuram, Ichapuram Mandal, Srikakulam district, as part of the “Super Six Promises” initiative.** This program provides free gas cylinders to eligible families, aiming to improve their quality of life. Marking the formal launch of the Deepam 2.0 scheme, **the Chief Minister flagged off gas cylinder delivery vehicles and personally handed over the first cylinder to beneficiary Ambati Shantamma.**

Assam’s first underwater tunnel

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated that Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the **Gohpur-Numaligarh tunnel project** is nearing completion. **Assam’s first underwater tunnel to be constructed between Numaligarh and Gohpur at a cost of Rs. 6,000 crores.**

Odisha considers scheme on preservation of temples

- **The BJP government in Odisha is planning a scheme to preserve and renovate famous temples and mutts across the state and provide funds for their day-to-day management.** The new scheme, whose guidelines are yet to be finalised, is likely to be named ‘Debalaya’ (temple). “The state government is seriously considering addressing the issues related to management and other long-standing problems of temples. The aspects related to temples and religious places, which have been neglected for years, will also be taken care of.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Translation Day 30 September

- **International Translation Day is an international day recognising translation professionals. It is celebrated every year on 30 September, which is the day of the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator who is considered the patron saint of translators.** International Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and cooperation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security.
- **30 September celebrates the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator, who is considered the patron saint of translators.** St. Jerome was a priest from North-eastern Italy, who is known mostly for his endeavor of translating most of the Bible into Latin from the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. **The theme for International Translation Day (ITD) 2024 is “Translation, an art worth protecting: Moral and Material rights for Indigenous Languages”.**

International Day of Older Persons 1 October

- **The International Day of Older People is observed on October 1 each year. On December 14, 1990, the United Nations General Assembly voted to establish October 1 as the International Day of Older People as recorded. The holiday was observed for the first time on October 1, 1991. This year’s theme, ‘Ageing with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide’** encourages the governments, policy makers and social services across the world for a concerted and sustained action to address the physical, social, psychological and health needs of older persons.

World Animal Day 2024

- **October 4 is observed as World Animal Day.** This day not only educates people about our most endangered species but also teaches how to protect and rescue them. World Animal Day was first commemorated on March 24, 1925, at the Sports Palace in Berlin, Germany, thanks to the initiative of cynologist and animal protection advocate Heinrich Zimmermann. His goal was to raise awareness about animal welfare, and over 5,000 people attended to show their support for the cause. **The theme for World Animal Day 2024 is “The world is their home too”.**

World Teachers’ Day 5 October

- **World Teachers’ Day is held annually on 5 October to celebrate all teachers around the globe.** It commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, which sets benchmarks regarding the rights and responsibilities of teachers, and standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment, and teaching and learning conditions. **The theme for World Teacher’s Day 2024 is “Valuing Teacher Voices: Towards a New Social Contract for Education”.** This theme focuses on the importance of listening to teachers and involving them in shaping educational policies and practices.

World Habitat Day 7 October

- **The Global Observance of World Habitat Day, marked on 7 October 2024, is under the theme “Engaging youth to create a better urban future.”** This event aims to address the challenges and opportunities of rapid urbanization by focusing on the active involvement of young people in shaping sustainable cities and communities. The observance focuses on how we can engage the new generation in planning their urban present and future through participatory processes and local leadership opportunities.

World Cotton Day 7 October

- In August 2021, the General Assembly of the United Nations **recognised the unique benefits of cotton by proclaiming 7 October of each year as World Cotton Day.** The objective of this global celebration is to raise the visibility of the cotton sector and awareness of the critical role that it plays in economic development, international trade and poverty alleviation. **The theme for World Cotton Day 2024 is “Weaving a Beautiful Future for Cotton”.**

World Space Week

- **World Space Week is an annual holiday observed from October 4 to 10** in over 95 nations throughout the world. World Space Week is officially defined as “an international celebration of science and technology, and their contribution to the betterment of the human condition”. **The theme for World Space Week (WSW) 2024 is “Space & Climate Change”.** The theme highlights the importance of space technology in addressing climate change, and how space exploration can help us understand and manage Earth’s climate.

World Post Day 9 October

- **World Post Day is an international day that occurs each year on October 9, the anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU),** which started in 1874 in Switzerland. The UPU was the start of the global communications revolution, introducing the ability to write letter to others all over the world. **The theme for World Post Day 2024 is “150 years of enabling communication and empowering peoples across nations”.** The theme celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and highlights the role of postal services in connecting people, businesses, and governments.

World Mental Health Day

- **10 October is World Mental Health Day.** The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. According to WHO, **the theme for 2024 is ‘Mental Health at Work’.** This theme emphasises the crucial role of addressing mental health and well-being in the workplace, benefiting not only individuals but also organisations and communities as a whole.

World Standards Day

- **World Standards Day is an international day celebrated on 14 October each year.** The day honours the efforts of the thousands of experts who develop voluntary standards within standards development organizations such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). **The aim of World Standards Day is to raise awareness among regulators, industry and consumers as to the importance of standardization to the global economy.**

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, 13 October

- **The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction is held each year on 13 October.** It focuses on the role of education in protecting and empowering children for a disaster-free future. Many disasters, often worsened by climate change, pose significant threats to the well-being of children and youth.
- **UNICEF reports that around one billion children worldwide are at extremely high risk** due to climate impacts and related disasters. In 2022, the number of children affected by flooding in Chad, Gambia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh was the highest in over 30 years. In addition to the risk of death and injury, children face further challenges in the form of disruptions in schooling, nutrition, healthcare, and protection issues in the aftermath of a disaster. **The theme for the 2024 International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) is “Empowering the next generation for a resilient future”.**

World Migratory Bird Day

- **World Migratory Bird Day is observed twice a year during the second Saturday in May and again on the second Saturday in October.** The goal is to raise awareness of issues affecting migratory birds and to inspire action around the world to take measures for their conservation.
- **The theme for World Migratory Bird Day 2024 is “Protect Insects, Protect Birds”.** The theme highlights the importance of insects as a food source for migratory birds and the decline of insect populations

International Day of Rural Women 15 October

- **International Day of Rural Women** was implemented by the **United Nations General Assembly**, and is celebrated every year on **October 15**, with the aim of highlighting the role and situation of women in rural areas.
- The theme for the **2024 International Day of Rural Women** is **“Rural Women Sustaining Nature for Our Collective Future”**. This theme highlights the important role that rural women play in building climate resilience, conserving biodiversity, and caring for the land.

World Food Day 2024

- The **FAO** hosted a **Global Ceremony on October 16, 2024, at its headquarters**. For World Food Day 2024, the main theme is **“Right to food for a better life and a better future.”** This theme emphasises the fundamental human rights to accessible nutritious, affordable and sustainable food to ensure everyone’s well-being and dignity.
- **World Food Day is celebrated on October 16**. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP) are the three Rome-based agencies that focus on World Food Day.

World Iodine Deficiency Day

- **World Iodine Deficiency Day, also known as Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, is observed annually on 21st October**. The day aims to raise awareness about the essential role of iodine in maintaining good health and to emphasize the consequences of iodine deficiency. This document outlines the importance of iodine in daily nutrition and its crucial significance in preventing iodine deficiency disorders.
- **Iodine is an essential component of the thyroid hormones, thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), which regulate metabolism and are crucial for fetal and infant development**. Found in foods and iodized salt, iodine exists in several forms, including sodium and potassium salts, inorganic iodine (I₂), iodate, and iodide. Iodide, the most common form, is quickly absorbed in the stomach and used by the thyroid for hormone production. Most excess iodide is excreted through urine

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage

- **The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage takes place every 27 October**. This commemorative day was chosen by UNESCO in 2005 to raise awareness of the significance and preservation risks of recorded sound and audiovisual documents. The day aligns with UNESCO’s Memory of the World Project, initiated in 1992, which aims to protect and provide universal access to cultural materials by addressing threats like chemical decay and obsolescence.

‘Run for Unity’, held on ‘Rashtriya Ekta Diwas’, the birth anniversary of Sardar Patel

- The **‘Run for Unity’, held on ‘Rashtriya Ekta Diwas’, the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, was organized this time on **29th October**. On **‘Rashtriya Ekta Diwas’**, programs to pay tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and National Unity Day pledge taking will be organized on **31st October**.

Assam Celebrates World Gibbon Day

- Aaranyak, with a mission of carrying out research, training and conservation activities in Northeast India carried out a **day-long awareness programme at Mariani College in Jorhat district of Assam on the occasion of International Gibbon Day, October 24**. The event was organized in collaboration with Department of Zoology, IQAC, Mariani College, Assam Forest Department specially Jorhat Forest Division with support from The Habitats Trust, IUCN SSC Primate Specialists Group, IUCN Section of small Ape.

Global Media and Information Literacy Week (24-31 October)

- **Global Media and Information Literacy Week is an annual event observed from 24th to 31st October to raise awareness and celebrate the progress achieved towards Media and Information Literacy for all**. During Global Media and Information Literacy Week, stakeholders around the world organize events and UNESCO co-hosts with a Member State the global conference gathering the Media and Information Literacy community.

- This year's theme is "The New Digital Frontiers of Information: Media and Information Literacy for Public Interest Information". It will address the transformative impact of emerging technologies such as Generative Artificial Intelligence and the new generation of digital content creators on the production and dissemination of public-interest information, highlighting both opportunities and risks.

United Nations Day 24 October

- **United Nations Day, on 24 October, marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter.** With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. There is no other global organization with the legitimacy, convening power and normative impact of the United Nations. No other global organization gives hope to so many people for a better world and can deliver the future we want. Today, the urgency for all countries to come together, to fulfil the promise of the nations united, has rarely been greater.
- **The first event called "United Nations Day" was a World War II Allies' day of solidarity and military parades launched by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt tied to US Flag Day on 14 June 1942,** six months after the Declaration by United Nations. It was observed in New York City as the "New York at War" parade, in London, and by the Soviet and Chinese governments.

World Development Information Day 24 October

- **In 1972, the General Assembly established World Development Information Day** to draw the attention of the world to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them. **The Assembly decided that the date for the Day should coincide with United Nations Day, 24 October,** which was also the date of the adoption, in 1970, of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

Infantry Day Observed Across Country

- **Infantry Day is celebrated across India on October 27th each year to honor the Indian Army's infantry and their contributions to the country.** Infantry Day is being observed across the country to acknowledge the contributions of Infantry, the largest fighting arm of the Indian Army. This day has a unique significance, as on this day in 1947, Infantry-men from the Indian Army became the first troops to land at Srinagar airport, forcing the invaders backed by Pakistan to withdraw. Infantry Day is celebrated every year to commemorate the landing of the 1st Battalion of the Sikh Regiment at the Srinagar airfield on October 27, 1947.

World Cities Day

- **World Cities Day is an annual United Nations observance day held on 31 October.** World Cities Day 2024, themed "Youth leading climate and local action for cities," emphasizes young people's advocacy for bold actions to tackle the climate crisis and the importance of turning ambitious ideas into tangible achievements.

World Stroke Day 2024

- **On the occasion of World Stroke Day (29th October 2024), National Institutes and Composite Regional Centres under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) organized** various programmes, to raise awareness about the severity of stroke, its prevention, and treatment. This year's objective is to reduce disability and mortality rates caused by stroke. **The theme for World Stroke Day 2024 is #GreaterThanStroke Active Challenge.**

National Unity Day

- **Every year, on October 31, India observes National Unity Day, also known as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.** This significant day commemorates the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a pivotal figure in India's struggle for independence and the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India. Renowned for his exceptional leadership and unyielding commitment to national integration, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is fondly remembered as the "Iron Man of India." National Unity Day serves as a reminder of his efforts to unite the diverse princely states into a single nation and fosters a spirit of solidarity among the people of India.

World Vegan Day

- **World Vegan Day is a global event celebrated annually on 1 November.** Vegans celebrate the benefits of veganism for animals, humans, and the natural environment through activities such as setting up stalls, hosting potlucks, and planting memorial trees. The Vegan Society promotes the slogan, ‘One World. Many Lives.’ to reflect the interconnectedness of all beings and the planet.

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

- **The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists is a UN-recognized international day observed annually on 2 November.** The day draws attention to the level of impunity for crimes against journalists, which remains extremely high globally.
- This year, the global commemoration of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists will take place on 6-7 November 2024 at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia under **the theme of Safety of Journalists in Crises and Emergencies.**



Career
Launcher

QUESTIONS

- Which of the following teams recently won the final of 95th MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup all-India hockey tournament?
(a) Indian Railways (b) Indian Oil Corporation
(c) Services (d) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited
- Who of the following recently launched a rescue mission for the two stuck astronauts at the International Space Station sending up a downsized crew to bring them home but not until next year?
(a) SpaceX (b) European Space Agency
(c) ISRO (d) CERN
- Who among the following recently became the first Indian designer to showcase his fashion line, World Collection, at Harrods, London?
(a) Sabyasachi Mukherjee (b) Manish Malhotra
(c) Gautam Jha (d) Mridula Sanghvi
- International Translation Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) 28th September (b) 30th September (c) 2nd October (d) 5th October
- The youngest individual featured in the 2024 Hurun India Under35s was _____.
(a) Akash Ambani (b) Deepak Bharadwaj
(c) Ankush Sachdeva (d) Gautam Singhania
- Recently, The _____ has launched a Detonation Tube Research Facility (DTRF) in the Combustion and Propulsion Laboratory of the institute to advance research and knowledge in combustion and propulsion.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
- Recently, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the Bidkin Industrial Area (BIA) in _____ to the nation, marking a significant milestone in India's industrial development.
(a) Assam (b) Punjab (c) Maharashtra (d) Haryana
- Recently, Justice Manmohan took oath as the chief justice of the _____.
(a) Gujarat High Court (b) Maharashtra High Court
(c) Rajasthan High Court (d) Delhi High Court
- Who among the following recently won Indonesia Grand Prix 2024?
(a) Jorge Martin (b) Pedro Acosta (c) Franco Morbidelli (d) Francesco Bagnaia
- Who among the following took over as the new Indian Air Force chief?
(a) Amar Preet Singh (b) Bipul Makheeja (c) D K Bhadoria (d) Ajay Kansal
- Who has been honoured with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony?
(a) Amitabh Bachchan (b) Shah Rukh Khan
(c) Mithun Chakraborty (d) Rajinikanth
- Recently, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal launched the _____ from the Mumbai port.
(a) 'Cruise India Mission' (b) 'Salil Mission'
(c) 'Bharat Jalseva Mission' (d) 'Cruise Bharat Mission'

13. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the water volunteers called 'jal sahelis' of _____ district whose efforts transformed the river Ghurari in the district.
(a) Jhansi (b) Ratlam (c) Pune (d) Jalore
14. Which of the following countries is set to become the first G7 nation to end coal-fired power production?
(a) Germany (b) United Kingdom (c) Japan (d) United States
15. Who was awarded the 2024 Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize by the Council of Europe?
(a) Osman Kavala (b) Nicolas Maduro
(c) Maria Corina Machado (d) Vladimir Kara-Murza
16. What is India's current rank in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2024?
(a) 81st (b) 39th (c) 34th (d) 21st
17. Which of the following states secured the first rank in the Urban Governance Index (UGI) according to the Praja Foundation's study?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Kerala (c) Odisha (d) Chhattisgarh
18. Which of the following regiments of the Indian Army is representing India in the KAZIND-2024 joint military exercise?
(a) Gorkha Regiment (b) Punjab Regiment (c) Kumaon Regiment (d) Rajput Regiment
19. Which of the following is India's first sub-machine gun (SMG) to be developed indigenously by the private sector?
(a) INSAS (b) AK-203 (c) MP5 (d) Asmi
20. Which team did India defeat recently to secure the SAFF Under-17 Championship title?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Nepal (c) Bhutan (d) Bangladesh
21. Which of the following states has recently decided to launch Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan' scheme?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
22. At IIFA awards 2024, who won the Best Actor award?
(a) Shah Rukh Khan (b) Salman Khan (c) Vicky Kaushal (d) Ranveer Singh
23. Who has recently launched its maiden State Chapter of Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in association with WE Hub and the Telangana government?
(a) NITI Aayog (b) Ministry of Finance
(c) Ministry of Youth Affairs (d) Finance Commission
24. Recently, _____ defence conglomerate Safran Group is willing to set up its first Defence Electronics unit outside France in _____.
(a) Germany (b) Canada (c) Japan (d) India
25. Recently, The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAPA) of _____ in the area of food safety.
(a) Brazil (b) Mexico (c) France (d) Germany
26. Recently, _____ government has signed Wales as one of the Country Partners for the upcoming 25th Edition of the Hornbill Festival.
(a) Nagaland (b) Mizoram (c) Manipur (d) Arunachal Pradesh
27. According to a recent report by Ask Capital, India is set to become a _____ digital economy by 2028.
(a) USD 1 trillion (b) USD 3 trillion (c) USD 5 trillion (d) USD 7 trillion

