

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



India's first Integrated Aqua Park (IAP) in Ziro, Lower Subansiri district

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** virtually launched **India's first Integrated Aqua Park (IAP) at Tarin, Ziro in Lower Subansiri district, Arunachal Pradesh**. This pioneering project aims to boost tourism and fisheries production in the region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also inaugurated 218 fisheries projects virtually. The IAP, built at a cost of Rs. 43.59 crore, **aims to enhance aquaculture, provide new income opportunities for farmers, and boost livelihoods in the region.**
- **Chief Minister Pema Khandu** participated in the inauguration from his office, while **fisheries minister Gabriel D Wangsu, Ziro MLA Hage Appa**, and other officials attended the event at the project site in Tarin. The Maharashtra government has **approved a Rs. 190-crore aqua tourism project for Ujani Dam** in Solapur district, focusing on water sports and bird safaris.

Arunachal Pradesh ("land of dawn-lit mountains") is a state in Northeast India. It **borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south. It shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east, and a disputed border with China in the north at the McMahon Line. The McMahon Line is the boundary between Tibet and British India as agreed in the maps and notes exchanged by the respective plenipotentiaries on 24–25 March 1914 at Delhi, as part of the 1914 Simla Convention. The Indian part of the Line currently serves as the de facto boundary between China and India, although its legal status is disputed by the People's Republic of China. Itanagar is the state capital of Arunachal Pradesh. Lieutenant General Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik is the current Governor.**

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar inaugurates Sports University at Rajgir, Bihar

- **Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar** inaugurated the **state-of-the-art sports academy, sports complex, and Sports University on the occasion of National Sports Day at Rajgir**. The sports complex is also equipped with a 24-bed hospital with modern treatment facilities for sports injuries.
- **It will be the first kind of sports destination in the country that has a sports complex and sports university in one place.** Rajgir Sports Complex has facilities to host 24 types of indoor and outdoor games. To promote new talents, three centres of excellence have been set up for wrestling, weightlifting, and athletics at the premises. It will have a large sports library, which will be the biggest after the National Institute of Sports, Patiala.

Bihar is a state in eastern India. It is the third largest state by population, the 12th largest by area, and the 14th largest by GDP in 2021. Bihar borders Uttar Pradesh to its west, Nepal to the north, the northern part of West Bengal to the east, and Jharkhand to the south. The Bihar plain is split by the river Ganges, which flows from west to east. On 15 November 2000, southern Bihar was ceded to form the new state of Jharkhand. **Nitish Kumar is serving as current Chief Minister of Bihar since 22 February 2015, having previous held the office from 2005 to 2014 and for a short period in 2000. Rajendra Arlekar is the current Governor of Bihar.** As per the 2011 census, among states, **Bihar has the lowest literacy rate of 47% and highest in Kerala (male: 96.1%, female 92.1%).**

Supreme Court's new flag and insignia unveiled by President Murmu

- **President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the new flag and insignia of the Supreme Court at the two-day National Conference of District Judiciary in New Delhi. The newly unveiled flag features symbols central to India's legal and cultural heritage: the Ashoka Chakra, the Supreme Court building, and the Constitution of India.**
- **The new Supreme Court flag is blue in colour. The insignia has 'Supreme Court of India' and 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah' (in Devanagari script) inscribed on it. The phrase "Yato Dharmastato Jayah" is a Sanskrit expression that translates to "Where there is Dharma, there is victory" or "Victory lies where Dharma (righteousness) prevails."**

The Supreme Court of India came into being on 28 January 1950. It replaced both the Federal Court of India and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which were then at the apex of the Indian court system. The first Chief Justice of India was Sir H J Kania. Originally, the Constitution of India envisaged a supreme court with a chief justice and seven judges; leaving it to parliament to increase this number. At present, SC is consisting of the Chief Justice of India and 33 sanctioned other judges. The motto of the Supreme Court is 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah', means "whence law (dharma), thence victory". It is also referred to – as the wheel of righteousness, encompassing truth, goodness and equity. Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud is an Indian jurist, who is the 50th and current chief justice of India serving since November 2022. He is ex-officio Patron-in-Chief of the National Legal Services Authority and the de facto Chancellor of the National Law School of India University. The only child of India's longest-serving chief justice, Y. V. Chandrachud who served as the 16th Chief Justice of India, serving from 22 February 1978 until 11 July 1985.

Ashwini Vaishnaw launches India's first Vande Bharat Sleeper trainset

- **Hon'ble Minister for Railways, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, flagged off India's first Vande Bharat Sleeper trainset at BEML's Bangalore rail complex. The trainset has been indigenously designed and manufactured by BEML, India's leading rail and metro manufacturer. The Vande Bharat Sleeper trainset, designed by BEML, represents a significant advancement in India's rail capabilities, combining aesthetic appeal with functionality. Constructed from austenitic stainless steel and equipped with advanced safety features, including crashworthy buffers and couplers, the trainset meets stringent fire safety standards.**

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.

Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan to launch AgriSURE Fund & Krishi Nivesh Portal and confer Greenathon AIF Excellence Awards at New Delhi

- **Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development Minister, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched AgriSURE Fund & Krishi Nivesh Portal at PUSA, New Delhi. Along with the launch of Krishi Nivesh portal, Shri Shivraj Singh conferred AIF Excellence Awards to the top-performing Banks and States under various categories in recognition and appreciation of their efforts.**
- **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme was launched in 2020 for creation of Post-harvest Management infrastructure and Community farming assets. Special campaigns are conducted to promote AIF scheme and in recognition of the efforts of various Banks and States in successfully implementing AIF scheme, Excellence awards are presented to them for fostering collective achievements, promoting excellence and inspiring future performance under AIF.**
- **Chouhan credited the idea of AgriSURE to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that under the central leadership, this idea was born during covid and helped save the Indian economy during the covid-induced lockdown.**

The 'Agri Fund for Start-Ups & Rural Enterprises' (AgriSURE) is a new initiative designed to boost innovation and sustainability in India's agriculture sector. The fund will be established as a Rs. 750 crore Category-II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF), offering both equity and debt support. It aims to target high-risk, high-impact activities across the agriculture value chain. The fund will be launched with an initial corpus of ₹750 Crore. Contributions include ₹250 Crores each from NABARD and the Ministry of Agriculture, and ₹250 Crores from other institutions. The fund will focus on supporting start-ups and agripreneurs, enhancing farm produce value chains, creating rural infrastructure, and supporting Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs). The fund would help foster innovation in agriculture, enhance the value chain of farm produce, create and improve rural infrastructure generate employment opportunities and support and develop IT-based solutions and machinery rental services for farmers.

Union Cabinet approves 309-km rail line between Mumbai, Indore

- The Union Cabinet has approved a 309-km rail line project between Mumbai and Indore at a total cost of ₹18,036 crore. The project is expected to be completed by 2028-29. Indian Railways said the project, apart from connecting commercial hubs Mumbai and Indore through the shortest rail route, would connect the unconnected areas of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh passing through two districts of Maharashtra and four Districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- Under the project, 30 new stations would be constructed, providing enhancing connectivity to Barwani, an aspirational district. The project would provide connectivity to approximately 1,000 villages and about 30 lakh populations. The project would provide direct connectivity to Pithampur Auto Cluster (housing 90 large units and 700 small and medium industries) from gateway port of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority and other State ports. "The project will also provide direct connectivity to millet producing districts of Madhya Pradesh and onion producing districts of Maharashtra which further facilitates in the distribution of the same to northern and southern parts of the country,".

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.

Indian Navy's P8I on its first-ever deployment in Europe to take part in 'Exercise Varuna'

- "A P8I aircraft of the Indian Navy has reached France to participate in 'Exercise Varuna' with the French Navy". "The 2024 edition of Indo-French bilateral naval 'Exercise Varuna', scheduled from September 2 to 4 in the Mediterranean Sea, will include advanced tactical exercises underscoring the deepening synergy and interoperability between the two navies,".
- "The Indian Navy's P8I aircraft touched down at Air Base 125 Istres-Le Tube, France, marking its first-ever deployment in Europe,". This deployment comes 63 years after the Indian Navy's Alize aircraft, operating from the erstwhile INS Vikrant, last flew at Hyeres Airbase. INS Tabar, which had earlier arrived in Toulon will also be participating in the exercise. The Indian and French Navy bilateral naval exercise was initiated in 1993. It was later christened as 'Varuna' in 2001 and has since become a hallmark of the robust India-France strategic bilateral relationship, the Ministry of Defence said in an earlier press release.

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.

PM Narendra Modi arrives in Brunei, becomes the first Indian Prime Minister to visit the nation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Brunei on the first leg of his two-nation trip that will also include Singapore. He is the first Indian Prime Minister to travel to Brunei on a bilateral visit. While embarking on the trip, Modi had expressed confidence in “advancing India’s historical ties with Brunei Darussalam and deepening its strategic partnership with Singapore”. Both countries are important partners in our Act East Policy and the Indo-Pacific Vision. **Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Brunei in 2013, during the ASEAN-India summit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Brunei for a bilateral meeting.**
- PM Modi landed in Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei Darussalam, on September 3 for his official visit to the country. The first Indian PM to visit the Southeast Asian nation, his trip also marks 40 years since India and Brunei officially established diplomatic ties. **The official diplomatic relations between India and Brunei Darussalam were established in 1984.** Before that, Indian representation was through the Indian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Brunei Darussalam opened its High Commission in India in 1992. In 1993, India’s High Commission was set up in Brunei.
- PM Modi inaugurated a new Chancery of the High Commission of India and visited the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque. The mosque has a fusion of architecture from the Mughal era and the Italian Renaissance period. The new Chancery will highly enhance the diplomatic relations between the two countries. This chancery design shows Indian motifs, which embody the cultural spirit in Indian buildings and help establish Indianness in Brunei.