28. According to a report from the National Bureau of Statistics, _____ ranked first in driving world economic growth from 1979 to 2023
(a) China (b) Japan (c) India (d) France
29. Recently, which of the following states dedicated the newly constructed Babu Tower on the occasion of the 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi?
(a) Gujarat (b) Bihar (c) Assam (d) West Bengal
30. In Shooting, the Indian pair of _____ clinched Bronze after defeating Croatia in the Air Rifle mixed event in the ISSF Junior World Championship in Lima, Peru.
(a) Vipul Nayak and Rajiv Kochchar (b) Kaustubh Makheeja and Ketan Pareekh
(c) Gautami Bhanot and Ajay Malik (d) Naman Ahuja and Hitesh Sindhvani
31. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the 'Lal Tipara Gaushala' with Bio-CNG plant in _____.
(a) Guwahati (b) Patna (c) Mathura (d) Gwalior
32. The first woman to head Indian Armed Forces Medical Services is _____.
(a) Vice Admiral Arti Sarin (b) Vice Admiral Devika Gehlot
(c) Vice Admiral Mridula Sharan (d) Vice Admiral Meenakshi Lodha
33. Recently, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, from _____.
(a) Hazaribagh, Jharkhand (b) Cuttack, Odisha
(c) Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir (d) Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh
34. _____ Expressway is set to become India's first highway to implement Free Flow Tolling, a cutting-edge toll collection system that eliminates the need for traditional toll plazas
(a) Dwarka (b) Yamuna (c) Purvanchal (d) Awadh
35. Recently, The World Green Economy Forum was launched in _____.
(a) Abu Dhabi (b) Dubai (c) New Delhi (d) Ottawa
36. Recently, Claudia Sheinbaum was sworn in as first woman President of _____.
(a) Peru (b) Chile (c) Mexico (d) Argentina
37. The Indian government has launched the _____ scheme that has a financial outlay of Rs. 10,900 crore over a period of two years.
(a) PM E-VAAHAN (b) PM E-DRIVE (c) PM E-RIDER (d) PM E-SEWA
38. Recently, Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has announced plans to develop 1,270 megawatts of solar and hydroelectric power projects in _____.
(a) Bhutan (b) Bangladesh (c) Nepal (d) Myanmar
39. Which of the following has become the first National Park and Tiger Reserve in India to recently implement the Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Index for resorts and homestays?
(a) Manas (b) Jim Corbett (c) Kaziranga (d) Kanha
40. Recently, The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI), in association with the International Kho Kho Federation, announced that the first Kho Kho World Cup in 2025 will take place in _____.
(a) Nepal (b) Kazakhstan (c) Iran (d) India
41. In 2024, World Animal Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) October 1 (b) October 2 (c) October 4 (d) October 6

42. Who among the following recently won the China Open title 2024?
(a) Jannik Sinner (b) Carlos Alcaraz
(c) Andy Murray (d) Roger Federer
43. What recent decision did the Union Cabinet make regarding certain Indian languages?
(a) To confer the status of classical language to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali
(b) To abolish the classical language status of Tamil, Sanskrit, and Telugu
(c) To create a new language category that includes only English and Hindi
(d) To grant classical language status only to languages spoken in Maharashtra
44. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the next step of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan-_____.
(a) Mission Pyaas (b) Mission Amrit
(c) Mission Jal Jeevan (d) Mission Dhara
45. _____ is the closest single star to our solar system, located about 6 light years away.
(a) Barnard's star (b) Alpha Centauri Majoris
(c) Wolf 359 (d) Luhman 16
46. BPCL and _____ launched India's first green fuel ecosystem.
(a) Kandla Port Authority (b) Paradip Port Authority
(c) Mumbai Port Authority (d) Vishakhapatnam Port Authority
47. What are the two major schemes recently approved by the Union Cabinet aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture and ensuring food security?
(a) PM Kisan Samman Nidhi and Soil Health Card Scheme
(b) PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and Krishonnati Yojana
(c) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and PM Kisan Mandhan Yojana
(d) National Agriculture Market and Digital India Initiative
48. Recently, "_____ has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF), which will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide."
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Bangladesh
(c) India (d) Maldives
49. Recently, Nextracker, a global leader in solar tracker technology inaugurated India's first Center for Solar Excellence (CFSE) in _____.
(a) Hyderabad (b) Bengaluru (c) Kochi (d) New Delhi
50. Which of the following African countries recently suspended the online operations of a leading newspaper after it released cartoons featuring the president and referencing recent abductions and killings of dissidents?
(a) Tanzania (b) Zimbabwe (c) South Africa (d) Zambia
51. World Teachers' Day is held annually on _____ to celebrate all teachers around the globe.
(a) 2 October (b) 3 October (c) 5 October (d) 6 October
52. Which of the following countries is currently battling Marburg virus disease outbreak, a highly fatal hemorrhagic fever?
(a) Rwanda (b) Nigeria (c) Liberia (d) Uganda
53. Which of the following states will honour individuals, who have made exceptional contributions to the Silk Industry and related fields with the "Pandit Deen Dayal Updhyay Samman" award?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh
(c) Haryana (d) Chhattisgarh

54. Recently, The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a letter of intent enabling India to join the International Energy Efficiency Hub. As of July 2024, how many countries have joined the Hub?
(a) Twelve (b) Fourteen (c) Sixteen (d) Twenty
55. Recently, India's forex reserves breached _____ mark for the first time.
(a) \$500 billion (b) \$600 billion (c) \$700 billion (d) \$800 billion
56. India is to become the _____ nation worldwide to operate hydrogen-powered trains.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
57. Recently, the Centre approved the National Mission on _____ with a financial outlay of ₹10,103 crore.
(a) Milk Products (b) Edible Oil (c) Petroleum Product (d) Water
58. With the fragile ecology of the _____ in mind, a Union Environment Ministry expert panel has decided that it will not grant final clearances to pumped hydropower projects proposed in the region without site visits to ascertain their impact on the environment.
(a) Western Ghats (b) Eastern Ghats
(c) Lakshadweep (d) Andaman & Nicobar Islands
59. India's foreign minister S Jaishankar will attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in _____.
(a) Kazakhstan (b) Russia (c) China (d) Pakistan
60. The 26th Water, Energy, Technology and Environment Exhibition (WETEX) 2024 is held in _____.
(a) Dubai (b) New Delhi (c) Seoul (d) Tokyo
61. Recently, The roll-out of a new administrative set-up of 'co-districts' within Assam's district administrations began with the launch of _____ such co-districts across the state by different ministers.
(a) 12 (b) 18 (c) 21 (d) 26
62. Which of the following districts in Maharashtra has been approved for a name change to Ahilyanagar by the Union Home Ministry?
(a) Aurangabad (b) Osmanabad (c) Ahmednagar (d) Pune
63. Which of the following Indian cities got its first underground Metro with PM Narendra Modi inaugurating the first phase of the Aqua Line Metro, a 12.44-km stretch?
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru
64. The _____ government has announced a long-delayed debt restructuring agreement with its sovereign bondholders, in a major relief to the cash-strapped island nation.
(a) Seychelles (b) Sri Lanka (c) Maldives (d) Mauritius
65. What percentage of green hydrogen is being blended into natural gas for household cooking purposes in parts of Ahmedabad by Adani Total Gas Ltd?
(a) 1.0-1.1% (b) 2.2-2.3% (c) 3.5-3.7% (d) 5.0-5.5%
66. What percentage of India's power still comes from coal, as of the current energy scenario?
(a) 50% (b) 60% (c) 70% (d) 80%
67. What is the name of the fast-paced format introduced by the National Cricket League (NCL)?
(a) Super Sixes (b) Sixty Strikes (c) Power Play (d) T20 Blitz
68. "India is home to _____ of the global population of Asian elephants, found across South and Southeast Asia.
(a) 32% (b) 40% (c) 45% (d) 60%

69. Who among the following unveiled the logo and mascot for the Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) Chief Minister Nitish Kumar
(c) President Droupadi Murmu
(d) Sports Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya
70. When is World Habitat Day observed annually?
(a) First Monday of September
(b) First Monday of October
(c) First Tuesday of October
(d) First Monday of November
71. Recently, The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has granted the GI tag to _____ products from the Assam region, including traditional food items and several unique varieties of rice beer.
(a) Three (b) Four (c) Six (d) Eight
72. The _____ has begun the process of formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC), on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.
(a) Finance Commission (b) NITI Aayog
(c) Bureau of Indian Standards (d) Energy Efficiency Services Limited
73. 'Satark Park,' India's first structure dedicated to military intelligence operatives was inaugurated in _____.
(a) Bhopal (b) Hyderabad (c) Bengaluru (d) Pune
74. What event did Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath unveil in Prayagraj?
(a) Ganga Mahotsav (b) Maha Kumbh-2025
(c) Kumbh Mela 2023 (d) International Yoga Day
75. Which of the following peaks near the border change between Italy and Switzerland is noted as the highest summit in the Alps?
(a) Mont Blanc (b) Eiger (c) Matterhorn (d) Monte Rosa
76. Who is the head of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) that approved M. Rajeshwar Rao's reappointment?
(a) Finance Minister (b) Home Minister (c) Prime Minister (d) RBI Governor
77. What is the primary purpose of the Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORAD) developed by the DRDO?
(a) To enhance long-range missile capabilities (b) To replace legacy air defence systems like Igla
(c) To develop naval warfare technologies (d) To support cyber warfare initiatives
78. Recently, which of the following teams won the 62nd Irani Cup edition?
(a) Mumbai (b) Rest of India
(c) Services (d) Delhi
79. Who among the following became the first Indian taekwondo player to break into the top of the World Poomsae Rankings?
(a) Rupa Bayor (b) Poonam Yadav
(c) Manju Kumari (d) Kavita Devi
80. When is World Cotton Day celebrated each year as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly?
(a) August 21 (b) October 7 (c) October 12 (d) November 15
81. Recently, Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun have been jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for _____ 2024.
(a) Literature (b) Physics (c) Chemistry (d) Physiology

82. Which of the following Asia Pacific region countries is set to host World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for the first time in history of ITU?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) Singapore (d) India
83. The Maritime Exercise Malabar 2024 is set to commence in Visakhapatnam. Which of the following countries is **not** part of Malabar 2024?
(a) USA (b) Japan (c) Australia (d) Russia
84. Recently, Prakash Man Singh Raut has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of _____.
(a) Nepal (b) Bangladesh (c) Mauritius (d) Suriname
85. Which of the following countries recently voted in a referendum on building the country's first nuclear power station as the world's top uranium producer looks to boost its power generation capacity?
(a) Kazakhstan (b) Turkmenistan (c) Kyrgyzstan (d) Afghanistan
86. Who has been recently named new Chief of Staff of Britain?
(a) Bernard Trill (b) Thomas Key (c) Morgan McSweeney (d) Alex Greyhart
87. Recently, The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) entered into a Currency Swap Agreement with the _____ under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2024-27 in New Delhi.
(a) Nepal Monetary Authority (b) Maldives Monetary Authority
(c) Bangladesh Monetary Authority (d) Mauritius Monetary Authority
88. The iconic India Pavilion at the Expo City in _____ will host the first overseas campus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT).
(a) Paris (b) Dubai (c) London (d) Abu Dhabi
89. Recently, The Union Health Ministry doubled the monthly nutrition support under Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY) for _____ patients under treatment from Rs. 500 to Rs.1,000.
(a) Tuberculosis (b) AIDA (c) Malaria (d) Dengue
90. Who has been recently appointed as the permanent coach of the Sri Lankan men's national side?
(a) Sanath Jayasuriya (b) Aravind Desilva
(c) Arjun Ranatunga (d) Marvan Atapattu
91. Which of the following states will develop the Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS) as the state's second tiger reserve?
(a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Haryana (d) Chhattisgarh
92. Recently, The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics to _____ " for foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks."
(a) Pierre Agostini and Ferenc Krausz
(b) Alain Aspect and Anton Zeilinger
(c) Anne L'Huillier and Gustaq Westminster
(d) John J. Hopfield and Geoffrey E. Hinton
93. Recently, State-owned GAIL (India) and AM Green B.V. (AMG) have signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly explore setting up of solar/wind hybrid renewable projects up to _____ across the country.
(a) 1 GW (b) 1.5 GW (c) 2.5 GW (d) 3.25 GW
94. What is the unique feature of Iconic Hong Kong Sixes Tournament?
(a) Each team fields only six players. (b) It is played in a T20 format.
(c) The tournament is held annually. (d) Each team bowls ten overs.

95. Which of the following is **NOT** one of the states or union territories included in the air quality management committee's jurisdiction?
(a) Haryana (b) Bihar (c) Gujarat (d) Chandigarh
96. Under Rajasthan's land aggregation law, what percentage of the developed land will the original landowner receive as compensation?
(a) 10% (b) 50% (c) 25% (d) 75%
97. Which of the following tiger reserves may soon offer World's first ropeway over jungle?
(a) Kanha Tiger Reserve (b) Sundarbans Tiger Reserve
(c) Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve (d) Ranthambore National Park
98. What is one of the key methods Alex Lucitante has used to combat illegal gold miners in the Amazon?
(a) Establishing a military base
(b) Setting up an Indigenous guard and drone surveillance system
(c) Negotiating with miners directly
(d) Creating a mining company for his community
99. Which of the following countries is the current chair of ASEAN and is hosting the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and 19th East Asia Summit in October 2024?
(a) Singapore (b) Vietnam (c) Laos (d) Indonesia
100. World Post Day is an international day that occurs each year on _____.
(a) October 3 (b) October 5 (c) October 7 (d) October 9
101. Who was awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for computational protein design?
(a) Demis Hassabis (b) John M. Jumper
(c) David Baker (d) Jennifer Doudna
102. World Mental Health Day is celebrated every year on _____.
(a) 5 October (b) 8 October
(c) 10 October (d) 12 October
103. Which of the following companies recently launched India's first CNG motorcycle?
(a) Bajaj Auto (b) Hero MotoCorp
(c) TVS Motor Company (d) Honda Motorcycles
104. According to the "Free to Think 2024" report by the Scholars at Risk (SAR) Academic Freedom Monitoring Project, what is India's current status on the Academic Freedom Index?
(a) Completely free (b) Somewhat restricted
(c) Moderately restricted (d) Completely restricted
105. Which of the following aircraft carriers led the sea phase of the maiden Carrier Strike Group (CSG) exercise between the Indian Navy and Italian Navy off the coast of Goa?
(a) INS Vikrant and ITS Montecuccoli (b) INS Vikramaditya and ITS Cavour
(c) INS Vishal and ITS Alpino (d) INS Visakhapatnam and ITS Cavour
106. Which of the following Indian museums became the first to win the prestigious 'Hands On! Children in Museums' Award?
(a) National Museum, New Delhi
(b) Museum of Solutions
(c) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya
(d) Salar Jung Museum

107. Who became the youngest person to summit all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre peaks?
(a) Mingma Gyabu Sherpa (b) Tenzing Norgay Sherpa
(c) Reinhold Messner (d) Nima Rinji Sherpa
108. Recently, _____ president, Kais Saied, has secured a second five-year term with a landslide victory, although the election had one of the lowest turnouts in the North African country's history.
(a) Egypt's (b) Tunisia's (c) Malaysia's (d) Zambia's
109. Which of the following global index providers announced the inclusion of Fully Accessible Route (FAR)-eligible Indian government bonds in its Emerging Markets Government Bond Index (EMGBI) starting September 2025?
(a) JP Morgan Chase & Co. (b) Bloomberg
(c) FTSE Russell (d) MSCI
110. What was the significant achievement of Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper that earned them the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry?
(a) Developing a new form of DNA sequencing
(b) Creating a model for predicting protein structures
(c) Discovering a new element on the periodic table
(d) Engineering a novel drug delivery system
111. Who was awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature?
(a) Toni Morrison (b) Han Kang
(c) Gabriel García Márquez (d) Orhan Pamuk
112. Recently, Narendra Modi witnessed 'Phralak Phralam,' the Ramayan performance in _____.
(a) Laos (b) Vietnam (c) Thailand (d) Singapore
113. Which of the following countries was not elected to the UN Human Rights Council for the 2025-2027 terms?
(a) Benin (b) Bolivia (c) Canada (d) Qatar
114. Which of the following countries has recently joined South Africa's case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), alleging that the Israeli Gaza offensive breaches the U.N. Genocide Convention?
(a) Brazil (b) Bolivia (c) Argentina (d) Chile
115. India has recently joined which of the following countries in surpassing 700 billion US dollars in foreign reserves?
(a) United States, Japan, Switzerland (b) China, Japan, Switzerland
(c) Russia, China, Japan (d) United Kingdom, Switzerland, Japan
116. Which of the following is true about the UMANG app?
(a) It is available only on iOS platforms
(b) It provides access to e-government services across India
(c) It is primarily designed for cloud storage
(d) It is used exclusively for banking transactions
117. Who is eligible to apply for the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Scholarship Scheme for faculty members?
(a) Full-time faculty members teaching economics or finance at UGC or AICTE-recognized universities or colleges in India
(b) Only part-time faculty members teaching economics at universities in India
(c) Full-time faculty members teaching subjects like history or geography at any university in India
(d) Only faculty members from foreign universities
118. Recently, _____ became one of the most rapidly intensifying storms on record as it went from barely hurricane strength to a dangerous Category 5 storm in less than a day on a path across the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida.
(a) Hurricane Milton (b) Hurricane Thomas (c) Hurricane Intense (d) Hurricane Cello

119. The 38th National Games will take place in _____ from January 28 to February 14 next year.
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Haryana (c) Rajasthan (d) Gujarat
120. Recently, name the chairman of Tata Group and Tata Sons who passed away.
(a) Ratan Tata (b) JRD Tata (c) Noel Tata (d) Harsh Singhania
121. World Standards Day is an international day celebrated on _____ each year.
(a) 9 October (b) 11 October (c) 14 October (d) 18 October
122. Which of the following Indian regions recently sighted of aurora, marked by reddish or greenish light in the night sky and usually observed in the far northern regions?
(a) Ladakh (b) Sikkim (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Andaman & Nicobar
123. Recently, who among the following became the first Indian to Scale Mt. Shishapangma in China?
(a) Arjun Vajpai (b) Manek Gupta (c) Rishabh Manchanda (d) Chetan Godbole
124. Recently, A US-based aerospace company unveiled the final design of _____, touted to be the world's first commercial space station.
(a) Aus-09 (b) Haven-1 (c) Lord-2 (d) Devine-4
125. Who has been recently appointed as chairman of the Tata group's philanthropic arm Tata Trusts?
(a) Noel Tata (b) Jim Tata (c) Gautam Adani (d) Shantanu Somaiyya
126. In order to encourage wider adoption of UPI payments, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to increase the UPI Lite wallet limit to _____ and per-transaction limit to Rs. 1,000 from Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 500 respectively.
(a) Rs. 10,000 (b) Rs. 7,500 (c) Rs. 6,000 (d) Rs. 5,000
127. Name the first country in the world to announce an artificial intelligence safety institute (AIS).
(a) UK (b) France (c) Singapore (d) Germany
128. A transformative campaign will kick off in _____, aiming to establish the city as the world's first energy-literate community.
(a) Kochi, Kerala (b) Indore, Madhya Pradesh
(c) Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (d) Gulbarga, Karnataka
129. Recently, The Department of Atomic Energy has installed the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory in _____.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Ladakh
(c) Maharashtra (d) Gujarat
130. Bathukamma is a hindu flower-festival celebrated by the women of _____.
(a) Telangana (b) Gujarat (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
131. Recently, _____ launched world's first AI hospital.
(a) Japan (b) UK (c) USA (d) China
132. The Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, announced that the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution, on _____, will be commemorated with a nationwide "Constitution Glorification Campaign" in every village.
(a) November 21 (b) November 24 (c) November 26 (d) November 29
133. Recently, President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a three-nation African visit. Which country is **not** among the three African nations where the President will visit?
(a) Mauritania (b) Zambia (c) Algeria (d) Malawi

134. Recently, India became _____ Largest Supplier of Health & Nutrition Support to UNICEF.
(a) 2nd (b) 3rd (c) 5th (d) 7th
135. The World University Rankings 2025 edition includes 115 countries. India now matches the UK's total tally of ranked universities, with _____.
(a) 73 (b) 87 (c) 96 (d) 107
136. Indian billionaire Gautam Adani-led conglomerate has signed a pact to build and operate key electricity transmission lines in _____ for 30 years.
(a) Kenya (b) Zimbabwe
(c) South Africa (d) Dominic Republic of Congo
137. Recently, India's _____ and NASA's space observatories have captured dramatic eruptions from stellar wreckage around a massive black hole.
(a) AstroSat (b) BharatSat (c) IndiaSat (d) ISROSat
138. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is leading a parliamentary delegation to the 149th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in _____, scheduled to be held.
(a) Paris (b) Geneva (c) London (d) Stockholm
139. Name the first Indian IPS officer to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth International Classic Bench Press Competition?
(a) Shalini Kumar (b) Nilabuja Chowdhry (c) Devika Arora (d) Anita Roy
140. Which country tennis legend Rafael Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam singles champion, has recently announced his retirement from professional tennis?
(a) Spain (b) Italy (c) USA (d) Mexico
141. Recently, the 2024 Nobel Prize for Peace has been awarded to _____ organisation Nihon Hidankyo for its "efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again".
(a) German (b) French (c) Korean (d) Japanese
142. Which of the following countries has been recently declared free from trachoma by the World Health Organization (WHO)?
(a) India (b) Australia (c) France (d) Bangladesh
143. Which of the following parties has staked the claim to form a new government in Jammu & Kashmir?
(a) National Conference (b) Indian National Congress
(c) People's Democratic Party (d) Aam Aadmi Party
144. Recently, The Times Higher Education released the World University Rankings 2025. _____, topped the Indian universities by securing the 251-300 band in 2025 rankings.
(a) Indian Institute of Science, IISc Bangalore (b) Jawaharlal Nehru University, JNU Delhi
(c) Delhi University, DU Delhi (d) Jammu University, Jammu & Kashmir
145. Recently, the government of India has approved the up gradation of _____ to 14th Maharatna, Central Public Sector Enterprises.
(a) National Aluminium Company Limited (b) National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited
(c) Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited (d) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
146. Recently, the 19th Global Hunger Index (GHI) report for 2024 has ranked India _____ out of 127 countries, placing it among nations with 'serious' hunger problems.
(a) 104th (b) 105th (c) 107th (d) 111th

147. Recently, Aerospace startup Space Kidz India has launched _____, a global mission to train about 12,000 girls across 108 countries on space technology, aiming for a satellite launch under ISRO's Chandrayaan-4 mission, fostering international collaboration in space exploration.
- (a) "BharatSAT", (b) "SakshiSAT",
(c) "ShakthiSAT" (d) "ShikshaSAT",
148. World Migratory Bird Day is observed twice a year during the second Saturday in May and again on the second Saturday in _____.
- (a) July (b) August
(c) October (d) December
149. The book _____, which Brian Lara co-authored with Phil Walker, provides insights into those marathon innings and how the mind of a genius works.
- (a) Lara, the England Chronicles (b) Lara, the West Indian Legend
(c) Lara, the Cricket Great (d) Lara, the Cricket Hero
150. Recently, India's _____ beat Tung Ciou-Tong of Taipei in straight games to win the women's singles title at the Bendigo International Challenge badminton tournament in Bendigo, Australia.
- (a) Garima Mahanta (b) Anupriya Goenka
(c) Tanya Hemanth (d) Neetu Luthra
151. Which of the following factors did Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson emphasize in their research as being crucial in determining a country's economic prosperity?
- (a) Natural resources (b) Military strength
(c) Societal institutions (d) Geographic location
152. Which of the following river systems were included in India's first population estimation of riverine dolphins?
- (a) Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river systems
(b) Ganga, Yamuna, and Godavari river systems
(c) Brahmaputra, Kaveri, and Mahanadi river systems
(d) Indus, Tapti, and Narmada river systems
153. Recently, _____ government increased the amount under Maiya Samman Yojana from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,500 from December.
- (a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Jharkhand
154. Which of the following countries was the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India according to the latest census by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for 2023-24?
- (a) United States (b) Singapore (c) Mauritius (d) United Kingdom
155. Which of the following countries contributed the highest percentage of newly installed solar capacity in 2023?
- (a) United States (b) Germany (c) China (d) India
156. Which of the following countries has been significantly impacted by the IMF surcharges recently?
- (a) Germany (b) Argentina (c) Japan (d) Canada
157. Recently, India launched its first reusable hybrid rocket _____ developed by the Tamil Nadu-based start-up Space Zone India with Martin Group, from Thiruvudandhai in Chennai.
- (a) 'NEERI- 1' (b) 'SURI- 1' (c) 'RHUMI- 1' (d) 'SIMI- 1'
158. Who among the following defeated Novak Djokovic in the Shanghai Masters final, preventing him from securing his 100th singles title?
- (a) Roger Federer (b) Jannik Sinner
(c) Carlos Alcaraz (d) Jimmy Connors

159. Which of the following states won the first prize in the Best State category at the 5th National Water Awards, 2023?
(a) Odisha (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Punjab
160. When is the International Day of Rural Women celebrated every year?
(a) October 10 (b) October 15 (c) November 15 (d) September 20
161. Who is set to be sworn in as the first Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir?
(a) Mehbooba Mufti (b) Farooq Abdullah
(c) Omar Abdullah (d) Ghulam Nabi Azad
162. Which of the following Indian companies has been awarded the contract to build India's first indigenously manufactured bullet trains?
(a) Tata Steel (b) Larsen & Toubro
(c) BEML (d) Reliance Industries
163. When does Google expect to have its first small nuclear reactor (SMR) operational as part of its deal with Kairos Power?
(a) By 2025 (b) By 2030 (c) By 2032 (d) By 2035
164. Who will become the first Indian woman footballer to play 100 international matches in the SAFF Championship opening match against Pakistan?
(a) Bala Devi (b) Ashalata Devi
(c) Anju Tamang (d) Ratanbala Devi
165. Who is the first woman from India to scale Mount Cho Oyu, the sixth-highest mountain in the world?
(a) Bachendri Pal (b) Arunima Sinha
(c) Sheetal Raj (d) Santosh Yadav
166. Which of the following companies recently launched a first-of-class Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) for the Indian Navy from its Kattupalli Shipyard near Chennai?
(a) Larsen & Toubro (b) Mahindra & Mahindra
(c) Reliance Infrastructure Limited (d) Tata Trust
167. Which of the following countries has **NOT** ratified the Nile River cooperative framework accord?
(a) Ethiopia (b) Uganda (c) Egypt (d) Tanzania
168. The Damanganga-Vaitarna-Godavari river-linking project along with Damanganga-Ekdare-Godavari will resolve the problem of water scarcity in _____.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
169. Which of the following institutions is responsible for leading the Centre of Excellence (CoE) in sustainable cities under the government's AI initiative?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur
(c) All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar
170. By 2030, how many of India's operational coal-based thermal power plant units will be eligible for retirement based on their average design-life?
(a) 224 units (b) 350 units (c) 500 units (d) 643 units
171. Who was recently appointed as the president-elect of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO)?
(a) Soumya Swaminathan (b) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw
(c) Shubha Tole (d) Vandana Shiva

172. Who has been recently appointed as the national brand ambassador of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)?
(a) Deepika Padukone (b) Rashmika Mandanna
(c) Alia Bhatt (d) Priyanka Chopra
173. Who has been sworn-in as the new Chief Minister of Haryana?
(a) Naveen Jindal (b) Rao Inderjeet Singh (c) Dr Anil Vij (d) Nayab Singh Saini
174. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud proposed _____ as his successor recently.
(a) Justice NV Ramana (b) Justice Sanjiv Khanna
(c) Justice UU Lalit (d) Justice Indu Malhotra
175. What is the primary focus of PFC Infra Finance IFSC Limited (PIFIL), a subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation (PFC), which recently received approval to operate in IFSC GIFT City?
(a) Agricultural financing (b) Retail lending
(c) Power and infrastructure lending (d) Real estate financing
176. Which of the following countries has recently appointed Taye Astike Selassie as its new President?
(a) Zambia (b) Nigeria
(c) Liberia (d) Ethiopia
177. Which of the following institutions will support the Centre's AI Centres of Excellence (CoE) focus on healthcare, agriculture, and sustainable cities?
(a) AIIMS, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur, and IIT Ropar
(b) AIIMS, IIT Bombay, IIT Madras, and IIT Kharagpur
(c) AIIMS, IIT Delhi, IIT Ropar, and IIT Bombay
(d) AIIMS, IIT Kanpur, IIT Madras, and IIT Mandi
178. Recently, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in _____.
(a) Pune (b) Bhopal (c) Lucknow (d) Kochi
179. Who among the following former Indian women's cricketers has been inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in 2024?
(a) Mithali Raj (b) Jhulan Goswami
(c) Neetu David (d) Harmanpreet Kaur
180. Which of the following countries has built two reception centres in Albania, in the first scheme by a European Union nation to divert migrants to a non-EU country?
(a) France (b) Germany (c) Italy (d) Portugal
181. Who among the following is the winner of the 2024 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award helped over 400 displaced women achieve financial independence in Africa?
(a) Jin Davod (b) Nada Fadol
(c) Maimouna Ba (d) Deepti Gurung
182. How many countries will participate in the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup?
(a) 12 countries from 4 continents (b) 20 countries from 5 continents
(c) 24 countries from 6 continents (d) 30 countries from 7 continents
183. A celestial object discovered decades ago is actually twins orbiting each other. Scientists have puzzled over the object known as _____, the first known brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago.
(a) Billies 334C (b) Allies 456B (c) Gliese 229B (d) Nuwon 555H
184. Where was the First ASEAN-India Track 1 Cyber Policy Dialogue held?
(a) New Delhi (b) Bangkok (c) Singapore (d) Jakarta

185. The new labor rules in Saudi Arabia, under the digital platform Musaned, will benefit workers from which of the following groups of countries?
(a) Only European countries (b) Both African and Asian countries
(c) Only Asian countries (d) Only Middle Eastern countries
186. What is the purpose of launching the Kanda Express Train from Nashik to Delhi?
(a) To transport fruits for the festive season (b) To meet the onion demand before Diwali
(c) To deliver subsidized vegetables to farmers (d) To promote tourism in North India
187. Which university conferred an Honorary Doctorate in Political Science on President Droupadi Murmu during her visit to Algeria?
(a) University of Algiers
(b) Sidi Abdellah Science and Technology Pole University
(c) Algiers University of Technology
(d) Saint Andrew Institute of Polity and International Affairs
188. The Seventh Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly will be held in _____.
(a) Paris, France (b) Geneva, Switzerland
(c) New Delhi, India (d) Tokyo, Japan
189. Recently, In a 4:1 majority ruling, a five-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud upheld the constitutional validity of _____ of the Citizenship Act, 1955 (1955 Act) that grants citizenship to immigrants who entered Assam between January 1, 1966, and March 25, 1971.
(a) Section 3A (b) Section 4C
(c) Section 6A (d) Section 7B
190. Mera Hou Chongba is the cultural festival of solidarity of _____.
(a) Manipur (b) Telangana
(c) Sikkim (d) Assam
191. Name India's first Airport based self-powered indoor air quality monitoring facility unveiled recently at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport
(a) Thiruvananthapuram International Airport (b) Bhopal International Airport
(c) Lucknow International Airport (d) Chennai International Airport
192. Recently, Government and _____ have joined forces for the "Scam se Bachho" campaign to tackle the rising threat of online scams.
(a) Google (b) Instagram (c) Meta (d) LinkedIn
193. What constitutional principle did the 2022 Supreme Court judgment find violated by Section 3(2) of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016?
(a) Article 21 – Right to Life
(b) Article 14 – Right to Equality
(c) Article 20(1) – Protection against retrospective punishment
(d) Article 19 – Freedom of Speech
194. Recently, India has extended its first-ever rupee-denominated Line of Credit (LOC) under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) to the _____.
(a) Government of Mauritius (b) Government of Maldives
(c) Government of Seychelles (d) Government of Sri Lanka
195. Which of the following cities regained its title as the world's freest economy in the Fraser Institute's latest Economic Freedom of the World report for 2022?
(a) Singapore (b) Switzerland (c) Hong Kong (d) New Zealand

196. What is the name of the communications relay satellite to be launched by the ESA in 2026 as part of the Moonlight programme?
(a) Artemis I (b) Lunar Pathfinder (c) Galileo Pathfinder (d) Mars Express
197. Who did Arjun Erigaisi defeat in the finals to win the WR Chess Masters Cup?
(a) Magnus Carlsen (b) Maxime Vachier-Lagrave
(c) Ian Nepomniachtchi (d) Levon Aronian
198. Which of the following statements is true about the BRICS expansion in 2024?
(a) BRICS saw the addition of 10 new member countries in 2024.
(b) The new BRICS members include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
(c) BRICS represents 30% of the global population.
(d) BRICS was established in 2006 with six founding members.
199. Recently, _____ had entered into an agreement to acquire the personal loan book of Standard Chartered Bank, India to strengthen its position further in the retail credit market.
(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank
(c) Kotak Mahindra Bank (d) RBL Bank
200. Who was honored with special recognition for global humanitarian leadership at the 9th Conscious Companies Awards in Johannesburg, South Africa?
(a) Nelson Mandela (b) Mohanji
(c) Desmond Tutu (d) Malala Yousafzai
201. Who has been recently appointed as the Chairperson of National Commission for Women (NCW)?
(a) Neeta Sharma (b) Sapna Ghai
(c) Meenakshi Jha (d) Vijaya Rahatkar
202. Which of the following Indian states has recently launched a mobile app feature allowing the public to report traffic violations in real-time?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Karnataka
203. Recently, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the _____ National Learning Week at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi.
(a) 'Karmayogi Saptah' (b) 'Karmayoddha Saptah'
(c) 'Karmayani Saptah' (d) 'Satkarma Saptah'
204. Under the lighthouse tourism initiative, how many iconic lighthouses have been developed in India with an investment of ₹60 crore?
(a) 50 (b) 60 (c) 75 (d) 100
205. Which of the following naval exercises concluded off the coast of Visakhapatnam in October 2024, involving India, Australia, Japan, and the U.S.?
(a) Exercise Malabar (b) Exercise Kakadu
(c) Exercise Rim of the Pacific (d) Exercise Talisman Sabre
206. Who won the 'Icon of the Year' award at Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards 2024?
(a) Roshani Nadar (b) Isha Ambani
(c) Anu Aga (d) Priyanka Chopra
207. With over 15 million World ID holders and World App users already migrating to the new platform, _____ is the first blockchain designed with a vision to benefit humans.
(a) World Chain (b) World Triumph
(c) World Coin (d) World One