Brunei, officially Brunei Darussalam, is a country in Southeast Asia, situated on the northern coast of the island of Borneo. Apart from its coastline on the South China Sea, it is completely surrounded by the Malaysian state of Sarawak, with its territory bifurcated by the Sarawak district of Limbang. Bandar Seri Begawan is the capital and largest city of Brunei. Hassanal Bolkiah is Sultan of Brunei since 1967, and prime minister of Brunei since independence from the United Kingdom in 1984. Al-Muhtadee Billah is the eldest son of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and his wife Queen Saleha. He is the Crown Prince of Brunei Darussalam, and is first in the line of succession to the Bruneian throne. The Brunei dollar is the currency of the Sultanate of Brunei since 1967.

UN, Odisha govt launch India’s first ‘grain ATM’ to boost food security

- The Government of Odisha, in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), will set up 24-hour grain dispensing machines, known as ‘Annapurti’ across the state in a bid to boost food security. The first such ‘grain ATM’ was inaugurated in Bhubaneswar. It was launched by Odisha Minister Krushna Chandra Patra, with Nozomi Hashimoto, Deputy Country Director for WFP in India, also in attendance. Under NFSA, the Centre has made provisions to provide free food grains to 813.5 million beneficiaries. The scheme focuses on the most vulnerable 67 per cent of India’s population.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is an international organization within the United Nations that provides food assistance worldwide. It is the world’s largest humanitarian organization and the leading provider of school meals. Founded in 1961, WFP is headquartered in Rome and has offices in 80 countries. WFP is an executive member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, a consortium of UN entities that aims to fulfil the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with a priority on achieving SDG 2 for “zero hunger” by 2030. The World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts to provide food assistance in areas of conflict, and to prevent the use of food as a weapon of war and conflict.

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Vishwashanti Buddha Vihara in Udgir, Maharashtra

- President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the ‘Vishwashanti Buddha Vihara’ in Udgir in Latur, Maharashtra. She installed a statue of Gautama Buddha inside the vihara and paid tribute to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar by offering flowers at his statue. The event featured a traditional Buddha worship ceremony. The President also participated in the ‘Mahila Anand Melava’ at the Udayagiri College grounds.
- The vihara is a replica of the Buddha Vihara in Kalburgi, Karnataka, spread over 15 hectares. It has a meditation center for 1,200 followers, and its main entrance is inspired by the Sanchi Stupa. Its entry gate is based on the design of the entry gate of Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh.

Buddhism started in India over 2,600 years ago as a way life that had a potential of transforming a person. It is one of the important religions of South and South-Eastern Asian countries. The religion is based upon the teachings, life experiences of its founder Siddhartha Gautam, born in circa 563 BCE. He was born into royal family of Sakya clan who ruled from Kapilvastu, in Lumbini which is situated near the Indo-Nepal Border. At the age of 29, Gautama left home and rejected his life of riches and embraced a lifestyle of asceticism, or extreme self-discipline. After 49 consecutive days of meditation, Gautama attained Bodhi (enlightenment) under a pipal tree at Bodhgaya, a village in Bihar. Buddha gave his first sermon in the village of Sarnath, near the city of Benares in Uttar Pradesh. This event is known as Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana (turning of the wheel of law). He died at the age of 80 in 483 BCE at a place called Kushinagara a town in Uttar Pradesh. The event is known as Mahaparinibban. The main teachings of Buddhism are encapsulated in the basic concept of four noble truths or ariya-sachchani and eightfold path or astangika marg. Four noble truths: 1. Suffering (dukkha) is the essence of the world. 2. Every suffering has a cause – Samudya. 3. Suffering could be extinguished – Nirodha. 4. It can be achieved by following the Atthanga Magga (Eight Fold Path). The essence of Buddhism is the attainment of enlightenment. It points to a way of life that avoids self-indulgence and self-denial. There is no supreme god or deity in Buddhism.

CAG signs pact with General Court of Audit of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- **The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has signed a pact with the General Court of Audit, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to strengthen cooperation and exchange of expertise between the two nations in the field of public sector auditing.** The area of cooperation encompasses conducting joint training programmes on topics related to financial, performance and compliance audits and exchange of audit manuals and audit methodologies.
- **The CAG stated that the support and cooperation between the two SAIs will energise their capacity development initiatives and encourage the exchange of knowledge and information between the two SAIs.** Hussam Abdulmohsen Alangari, President, General Court of Audit, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, highlighted the importance of the agreement in enhancing the cooperation in areas of competence of two SAIs to enhance and improve their respective external audit practices.

The Constitution of India (Article 148) provides for an independent office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). He is the head of the Indian audit & account department and chief Guardian of Public purse. It is the institution through which the accountability of the government and other public authorities (all those who spend public funds) to Parliament and State Legislatures and through them to the people is ensured. CAG is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal and provided with tenure of 6 years or 65 years of age, whichever is earlier. CAG can be removed by the President only in accordance with the procedure mentioned in the Constitution that is the manner same as removal of a Supreme Court Judge. He is ineligible to hold any office, either under the Government of India or of any state, once he retires/resigns as a CAG. The current Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is Girish Chandra Murmu, who took office on August 8, 2020. He was re-elected as the External Auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO) for a four-year term from 2024 to 2027.

Govt sets up 23rd Law Commission for legal reforms

- **The Union Government set up the 23rd Law Commission for a period of three years to identify laws that have become obsolete and can be repealed, carry out audits of laws that affect the poor and give its views on any law that the Law and Justice Ministry conveys to it. The Law and Justice Ministry announced the setting up of the Law Commission from September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2027.**
- **The commission would include a full-time chairperson, four four-time members, the Secretaries of the Legal Affairs and Legislative departments as ex-officio members and up to five part-time members. The government was yet to appoint the members. Similar to the terms of reference of the 22nd Law Commission that was created in 2020, the new panel has been tasked with examining “the existing laws in the light of Directive Principles of State Policy and to suggest ways of improvement and reform and also to suggest such legislations as might be necessary to implement the Directive Principles and to attain the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution.”**

- The Commission has also been asked to “examine the impact of globalization on food security, unemployment and recommend measures for the protection of the interests of the marginalized”, which was also in the terms of reference of the previous Commission. The terms of reference include reviewing the system of judicial administration to make it more responsive to the demands of the time. The panel’s goals include eliminating delays, simplification of rules of High Courts for sake of uniformity and ease of understanding, and implementation of a framework for cash flow management.

The Law Commission of India is an executive body established by an order of the Government of India. The commission’s function is to research and advise the government on legal reform, and is composed of legal experts, and headed by a retired judge. The commission is established for a fixed tenure and works as an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice. The first Law Commission was established during colonial rule in India by the East India Company under the Charter Act of 1833 and was presided over by Lord Macaulay. After that, three more commissions were established in British India. The first Law Commission of independent India was established in 1955 for a three-year term. The first chairman of the Law Commission of Independent India was M. C. Setalvad, who was also the first Attorney General of India.

Indian Army launched the first phase of Project NAMAN

- The Indian Army launched the first phase of Project NAMAN. The project involves the establishment of reception and facilitation centres, enabled through a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indian Army’s Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (Adjutant General’s Branch), Common Service Centre (CSC) e-Governance India Limited, and HDFC Bank Limited signed last year in September 2023.
- These Common Service Centres (CSCs) are dedicated to Army Veterans, Pensioners, War Widows, and NOKs, offering SPARSH-enabled pension services, Government to Citizen (G2C) services, and Business to Consumer (B2C) services, all at a single, convenient location. In the first phase of Project NAMAN, 14 CSCs have been established at key locations across India, including New Delhi, Jalandhar, Leh, Dehradun, Lucknow, Jodhpur, Bengdubi, Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Secunderabad, Saugor, Guntur, Ahmedabad and Bangalore.
- The project is set to expand significantly, with plans to establish approximately 200 centres nationwide over the next 2-3 years. The banking partner, HDFC Bank, has provided the necessary IT infrastructure for operationalising the CSCs, while local military stations have contributed essential physical infrastructure and facilities. Project NAMAN was conceived after careful deliberation and feedback from the Defence community, reflecting the Indian Army’s commitment to fostering camaraderie among serving and retired Armed Forces personnel. This initiative not only delivers essential care and support to esteemed veterans but also extends services to the entire resident population of military stations and surrounding localities.

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. Sam Manekshaw was the first field marshal of India, and was conferred the rank on 1 January 1973. The second was Kodandera M. Cariappa, who was conferred the rank on 15 January 1986. The Indian Army was formed in 1895 alongside the long established presidency armies of the East India Company, which too were absorbed into it in 1903. General Upendra Dwivedi is a serving four star general officer of the Indian Army. He is the current and 30th Chief of the Army Staff. He took over as the 30th COAS succeeding General Manoj Pande on 30 June 2024.

Jaipur’s UNESCO heritage status to be strengthened with Rs.100 crore expenditure

- The heritage conservation and development of the Walled City of Jaipur, which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019, will be taken up with a budgetary expenditure of Rs. 100 crore. The city’s infrastructure will be strengthened with an emphasis on protecting its architectural legacy and vibrant culture. Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari, who holds the tourism portfolio, visited various places in the Walled City and gave instructions for launching the conservation works. Ms. Kumari said the 400-year-old Man Sagar Lake would also be redeveloped with the boating facilities.

Jaipur is the capital and the largest city of the north-western Indian state of Rajasthan. Jaipur is also known as the **Pink City** due to the dominant color scheme of its buildings in old city. Jaipur was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II, the Kachhwaha Rajput ruler of Amer, after whom the city is named. **Ahmedabad is the first city in India to be recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.** Ahmedabad is located on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati river in Gujarat.

Telangana CM inaugurated Global Artificial Intelligence Summit 2024 in Hyderabad

- **Hyderabad hosted a two-day Global Artificial Intelligence Summit-2024-themed “Making AI Work for Everyone”.** The summit was formally inaugurated by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre. **The role of Technology and Innovation are significant to bring a transformation in the society.** We should not expect a change without technological development.
- **Aimed at fostering discussions on various aspects of AI, the summit is expected to amplify the state’s ambition to become a global innovation hub.** The summit featured a series of parallel tracks, including a central plenary and specialised sessions that delve into AI advancements, practical applications, and future opportunities. The event is expected to draw over two thousand delegates from across the world. Several global AI experts will provide insights into the impact of AI across sectors like governance, technology, finance, and manufacturing.
- **The summit also hosted hackathons, lighting demonstrations, and startup showcases, featuring innovative projects and emerging technologies. Telangana AI Mission – T-AIM in partnership with NASSCOM will assist the government in implementing the AI framework in the Telangana State.** The government will move forward to develop innovations in AI in coordination with industry experts. This Global AI Summit is a testimony that the city of Hyderabad will become an AI Hub soon. Welcoming everyone to the City of the Future. We are inviting all to join us in making the Future City a prominent AI hub in the world.

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Virtually Addresses First International Solar Festival

- **India’s solar energy capacity has increased 32-fold in the last 10 years, and this speed and scale will help the country achieve 500 gigaatt non-fossil capacity by 2030.** This was stated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing the two-day first International Solar Festival through video conferencing held in New Delhi.
- Mr Modi said India has taken many massive strides in green energy in the past few years, and it is the **first G20 nation to achieve the Paris commitments in renewable energy.** The Prime Minister said the **International Solar Alliance (ISA), established in 2015,** is growing into a giant tree inspiring policy and action, and within a short time, its membership has reached a milestone of 100 countries.
- **He added that 19 more countries are ratifying the framework agreement for attaining full membership in the ISA, highlighting that the growth of this organisation is important for the vision of one world, one sun. Mr Modi said one of the most popular mantras of the Vedas is about the sun, millions of Indians chant it daily.**
- Prime Minister highlighted that the **International Solar Festival brings the whole world together to celebrate the sun’s impact and will help build a better planet.** Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi emphasised uniting efforts to move towards a solar-powered future. **The International Solar Festival is intended to celebrate the transformative impact of solar energy on communities in the ISA member countries.** The festival aims at highlighting and celebrating the transformative power of solar energy and its role in powering new opportunities across the globe, leading the way to universal energy access, and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. This festival will convene youth, women, communities, policymakers, and the private sector in a vibrant celebration of solar energy and its transformative power.

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.

“Vishanu Yuddh Abhyas”: A Mock Drill on Pandemic Preparedness conducted under National One Health Mission

- Under the aegis of National One Health Mission (NOHM), a comprehensive national mock drill, “Vishanu Yuddh Abhyas” (Virus War Exercise), was conducted in Ajmer district of Rajasthan state, from August 27 to August 31, 2024 to assess pandemic preparedness. This exercise aimed to evaluate the readiness and response of the National Joint Outbreak Response Team (NJORT) composed of experts from human health, animal husbandry and wildlife sectors. A mock zoonotic disease outbreak scenario was created to simulate a real-world outbreak. Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, Shri J P Nadda appreciated this first-of-its kind exercise, highlighting the role of One Health Mission by fostering collaborations to address health of humans, animals and plants and environment holistically and in a sustainable manner.
- The drill was structured around two key components: a) Investigation and identification of the virus responsible for the mock outbreak; and b) Actions initiated to control the spread of illness across human and animal populations. Independent observers monitored the response. The response of the district and state teams, directed by NJORT was found to be mostly prompt and appropriate. The exercise also identified some areas requiring further improvement. The Vishanu Yuddh Abhyas was a successful exercise that provided valuable insights to inform future strategies to enhance India’s preparedness and response to zoonotic disease outbreaks, fostering a coordinated and efficient approach across all relevant sectors.

The National One Health Mission was approved by the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) in 2022. The mission aims to coordinate across ministries in achieving overall pandemic preparedness and integrated disease control against priority diseases of both human and animal sectors. The mission will help in institutionalising the ‘One Health’ approach. One Health is an approach that recognises that the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment.

West Bengal becomes first in India to amend Central laws on rape and sexual assault

- West Bengal became the first state to introduce amendments to Central laws dealing with offences of rape, gang-rape, and sexual assault after the Assembly, unanimously passed an anti-rape ‘Aparajita’ bill. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee termed the bill ‘historic’ and ‘model’, calling it a tribute to the 31-year-old trainee doctor who was raped and murdered at the government-run RG Kar Medical Centre and Hospital last month. The bill, titled the ‘Aparajita Woman and Child Bill (West Bengal Criminal Laws and Amendment) 2024, provides for the death penalty for rape and sexual offences.
- The Bill proposes capital punishment for individuals convicted of rape if the act results in the victim’s death or leaves her in a vegetative state. Under BNS Laws, the penalties for rape are as follows: a fine and a minimum of 10 years imprisonment for rape; a minimum of 20 years imprisonment for gang rape, which may extend to life imprisonment; and a minimum of 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for rape resulting in the victim’s death or a vegetative state, with the possibility of life imprisonment or the death penalty.
- Time-Bound Investigations and Trials: Investigations into rape cases are mandated to be completed within 21 days of the initial report and trial to be completed within 30 days. Extensions are permissible only with written justification from a senior police officer. Under BNSS laws, the time limit for investigation and trial is 2 months from the date of FIR.

West Bengal is a state in the eastern region of India along the Bay of Bengal. Part of the Bengal region of the Indian subcontinent, it borders Bangladesh in the east, and Nepal and Bhutan in the north. The state capital is Kolkata. Under the East India Company rule and later under the British Raj, Calcutta served as the capital of British-held territories in India until 1911, when its perceived geographical disadvantages, combined with growing nationalism in Bengal, led to a shift of the capital to New Delhi. Mamata Banerjee is serving as the current Chief Minister of West Bengal since 2011, the first woman to hold the office. Dr. C.V. Ananda Bose is serving as the current Governor of West Bengal.

Kerala, Andhra Pradesh top ease of doing business reformers' ranking

- **Kerala, followed by Andhra Pradesh, were ranked as the top performers** by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) for promoting ease of doing business in their respective states.
- **According to the achievers' numbers, Kerala was the top performer, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh.** Meanwhile, Arunachal Pradesh, Telangana, Punjab, and Puducherry were ranked the worst performers, the ranking showed.
- During the 'Udyog Samagam,' Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said that **states have shared their best practices and emphasised that healthy competition and collaboration are key to the nation's progress.** "Odisha has reformed its mining sector, UP has begun promoting investment, Maharashtra is attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by improving infrastructure, and Sikkim is adding value to organic farming."

India, Maldives hold defence dialogue focusing on Indian Ocean

- **India and the Maldives held a fresh round of "productive" defence dialogue with a focus on the situation in the Indian Ocean and ways to expedite implementation of ongoing defence projects.** The defence dialogue in Delhi took place nearly a month after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar paid a three-day visit to the Maldives, in the first high-level trip from New Delhi after the island nation's pro-China president Mohamed Muizzu assumed office. "The entire range of talks were productive which will advance shared interests of both the nations in near future and bring stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region," the defence ministry said on the defence dialogue.

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.

India Singapore Sign 4 MoUs to Deepen Economic Ties

- **India and Singapore have exchanged four Memorandums of Understanding for cooperation in the fields of health and medicine, education and skill development, digital technologies, and the India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership.**
- The two countries also agreed to **elevate their ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which would give a major boost to India's Act East Policy.** This was decided after delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Singaporean counterpart, Lawrence Wong. During the talks in Singapore, both leaders reviewed the progress of bilateral relations. Taking stock of the robust progress in economic ties, the two sides called for further expanding trade and investment flows between the two countries.
- Prime Minister Modi highlighted that Singapore, **with an investment of around 160 billion US dollars in the Indian economy, is a leading economic partner for India.** The two leaders discussed the outcome of the 2nd India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable held in Singapore last month. **Their discussion also covered the celebration of the 60th anniversary of bilateral relations in 2025.**
- Mr. Modi said that the **350,000 people of Indian origin living in Singapore are a strong foundation of the relationship between the two countries.** He also announced that **India's first Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centre would be opened in Singapore.**

Prime Minister Modi visited Singapore during the second leg of a two-nation trip to South-East Asia, having travelled to Brunei Darussalam in the first leg. Singapore is India's largest trade partner in ASEAN. It is the leading source of FDI, among the largest sources of External Commercial Borrowings and Foreign Portfolio Investment. Sir Stamford Raffles, in 1819, established a trading station in Singapore on the route of the Straits of Malacca which later became a crown colony and was governed from Kolkata till 1867.