208. What does the new NASA research suggest about the conditions for photosynthesis on Mars?
(a) Photosynthesis can occur in Mars' atmosphere.
(b) Photosynthesis can occur only at Mars' Polar Regions.
(c) There is no possibility of photosynthesis on Mars.
(d) Photosynthesis may be possible below the dusty ice at Mars' mid-latitude regions.
209. Who recently became the first Indian woman to score 50 international goals in football?
(a) Meenal Lamba (b) Bala Devi (c) Aditi Chauhan (d) Ngangom Bala Devi
210. World Iodine Deficiency Day, also known as Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, is observed annually on _____.
(a) 15th October (b) 18th October (c) 21st October (d) 23rd October
211. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the monitoring group set up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to review the implementation of schemes announced by the Prime Minister and in the Union Budget?
(a) Rajnath Singh (b) Piyush Goyal
(c) Shivraj Singh Chouhan (d) Amit Shah
212. Recently, President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has decided to introduce India's Unified Payment Interface in the _____.
(a) Maldives (b) Mauritius (c) Malaysia (d) Indonesia
213. What initiative did Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announce to address the disparity between farm-gate prices and retail costs of horticulture produce?
(a) Krishi Chaupal (b) Kisan Credit Card Scheme
(c) National Agricultural Policy (d) Soil Health Card Scheme
214. Labour and Employment Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the _____, One Stop Solution for Unorganized Workers in New Delhi.
(a) eShram (b) eLabour (c) eKarya (d) eSewa
215. Recently, Which of the following Indian states has launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 to provide land rights to indigenous people?
(a) Assam (b) Punjab (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
216. What is the main theme of the 15th edition of the ITU Kaleidoscope Academic Conference?
(a) Quantum Computing Innovations
(b) Innovation and Digital Transformation for a Sustainable World
(c) Global Telecommunications Standards
(d) Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity
217. What position did Prabowo Subianto recently assumed in Indonesia?
(a) Vice President (b) Minister of Defense
(c) President (d) Prime Minister
218. In the Women's T20 Cricket World Cup, which of the following teams recently clinched their maiden Women's T20 World Cup title?
(a) New Zealand (b) South Africa
(c) West Indies (d) Pakistan
219. Who is the first Indian artiste to be featured on the cover of Billboard Canada?
(a) Arijit Singh (b) Neha Kakkar
(c) Diljit Dosanjh (d) Honey Singh

220. Who was declared the Player of the Match and Player of the Series in the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 final?
(a) Sophie Devine (b) Amelia Kerr
(c) Aimee Watkins (d) Lizelle Lee
221. Who received the Best Actor honour at the Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards 2024?
(a) Deepika Padukone (b) Alia Bhatt
(c) Kriti Sanon (d) Priyanka Chopra
222. What is the theme of the 16th BRICS Summit that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend in Russia?
(a) Global Economic Recovery and Security
(b) Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security
(c) Sustainable Development and Climate Action
(d) New BRICS Membership Expansion
223. What is the name of the Indonesia's Cabinet announced by President Prabowo Subianto, and what does it symbolize?
(a) Red and White Cabinet, symbolizing unity and strength
(b) Merah Putih Cabinet, symbolizing Indonesia's diversity
(c) Unity Cabinet, symbolizing the economy's growth
(d) National Cabinet, symbolizing the government's transparency
224. Who will serve as the executive chairman of Dharma Productions, focusing on the company's creative vision?
(a) Apoorva Mehta (b) Adar Poonawalla (c) Karan Johar (d) Rohit Shetty
225. Recently, Tata Group and _____ have announced the construction of a building in honour of the late Ratan Tata Building on the college campus in England.
(a) St Catherine's College, University of Oxford (b) Magdalen College, University of Oxford
(c) Somerville College, University of Oxford (d) Oriel College, University of Oxford
226. Recently, India quietly launched its fourth nuclear powered ballistic missile (SSBN) submarine at Ship Building Center (SBC) in _____ to strength its nuclear deterrence against its adversaries.
(a) Visakhapatnam (b) Kochi (c) Panaji (d) Paradip
227. Name the cyclone which made landfall along the Odisha-West Bengal coast between Puri and Sagar Island.
(a) Cyclone Mana (b) Cyclone Sana (c) Cyclone Tana (d) Cyclone Dana
228. Who recently won the gold medal in the men's S4 100m freestyle event at the National Para-Swimming Championship in Panaji?
(a) Kamalkant Kashyap (b) Balraj Kamat (c) Lakhan Singh (d) Narhari Gupta
229. Who was recently conferred with the CIF Global Indian Award by the Canada India Foundation for contributions towards creating a conscious planet?
(a) Dalai Lama (b) Sadhguru (c) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (d) Baba Ramdev
230. In which country did Indian archer Deepika Kumari recently win the silver medal at the Archery World Cup final?
(a) China (b) Mexico (c) India (d) Japan
231. Which country along with India has agreed to extend the validity of the Agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for a further period of five years?
(a) Pakistan (b) Afghanistan (c) Bangladesh (d) Nepal
232. Which country has recently completed the world's first fully unmanned road resurfacing project, covering an impressive 157.79 kilometres of expressway?
(a) China (b) India (c) Canada (d) USA

233. What was the main reason of the recently held referendum in Moldova?
(a) Joining the NATO alliance
(b) Securing Moldova's path toward European Union membership
(c) Adopting a new constitution
(d) Strengthening ties with Russia
234. Who was recently appointed as the first female Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of HSBC Holdings?
(a) Pam Kaur
(b) Georges Elhedery
(c) Mary Barra
(d) Christine Lagarde
235. Where will the 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games take place in 2026?
(a) Birmingham, England
(b) Sydney, Australia
(c) Glasgow, Scotland
(d) New Delhi, India
236. Recently, which district has been honored as the Best District at the 5th National Water Awards, 2023?
(a) Ganderbal
(b) Hisar
(c) Kapurthala
(d) Mewat
237. The United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) started in _____ to assess historic commitments to halt and reverse the loss of nature.
(a) Colombia
(b) Brazil
(c) Argentina
(d) Mexico
238. Which of the following best describes the significance of BSNL's new logo recently unveiled by Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia?
(a) Speed, Innovation, and accessibility
(b) Strength, Innovation, and reliability
(c) Speed, Reliability, and coverage
(d) Strength, Trust, and accessibility
239. Recently, Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the International Incoming Spoofed Calls Prevention System in _____.
(a) New Delhi
(b) Bengaluru
(c) Hyderabad
(d) Lucknow
240. Which of the following reflects the Supreme Court's view on secularism in the Constitution of India?
(a) Secularism was added to the Constitution through the 42nd Amendment in 1976.
(b) Secularism is not considered part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
(c) Secularism is an indelible and core part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
(d) Secularism curtails personal liberty and individualism.
241. How many judges constitution Bench of the Supreme Court pronounced its judgment on multiple States' challenge to the Centre's position that it has exclusive control over industrial alcohol?
(a) Five
(b) Seven
(c) Nine
(d) Eleven
242. Who was appointed as the next Chief Justice of Pakistan by President Asif Ali Zardari?
(a) Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry
(b) Justice Yahya Afridi
(c) Justice Nasir ul Mulk
(d) Justice Khosa
243. Who was elected as Vietnam's President during the ongoing 8th session of the 15th-tenure National Assembly?
(a) To Lam
(b) Nguyen Phu Trong
(c) Luong Cuong
(d) Nguyen Xuan Phuc
244. Recently, OpenAI has appointed _____, a business and public policy professor from Duke University, as its first-ever Chief Economist.
(a) Megan "Luthar" Gangopadhyay
(b) Alex "Nion" Ghosh
(c) Duke "Huron" Bannerjee
(d) Aaron "Ronnie" Chatterji

245. What recent approval did the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) grant to Paytm?
(a) To operate as a bank (b) To onboard new UPI users
(c) To provide loans to customers (d) To expand its international operations
246. Who among the following recently won the Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024 which was recently presented by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken?
(a) Urmila Chaudhary (b) Mansi Ganguly
(c) Mridula Goswami (d) Anjali Deepanshu
247. What is significant about the Line of Credit extended by India to Mauritius?
(a) It is the largest loan India has provided.
(b) It is the first rupee denominated Line of Credit under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS).
(c) It is a grant rather than a loan.
(d) It is specifically for agricultural development.
248. What is the primary benefit of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) for senior citizens?
(a) Cashless cover for outpatient services
(b) Cashless cover of up to Rs.5 lakh per year for hospitalization
(c) Free medicines for all senior citizens
(d) Financial aid for senior citizens' pensions
249. What is the main responsibility of the countries listed in Annex II of the UNFCCC?
(a) To reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a specified percentage
(b) To provide financial resources for climate action in developing countries
(c) To develop new technologies for renewable energy
(d) To enforce climate regulations globally
250. What historical milestone did LeBron James and his son Bronny achieve together in the NBA?
(a) They won an NBA championship together.
(b) They became the first father and son to play in the NBA together.
(c) They were the first father and son duo to score over 30 points in a game.
(d) They became the first father and son to coach an NBA team together.
251. What fundamental right did the Supreme Court highlight in its remarks concerning environmental protection under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution?
(a) Right to property (b) Right to a pollution-free environment
(c) Right to privacy (d) Right to education
252. Which district in Uttar Pradesh received the Best District award for exceptional efforts in water management and conservation?
(a) Agra (b) Banda (c) Varanasi (d) Lucknow
253. The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly known as COP29, will be held in _____.
(a) Baku, Azerbaijan (b) Astana, Kazakhstan (c) Manila, Philippines (d) Ottawa, Canada
254. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), takes place every _____ years.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five
255. Which of the following Indian ports is linked with 'Harit Shrey' scheme which encourages ports to introduce green vessel incentives to promote a green culture in ports?
(a) Mormugao Port (b) Kandla Port (c) Tuticorin Port (d) Kochi Port

256. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez jointly inaugurated the final assembly line of the Tata Advanced Systems Ltd's (TASL) C-295 aircraft facility in _____.
- (a) Vadodara (b) Bhopal (c) Ranchi (d) Kochi
257. What is the objective of the Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (LISA) mission?
- (a) To study gravitational waves in space-time (b) To explore the surface of Mars
(c) To detect black holes in nearby galaxies (d) To map the Earth's atmosphere
258. Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the _____ Livestock Census Operation in New Delhi.
- (a) 12th (b) 15th (c) 18th (d) 21st
259. Who won the bronze medal for India at the Under-23 World Wrestling Championship in Tirana, Albania?
- (a) Ali Abdollah Ahmadi Vafa (b) Rashad Mammadov
(c) Vishvajit Ramchandra More (d) Kohel Yamagiwa
260. Which of the following organizations co-hosts the global conference during Global Media and Information Literacy Week?
- (a) World Health Organization (WHO)
(b) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
(c) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
(d) World Trade Organization (WTO)
261. Recently, the foundation stone for India's First Purpose Built AI Data Center was laid in _____.
- (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Telangana (d) Haryana
262. Recently, India's first 'Writer's village' was inaugurated in _____.
- (a) Uttarakhand (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) Karnataka
263. Which of the following countries has launched "Mukaab", a monumental skyscraper set to become the largest building in the world?
- (a) Egypt (b) Indonesia (c) Malaysia (d) Saudi Arabia
264. Recently, NTPC has partnered with the Indian Army to establish a solar hydrogen-based microgrid at _____.
- (a) Ladakh (b) Tawang (c) Siachin (d) Bhuj
265. Which material is a primary component in Lyten's lithium-sulfur batteries, created from converted greenhouse gases?
- (a) Lithium Ion (b) Solid Carbon (c) Cobalt (d) Nickel
266. Where has India's first QR code-based coin vending machine (QCVN) been installed?
- (a) Hyderabad (b) Chennai (c) Kozhikode (d) Paradip
267. Which future mission is expected to include some of the biotechnology experiments from the DBT-ISRO collaboration?
- (a) Mars Orbiter Mission (b) Chandrayaan 4
(c) Gaganyaan (Crewed Mission) (d) Aditya-L1 (solar mission)
268. Who has made table tennis history as she recently became the first Indian to qualify for quarter-finals at a WTT Champions event?
- (a) Manika Batra (b) Deepa Luthra (c) Ajita Suryavanshi (d) Kritika Desai
269. United Nations Day, on _____, marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter.
- (a) 21 October (b) 23 October (c) 24 October (d) 27 October

270. Who among the following became the first Indian to win the Miss Grand International 2024 title?
(a) Deepika Rai (b) Rachel Gupta (c) Ashwini Chopra (d) Radhika Chhillar
271. Who has been recently appointed as the brand ambassador for the upcoming Jharkhand election by the Election Commission?
(a) Mahendra Singh Dhoni (b) Manu Bhaker
(c) Ishan Kishan (d) Deepika Kumari
272. Which of the following Indian cities recently won the 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024?
(a) Ranchi (b) Kochi (c) Bhopal (d) Bhubaneswar
273. Which of the following locations currently hosts the Assam Rifles bases in Aizawl?
(a) Zokhawsang and Sectretariat (b) Zodin Square and Khatla
(c) Raj Bhavan and Red Square (d) Tuikhuahtlang and Neon Triangle
274. Recently, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a scholarship scheme for all students of _____ across the state.
(a) Sanskrit (b) Awadhi (c) Bhojpuri (d) Bundeli
275. India is all set to launch its first-ever pod taxi soon in _____.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Haryana (d) Maharashtra
276. What rank did India receive in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index among 142 countries?
(a) 47 (b) 59 (c) 76 (d) 98
277. Which bank was recognised as the Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine of the US at its 31st Annual Best Bank Awards?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Canara Bank
(c) State Bank of India (d) Punjab National Bank
278. Which of the following projects is being developed by Google to enable artificial intelligence to take over a web browser, assisting users in tasks like conducting research and shopping online?
(a) Jarvis (b) Catalpa (c) Anexa (d) Biplav
279. Recently, At the Japan Para Badminton International 2024, India's star shuttler _____, won a gold medal in men's singles and a silver medal in men's doubles alongside his partner Dinesh Rajaiiah.
(a) Ramesh Narang (b) Sukant Kadam (c) Mahesh Rawat (d) Mukesh Razdaan
280. The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage takes place on every _____.
(a) 21 October (b) 24 October (c) 27 October (d) 29 October
281. Who has been appointed as the next Chief Justice of India?
(a) Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai (b) Justice Sanjiv Khanna
(c) Justice J.K. Maheshwari (d) Justice B.V. Nagarathna
282. Which of the following Indian states has become the first state to introduce sub-quota divisions within the Scheduled Castes (SC)?
(a) Haryana (b) Uttarakhand
(c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Punjab
283. The Government launched BRIC - National Agri-Food Biomanufacturing Institute (BRIC-NABI) in _____.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh
(c) Punjab (d) Chhattisgarh