Singapore is a sovereign city-state and island country in Southeast Asia. Singapore dollar is the official currency of Singapore. Lawrence Wong is the current Prime Minister of Singapore. Halimah binti Yacob served as the first female President in the country's history. Tharman Shanmugaratnam has been serving as the current President of Singapore since 2023.

Delhi launched 'Abhishikt' program for high-IQ students

- The Delhi government introduced specialised classrooms for gifted students in 15 of its schools following the mid-term exams. Known as 'Abhishikt', these classrooms will serve students in classes VI and IX, focusing on nurturing those identified as exceptionally intelligent through a thorough screening process.
- The Abhishikt programme, according to officials at the Inclusive Education Branch under the Directorate of Education, involves a multi-stage selection process. Those selected will attend the specialised classrooms in 15 public schools while continuing to follow the NCERT curriculum. They will receive additional learning opportunities that will allow them to engage with more advanced materials.

Delhi officially the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, is a city and a union territory of India containing New Delhi, the capital of India. Straddling the Yamuna river, primarily its western or right bank, Delhi shares borders with the state of Uttar Pradesh in the east and with the state of Haryana in the remaining directions. Delhi's urban agglomeration, which includes the satellite cities Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida in an area known as the National Capital Region (NCR), has an estimated population of over 28 million, making it the largest metropolitan area in India and the second-largest in the world (after Tokyo). In 1911, New Delhi, a southern region within Delhi, became the capital of the British Indian Empire. Vinai Kumar Saxena is the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi since 26 May 2022. Arvind Kejriwal is an Indian politician, former bureaucrat and activist who is serving as the 7th and current Chief Minister of Delhi since 2015.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO)

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO) is the project proponent for the NITI Aayog-promoted Rs. 72,000 crore mega infrastructure projects in Great Nicobar, the southernmost island in the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago.
- The project entails the construction of a trans-shipment port, a greenfield airport, a tourism and township project and a solar and gas based power plant in Great Nicobar. ANIIDCO was incorporated on June 28, 1988 under the Companies Act. ANIIDCO which has been granted permission for the mega project is a little known quasi-government agency based in Port Blair. Its objective is "to develop and commercially exploit natural resources for the balanced and environment friendly development of the territory." Its main activities, according to its website, include trading of petroleum products, Indian made foreign liquor and milk, managing tourism resorts and infrastructure development for tourism and fisheries.

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

Government of India introduces Vishvasya-Blockchain Technology Stack

- In a programme organized at the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, Shri S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY** launched the **Vishvasya-Blockchain Technology Stack** to offer **Blockchain-as-a-Service with a geographically distributed infrastructure** designed to support various permissioned Blockchain based applications. It aimed at **enhancing transparency, security, and efficiency in digital service delivery**. The **Vishvasya-Blockchain Technology Stack is designed to offer Blockchain-as-a-Service (BaaS)** with a geographically distributed setup to support a range of permissioned blockchain applications.
- Additionally, the Secretary, **MeitY also unveiled the NBFLite-Lightweight Blockchain Platform, Praamaanik** - an innovative blockchain-enabled solution for verifying mobile app origin and **National Blockchain Portal**. MeitY, with the vision to create trusted digital platforms, initiated **National Blockchain Framework (NBF)** for promoting research and application development; facilitating state of the art, transparent, secure and trusted digital service delivery to citizens.
- **National Blockchain Framework technology stack is architected** with Distributed Infrastructure, Core Framework functionality, Smart Contracts & API Gateway, Security, Privacy & Interoperability and Applications development offering Blockchain as a Service (BaaS). NBF currently supports **two permissioned Blockchain platforms** and is extensible. **The Technology Stack is hosted on geographically distributed infrastructure at NIC Data centers i.e. Bhubaneswar, Pune, Hyderabad**. **NBFLite, a Blockchain sandbox platform**, is developed especially for startups/academia for rapid prototyping of applications, carrying out research and capacity building. These technologies have been developed by collaborating efforts of C-DAC, NIC, IDRBT Hyderabad, IIT Hyderabad, IIIT Hyderabad and SETS Chennai under the MeitY support. It is the part of the efforts of Government of India for providing trusted digital service delivery, the National Blockchain Framework would play an important role in **enabling security, trust and transparency** for various citizen centric applications.

A blockchain is a distributed ledger with growing lists of records (blocks) that are securely linked together via cryptographic hashes. Each block contains a cryptographic hash of the previous block, a timestamp, and transaction data (generally represented as a Merkle tree, where data nodes are represented by leaves). Since each block contains information about the previous block, they effectively form a chain (compare linked list data structure), with each additional block linking to the ones before it. Consequently, **blockchain transactions are irreversible in that, once they are recorded, the data in any given block cannot be altered retroactively without altering all subsequent blocks.** Blockchains are typically managed by a **peer-to-peer (P2P) computer network** for use as a **public distributed ledger**, where nodes collectively adhere to a consensus algorithm protocol to add and validate new transaction blocks. **The first decentralized blockchain was conceptualized by a person (or group of people) known as Satoshi Nakamoto in 2008.** The words block and chain were used separately in Satoshi Nakamoto's original paper, but were eventually popularized as a single word, blockchain, by 2016.

CM Mohan Charan Majhi 'repackages' Naveen Patnaik govt's KALIA, launches new scheme

- **Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi launched the CM-Kisan assistance, a repackaging of KALIA scheme of the previous BJD government that propelled the Naveen Patnaik-led government to a victory in the 2019 polls.** The BJP government chose Nuakhai, the agrarian festival in western Odisha, to launch the new scheme in Sambalpur in the state's western region.
- **The time and place is seen as an attempt to "connect emotionally" with the people in the region.** Compared to the southern and coastal regions of the state, the BJP enjoys a strong base in the western region. In an event, Majhi also transferred Rs. 925 crore to the accounts of over 46 lakh farmers in the state. The government also announced a Rs. 800 bonus beyond the MSP to farmers for every quintal of paddy under the Samrudha Krushak Yojana.
- The major flagship programmes which were operational during the Naveen regime in Odisha and rebranded by the Majhi government are — **Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana, the state's health scheme, as Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana (named after respected social reformer Gopabandhu Das) and Nabin Odisha as Viksit Gaon — Viksit Odisha.**

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga

War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE.

Centre dissolves Pronab Sen-headed Standing Committee on Statistics after members question census delay

- **The Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has quietly dissolved the 14-member Standing Committee on Statistics (SCoS) headed by eminent economist and former chief statistician of the country Pronab Sen, allegedly after its members questioned the delay in conducting the census.** The reason it is being dismantled, according to an email sent to the members by Geeta Singh Rathore, Director General of the Ministry's National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), is that the **committee's work overlapped with that of the recently formed Steering Committee for National Sample Surveys.**

A **Parliamentary Committee** is a panel of MPs that is appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the Speaker/Chairman. The committee works under the direction of the Speaker/chairman and it presents its report to the House or to the Speaker/chairman. **Parliamentary Committees have their origins in the British Parliament.** They draw their authority from **Article 105 and Article 118.** Article 105 deals with the privileges of MPs. Article 118 gives Parliament authority to make rules to regulate its procedure and conduct of business. India's Parliament has multiple types of committees. They can be differentiated on the basis of their work, their membership and the length of their tenure. However, **broadly there are two types of Parliamentary Committees– Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees.** The **Standing Committees are permanent** (constituted every year or periodically) and work on a continuous basis. **While the Ad Hoc Committees are temporary and cease to exist on completion of the task assigned to them.**

India's Military diplomacy in top gear with back-to-back exercises for three Services

- In the last few months, India's military diplomacy is at a hectic pace with back-to-back military exercises from countries far and wide for all three Services. **India-U.S. bilateral Army exercise Yudh Abhyas is set to commence at the Mahajan field firing ranges in Rajasthan. This year's edition will see the U.S. Army deploying Stryker infantry vehicles and the M142 HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System),** underscoring the deepening strategic partnership between the two countries. **Talks are also underway to potentially procure Stryker vehicles for the Indian Army, with the possibility of manufacturing them domestically under license.**
- In addition to Yudh Abhyas, **the Indian Army has been involved in other key engagements, including the Mitra Shakti exercise with Sri Lanka and participation in Mongolia's Khaan Quest multinational peacekeeping exercise, reflecting India's expanding regional influence.**
- Not far away, **Phase-II of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) largest multilateral exercise Tarang Shakti is underway at Jodhpur with eight countries, including India participating with aircraft and 17 countries as observers. The iconic A-10 Thunderbird close air support aircraft are flying over Indian air space for the first time as the U.S. has deployed them for the exercise along with F-16 jets.**
- The countries deploying aircraft include Australia, Greece, Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, UAE and the U.S., Bangladesh, which was scheduled to deploy a C-130 transport aircraft, has dropped out in the backdrop of recent domestic developments. **"Tarang Shakti: A force for unity! The 25th Fighter Squadron's A-10 Thunderbolt II and a C-17 Globemaster III assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord showcased their capabilities in India". This follows India's participation in other major air force exercises like Pitch Black in Australia and Red Flag in the U.S. earlier this year, which aim to enhance operational capabilities and foster greater cooperation among like-minded nations.**
- **The Indian Navy, too, has been actively building its maritime partnerships. Exercise Varuna with France, held in early September 2024, saw the deployment of INS Tabar and a P-8I maritime patrol aircraft, marking the first time an Indian Navy aircraft was deployed in Europe.** These exercises are part of India's broader strategy to increase its presence in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

- Additionally, the Indian Navy participated in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise hosted by the U.S. and deployed assets to joint drills with Russia and Brazil. These engagements highlight India's focus on enhancing maritime security and cooperation in strategically critical regions such as the South China Sea, Mediterranean, and the Pacific Ocean.
- The Malabar naval exercise comprising India, Australia, Japan and the U.S. is scheduled to be held off the Visakhapatnam coast in the first half of October. Shortly after that, an Indian Army mechanised infantry contingent will head to Russia for bilateral exercise Indra.

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. Sam Manekshaw was the first field marshal of India, and was conferred the rank on 1 January 1973. The second was Kodandera M. Cariappa, who was conferred the rank on 15 January 1986. The Indian Army was formed in 1895 alongside the long established presidency armies of the East India Company, which too were absorbed into it in 1903. General Upendra Dwivedi is a serving four star general officer of the Indian Army. He is the current and 30th Chief of the Army Staff. He took over as the 30th COAS succeeding General Manoj Pande on 30 June 2024. 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.

Second International Buddhist Media Conclave organised in Delhi on 11th September

- International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) and the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised the 2nd International Buddhist Media Conclave on the theme “Mindful Communication for Conflict Avoidance and Sustainable Development”. Shri Baichung Bhutia, the former captain of the Indian Football Team was the Guest of Honour. The event was attended by the representatives of media from 18 countries.
- The primary objective of the 2nd International Buddhist Media Conclave will focus on how Buddhist teachings can be assimilated into modern media practices to address global crises and enhance trust in media institutions. The conclave aims to foster ethical journalism, promote mindful communication, and establish a network of Buddhist media professionals across Asia. The first conclave brought together around 150 delegates, including Buddhist journalists and media personalities from 12 different countries and laid a strong foundation for integrating Buddhist principles into media practices.
- Guest of Honour Shri Baichung Bhutia emphasized that Buddhism is a way of life. “Buddhas teachings have the message of peace and sacrifice”, he stated. Shri Bhutia concluded that Buddhism has a major role in ensuring peace and brotherhood and media will have crucial role in spreading the message of Buddhism across the world.

Buddhism started in India over 2,600 years ago as a way life that had a potential of transforming a person. It is one of the important religions of South and South-Eastern Asian countries. The religion is based upon the teachings, life experiences of its founder Siddhartha Gautam, born in circa 563 BCE. He was born into royal family of Sakya clan who ruled from Kapilvastu, in Lumbini which is situated near the Indo-Nepal Border. At the age of 29, Gautama left home and rejected his life of riches and embraced a lifestyle of asceticism, or extreme self-discipline. After 49 consecutive days of meditation, Gautama attained Bodhi (enlightenment) under a pipal tree at Bodhgaya, a village in Bihar. Buddha gave his first sermon in the village of Sarnath, near the city of Benares in Uttar Pradesh. This event is known as Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana (turning of the wheel of law). He died at the age of 80 in 483 BCE at a place called Kushinagara a town in Uttar Pradesh. The event is known as Mahaparinibban. The main teachings of Buddhism are encapsulated in the basic concept of four noble truths or ariya-sachchani and eightfold path or astangika marg. Four noble truths: 1. Suffering (dukkha) is the essence of the world. 2. Every suffering has a cause – Samudya. 3. Suffering could be extinguished – Nirodha. 4. It can be achieved by following the Atthanga Magga (Eight Fold Path). The essence of Buddhism is the attainment of enlightenment. It points to a way of life that avoids self-indulgence and self-denial. There is no supreme god or deity in Buddhism.

Indian Navy launches Anti-Submarine Warfare vessels Malpe and Mulki at Cochin Shipyard

- The Indian Navy launched two anti-submarine warfare (ASW) shallow water crafts, named Malpe and Mulki, at Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL) in Kochi. These vessels, part of the Eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft project, are the fourth and fifth ships to be launched under the program, which was initiated through a contract signed between the Indian Ministry of Defence and CSL.
- The newly launched ships, Malpe and Mulki, are designed to enhance India's coastal defense and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. They are equipped with advanced, locally developed underwater sensors designed to detect enemy submarines and other underwater threats. The vessels are capable of conducting anti-submarine warfare in shallow waters, low-intensity maritime operations, and mine-laying activities.

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.

India will host for the first time the general assembly of Cooperative Alliance

- The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly and the Global Cooperative Conference 2024 is scheduled to take place from November 25th to November 30th, 2024, at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. It will be for the first time in the 130 years long history of International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the premier body for the Global Cooperative movement, the ICA General Assembly and Global Cooperative Conference are going to be hosted by India.

A co-operative society is a voluntary association of individuals having common needs who join hands for the achievement of common economic interest. Its aim is to serve the interest of the poorer sections of society through the principle of self-help and mutual help. 97th Constitutional Amendment Act 2011 established the right to form cooperative societies as a fundamental right (Article 19). It included a new Directive Principle of State Policy on the Promotion of Cooperative Societies (Article 43-B). It added a new Part IX-B to the Constitution titled "The Co-operative Societies" (Articles 243-ZH to 243-ZT). It authorizes the Parliament to establish relevant laws in the case of multi-state cooperative societies (MSCS) and state legislatures in the case of other cooperative societies. The Union Ministry of Cooperation is a ministry under the Government of India which was formed in July 2021. Before the creation of this ministry, the objectives of this ministry were looked after by the Ministry of Agriculture. Amit Shah is the first and current Minister of Co-operation of India since 2021.

6 senior advocates as Additional Solicitor Generals in Supreme Court

- Senior Advocates S. Dwarakanath, Ms. Archana Pathak Dave, Satya Darshi Sanjay, Brijender Chahar, Raghavendra P. Shankar, and Rajkumar Bhaskar Thakare (Raja Thakare) have been appointed as Additional Solicitor General (ASG) for the Apex Court. They will hold office for three years with effect from the date of assumption of charge of the office or until further orders. Currently, the Supreme Court has five ASGs — Senior Advocates S V Raju, Aishwarya Bhati, Vikramjeet Banerjee, N Venkataraman, and K M Nataraj.
- The Solicitor General of India (SGI) is subordinate to the Attorney General for India. The SGI is the second-highest law officer of the country, assists the Attorney General, and is assisted by Additional Solicitors General of India (Addl. SGIs). The SGI and the Addl. SGIs advise the Government and appear on behalf of the Union of India in terms of the Law Officers (Conditions of Service) Rules, 1972.
- However, unlike the post of Attorney General for India, which is a Constitutional post under Article 76 of the Constitution of India, the posts of the Solicitor General and the Additional Solicitors General are merely statutory. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) recommends the appointment and officially appoints the Solicitor General. The proposal for appointment of Solicitor General, Additional Solicitor General is generally moved at the level of Joint secretary (or Law Secretary) in the Department of Legal Affairs and after obtaining the approval of the Minister of Law & Justice, the proposal goes to the ACC and then to the president. Currently, the Solicitor General of India is Tushar Mehta.

The Solicitor General is the ‘second highest law officer’ in the country after the Attorney General of India. The Attorney General is assisted by the Solicitor General of India and several Additional Solicitors General of India for the fulfilment of his official responsibilities. The Solicitor General and the Additional Solicitors General of India also advise the Union Government and appear on behalf of the Union of India in the Supreme Court and High Courts. The Constitution of India does not mention the offices of the Solicitor General of India and Additional Solicitors General of India. Thus, these posts are statutory, and not constitutional. As per the Law Officers (Conditions of Service) Rules, 1987: **The Headquarters of the Solicitor General of India (SGI) shall be in New Delhi.** The Headquarters of the Additional Solicitors General shall be at New Delhi or Bombay or Calcutta or Madras or Allahabad as may be specified, from time to time, by the Government of India in the case of each Additional Solicitors General.

Madhya Pradesh constitutes Delimitation Commission for Fresh Demarcation of Divisions, Districts and Tehsils in the State

- **Madhya Pradesh government has constituted a delimitation commission for fresh demarcation of Divisions, Districts and Tehsils in the state.** The government says that the boundaries of the Districts and Divisions are being re-drawn for the convenience of the public.
- **The state government constituted a three-member delimitation commission. Retired Additional Chief Secretary Manoj Shrivastava has been made the chairman of the commission.** Madhya Pradesh is the second largest state in the country geographically. The area of the state is large but due to the boundaries of the district and divisions, people also have to face various problems. Therefore, the boundaries are re-drawing.