284. Recently, the Global Ecosystems Atlas, has been launched at the 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) in _____ to provide a comprehensive and unified resource for mapping and monitoring ecosystems worldwide.
(a) Cali, Colombia (b) Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
(c) Buenos Aires, Argentina (d) Guadalajara, Mexico
285. Which of the following countries has recently finalised a 170 billion reais (£30 billion) compensation deal with mining companies BHP, Vale, and Samarco over the 2015 Mariana dam collapse?
(a) Brazil (b) Argentina (c) Chile (d) Peru
286. Recently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated the newly constructed passenger terminal building and a cargo gate named _____ at the Land Port in Petrapole, on the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal.
(a) 'Maitri Dwar' (b) 'Sahaj Dwar' (c) 'Mitra Dwar' (d) 'Saharsha Dwar'
287. Who has been recently ranked the top central banker by the US-based Global Finance magazine?
(a) Harvesh Kumar Seegolam (b) Shaktikanta Das
(c) Nguyen Thi Hong (d) Christian Kettel Thomsen
288. India is set to construct its first two nuclear-powered attack submarines, known as _____, marking a significant advancement in its naval capabilities.
(a) Nuclear Sharks (b) Nuclear Whales (c) Nuclear Amazon (d) Nuclear Class
289. Who among the following recently won the 16th edition of the \$400,000 Hero Women's Indian Open Golf?
(a) Liz Young (b) Jonathan Je (c) Ellyse Perry (d) Amelia Kerr
290. World Development Information Day (WDID) is celebrated on the _____ of October every year.
(a) 15th (b) 19th (c) 24th (d) 27th
291. Which of the following state governments has recently implemented a scheme Rajya Vishisht Yojana to curb the incidents of stubble burning?
(a) Haryana (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Punjab
292. When and where will India host the first World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit?
(a) Kerala, November 1-5, 2024 (b) Maharashtra, November 20-24, 2024
(c) Goa, November 20-24, 2024 (d) Assam, December 1-5, 2024
293. Which of the following two locations will be connected by Assam's first underwater tunnel, according to the Chief Minister's recent update?
(a) Tezpur and Dispur (b) Gohpur and Numaligarh
(c) Jorhat and Guwahati (d) Silchar and Dibrugarh
294. Recently, Georgia's ruling party has won the country's parliamentary elections. Name the Capital city of Georgia?
(a) Prague (b) Minsk (c) Bratislava (d) Tbilisi
295. Which country has recently introduced the world's first turtle islands?
(a) Australia (b) New Zealand (c) Brazil (d) Argentina
296. Which of the following countries was **NOT** among the top three importers of Indian military exports in the last financial year?
(a) United States (b) France (c) Armenia (d) Russia
297. What is the new loan limit under the Prime Minister Mudra loan scheme as announced in the Union Budget 2024-2025?
(a) ₹5 lakhs (b) ₹10 lakhs (c) ₹15 lakhs (d) ₹20 lakhs

298. Which of the following companies recently became the world's most valuable after a surge in demand for its supercomputing AI chips?
(a) Apple (b) Microsoft (c) Nvidia (d) Google
299. Which of the following universities recently launched the world's first large-scale AI model Earth observation satellite in late September?
(a) Peking University (b) University of Hong Kong
(c) Chinese University of Hong Kong (d) Tsinghua University
300. Which of the following cities in India is set to host the country's first-ever "Urban Downhill Race"?
(a) Shillong (b) Aizawl (c) Gangtok (d) Imphal
301. Recently, the third edition of the Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Seminar, _____, commenced in New Delhi.
(a) Swavlamban-2024 (b) Swabhimaan-2024 (c) Samwidhaan-2024 (d) Suvidha-2024
302. The Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, represents the pinnacle of which architectural style?
(a) Mughal architecture (b) Odishan temple architecture
(c) Dravidian temple architecture (d) Indo-Saracenic architecture
303. Who won the recent 2024 Ballon d'Or award in the male category in football?
(a) Lionel Messi (b) Kylian Mbappé (c) Rodri (d) Erling Haaland
304. The 2028 Summer Olympics, officially the Games of the XXXIV Olympiad and commonly known as _____.
(a) Los Angeles 2028 (b) London 2028 (c) New York 2028 (d) Stockholm 2028
305. What percentage of the world's tree species are threatened with extinction, according to the recent global assessment by BGCI and IUCN?
(a) 25% (b) 38% (c) 50% (d) 62%
306. Which of the following recently became First Indian Airline to Get DGCA Design Approval for Aircraft Interior Upgrades?
(a) Air India (b) Go Air (c) Indigo Airlines (d) Vistara Airlines
307. What are the four new components reportedly being included in the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) by the Union Government?
(a) Organic Farming, Greenhouse Cultivation, Aquaponics, Vertical Farming
(b) Aquaponics, Hydroponics, Vertical Farming, Precision Agriculture
(c) Hydroponics, Aquaculture, Soil Testing, Pest Management
(d) Precision Agriculture, Vertical Farming, Animal Husbandry, Mushroom Cultivation
308. Which of the following state government's scheme intends to resolve management issues and other longstanding problems faced by temples in Odisha?
(a) 'Debalaya' (b) 'Sewa' (c) 'Shivalaya' (d) 'Karmalaya'
309. Where will the first batch of Airbus C-295 transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force be assembled?
(a) Zurich, Germany (b) Madrid, Spain (c) Seville, Spain (d) New Delhi, India
310. World Cities Day is an annual United Nations observance day held usually on _____.
(a) 24 October (b) 26 October (c) 28 October (d) 31 October
311. Which of the following countries represented by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), has been recently included in the Steering Committee of the Asset Recovery Interagency Network-Asia Pacific (ARIN-AP)?
(a) India (b) Thailand (c) Laos (d) Singapore

312. Which state's Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park will become India's first zoo to earn certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for sustainable and eco-friendly infrastructure?
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Uttar Pradesh
313. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched health insurance coverage for all senior citizens aged _____ and above, without considering their income, as part of the flagship initiative Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
(a) 65 (b) 70 (c) 75 (d) 80
314. Recently, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science had inaugurated the new complex of India's first biomufacturing institute—_____.
(a) BRIC-VAN (b) BRIC-STAY (c) BRIC-NABI (d) BRICS-DAN
315. Which of the following countries recently becomes the second country after India in the BRICS bloc to reject Beijing's mega project (BRI)?
(a) Russia (b) South Africa (c) Brazil (d) Argentina
316. Which country at the U.N. COP16 biodiversity has launched a coalition with 20 other countries seeking to make "peace with nature," as leaders warned that the rapid destruction of the environment risks humanity's own extinction?
(a) Chile (b) Argentina (c) Peru (d) Colombia
317. Recently, The Institute of Actuaries of India (IAI) appointed _____ as its first woman president.
(a) Preeti Chandrashekhar (b) Anapurna Saini (c) Mridula Jha (d) Sreejita Anand
318. Recently, which of the following countries launched a spaceflight "Shenzhou 19"?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) South Korea (d) Thailand
319. Recently, Noted author and economist _____, who has been the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council chairman since 2017, has passed away at the age of 69.
(a) Bibek Debroy (b) Amrit Bagchi (c) Vipul Bharadwaj (d) Mehul Vikram
320. World Stroke Day is observed on _____ to underscore the serious nature and high rates of stroke, raise awareness of the prevention and treatment of the condition, and ensure better care and support for survivors.
(a) October 24 (b) October 27 (c) October 29 (d) October 31
321. The 9th edition of _____ Joint Special Forces Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 is to take place.
(a) India-Indonesia (b) India- Malaysia
(c) India-Seychelles (d) India- Nepal
322. Recently, the Government has approved the Central Sector Scheme _____ for providing Drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores.
(a) 'Namo Drone India' (b) 'Namo Drone Sewa' (c) 'Namo Drone Didi' (d) 'Namo Drone Bharat'
323. Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Gujarat's largest waste to energy plant in _____.
(a) Bhavnagar (b) Jamnagar (c) Ahmedabad (d) Bharuch
324. Which of the following cities recently set Guinness World Record with 25 Lakh Diyas Lit and 1,121 Vedacharyas Performing Aarti Together?
(a) Varanasi (b) Chitrakoot (c) Ayodhya (d) Ahmedabad
325. Which country foreign ministry had recalled its ambassador to Brazil for consultations, after Brazil's government vetoed its application to join the BRICS group of emerging economies?
(a) Chile (b) Peru (c) Venezuela (d) Italy

326. What is the objective of the Securities and Exchange Board of India's (Sebi) proposed changes in the regulatory filing procedure for new fund offers (NFOs)?
(a) To increase the number of mutual funds available to investors.
(b) To allow fund houses to maintain the secrecy of innovative ideas in their schemes.
(c) To reduce the fees associated with launching new funds.
(d) To simplify the investment process for retail investors.
327. What was the primary purpose of the National Internet Exchange of India's (NIXI) new office inauguration at the World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi?
(a) To launch a new internet service provider
(b) To strengthen India's internet infrastructure and foster digital growth
(c) To introduce a new technology for cyber security
(d) To hold a seminar on internet safety
328. What percentage of the world's tree species are reported to be threatened with extinction according to the new global assessment?
(a) 25% (b) 30% (c) 38% (d) 50%
329. Which of the following countries recently published world's first international standard for stem cell data?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) India (d) China
330. Every year, on _____, India observes National Unity Day, also known as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.
(a) October 24 (b) October 27 (c) October 29 (d) October 31
331. When is the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists observed?
(a) May 3 (b) November 2 (c) September 28 (d) December 10
332. Where is ISRO's first analog space mission, which includes the Hab-1 habitat, being conducted?
(a) Gangtok, Sikkim (b) Leh, Ladakh
(c) Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands (d) Shimla, Himachal Pradesh
333. The 15th edition of India-US joint Special Forces Exercise _____ is set to be held in US.
(a) VAJRA PRAHAR (b) GUARDIAN PACIFIC
(c) DRAGON KING (d) NOMADIC ELEPHANT
334. Which of the following states recently launched the Deepam 2.0 scheme, as part of the "Super Six Promises" initiative?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana
(c) Maharashtra (d) Tamil Nadu
335. Who was recently sworn in as Kenya's new deputy president after his predecessor was impeached?
(a) Uhuru Kenyatta (b) Raila Odinga
(c) Kindiki Kithure (d) William Ruto
336. Where were the recent bilateral consultations between India and Albania held?
(a) New Delhi (b) Tirana (c) Mumbai (d) Durres
337. To commemorate its 30 years of operations, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) recently launched a mobile app and websites in how many additional languages?
(a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 11 (d) 14
338. Who among the following conceded defeat in the recent Botswana general election, marking a significant shift in the country's political landscape?
(a) Mokgweetsi Masisi (b) Duma Boko (c) Ian Khama (d) Festus Mogae

339. In a significant move to bridge the digital divide in rural India, the government is set to launch the Digital India Common Service Center (DICSC) project, starting with _____ in Uttar Pradesh.
(a) Pilibhit and Gorakhpur (b) Lakimpur Khiri and Deoria
(c) Bahraich and Gonda (d) Sant Kabir Nagar and Banda
340. The inaugural Climate and Health Africa Conference (CHAC 2024), a meeting that brings Africa into the global dialogue on the intersection of climate change and health is to be held in _____.
(a) Durban (b) Harare (c) Johannesburg (d) Tbilisi
341. Which city is to host the world's first '11K Footpath Run'?
(a) Bengaluru (b) Lucknow (c) Hyderabad (d) Kochi
342. Which of the following states is **not** mentioned in the draft notification as part of the Western Ghats eco-sensitive area (ESA)?
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Kerala
343. Who among the following leads the Commission of Inquiry examining SC status for converts to religions outside of Sikhism and Buddhism?
(a) Justice Dipak Misra (b) Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud
(c) Former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan (d) Justice N V Ramana
344. Recently, India's updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) was launched in _____.
(a) Colombia (b) Mexico (c) Italy (d) Sri Lanka
345. Which of the following recently developed the LignoSat, the world's first wooden satellite?
(a) NASA and MIT (b) Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry
(c) European Space Agency and Airbus (d) Tokyo Institute of Technology and Honda
346. Which of the following countries recently held its first joint military drills with Russia and has recently appointed Prabowo Subianto as its new President?
(a) Malaysia (b) Philippines (c) Fiji (d) Indonesia
347. In a first, _____ will rope in a bank to collect user fee on a highway stretch, marking a paradigm shift in the tolling system in the country.
(a) NHAI (b) Ircon International (c) RITES Limited (d) CPWD
348. Name the Indian who recently clinched a gold medal at the U19 World Boxing Championships in Colorado, USA.
(a) Krisha Verma (b) Bipul Yadav (c) Prashant Mahadev (d) Nikhil Kamble
349. What was Lahore's pollution reading, recorded near the Pakistan-India border that placed it at the top of the world's most polluted cities?
(a) 500 (b) 1000 (c) 1500 (d) 1900
350. World Vegan Day is a global event celebrated annually on _____.
(a) 16 October (b) 22 October (c) 25 October (d) 1 November

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Indian Railways team gained 5-3 victory over Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) in the final of the 95th MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup all-India hockey tournament.
2. a SpaceX launched a rescue mission for the two stuck astronauts at the International Space Station sending up a downsized crew to bring them home but not until next year.
3. b Manish Malhotra becomes the first Indian designer to showcase his fashion line, World Collection, at Harrods, London.
4. b International Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and cooperation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security. 30 September celebrates the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator, who is considered the patron saint of translators.
5. c The youngest individual featured in the 2024 Hurun India Under35s was Sharechat's Ankush Sachdeva. Akash Ambani stood at 32nd position in the list.
6. c The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur has launched a Detonation Tube Research Facility (DTRF) in the Combustion and Propulsion Laboratory of the institute to advance research and knowledge in combustion and propulsion.
7. c Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the Bidkin Industrial Area (BIA) in Maharashtra to the nation, marking a significant milestone in India's industrial development.
8. d Justice Manmohan took oath as the chief justice of the Delhi High Court.
9. a Jorge Martin of Pramac Racing won the crash-filled Indonesia Grand Prix in Mandalika, leading from start to finish to secure his third victory of the season.
10. a Ace test pilot Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh takes over as the new Indian Air Force chief.
11. c Mithun Chakraborty has been selected for the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, which is the highest honor in Indian cinema, for his significant contribution to the industry. This award is being presented to him at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony.
12. d Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal launched the 'Cruise Bharat Mission' from the Mumbai port.
13. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the water volunteers called 'jal saheli' of Jhansi district whose efforts transformed the river Ghurari of Babina area in the district.
14. b Britain is on track to become the first G7 country to completely end coal-fired power production with the closure of its last coal plant, Uniper's Ratcliffe-on-Soar. The country has significantly reduced its reliance on coal, dropping from almost 30% of its electricity production in 2015 to just over 1% last year.
15. c Maria Corina Machado, a Venezuelan opposition figure, was awarded the 2024 Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize for her struggle for democracy under the regime of President Nicolas Maduro. She became the first Latin American to win this prestigious prize.
16. b India has shown significant progress in the Global Innovation Index (GII), improving from 81st in 2015 to 39th in 2024, reflecting its growing leadership in innovation among global economies.
17. b Kerala ranked first in the Urban Governance Index (UGI), scoring 59.31 out of 100, as noted in the two-year-long study by the Praja Foundation. Odisha came second with 55.10.
18. c The Indian Armed Forces are represented by a battalion of the KUMAON Regiment in the KAZIND-2024 joint military exercise. This regiment is actively involved in the exercise to improve interoperability and share best practices in conducting joint operations.

19. d The Asmi sub-machine gun (SMG) is India's first indigenously developed SMG by a private sector company. Lokesh Machines Limited successfully delivered the first major order for 550 units to the Northern Command of the Indian Army.
20. d India won the SAFF Under-17 Championship title by defeating Bangladesh 2-0 in the final match, which was held at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu, Bhutan.
21. c In a major step towards empowering the youth of Uttar Pradesh and create entrepreneurship, the Yogi Adityanath government has decided to launch Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan' scheme.
22. a Shah Rukh Khan won the Best Actor award for his performance in Jawan, Rani Mukerji took home the trophy for Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway, and the Best Director award went to Vidhu Vinod Chopra for the Vikrant Massey-starrer 12th Fail.
23. a NITI Aayog has launched its maiden State Chapter of Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in association with WE Hub and the Telangana government.
24. d French defence conglomerate Safran Group has indicated to India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval that it is willing to set up its first Defence Electronics unit outside France in India, pointing out that this a sign of the strategic relationship between the two countries becoming deeper.
25. a The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAPA) of Brazil in the area of food safety.
26. a Nagaland government has signed Wales as one of the Country Partners for the upcoming 25th Edition of the Hornbill Festival.
27. a A recent report by Ask Capital says with enablers like deep internet penetration efficient and cheap 4G and 5G services along with government digital initiatives India is set to become a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2028.
28. a China ranks first in driving world economic growth from 1979 to 2023
29. b In Bihar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar dedicated the newly constructed Bapu Tower on the occasion of the 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Patna.
30. c In Shooting, the Indian pair of Gautami Bhanot and Ajay Malik clinched Bronze after defeating Croatia 17-9 in the Air Rifle mixed event in the ISSF Junior World Championship in Lima, Peru.
31. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the 'Lal Tipara Gaushala' with Bio-CNG plant in Gwalior and launched various development projects of Rs. 685 crore in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of Swachhta Diwas.
32. a Vice Admiral Arti Sarin was appointed as the next Director General of the Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS).
33. a Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand.
34. d The Dwarka Expressway in New Delhi is set to become India's first highway to implement Free Flow Tolling, a cutting-edge toll collection system that eliminates the need for traditional toll plazas.
35. b The World Green Economy Forum was launched in Dubai, bringing together global leaders and experts to address pressing environmental challenges.
36. c Claudia Sheinbaum was sworn in as Mexico's first woman president vowing to bolster women's rights and ensure Latin America's No. 2 economy remains a secure destination for international investment.
37. b The government launched the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) scheme that has a financial outlay of Rs. 10,900 crore over a period of two years.
38. a Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has entered Bhutan, announcing plans to develop 1,270 megawatts of solar and hydroelectric power projects in the country.
39. c Kaziranga has become the first National Park and Tiger Reserve in India to implement the Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Index for resorts and homestays.