Delimitation means the process of fixing the number of seats and boundaries of territorial constituencies in each State for the Lok Sabha and Legislative assemblies. It also includes **determining the seats to be reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in these houses.** This ‘delimitation process’ is performed by the ‘Delimitation Commission’ that is set up under an act of Parliament. **Delimitation Commissions have been set up four times — 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002 under the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002.** The first delimitation exercise was carried out by the President (with the help of the Election Commission) in 1950-51. The 84th Amendment Act of 2001 empowered the government to undertake readjustment and rationalisation of territorial constituencies in the states on the basis of the population figures of 1991 census. The 87th Amendment Act of 2003 provided for the delimitation of constituencies on the basis of 2001 census and not 1991 census. However, this can be done without altering the number of seats allotted to each state in the Lok Sabha. **The Delimitation of constituencies for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies is to be carried out on the basis of the First Census after 2026.**

India’s First Medical Technology University to be established in Visakhapatnam

- **The Andhra Pradesh Medical Technology Zone (AMTZ) in Visakhapatnam has decided to establish a Greenfield ‘Global MedTech University,’ the first of its kind in the country,** on its premises. AMTZ will collaborate with industry players for this academic institution pursuit in a public-private partnership model. Set to commence operations from the 2025-26 academic year, the university will offer a range of academic programmes related to medical technology and regulatory affairs, including an MBA (medical regulatory approvals and entrepreneurship), MTech (medical technology devices), MTech (bioengineering), and PhD courses.

Andhra Pradesh is a state in the southern coastal region of India. It is the **seventh-largest state.** It shares borders with Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and the Bay of Bengal. It has the second-longest coastline in India at about 974 km (605 mi). **After existence as Andhra State and unified Andhra Pradesh, the state took its present form on 2 June 2014,** when the new state of Telangana was formed through bifurcation. Amaravati is the capital of the state, with the largest city being Visakhapatnam. Telugu, one of the classical languages of India used by the majority of people, is the first official language. **Nara Chandrababu Naidu is currently serving as the 13th Chief Minister** of Andhra Pradesh. **Syed Abdul Nazeer is the 24th Governor of Andhra Pradesh.** He is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India and a former judge of the Karnataka High Court. **Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. Hyderabad is no more capital of the Andhra Pradesh with a transitional arrangement ended in 2024.**

Cabinet approves ‘Mission Mausam’ to create a more weather-ready and climate-smart Bharat

- **The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved ‘Mission Mausam’ with an outlay of Rs. 2,000 crore over two years.** Mission Mausam, to be chiefly implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, is envisaged to be a multi-faceted **and transformative initiative to tremendously boost India’s weather and climate-related science, research, and services.**
- **It will help to better equip stakeholders, including citizens and last-mile users, in tackling extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change.** The ambitious program will help broaden capacity and resilience across communities, sectors, and ecosystems in the long run. As part of the Mission Mausam, India will exponentially expound research and development, and capacity in atmospheric sciences, especially weather surveillance, modelling, forecasting, and management. By integrating advanced observation systems, high-performance computing, and cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning, Mission Mausam will set a new benchmark for predicting weather with high precision.
- **The mission’s focus will include improving observations and understanding for providing highly accurate and timely weather and climate information across temporal and spatial scales,** including monsoon forecasts, alerts for air quality, extreme weather events and cyclones, weather interventions for managing fog, hail, and rain, etc., capacity building and generating awareness.
- **Critical elements of Mission Mausam will include the deployment of next-generation radars and satellite systems with advanced sensors and high-performance supercomputers,** the development of improved Earth system models and a GIS-based automated Decision Support System for real-time data dissemination. Mission Mausam will directly benefit numerous sectors, such as agriculture, disaster management, defence, environment, aviation, water resources, power, tourism, shipping, transport, energy, and health. It would also enhance data-driven decision making in areas such as urban planning, road and rail transport, offshore operations, and environmental monitoring.

Project Mausam is a cultural project by the Indian Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and the National Museum in New Delhi which aims to connect countries on the Indian Ocean. The term “mausam” means “weather” or “season” and is derived from regional dialects including the Arabic word mawsim, which refers to the season when boats can safely sail. Project Mausam aims to rebuild maritime cultural connections with the 39 countries bordering the Indian Ocean. There are two visions for Project Mausam: the first is to understand national cultures between countries and the second is to rebuild communications between countries. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is serving as Minister of Culture and Minister of Tourism since 2024. He is representing Jodhpur in the Lok Sabha from BJP Party.

Centre revises National Highway rules: Free travel up to 20 km for satellite system-equipped vehicle

- **The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) will enable free journey of up to 20 kilometres a day in each direction on national highways and expressways for vehicles equipped with the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS).** The ministry amended the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008 to include provisions related to GNSS-based electronic toll collection in India. The objective of the move is to **reduce congestion at highway toll plazas and charge the toll on the basis of actual distance travelled.**
- **“A driver, owner or person in-charge of a mechanical vehicle other than National Permit Vehicle who makes use of the same section of national highway, permanent bridge, bypass or tunnel, as the case may be, shall be levied a zero-user fee up to twenty kilometres of journey in each direction in a day under Global Navigation Satellite System based user fee collection system and if the distances travelled is more than twenty kilometres, the fee will be charge for actual distance travelled”.**
- GNSS will provide distance-based tolling where users will pay only for the stretch they have travelled on a National Highway. **Also, vehicles equipped with the GNSS will be allowed to pass through toll plazas without stopping for toll payment or FASTag scanning.** They will use exclusive earmarked lanes that will not have boom barriers at toll plazas.
- **The GNSS device—called the on-board unit—will be non-transferrable and firmly fitted in the vehicle for user fee collection.** However, if vehicles that are not equipped with GNSS enter the GNSS-exclusive lanes, they

will have to pay double the toll as penalty. GNSS will have advance reading, identification, and enforcement equipment for vehicles so that valid vehicles get a free-flow pass.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari is the in the Government of India. He is also the **longest serving Minister for Road Transport & Highways currently running his tenure for over 8 years**. Gadkari earlier served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from 2009 to 2013. **Gadkari contested 2014, 2019 and 2024 Loksabha elections successfully from current Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it. He is also the longest serving Minister for Road Transport & Highways, currently in his tenure for over ten years (2014-present), and is the only person to serve under a single portfolio for three consecutive terms.**

India hosted 2nd Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation

- **Union Minister for Civil Aviation, Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, addressed the media regarding 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation 2024 at Rajeev Gandhi Bhawan New Delhi. Third-largest domestic aviation market globally, India is positioning itself to become a major hub for Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services, cargo operations, and overall regional aviation. The government's initiatives, including the UDAN scheme, are reshaping regional connectivity, and rapid infrastructure expansion promises unprecedented growth.**
- **The 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation is held from 11th to 12th September 2024 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, India. The event is co-hosted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India. The first Ministerial Conference of the Asia Pacific region was organized in 2018 in Beijing, China. During the first conference, India volunteered to host the second Conference in 2020 however due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the conference was postponed.**

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-serviced 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.

Gujarat sets Up GRIT as Policy Think Tank under CM Bhupendra Patel

- **Gujarat government has set up Gujarat State Institution for Transformation-GRIT under Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel's chairmanship. The body will act as a policy think tank on the lines of NITI Ayog. The Chief Minister will be the Chairman of the Governing Body of this Grit, while the Finance Minister will be the Vice-Chairman and the Ministers of Agriculture, Health, Education and Industries as members.**
- **A 10-member executive committee will be in place for the day-to-day operations of GRIT. The formal resolution regarding the formation of 'GRIT' and its scope will be published by the General Administration Department-Planning Division.**

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

Navika Sagar Parikrama II

- **Indian Navy has made significant efforts to revitalise the sailing tradition, emphasising its commitment to preserve maritime heritage and promote seamanship skills. Through the pioneering efforts of Sail Training Ships INS Tarangini & INS Sudarshini and circumnavigation onboard INSVs Mhadei and Tarini, the Indian Navy has taken a centre stage in Ocean Sailing expeditions.**

- Continuing with the celebration of maritime skill and adventure, **two Indian Navy women officers – Lt Cdr Roopa A and Lt Cdr Dilna K would be embarking on the extraordinary expedition of circumnavigating the globe - Navika Sagar Parikrama II onboard INSV Tarini very shortly.**
- The duo have been preparing themselves for this expedition for the last three years. **The officers as part of the six member crew had participated in trans-oceanic expedition from Goa to Rio de Janeiro via Cape Town and back last year.** Thereafter, the officers undertook a sailing expedition from Goa to Sri Vijaya Puram (earlier Port Blair) and back in double handed mode. Further, the duo successfully undertook a sortie from Goa to Port Louis, Mauritius again in dual handed mode early this year.

PM Narendra Modi flagged off country's first Vande Metro service in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the country's first 'Vande Metro' service** during his two-day visit to Gujarat. The Ahmedabad-Bhuj Vande Metro is a fully unreserved air-conditioned train for which passengers can buy tickets from the counter shortly before its departure. The 'Vande Metro' concept is designed on the lines of the indigenous **semi-high-speed train Vande Bharat service with fully air-conditioned coaches and the 'KAVACH' anti-collision system** as well as other state-of-the-art features.

KAVACH ('Armour') is an Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system indigenously developed by Indian Railways through Research Designs & Standards Organisation (RDSO). Initially it was known by the name Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). Kavach was adopted by Ministry of Railways as the National ATP System in July 2020. The Union budget of India for the FY 2022-23 allocated funds for the rapid implementation of Kavach across 2,000 km of track, as well as sanctioning its implementation along 34,000 km track of the Golden Quadrilateral rail route, which is to be implemented by 2027-2028.

Centre grants in-principle approval to oil and gas exploration in Assam's hoolock gibbon sanctuary

- The Union environment ministry has **granted in-principle approval to divert around 4.50 hectares of forest land in Assam, home to the endangered hoolock gibbon, for oil and gas exploration by a Vedanta Group company.** Cairn Oil & Gas will carry out exploratory oil drilling in the ecosensitive zone of the Hoollongapar **Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary in Jorhat district**, the sole habitat for India's only ape species.
- The ministry's Forest Advisory Committee approved the diversion of 4.49 hectares of forest land. **The project site is located within the ecosensitive zone of the sanctuary**, an area also used by wild elephants to move between the sanctuary and the Desso Valley Reserve Forest.

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.

India participates in BRICS Literature Forum 2024 in Russia

- BRICS Literature Forum 2024 commenced in Kazan, Russia.** **The theme of the 2024 edition of Literary BRICS is, "World literature in the new reality. Dialogue of traditions, national values and cultures."** The conference is the confluence of writers, poets, philosophers, artists, scholars from the BRICS countries.

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 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.**

Indian Navy commissions ‘Vineta’

- A state-of-the-art submarine escape training facility, named “Vineta,” was commissioned at INS Satavahana in Visakhapatnam. The facility, designed to enhance the escape capabilities of crew members from distressed Kalvari-class submarines. Named “Vineta,” meaning “Trainer,” the facility marks a significant step forward in ensuring the safety and confidence of Indian Navy submariners.
- By offering specialised training, it enhances operational readiness and reinforces the Navy’s focus on safety protocols and preparedness in underwater emergency situations. Kalvari-class submarines are a series of diesel-electric attack submarines built for the Indian Navy.
- These submarines are based on the Scorpène-class, originally designed by the French shipbuilder Naval Group (formerly DCNS). The Kalvari-class submarines are a key component of India’s underwater warfare capabilities, designed for a range of tasks including anti-ship warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, and area surveillance.

Centre plans to form ‘Golden City Club’ for top-performing cities

- The government is planning to introduce the ‘Golden City Club’ initiative aimed at recognising cities that consistently excel in various development indicators. Khattar explained that this initiative will create a special category for cities which hold top ranks in government assessments across the country.
- “This year, we have devised a plan where those cities that come first every time will be grouped into a separate category called the ‘Golden City Club’”. Each year, a new city that bags the top ranks in its vertical will be added to this prestigious club.

Port Blair to be renamed Shri Vijayapuram

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that the Indian government has decided to rename the island of Port Blair as ‘Shri Vijayapuram,’ in a bid to “rid the country of all symbols of slavery.” “This island, which played the role of a naval base in the Chola Empire, is ready to accelerate the country’s security and development”. The Home Minister also talked of the Cellular Jail - a historical landmark that saw many freedom fighters imprisoned - and the legacy of India’s independence struggle.

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

Tarang Shakti, India’s largest multinational air exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability

- As part of Exercise Tarang Shakti, India’s largest multinational air exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational coordination among Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs), the Indian Air Force (IAF) organized a multinational symposium on ‘Air Domain Awareness’ at Jodhpur.
- The theme of the symposium was “Collaborative Approach to Facilitate Air Domain Awareness Towards Enhancing Regional Security.” The event saw participation from over 50 delegates, representing 27 nations involved in Exercise Tarang Shakti. International delegates shared their concepts of air domain awareness and discussed strategies to tackle challenges from both national and regional perspectives. The symposium fostered an open exchange of ideas among subject matter experts on emerging challenges related to air situational awareness and airspace management. Discussions focused on policy matters and technological solutions for effective information sharing.

- On the sidelines of this exercise, IAF has organized the India Defence Aviation Exposition IDAX-24, which was inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. In the exposition, several Defence Public Sector Undertakings, DRDO, private industries, and startups are participating. They have showcased a wide range of defense products and technologies. In the second phase of Tarang Shakti exercise, United States fighter jets, F-16, A-10, United Arab Emirates F-16, Australia EA 18, Japan F2, and Greece F 16 have participated and displayed their prowess. Apart from the fighter jets, Singapore-C-130, Sri Lanka- Super King B 200, United States KC 135, UAE global 6000 also displayed their aerial skills.

India Participates in G20 Agriculture Ministerial Meeting in Cuiabá, Brazil

- Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Ram Nath Thakur along with Ambassador of India to Brazil Shri Suresh Reddy and Joint Secretary (NRM), Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare participated in the G20 Agriculture Ministerial Meeting held in Cuiabá, Brazil on 12th-14th September 2024.
- Our approach not only focuses on productivity but also ensures economic, social, environmental sustainability, enhancing farmer prosperity and embodying a comprehensive vision for development. He further mentioned that India is implementing the world's largest food-based safety net programs to ensure food security and nutrition. Shri Ram Nath Thakur held bilateral meetings aimed at strengthening India's agricultural relations with other countries. He reiterated India's readiness to collaborate, learn and contribute to the collective global efforts required to address the pressing challenges facing global food systems.

The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU) and African Union. Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers, foreign ministers and think tanks, have periodically conferred at summits ever since. It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any single nation. In 2023, during its 2023 summit, the African Union joined as its 21st member. The G20 members are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union and African Union. The G20 has no permanent secretariat. The first G20 Summit took place in 2008 in Washington DC, US.

Union Cabinet Approves 'One Nation, One Election' Proposal

- The government of India accepted the recommendations of the High Level Committee constituted for exploring the idea of One Nation, One Election, paving the way for simultaneous elections across the country. The Union Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said a high-level committee constituted under the chairmanship of former President Ram Nath Kovind held extensive deliberations with stakeholders, including political parties and experts. He said it will be implemented in two phases. He said that in the first phase, Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be held simultaneously, while local bodies' elections like panchayats and municipalities will be conducted within 100 days of general elections.
- **Rationale for simultaneous election:** The Committee recommended that simultaneous election be held in the country. It observed that frequent elections create an atmosphere of uncertainty. Simultaneous election will ensure stability and predictability in governance by minimising disruption and policy paralysis. Simultaneous election will help reduce costs, and increase voter participation. It cited a research paper which observed that simultaneous elections lead to a higher economic growth, a lower inflation, increased investments, and improved quality of government expenditure.
- **Implementation of simultaneous election:** The Committee recommended a framework for holding simultaneous election which will require constitutional amendments. At the time of the next election for Lok Sabha, all state assemblies and local bodies should be dissolved, irrespective of the remaining term as a one-time measure. This will synchronise all elections. The Committee recommended holding elections for Lok Sabha and all State Assemblies at the same time, and that of local bodies within 100 days from then.
- Currently, a legislature is elected for the term of five years. Hence, a hung legislature at any point of time would render them out of synchronisation for the next simultaneous election. To address this, the Committee recommended that fresh election should be held for a hung legislature or a local body for a reduced term. The

reduced term will be equivalent to the remaining period of the five-year cycle for the simultaneous election. **This implies that if fresh election for a state assembly or Lok Sabha is held two years after the simultaneous election, its term will be only three years. This will synchronise all elections every five years.**

- **Need for ratification by states:** The Committee observed that constitutional **amendments in relation to terms of Parliament and state assemblies will not require ratification by states.** However, constitutional amendments in relation to local bodies will be required to be passed with ratification by at least half of the states.
- **Single electoral roll: Supervision of elections are entrusted with two constitutional authorities: (I) Election Commission of India (ECI) for both Houses of Parliament, State Legislative Assemblies and Councils, President, and Vice-President, and (ii) State Election Commission (SECs) for local bodies.** Preparation of electoral roll by SECs is governed by respective state laws. Some state laws allow SECs to prepare separate electoral rolls, while others require them to utilise the electoral roll prepared by ECI.
- **The Committee recommended that a single electoral roll should be adopted.** This will reduce redundancy and duplication across multiple agencies. The Committee recommended empowering ECI to prepare the single electoral roll in consultation with SECs. To give effect to this single electoral roll, a constitutional amendment will be required. The Committee observed that these amendments will also require ratification by at least half of the states.
- **Logistical requirements:** The Committee recommended that ECI and SECs should carry out planning and estimation for logistical arrangements around the time of the rollout.

The High level Committee on Simultaneous Elections constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Ram Nath Kovind, former President of India, met the Hon'ble President of India, Shrimati Droupadi Murmu, and submitted its Report. The Report, comprising 18,626 pages, is an outcome of extensive consultations with stakeholders, experts and research work of 191 days, since its constitution on 2 September, 2023. The other members of the Committee were Shri Amit Shah, Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Shri N.K. Singh, former Chairman, 15th Finance Commission, Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap, former Secretary General, Lok Sabha, Shri Harish Salve, Senior Advocate, and Shri Sanjay Kothari, former Chief Vigilance Commissioner. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Law and Justice was a Special Invitee and Dr. Niten Chandra was the Secretary of the HLC. The Committee held extensive consultations to understand the views of different stakeholders. 47 political parties submitted their views and suggestions, out of which 32 supported simultaneous elections. Many political parties had extensive discussions with the HLC on this matter. In response to a public notice published in newspapers in all the States and Union territories, 21,558 responses were received from citizens from all over India. 80 per cent of the respondents supported simultaneous elections. Experts on law such as four former Chief Justices of India and twelve former Chief Justices of major High Courts, four former Chief Election Commissioners of India, eight State Election Commissioners, and Chairman, Law Commission of India were invited by the Committee for interaction in person. Views of the Election Commission of India were also sought.