40. d The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI), in association with the International Kho Kho Federation, announced that the first Kho Kho World Cup in 2025 will take place in India.
41. c World Animal Day is an international day of action for animal rights and welfare celebrated annually on October 4, the feast day of Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals.
42. b Carlos Alcaraz, the second-seeded player from Spain, won his first China Open title by defeating defending champion and world No. 1 Jannik Sinner with a score of 6-7, 6-4, 7-6.
43. a The Union Cabinet approved the conferring of classical language status to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali languages during a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This decision highlights the importance of these languages in preserving India's cultural heritage.
44. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the next step of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan – Mission Amrit.
45. a Barnard's star is the closest single star to our solar system, located about 6 light years away.
46. c BPCL and Mumbai Port Authority launched India's first green fuel ecosystem.
47. b The Union Cabinet approved two major schemes, namely the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) to promote sustainable agriculture and the Krishonnati Yojana (KY) to achieve food security for self-sufficiency.
48. c "India has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF), which will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide."
49. a Nextracker, a global leader in solar tracker technology inaugurated India's first Center for Solar Excellence (CFSE) in Hyderabad.
50. a Tanzania suspended the online operations of a leading newspaper after it released cartoons featuring the president and referencing recent abductions and killings of dissidents.
51. c World Teachers' Day is held annually on 5 October to celebrate all teachers around the globe.
52. a Rwanda is currently battling Marburg virus disease outbreak, a highly fatal hemorrhagic fever.
53. a The UP government will honour individuals, who have made exceptional contributions to the Silk Industry and related fields with the "Pandit Deen Dayal Updhyay Samman" award.
54. c The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a letter of intent enabling India to join the International Energy Efficiency Hub. As of July 2024, sixteen countries, including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, have joined the Hub.
55. c India's forex reserves jumped \$12.58 billion on week, breaching \$700 billion mark for the first time, standing at \$704.88 billion according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
56. d India will join Germany, France, Sweden, and China as the fifth nation worldwide to operate hydrogen-powered trains.
57. b The Centre approved the National Mission on Edible Oils–Oilseeds (NMEO–Oilseeds), with a financial outlay of `10,103 crore.
58. a With the fragile ecology of the Western Ghats in mind, a Union Environment Ministry expert panel has decided that it will not grant final clearances to pumped hydropower projects proposed in the region without site visits to ascertain their impact on the environment.
59. d India's foreign minister S Jaishankar will attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Pakistan.
60. a The 26th Water, Energy, Technology and Environment Exhibition (WETEX) 2024 is held at the Dubai World Trade Centre, featuring a strong Indian presence with 29 leading companies participating in the Indian pavilion.

- 61. c** The roll-out of a new administrative set-up of ‘co-districts’ within Assam’s district administrations began with the launch of 21 such co-districts across the state by different ministers.
- 62. c** The Union Home Ministry has approved the name change of Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra to Ahilyanagar. This renaming honors Ahilyabai Holkar, an 18th-century ruler of Indore who hailed from this district.
- 63. a** Eight years in the making, Mumbai finally got its first underground Metro with PM Narendra Modi inaugurating the first phase of the Aqua Line Metro, a 12.44-km stretch that will run from Aarey to Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC).
- 64. b** The Sri Lankan government has announced a long-delayed debt restructuring agreement with its sovereign bondholders, in a major relief to the cash-strapped island nation.
- 65. b** Adani Total Gas Ltd is blending 2.2-2.3% of green hydrogen into natural gas supplies in parts of Ahmedabad, specifically in Shantigram, as part of efforts to reduce emissions and contribute to net-zero goals. This mixture reduces carbon emissions compared to using natural gas alone for household cooking purposes.
- 66. c** India continues to rely heavily on coal for its energy production, with 70% of its power still being sourced from coal. Despite its efforts to shift towards cleaner energy and its growing role in the global energy transition, coal remains a dominant player in meeting the country’s energy demands.
- 67. b** The NCL has introduced an innovative format called Sixty Strikes, which is designed to be a fast-paced version of cricket. This format aims to make the game more exciting and appealing to a wider audience, especially in the United States.
- 68. d** “India is home to 60% of the global population of Asian elephants, found across South and Southeast Asia.
- 69. b** The logo and mascot for the Women’s Asian Champions Trophy-2024 were unveiled by Bihar’s Chief Minister, Nitish Kumar, during a ceremony in Rajgir. This highlights Bihar’s active role in hosting this international sporting event.
- 70. b** World Habitat Day is celebrated annually on the first Monday of October. This day focuses on raising awareness about the state of human settlements and emphasizes the importance of adequate shelter as a fundamental right for all.
- 71. d** The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has granted the GI tag to eight products from the Assam region, including traditional food items and several unique varieties of rice beer.
- 72. c** The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has begun the process of formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC), on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.
- 73. d** “Satark Park,’ the country’s first structure dedicated to military intelligence operatives, was inaugurated in Pune.
- 74. b** Yogi Adityanath unveiled the logo of Maha Kumbh-2025 during his visit to Prayagraj. The Kumbh Mela is a significant religious festival, and the unveiling of its logo marks the beginning of preparations for this important event.
- 75. c** The border changes between Italy and Switzerland will occur near the iconic Matterhorn Peak, which is recognized as the highest summit in the Alps. This information emphasizes the geographical significance of the area affected by the changes in the national border.
- 76. c** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), which approved the reappointment of M. Rajeshwar Rao, is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- 77. b** The VSHORAD is specifically designed to fulfill a critical requirement for the Indian Army by replacing the older Igla systems, which have been used for air defence but are now considered outdated.
- 78. a** The 62nd Irani Cup edition was completed at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow with 2023-24 Ranji Trophy champions Mumbai defeating the Rest of India (RoI).
- 79. a** Rupa Bayor made history by becoming the first Indian taekwondo player to enter the top of the World Poomsae Rankings, showcasing her outstanding skills and achievements in the sport.

- 80. b** In August 2021, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the unique benefits of cotton and proclaimed October 7 as World Cotton Day. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of cotton in economic development, international trade, and poverty alleviation.
- 81. d** Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun have been jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology 2024, the Nobel Academy at the Karolinska Institute announced.
- 82. d** The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) will be held in New Delhi from October 14 to 24, 2024. This will be the first time in the history of ITU that this prestigious global tech event is happening in Asia-Pacific region.
- 83. d** Maritime Exercise Malabar 2024 is set to commence in Visakhapatnam. The exercise, which is hosted by India this year, will also have participation from Quad nations, which include Australia, Japan, and the US.
- 84. a** Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel appointed Prakash Man Singh Raut as the new Chief Justice of the country.
- 85. a** Kazakhstan voted in a referendum on building the country's first nuclear power station as the world's top uranium producer looks to boost its power generation capacity.
- 86. c** Morgan McSweeney, the Labour Party's former campaign director who masterminded July's general election landslide for the party, will replace Sue Gray as the new Chief of Staff.
- 87. b** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) entered into a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2024-27 in New Delhi.
- 88. b** The iconic India Pavilion at the Expo City in Dubai will host the first overseas campus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT).
- 89. a** The Union Health Ministry doubled the monthly nutrition support under Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY) for tuberculosis (TB) patients under treatment from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000.
- 90. a** Former Sri Lanka captain Sanath Jayasuriya has been appointed as the permanent coach of the Sri Lankan men's national side.
- 91. a** The Bihar government will develop the Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS) as the state's second tiger reserve.
- 92. d** The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics to John J. Hopfield and Geoffrey E. Hinton "for foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks."
- 93. c** State-owned GAIL (India) and AM Green B.V. (AMG) have signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly explore setting up of solar/wind hybrid renewable projects up to 2.5 GW across the country.
- 94. a** The tournament features a unique format where each team is allowed to field only six players, which distinguishes it from T20 or T10 formats. In this tournament, aside from the bowler and the keeper, only four fielders are allowed on the field.
- 95. c** The coordination committee covers eight states and union territories, which include Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. Gujarat is not part of this list, making option C the correct answer.
- 96. c** Under Rajasthan's land aggregation law stipulates that the original landowner will receive a minimum of 25% of the developed land as compensation. This portion can be used for personal purposes, leased, or sold to third parties, offering flexibility and potential financial benefits for the landowner.
- 97. c** Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve (TATR) is planning to introduce a ropeway service that will allow tourists to view tigers and other wildlife from above the dense forests, enhancing tourism without disturbing the natural habitat.
- 98. b** Alex Lucitante, from the Cofan Avie ethnic group, spearheaded his community's fight against illegal gold miners by establishing an Indigenous guard and a drone surveillance system to monitor and protect their lands. This initiative was crucial in their battle against land exploitation.
- 99. c** Laos is the current chair of ASEAN in 2024 and is hosting both the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit. The chair of ASEAN rotates annually among member states, and the host country plays a key role in organizing these summits.

- 100. d** World Post Day is an international day that occurs each year on October 9.
- 101. c** David Baker, from the University of Washington, Seattle, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2024 for his pioneering work in computational protein design. This involves designing new proteins, opening up new possibilities in biotechnology and medicine. Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper, on the other hand, were awarded for their work on protein structure prediction.
- 102. c** World Mental Health Day is celebrated every year on 10 October. This year's theme set by the World Federation of Mental Health is workplace mental health.
- 103. a** Bajaj Auto, one of India's leading two-wheeler manufacturers, launched the country's first CNG motorcycle, called Freedom 125. This initiative is part of the company's effort to provide eco-friendly transportation and cost-saving alternatives to petrol-powered vehicles.
- 104. d** India's academic freedom has significantly declined over the past decade, with its score on the Academic Freedom Index dropping from 0.6 points to 0.2 points between 2013 and 2023. The report notes that India is now ranked as "completely restricted," marking its lowest score since the mid-1940s.
- 105. b** The sea phase of the exercise, held on October 5 and 6, was led by India's aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and Italy's ITS Cavour, along with other vessels. These were the two main carriers involved in the joint naval operation.
- 106. b** The Museum of Solutions (MuSo) became the first Indian museum to win the 'Hands On! Children in Museums' Award. This award recognizes museums that contribute to educating and inspiring young minds. MuSo competed against 32 museums from 17 countries and won the award.
- 107. d** Nima Rinji Sherpa, an 18-year-old Nepali mountaineer, achieved this remarkable feat by summiting Tibet's Shisha Pangma, becoming the youngest person to summit all 14 of the world's "eight-thousanders." The previous record was held by Mingma Gyabu Sherpa, who was 30 when he completed this challenge.
- 108. b** Tunisia's president, Kais Saied, has secured a second five-year term with a landslide victory, although the election had one of the lowest turnouts in the North African country's history.
- 109. c** FTSE Russell, a London-based global index provider, announced that it would include Fully Accessible Route (FAR)-eligible Indian government bonds in its FTSE Emerging Markets Government Bond Index (EMGBI) starting in September 2025. This is the third global bond index to include Indian bonds, following JP Morgan Chase & Co and Bloomberg.
- 110. b** Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper, of Google DeepMind, were awarded the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for their groundbreaking work in developing an AI model that can predict the three-dimensional structures of proteins from their amino acid sequences. This achievement fulfills a 50-year-old scientific challenge and has far-reaching implications for understanding biological processes and designing new treatments.
- 111. b** The 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to South Korean author Han Kang for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life.
- 112. a** Narendra Modi witnessed 'Phralak Phralam,' the Laotian Ramayan performance.
- 113. c** The elected members to the UN Human Rights Council included Benin, Bolivia, Qatar, and others, but Canada was not mentioned as one of the elected countries for the 2025-2027 term.
- 114. b** Bolivia has joined South Africa's case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing Israel of violating the U.N. Genocide Convention through its offensive in Gaza. Bolivia has also severed diplomatic ties with Israel, citing disproportionate attacks on Gaza.
- 115. b** India's foreign exchange reserves have surpassed 700 billion US dollars, making it the fourth country in the world to achieve this milestone. The other three countries that have surpassed this level are China, Japan, and Switzerland.
- 116. b** The UMANG app offers citizens a single platform to access various e-government services ranging from central to local government bodies. This app is accessible to all Android users and can be used in conjunction with DigiLocker for secure document storage and service management.

117. a The RBI's Scholarship Scheme is specifically designed for full-time faculty members teaching economics or finance at any UGC or AICTE-recognized universities or colleges in India. Other faculty members or subjects are not eligible under this scheme.
118. a Hurricane Milton became one of the most rapidly intensifying storms on record as it went from barely hurricane strength to a dangerous Category 5 storm in less than a day on a path across the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida.
119. a The 38th National Games will take place in Uttarakhand from January 28 to February 14 next year.
120. a Ratan Tata, a significant figure in Indian business and philanthropy, passed away at the age of 86.
121. c World Standards Day is an international day celebrated on 14 October each year.
122. a Ladakh's recent sightings of aurora, marked by reddish or greenish light in the night sky and usually observed in the far northern regions, is a validation of our efforts in space weather monitoring, a team of astrophysicists that predicted the activity about 48-72 hours prior said.
123. a Arjun Vajpai becomes First Indian to Scale Mt. Shishapangma in China.
124. b A US-based aerospace company unveiled the final design of Haven-1, touted to be the world's first commercial space station.
125. a Noel Tata was appointed as chairman of the Tata group's philanthropic arm Tata Trusts.
126. d In order to encourage wider adoption of UPI payments, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to increase the UPI Lite wallet limit to Rs. 5,000 and per-transaction limit to Rs. 1,000 from Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 500 respectively.
127. a The UK became the first country in the world to announce an AISI during the AI Safety Summit held in Bletchley Park in November 2023 with an initial investment of £100 million (~ ₹1,100 crore).
128. b A transformative campaign will kick off in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, aiming to establish the city as the world's first energy-literate community.
129. b The Department of Atomic Energy has installed the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory in Ladakh.
130. a Bathukamma is a hindu flower-festival celebrated by the women of Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh. Every year this festival is celebrated as per the Sathavahana calendar for nine days starting on Pitru Amavasya.
131. d China launches world's first AI hospital.
132. c Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, announced that the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution, on November 26, will be commemorated with a nationwide "Constitution Glorification Campaign" in every village.
133. b President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a three-nation visit to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi. This is the first ever visit by a President of India to the three African nations and comes a year after the African Union was made a permanent member of G-20 group during India's Presidency.
134. b India becomes 3rd Largest Supplier Of Health & Nutrition Support To UNICEF.
135. d The 2025 edition includes 115 countries, compared to 29 countries in 2004. India now matches the UK's total tally of ranked universities, with 107, while China takes 94 places and Hong Kong six.
136. a Indian billionaire Gautam Adani-led conglomerate has signed a pact to build and operate key electricity transmission lines in Kenya for 30 years.
137. a India's AstroSat and NASA's space observatories have captured dramatic eruptions from stellar wreckage around a massive black hole.
138. b Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is leading a parliamentary delegation to the 149th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, scheduled to be held.

139. **d** IPS officer Anita Roy, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Puducherry, has made history by becoming the first IPS officer to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth International Classic Bench Press Competition.
140. **a** Spain's tennis legend Rafael Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam singles champion, has announced his retirement from professional tennis.
141. **d** The 2024 Nobel Prize for Peace has been awarded to Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo for its "efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again".
142. **a** In a significant public health achievement, India has been officially declared free from trachoma by the World Health Organization (WHO).
143. **a** National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah has staked the claim to form a new government in J&K.
144. **a** The Times Higher Education released the World University Rankings 2025. Indian Institute of Science, IISc Bangalore, topped the Indian universities by securing the 251-300 bands in 2025 rankings.
145. **d** The government has approved the upgradation of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to 14th Maharatna, Central Public Sector Enterprises.
146. **b** The 19th Global Hunger Index (GHI) report for 2024 has ranked India 105th out of 127 countries, placing it among nations with 'serious' hunger problems.
147. **c** Aerospace startup Space Kidz India has launched "ShakthiSAT", a global mission to train about 12,000 girls across 108 countries on space technology, aiming for a satellite launch under ISRO's Chandrayaan-4 mission, fostering international collaboration in space exploration.
148. **c** World Migratory Bird Day is observed twice a year during the second Saturday in May and again on the second Saturday in October.
149. **a** The book Lara, The England Chronicles, which he co-authored with Phil Walker, provides insights into those marathon innings and how the mind of a genius works.
150. **c** India's Tanya Hemanth beat Tung Ciou-Tong of Taipei in straight games to win the women's singles title at the Bendigo International Challenge badminton tournament in Bendigo, Australia.
151. **c** Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson's research highlights the pivotal role of societal institutions in shaping the economic prosperity of nations. They argue that inclusive institutions encourage innovation and growth, while extractive institutions hinder progress and lead to poverty.
152. **a** India's first population estimation of riverine dolphins was conducted in the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river systems. These river systems are the natural habitats of both the Ganges and Indus river dolphins.
153. **d** Jharkhand government to increase the amount under Maiya Samman Yojana from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,500 from December.
154. **a** According to the annual census of the RBI for the year 2023-24, the United States continued to be the largest source of FDI in India, followed by Mauritius, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. This highlights the significant role of the US in contributing to India's foreign investments.
155. **c** China was the leading country in solar power expansion in 2023, accounting for 63% of the newly installed solar capacity. It added 216.9 GW of solar power, solidifying its position as the global leader in renewable energy development.
156. **b** The burden of IMF surcharges has been carried mainly by countries like Argentina, Egypt, Ukraine, and Ecuador, which are some of the fund's biggest borrowers. These surcharges are additional fees imposed on top of regular interest payments.
157. **c** India launched its first reusable hybrid rocket 'RHUMI- 1', developed by the Tamil Nadu-based start-up Space Zone India with Martin Group, from Thiruvudandhai in Chennai.
158. **b** Novak Djokovic was beaten by world number one Jannik Sinner in the Shanghai Masters final, which stopped him from adding a 100th singles title to his career achievements.

- 159. a** In the 5th National Water Awards, 2023, Odisha secured the first position in the Best State category for its efforts in water conservation and management. Uttar Pradesh came in second, while Gujarat and Puducherry jointly secured the third position.
- 160. b** The International Day of Rural Women is celebrated annually on October 15. This day, implemented by the United Nations General Assembly, highlights the crucial role and contributions of women living in rural areas, particularly in agriculture, food security, and economic development.
- 161. c** Omar Abdullah, who previously served as the Chief Minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir from 2009 to 2014, is set to become the first Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 162. c** BEML (Bharat Earth Movers Limited), a state-owned company, has been awarded the contract for designing, manufacturing, and commissioning India's first indigenously manufactured bullet trains. The total contract value is Rs. 866.87 crore.
- 163. b** Google has signed a deal with Kairos Power to acquire several small nuclear reactors (SMRs), with the first expected to be completed by 2030. The remaining reactors are planned to be finished by 2035, helping to ensure a stable, clean energy supply for Google's operations.
- 164. b** Ashalata Devi, captain of the Indian women's football team, will achieve the milestone of becoming the first Indian woman footballer to play 100 international matches during the SAFF Championship opener against Pakistan.
- 165. c** Sheetal Raj from Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand, scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to scale Mount Cho Oyu on October 8. She has also achieved several other significant summits, including Mount Everest in 2019.
- 166. a** Larsen & Toubro (L&T) launched a first-of-class Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) for the Indian Navy from its Kattupalli Shipyard near Chennai.
- 167. c** Egypt has declined to sign and ratify the cooperative framework on the equitable use of the Nile River's water resources. The agreement has been ratified by countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, and Tanzania, but Egypt, along with Sudan, has raised concerns about the potential impact on its water share, especially due to Ethiopia's construction of a dam on the Blue Nile.
- 168. a** The Maharashtra Cabinet approved the Damanganga-Vaitarna-Godavari river-linking project along with Damanganga-Ekdare-Godavari, which will resolve the problem of water scarcity in North Maharashtra and Marathwada regions.
- 169. b** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur has been designated to lead the Centre of Excellence (CoE) focused on sustainable cities under the Centre's AI initiative. IIT Delhi and AIIMS Delhi are involved with the healthcare CoE, while IIT Ropar leads the CoE in agriculture.
- 170. a** India's coal-based thermal power plants have an average design-life of 25 years. By 2030, nearly a third of the current thermal power plant units, or 224 units, will reach the retirement age, as most of them were commissioned less than 20 years ago.
- 171. c** Shubha Tole, a prominent Indian neuroscientist and dean of graduate studies at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Mumbai, has been appointed as the president-elect of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO). She is the first scientist from a developing country to hold this prestigious position.
- 172. b** Rashmika Mandanna has been appointed as the national brand ambassador of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C). As an ambassador, she will lead campaigns to raise awareness about cybercrimes and digital safety across India. Her appointment follows her personal experience as a victim of a deepfake video, highlighting the importance of addressing online safety issues.
- 173. d** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Nayab Singh Saini has been sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Haryana for the second time.
- 174. b** Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, in a formal communication to the Union government, proposed Justice Sanjiv Khanna as his successor. Upon approval, Justice Khanna will become the 51st Chief Justice of India, succeeding Justice Chandrachud when he demits office on November 11, 2024.
- 175. c** PFC Infra Finance IFSC Limited (PIFIL) is focused on providing financial solutions specifically for the power and infrastructure sectors. It will be the first finance company in IFSC GIFT City, Gujarat, dedicated to these areas, catering to both government and private entities in India and abroad through foreign currency lending.

- 176. d** Ethiopia has marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter with the appointment of Taye Astike Selassie as the nation's President.
- 177. a** The government has announced the establishment of three AI Centres of Excellence with the support of AIIMS, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur, and IIT Ropar. These centres will focus on healthcare, agriculture, and sustainable cities as part of the Centre's vision to promote AI innovation in India.
- 178. a** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in at Jejuri in Pune from New Delhi.
- 179. c** Neetu David, a former Indian women's cricketer known for her spin bowling, was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in 2024, recognizing her significant contributions to women's cricket.
- 180. c** Italy has built two reception centres in Albania, in the first scheme by a European Union nation to divert migrants to a non-EU country.
- 181. c** Maimouna Ba, an activist from Burkina Faso, is the regional winner for Africa. She has not only helped more than 100 displaced children return to school but also supported over 400 displaced women on their journey to financial independence, making her a key figure in addressing displacement challenges in Africa.
- 182. c** The first-ever Kho Kho World Cup will feature 24 countries from 6 continents, demonstrating the global reach and importance of this event in showcasing India's sporting talents.
- 183. c** A celestial object discovered decades ago is actually twins orbiting each other, a new study confirms. Scientists have puzzled over the object known as Gliese 229B, the first known brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago.
- 184. c** The First ASEAN-India Track 1 Cyber Policy Dialogue took place in Singapore. This platform was designed to enhance cooperation and exchange views between ASEAN and India on various cyber-related issues, including national cyber policies and threat assessments.
- 185. b** The new labor rules will benefit workers from 10 African countries, such as Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya, as well as 9 Asian countries, including India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. Musaned, the digital platform, is designed to enhance labor processes for workers from these regions.
- 186. b** The Kanda Express Train has been launched by the government to ensure the supply of onions before Diwali. The train is specifically designed to carry onions from Nashik to Delhi.
- 187. b** During President Droupadi Murmu's visit to Algeria, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Political Science by Sidi Abdellah Science and Technology Pole University in Algiers. This honor was handed over by the Algerian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Mr. Kamal Baddari.
- 188. c** The Seventh Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly will be held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, as mentioned in the provided information. This global event will focus on promoting the adoption of solar energy among member countries.
- 189. c** In a 4:1 majority ruling, a five-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 (1955 Act) that grants citizenship to immigrants who entered Assam between January 1, 1966, and March 25, 1971.
- 190. a** Mera Hou Chongba or Mera Waayungba or Mera Thaomei Thaanba is the cultural festival of solidarity of Manipur, celebrated by every indigenous ethnic groups, including the Meitei people and Naga tribes of Manipur.
- 191. a** Union Minister of State for Science and Technology (Independent Charge) Dr Jitendra Singh unveiled Pavana Chitra, India's first Airport based self-powered indoor air quality monitoring facility at Thiruvananthapuram International Airport.
- 192. c** Government and Meta have joined forces for the "Scam se Bachho" campaign to tackle the rising threat of online scams.
- 193. c** The 2022 Supreme Court judgment declared Section 3(2) of the 2016 Amendment Act unconstitutional, as it violated Article 20(1) of the Constitution, which prohibits retrospective punishment. The judgment found that the law could not be applied retroactively to penalize actions that took place before the law was amended.

- 194. a** India has extended its first-ever rupee-denominated Line of Credit (LOC) under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) to the Government of Mauritius.
- 195. c** According to the Fraser Institute's 2022 Economic Freedom of the World report, Hong Kong regained its position as the world's freest economy with a score of 8.58, edging out Singapore, which scored 8.55. Hong Kong had previously ceded the top spot for the first time but reclaimed it after a revision of data.
- 196. b** The Lunar Pathfinder is the first step in the ESA's Moonlight LCNS programme. It is a communications relay satellite built by Surrey Satellite Technology LTD, scheduled to be launched in 2026. It will play a crucial role in supporting future lunar missions by facilitating communication between the Earth and the Moon.
- 197. b** Arjun Erigaisi defeated Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the finals of the WR Chess Masters Cup, held in London. This victory in the 16-player knockout tournament placed Arjun at the top of the FIDE Circuit standings, highlighting his strong performance on the international chess stage.
- 198. b** BRICS expanded in 2024 to include five new members: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. The grouping now represents about 45% of the global population, and BRICS was initially formed in 2006 with Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa as its original members. Therefore, option B is the correct statement.
- 199. c** Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB) said it had entered into an agreement to acquire the personal loan book of Standard Chartered Bank, India to strengthen its position further in the retail credit market.
- 200. b** Mohanji, a renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader, was honored for his global humanitarian leadership at the 9th Conscious Companies Awards in Johannesburg. The awards recognize leaders who align people, profit, and purpose in a way that benefits all stakeholders and contributes to a better world.
- 201. d** Vijaya Rahatkar has been appointed as the Chairperson of National Commission for Women NCW.
- 202. c** Kerala is the first state in India to introduce this initiative, where citizens can report traffic violations in real-time through the 'NextGen mParivahan' app. This effort encourages public participation in improving road safety.
- 203. a** Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the 'Karmayogi Saptah' - National Learning Week at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi.
- 204. c** A total of 75 iconic lighthouses have been developed across 9 coastal states and 1 union territory under the leadership of the Prime Minister, with an investment of ₹60 crore. These lighthouses have been modernized to offer both heritage value and recreational amenities such as museums, amphitheaters, and children's parks.
- 205. a** Exercise Malabar is a naval war game that involves the Quad countries—India, Australia, Japan, and the U.S. The 2024 edition of Exercise Malabar concluded off the coast of Visakhapatnam in October and was noted for being the most comprehensive of all editions held so far. While Exercise Kakadu was hosted earlier by the Royal Australian Navy and is a separate exercise.
- 206. b** Isha Ambani, the managing director of Reliance Retail, won the 'Icon of the Year' award at the 2024 Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards. Gauri Khan presented the award, but the recognition was given to Isha Ambani.
- 207. a** With over 15 million World ID holders and World App users already migrating to the new platform, World Chain is the first blockchain designed with a vision to benefit humans.
- 208. d** The research indicates that the conditions for photosynthesis might exist below the dusty ice in Mars' mid-latitudes, where the ice could shield against harmful radiation while still allowing enough light to support the photosynthetic process.
- 209. b** Bala Devi, known as the "goal machine" of Indian women's football, became the first Indian woman to score 50 international goals. She achieved this milestone during the 2024 SAFF Women's Championship in Nepal in a match against Pakistan.
- 210. c** World Iodine Deficiency Day, also known as Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, is observed annually on 21st October.
- 211. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi appointed Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister of Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, as the chairman of a monitoring group tasked with reviewing the implementation of schemes announced by the Prime Minister and in the Union Budget, as well as subordinate legislation and infrastructure projects.

- 212. a** President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has decided to introduce India's Unified Payment Interface in the Maldives.
- 213. a** Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the launch of 'Krishi Chaupal' to bridge the gap between agricultural research and its practical application, aiming to help farmers by addressing issues such as the disparity between the prices they receive and the retail costs consumers pay.
- 214. a** Labour and Employment Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the eShram, One Stop Solution for Unorganized Workers in New Delhi.
- 215. a** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 in Guwahati to provide land rights to indigenous people.
- 216. b** The conference's theme focuses on innovation and digital transformation, aiming to discuss the latest developments in various transformative technologies, including 5G, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, among others.
- 217. c** Prabowo Subianto took over as the president of Indonesia, becoming the eighth president of the country. He won the election with nearly 60% of the vote, indicating a strong mandate from the electorate.
- 218. a** In the Women's T20 Cricket World Cup, New Zealand scripted history as the Sophie Devine-led side clinched their maiden Women's T20 World Cup title after beating South Africa by 32 runs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai.
- 219. c** Diljit Dosanjh has made history as the first Indian artiste to be featured on the cover of Billboard Canada, marking a significant milestone in his career and for Indian artists globally.
- 220. b** Amelia Kerr was recognized for her outstanding performance by being awarded both Player of the Match and Player of the Series during the Women's T20 World Cup final, where New Zealand secured their first title.
- 221. c** At the Harper's Bazaar Women of the Year Awards 2024, the Best Actor honour was awarded to Kriti Sanon. She has been recognized for her outstanding performances in recent films.
- 222. b** The theme of the 16th BRICS Summit is "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security," which highlights the focus on multilateral cooperation among BRICS nations to promote equitable global development and ensure security.
- 223. a** Prabowo Subianto named his government the "Red and White Cabinet," which refers to the colors of Indonesia's national flag. This symbolism reflects his pledge for a strong and unified government, emphasizing the importance of national identity and unity.
- 224. c** Karan Johar, as the executive chairman, will spearhead Dharma Productions' creative vision, while Apoorva Mehta will act as the CEO, focusing on strategic and operational aspects.
- 225. c** Tata Group and Somerville College, University of Oxford, have announced the construction of a building in honour of the late Ratan Tata Building on the college campus in England.
- 226. a** In the midst of a diplomatic spat with Canada, India quietly launched its fourth nuclear powered ballistic missile (SSBN) submarine at Ship Building Center (SBC) in Visakhapatnam this week to strength its nuclear deterrence against its adversaries.
- 227. d** Cyclone Dana made landfall along the Odisha-West Bengal coast between Puri and Sagar Island, the Odisha government has announced a goal of "100 percent evacuations" from potentially impacted areas.
- 228. c** Lakhan Singh from Rajasthan won the gold medal in the men's S4 100m freestyle event at the National Para-Swimming Championship held in Panaji. Kamalkant from Odisha won silver, and Balraj from Haryana secured the bronze medal.
- 229. b** Sadhguru was recognized by the Canada India Foundation with the CIF Global Indian Award for his significant contributions in addressing environmental challenges and promoting global consciousness, especially through initiatives like the "Conscious Planet" movement.
- 230. b** Deepika Kumari won the silver medal in the Archery World Cup final, which took place in Tlaxcala, Mexico. She lost the final match to China's Li Jiaman but still secured her sixth World Cup Final medal.
- 231. a** India and Pakistan have agreed to extend the validity of the Agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for a further period of five years.

- 232. a** China has recently completed the world's first fully unmanned road resurfacing project, covering an impressive 157.79 kilometres of expressway.
- 233. b** The referendum was primarily focused on Moldova's potential European Union membership. The pro-Western president and government supported the campaign for EU integration, as indicated by the final vote results showing a narrow majority in favor of the "Yes" vote.
- 234. a** Pam Kaur made history by being appointed as HSBC Holdings' first female CFO. The appointment is a significant move by the 160-year-old banking giant, highlighting the inclusion of more women in senior leadership roles.
- 235. c** The 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place in Glasgow, Scotland, from the 23rd of July to the 2nd of August, 2026. Four venues in Glasgow will host around 3,000 athletes from 74 Commonwealth nations and territories.
- 236. a** Ganderbal has been honored as the Best District at the 5th National Water Awards, 2023.
- 237. a** The two-week United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) started in Colombia to assess historic commitments to halt and reverse the loss of nature.
- 238. d** The new logo of BSNL, as unveiled by the Union Minister, symbolizes "strength, trust, and accessibility," highlighting the company's values as it advances in providing telecom services.
- 239. a** Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the International Incoming Spoofed Calls Prevention System in New Delhi.
- 240. c** The Supreme Court, in its observations, reaffirmed that secularism is a core feature of the Basic Structure of the Constitution. It emphasized that secularism was always part of the Constitution, even before the 42nd Amendment. This reflects the court's stance that secularism cannot be altered, as it forms an integral part of the Basic Structure doctrine established in the Kesavananda Bharati case.
- 241. c** A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court is scheduled on October 23 to pronounce its judgment on multiple States' challenge to the Centre's position that it has exclusive control over industrial alcohol.
- 242. b** President Asif Ali Zardari appointed Justice Yahya Afridi as the next Chief Justice of Pakistan. The announcement was made by the Press Wing of the President's Office, highlighting that the appointment is for a fixed term of three years.
- 243. c** Luong Cuong was elected as Vietnam's President during the ongoing 8th session of the National Assembly, with all 440 deputies present voting in favor of him. To Lam was the previous president before Cuong's election.
- 244. d** OpenAI has appointed Aaron "Ronnie" Chatterji, a business and public policy professor from Duke University, as its first-ever Chief Economist.
- 245. b** The NPCI has approved Paytm to onboard new UPI users, which is significant for the company's operations in the digital payment space. This approval comes after previous restrictions imposed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) regarding new UPI user onboarding.
- 246. a** Urmila Chaudhary of Nepal won the Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024 which was presented by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken.
- 247. b** This Line of Credit is noteworthy as it marks the first-ever rupee denominated Line of Credit extended by India for project financing to any country under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS). This reflects India's innovative approach to international development financing. India has extended its first-ever rupee-denominated line of credit (LoC) to the Mauritius government, amounting to Rs. 487.60 crores, to fund a water pipeline replacement project.
- 248. b** The AB-PMJAY offers a cashless cover of up to Rs.5 lakh per year specifically for hospitalization for senior citizens aged 70 years and above, making healthcare more accessible without the burden of direct costs.
- 249. b** The countries listed in Annex II of the UNFCCC are mandated to provide "new and additional financial resources" to assist developing countries in their climate action efforts. This responsibility stems from their historical contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and their economic capacity.

- 250. b** LeBron James and his son Bronny made history by becoming the first father-son duo to play in the NBA together. This achievement is significant not only for their family but also for the league, as it highlights the generational talent and legacy that can be passed down through families in professional sports. While LeBron has numerous accolades throughout his career, this milestone holds a special personal significance as it represents a unique bond between him and his son in a highly competitive environment.
- 251. b** The Supreme Court emphasized that every citizen has a fundamental right to live in a pollution-free environment, as guaranteed under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. This right forms part of the broader right to life and personal liberty, ensuring environmental protection as essential to human well-being.
- 252. b** Banda district in Uttar Pradesh was awarded the Best District award for its exemplary performance in water management and conservation. This recognition highlights Banda's role in successfully implementing strategies to conserve water and improve water access in the region.
- 253. a** The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, more commonly known as COP29, will be the 29th United Nations Climate Change conference. COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11 to 22 November, 2024.
- 254. a** CHOGM, which takes place every two years, will see Commonwealth leaders select a new secretary-general nominated from an African country, in line with regional rotations of the position.
- 255. a** Mormugao Port is India's first port to introduce Green Ship Incentives through the ESI, aligning with global efforts to reduce air emissions in shipping. The port's incentive program, 'Harit Shrey,' launched in October 2023, offers discounts on port charges based on ESI scores, rewarding ships with higher environmental performance.
- 256. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, will jointly inaugurate the final assembly line of the Tata Advanced Systems Ltd's (TASL) C-295 aircraft facility in Vadodara.
- 257. a** The main objective of the LISA mission is to study gravitational waves, which are ripples in space-time. The mission involves three spacecraft arranged in a triangular formation, each with telescopes to detect gravitational waves as they travel through space. This is unrelated to exploring Mars, detecting black holes, or mapping Earth's atmosphere.
- 258. d** Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, will launch the 21st Livestock Census Operation in New Delhi.
- 259. c** Vishvajit Ramchandra More won the bronze medal for India at the Under-23 World Wrestling Championship held in Tirana, Albania. This was India's first medal in the championship. Ali Abdollah Ahmadi Vafa won the gold, Rashad Mammadov the silver, and Kohel Yamagiwa shared the bronze with More.
- 260. b** UNESCO co-hosts the global conference with a Member State, bringing together stakeholders from the Media and Information Literacy community to discuss and share insights.
- 261. a** Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav laid the Foundation Stone for India's First Purpose Built AI Data Center in Madhya Pradesh.
- 262. a** India's first 'Writer's village' was jointly inaugurated by former President Ram Nath Kovind, Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen Gurmeet Singh (retd) and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.
- 263. d** In an ambitious move to reshape its urban landscape, Saudi Arabia has launched a staggering \$50 billion project known as the 'Mukaab'.
- 264. a** NTPC has partnered with the Indian Army to establish a solar hydrogen-based microgrid at Chushul, Ladakh.
- 265. b** Lyten has developed a "supermaterial" called Lyten 3D Graphene by converting greenhouse gases into solid carbon and hydrogen. The carbon is essential in constructing this graphene material, which plays a key role in their lithium-sulfur battery technology. This innovative process contributes to sustainable battery production while addressing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 266. c** The first QR code-based coin vending machine (QCVM) in India has been installed at the Federal Bank's Puthiyara branch in Kozhikode district, Kerala. This machine allows users to obtain coins easily by scanning a QR code, providing a convenient way to access small denomination coins.

- 267. c** Some of the biotechnology experiments from the DBT-ISRO collaboration are planned for inclusion in the uncrewed Gaganyaan mission, with potential applications for the crewed Gaganyaan mission as well. This inclusion demonstrates the importance of biotech research for supporting human spaceflight and enhancing mission safety.
- 268. a** Manika Batra has made table tennis history as she became the first Indian to qualify for quarter-finals at a WTT Champions event.
- 269. c** United Nations Day, on 24 October, marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter.
- 270. b** Rachel Gupta, a 20-year-old from Jalandhar, made history as the first Indian to win the Miss Grand International title in 2024, showcasing her beauty, intelligence, and grace.
- 271. a** Former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been appointed as the brand ambassador for the upcoming Jharkhand election by the Election Commission.
- 272. d** Bhubaneswar wins the 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024.
- 273. b** The Assam Rifles currently has bases located in Zodin Square (Lammual) and Khatla areas in Aizawl. The other options refer to residences and facilities related to the Assam Rifles but do not represent the locations of their operational bases.
- 274. a** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a scholarship scheme at the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University for all students of Sanskrit across the state.
- 275. a** India is all set to launch its first-ever pod taxi soon, which will run from Noida's Film City to the International Airport in Jewar.
- 276. d** India stands at 98 out of 142 countries in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index. This ranking indicates India's position in relation to other countries regarding the rule of law, governance, and legal framework.
- 277. c** State Bank of India (SBI) was recognised as the Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine of the US at its 31st Annual Best Bank Awards event held during the sidelines of Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in Washington.
- 278. a** Project Jarvis is being developed by Google to enable artificial intelligence to take over a web browser, assisting users in tasks like conducting research and shopping online.
- 279. b** At the Japan Para Badminton International 2024, India's star shuttler Sukant Kadam, won a gold medal in men's singles and a silver medal in men's doubles alongside his partner Dinesh Rajaiah.
- 280. c** The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage takes place every 27 October.
- 281. b** Justice Sanjiv Khanna has been appointed as the next Chief Justice of India, effective from November 11. He will be the 51st Chief Justice and is currently the second-most senior judge of the Supreme Court.
- 282. a** Haryana has become the first state to introduce sub-quota divisions within the Scheduled Castes (SC).
- 283. c** To strengthen India's capabilities in agricultural biotechnology and bioprocessing, the Government is set to launch BRIC - National Agri-Food Biomanufacturing Institute (BRIC-NABI), at Mohali in Punjab.
- 284. a** A new conservation initiative, the Global Ecosystems Atlas, has been launched at the 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) in Cali, Colombia to provide a comprehensive and unified resource for mapping and monitoring ecosystems worldwide.
- 285. a** Brazil has finalised a 170 billion reais (£30 billion) compensation deal with mining companies BHP, Vale, and Samarco over the 2015 Mariana dam collapse.
- 286. a** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated the newly constructed passenger terminal building and a cargo gate named 'Maitri Dwar' at the Land Port in Petrapole, on the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal.

- 287. b** Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das has been ranked the top central banker by the US-based Global Finance magazine.
- 288. a** India is set to construct its first two nuclear-powered attack submarines, known as nuclear sharks, marking a significant advancement in its naval capabilities.
- 289. a** England's Liz Young overcame a challenging field and a daunting course to win the 16th edition of the \$400,000 Hero Women's Indian Open by one shot at the DLF Golf and Country Club.
- 290. c** World Development Information Day (WDID) is celebrated on the 24th of October every year.
- 291. a** The Haryana government has implemented a scheme Rajya Vishisht Yojana to curb the incidents of stubble burning.
- 292. c** India will host the inaugural World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) from November 20-24, 2024, in Goa. This event is scheduled to coincide with the International Film Festival of India, making it a significant gathering for stakeholders in the media and entertainment industry.
- 293. b** The proposed underwater tunnel will connect Gohpur and Numaligarh in Assam. This tunnel, being the first of its kind in Assam, aims to improve connectivity and is expected to have a significant impact on transportation in the region.
- 294. d** Tbilisi is the capital and largest city of Georgia, lying on the banks of the Kura River with around 1.2 million inhabitants, which is about a third of the country's population.
- 295. a** Australia has introduced the world's first turtle islands. The floating islands are made of PVC, featuring a central platform with a raised nesting box and 'vegetation pods' to support turtle breeding.
- 296. d** In the last financial year, the top three customers for Indian military exports were the United States, France, and Armenia. Russia is not listed among the top three countries importing military equipment from India.
- 297. d** The Government raised the maximum loan limit under the Prime Minister Mudra loan scheme from Rs. 10 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs. This increase, announced as part of the Union Budget for 2024-2025, aims to provide more financial support to small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- 298. c** Nvidia's stock experienced a record-setting rally, driven by high demand for its new AI chips, pushing it to become the most valuable company, surpassing Apple.
- 299. c** The satellite, named the "Hong Kong Youth Science and Technology Innovation Satellite," was launched by the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) with assistance from ADA Space. This highlights CUHK's contribution to space technology and artificial intelligence in collaboration with China's central government initiatives.
- 300. b** Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, is preparing to host India's first-ever "Urban Downhill Race." This event, organized under the Red Bull Downhill series, marks a milestone in India's adventure sports by introducing downhill mountain biking to an urban landscape.
- 301. a** The third edition of the Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Seminar, Swavlamban – 2024, commenced in New Delhi.
- 302. b** The Konark Sun Temple is considered the peak of "Odishan temple architecture," reflecting the rich cultural history and architectural excellence of Odisha, India.
- 303. c** Rodri, a midfielder for Spain and Manchester City, won the 2024 Ballon d'Or award in the male category. His performances contributed significantly to both Manchester City's English Premier League victory and Spain's European Championship success.
- 304. a** The 2028 Summer Olympics, officially the Games of the XXXIV Olympiad and commonly known as Los Angeles 2028 or LA28, is an upcoming international multi-sport event scheduled to take place from July 14–30, 2028, in the United States.
- 305. b** The report, published by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), found that 38% of tree species globally are endangered, highlighting an urgent conservation need for various species.

- 306. a** Air India Becomes First Indian Airline to Get DGCA Design Approval for Aircraft Interior Upgrades.
- 307. b** The Union Government is reportedly adding four new components under the MIDH scheme to encourage diverse and sustainable farming practices. These include Hydroponics, Aquaponics, Vertical Farming, and Precision Agriculture, which represent advanced agricultural techniques aimed at enhancing productivity and resource efficiency.
- 308. a** The ‘Debalaya’ scheme intends to resolve management issues and other longstanding problems faced by temples in Odisha, as well as address various aspects of temple and religious place maintenance that have been neglected for years.
- 309. c** Under the agreement, 16 of the C-295 transport aircraft will initially be assembled in Seville, Spain, with the remaining 40 units to be manufactured at the new Tata Aircraft Complex in Vadodara, India. The first “Made in India” aircraft is expected to be completed by 2026.
- 310. d** World Cities Day is an annual United Nations observance day held on 31 October.
- 311. a** India, represented by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), has been included in the Steering Committee of the Asset Recovery Interagency Network-Asia Pacific (ARIN-AP), a prominent multi-agency network dedicated to tackling the proceeds of crime in the Asia-Pacific region and a member of the Global CARIN Network.
- 312. a** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announced that the upcoming Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park in the Bankhandi area of Kangra’s Dehra assembly constituency will become India’s first zoo to earn certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for sustainable and eco-friendly infrastructure.
- 313. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched health insurance coverage for all senior citizens aged 70 and above, without considering their income, as part of the flagship initiative Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
- 314. c** Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, and other key portfolios, inaugurated the new complex of India’s first biomanufacturing institute—BRIC-National Agri-Food Bio-Manufacturing Institute (BRIC-NABI).
- 315. c** Brazil has decided not to join China’s multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It has become the second country after India in the BRICS bloc to reject Beijing’s mega project.
- 316. d** Colombia at the U.N. COP16 biodiversity launched a coalition with 20 other countries seeking to make “peace with nature,” as leaders warned that the rapid destruction of the environment risks humanity’s own extinction.
- 317. a** The Institute of Actuaries of India (IAI) appointed Preeti Chandrashekhar as its first woman president. Chandrashekhar has become the 11th president since IAI became a statutory body in 2006.
- 318. a** Shenzhou 19 is a Chinese spaceflight to the Tiangong space station, that was launched on 29 October 2024.
- 319. a** Noted author and economist Bibek Debroy, who has been the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council chairman since 2017, has passed away at the age of 69.
- 320. c** World Stroke Day is observed on October 29 to underscore the serious nature and high rates of stroke, raise awareness of the prevention and treatment of the condition, and ensure better care and support for survivors.
- 321. a** The Indian Army contingent comprising 25 personnel departed for Cijantung, Jakarta, Indonesia to take part in the 9th edition of India-Indonesia Joint Special Forces Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24.
- 322. c** The Government has approved the Central Sector Scheme ‘Namo Drone Didi’ for providing Drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores.
- 323. c** Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Gujarat’s largest waste to energy plant at Pirana in Ahmedabad.
- 324. c** Ayodhya Sets Guinness World Record With 25 Lakh Diyas Lit And 1,121 Vedacharyas Performing Aarti Together.
- 325. c** Venezuela’s foreign ministry had recalled its ambassador to Brazil for consultations, after Brazil’s government last week vetoed Venezuela’s application to join the BRICS group of emerging economies.

- 326. b** The proposed changes aim to protect the innovative ideas being proposed by fund houses. By allowing the scheme information document (SID) to be publicly available only five working days before the launch, Sebi seeks to prevent competitors from replicating these investment ideas, thereby fostering innovation in mutual fund offerings.
- 327. b** The inauguration of NIXI's new office marked a significant step in its ongoing efforts to enhance internet infrastructure in India and promote digital growth, as stated in the information provided.
- 328. c** The report indicates that 38% of tree species are endangered, highlighting a significant threat to global biodiversity. This figure surpasses the combined threat levels faced by other wildlife categories, emphasizing the urgency of the conservation efforts discussed at the UN biodiversity summit.
- 329. d** China publishes world's first international standard for stem cell data.
- 330. d** Every year, on October 31, India observes National Unity Day, also known as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.
- 331. b** The United Nations designated November 2 as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. This date was chosen to highlight the need for global action to safeguard journalists and end the high levels of impunity for crimes against them.
- 332. b** ISRO's first analog space mission is taking place in Leh, Ladakh. This location has been chosen to simulate extraterrestrial conditions that astronauts might face on missions beyond Earth, such as on the Moon or Mars. The analog mission will help ISRO study various challenges in a controlled but challenging environment similar to space.
- 333. a** The Indian Army contingent departed for the 15th edition of India-US joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR.
- 334. a** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu launched the Deepam 2.0 scheme in Edupuram, Ichapuram Mandal, Srikakulam district, as part of the "Super Six Promises" initiative.
- 335. c** Kindiki Kithure took office as Kenya's new deputy president after his predecessor was removed from office through an impeachment motion in parliament. The other options listed are prominent Kenyan political figures but are unrelated to the recent swearing-in.
- 336. b** The consultations between India and Albania were held in Tirana, the capital of Albania. The meeting focused on a range of topics, including bilateral, regional, and international issues.
- 337. b** The National Stock Exchange (NSE) introduced its mobile app and websites in eight additional languages as part of its 30th-anniversary celebration. These languages are Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu, making NSE services more accessible to diverse linguistic groups across India.
- 338. a** Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi conceded defeat before the final results were announced in a historic moment for the country, as it ended the ruling party's hold on power. His Botswana Democratic Party was trailing in the election, making the main opposition party's candidate, Duma Boko, the likely next president.
- 339. a** In a significant move to bridge the digital divide in rural India, the government is set to launch the Digital India Common Service Center (DICSC) project, starting with Pilibhit and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- 340. b** Representatives of African countries and global research experts are meeting in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, for the inaugural Climate and Health Africa Conference (CHAC 2024), a meeting that brings Africa into the global dialogue on the intersection of climate change and health.
- 341. a** Bengaluru hosts the world's first '11K Footpath Run'.
- 342. c** The draft notification by the Centre designates the Western Ghats in six states as an eco-sensitive area: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. Andhra Pradesh is not listed among these states.
- 343. c** The Commission is headed by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan. He has been collaborating with sociologists, historians, and representatives from affected communities to explore caste identity issues in the context of religious conversion.
- 344. a** Minister of State for Environment, Kirti Vardhan Singh, launched India's updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) at the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 16) in Colombia.

- 345. b** The LignoSat was developed by a team from Kyoto University in collaboration with Sumitomo Forestry, a homebuilder company. This innovative satellite will test the durability of wood as a satellite material in space.
- 346. d** Indonesia's first joint military drills with Russia signal that new President Prabowo Subianto will seek a bigger role for Jakarta on the world stage as part of a significant foreign policy shift.
- 347. a** In a first, NHAI will rope in a bank to collect user fee on a highway stretch, marking a paradigm shift in the tolling system in the country.
- 348. a** India's Krisha Verma clinched a gold medal at the U19 World Boxing Championships in Colorado, USA.
- 349. d** Lahore's pollution level reached a reading of 1900, marking its highest recorded pollution reading and leading to the city being ranked as the most polluted in the world. This extremely high reading prompted urgent action from local authorities to protect public health.
- 350. d** World Vegan Day is a global event celebrated annually on 1 November.



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