Union Cabinet approved the development of Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has **approved the development of Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)** that will be a **significant step towards the Government's vision of exploring and studying the Venus, beyond moon and mars.** Venus, the closest planet to Earth and believed to have formed in conditions similar to Earth, offers a unique opportunity to understand how planetary environments can evolve very differently.
- **The 'Venus Orbiter Mission' to be accomplished by Department of Space is envisaged to orbit a scientific spacecraft in the orbit of planet Venus for better understanding of the Venusian surface and subsurface, atmospheric processes and influence of Sun on Venusian atmosphere.** The study of the underlying causes of transformation of Venus, which is believed to be once habitable and quite similar to Earth would be an invaluable aid in understanding the evolution of the sister planets, both Venus and Earth.
- **ISRO will be responsible for the development of spacecraft and its launch.** The Project will be effectively managed and monitored through the established practices prevailing at ISRO. The data generated from the mission would be disseminated to the scientific community through existing mechanisms

- The mission is expected to be accomplished on the opportunity available during March 2028. The Indian Venus mission is expected to answer some of the outstanding scientific questions resulting in various scientific outcomes. The realization of the spacecraft and launch vehicle is through various industries and it is envisaged that there would be large employment potential and technology spin-off to other sectors of the economy. **The total fund approved for the Venus Orbiter Mission” (VOM), is Rs.1236 Cr out of which Rs. 824.00 Crore will be spent on the spacecraft.** The cost includes development and realization of the spacecraft including its specific payloads and technology elements, global ground station support cost for navigation and network as well as the cost of launch vehicle.

Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. As the brightest natural object in Earth’s night sky after the Moon, Venus can cast shadows and can be, on rare occasions, visible to the naked eye in broad daylight. Venus lies within Earth’s orbit, and so never appears to venture far from the Sun, either setting in the west just after dusk or rising in the east a little while before dawn. Venus orbits the Sun every 224.7 Earth days.

Cabinet approves Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan

- The Union Minister informed that the government has approved Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gramme Abhiyan with a total outlay of 79 thousand 156 crore rupees. He said this scheme will improve the socio-economic condition of tribal communities by developing enabling infrastructure, ensuring economic empowerment, and providing access to quality education and health. Mr. Vaishnav said this will cover around 63 thousand villages, benefiting more than five crore tribal people. It will cover 549 districts and two thousand 740 blocks spread across all tribal majority villages across 30 states and Union Territories.
- India has ST population of 10.45 crore as per 2011 census and there are more than 705 tribal communities, spread across the country, living in remote and hard-to-reach areas. The Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan envisions saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, livelihood, through different schemes of Govt of India by convergence and outreach and ensure holistic and sustainable development of tribal areas and communities based on learnings and success of PMJANMAN (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan).

The population of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the country, as per Census 2011 is 10.45 crore. STs constitute 8.6 per cent of the country’s total population and 11.3 per cent of the total rural population. Population of ST males is 5.25 crore and ST females is 5.20 crore. There are over 700 Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, spread over different states and Union Territories of the country. Many tribes are present in more than one state. The largest number of communities listed as Scheduled Tribes are in Odisha (62). Madhya Pradesh has the highest tribal population in India as per 2011 Census. According to the 2011 census, Lakshadweep in U and Mizoram had the highest percentage of tribal population in India, at 94.8% and 94.4% respectively. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Due to this factor, more developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development. In 1973, the Dhebar Commission created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, who are less developed among the tribal groups. In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs. Among the 75 listed PVTG’s the highest number are found in Odisha.

Cabinet approves Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for Rabi Season, 2024

- Mr. Vaishnav also announced that the government has approved nutrient-based subsidy rates for Rabi Season 2024-2025 on phosphoric and potassium fertilizers. The minister said the financial implication would be over 24 thousand crore rupees. He said this will ensure availability of fertilisers to farmers at subsidised, affordable, and reasonable prices.
- The Minister said the government has also approved the continuation of schemes of Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) to provide remunerative prices to farmers and to control price volatility of essential commodities for consumers. He said the total financial outgo will be 35 thousand crore rupees. Mr. Vaishnav said this will promote self-sufficiency in the production of pulses, oilseeds, and other essential agri-horticulture commodities.

- Government is making available 28 grades of P&K fertilizers to farmers at subsidized prices through fertilizer manufacturers/importers. The subsidy on P&K fertilizers is governed by NBS Scheme w.e.f. 01.04.2010. In accordance with its farmer friendly approach, the Government is committed to ensure the availability of P&K fertilizers to the farmers at affordable prices.
- In view of the recent trends in the international prices of fertilizers & inputs i.e. Urea, DAP, MOP and Sulphur, Government has decided to approve the NBS rates for Rabi 2024 effective from 01.10.24 to 31.03.25 on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers. The subsidy would be provided to the fertilizer companies as per approved and notified rates so that fertilizers are made available to farmers at affordable prices.

Nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) are three macronutrients that are crucial in plant growth and development. Deficiency or excess of any or all directly decreases crop yield and quality. A desirable NPK ratio is 4:2:1 (N:P: K), ensuring plants receive balanced nutrients for healthy growth and optimal yields.

Union cabinet approved the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) in Mumbai

- The Union cabinet approved the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) in Mumbai as a not-for-profit company. Tentatively called the Indian Institute for Immersive Creators (IIIC), the centre will follow a hub and spoke model with the IIIC as the hub and other centres as its spokes, information and broadcasting minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said while announcing the cabinet decisions. “The aim is to channelise the new developments in economy to create new opportunities,” Vaishnaw said as he talked about the growing creator economy in the country. Industry bodies Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) will be the central government’s partners for this institute.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group based in India. It was established in 1927, on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi by Indian businessman G.D. Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas. It is the largest, one of the oldest and the apex business organisation in India. It is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation. FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs. Currently, it is headquartered in the national capital New Delhi and has a presence in 12 states in India and 8 countries around the world. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group headquartered in New Delhi, India, founded in 1895. CII engages business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas. It is a membership-based organisation.

Union Cabinet approves ‘Bio-RIDE’ scheme to support cutting edge research and development in Biotechnology

- The Minister said the Union Cabinet has also approved a Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development scheme with a new component, namely Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry. He said the proposed outlay for the implementation of the unified scheme Bio-RIDE is nine thousand 197 crore rupees.
- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved continuation of the two umbrella schemes of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), merged as one scheme-‘Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Bio- RIDE)’ with a new component namely Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry. The scheme has three broad components: 1. Biotechnology Research and Development (R&D); 2. Industrial & Entrepreneurship Development (I&ED) and 3. Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry.
- The proposed outlay for the implementation of the unified scheme ‘Bio-RIDE’ is Rs.9197 crore during the 15th finance Commission period from 2021-22 to 2025-26. Bio-RIDE scheme is designed to foster innovation, promote bio-entrepreneurship, and strengthen India’s position as a global leader in biomanufacturing and biotechnology. It aims to accelerate research, enhance product development, and bridge the gap between academic research and industrial applications. The scheme is part of the Government of India’s mission to harness the potential of bio-innovation to tackle national and global challenges such as healthcare, agriculture, environmental sustainability, and clean energy.

India-Oman Joint Military Exercise Al Najah

- India has also sent its contingent for the ongoing India-Oman Joint Military Exercise Al Najah, which is conducted from 13th to 26th September 2024 at the Rabkoot Training Area in Salalah, Oman. “Exercise AL NAJAH V will allow both sides to exchange best practices in tactics, techniques, and procedures for joint operations. It will foster interoperability, goodwill, and camaraderie between the two armies. Additionally, the joint exercise will strengthen defence cooperation and further enhance the bilateral relations between countries.

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.

Centre to launch BHASKAR to boost India’s startup ecosystem

- Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal launched Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR), an interactive online platform to further boost world’s third largest startup ecosystem and to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of youth converting ideas into businesses. The platform will centralise, streamline, and enhance collaboration among key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors, mentors, service providers, and regulatory bodies.

Government of India launched the flagship initiative, “Startup India” in 2016. The program envisages to build a strong ecosystem that is conducive for the growth of startup businesses and kickstarted an entrepreneurship revolution. Further, the overhaul of the digital payments ecosystem is being led by State innovation (NPCI), with Aadhaar, Jan Dhan, UPI, and India Stack. As India improved its digital connectivity, market access barriers have been brought down and created a favourable ecosystem for startups. India is the third largest Unicorn ecosystem in the world after US and China. A unicorn is any privately owned firm with a market capitalization of more than USD 1 billion.

India launches Operation Sadbhav as Typhoon Yagi wreaks havoc in Southeast Asia

- India launched Operation Sadbhav to send urgent supplies to Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar – the countries devastated by Typhoon Yagi that has claimed more than 200 lives so far. The three countries have been reeling under heavy floods after the Typhoon made landfall. The typhoon first made landfall in the Philippines, where it claimed the lives of over a dozen people. After striking the Philippines, Yagi continued its westward journey, impacting southern China before affecting parts of Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos.

Typhoon Yagi, also known as Severe Tropical Storm Enteng in the Philippines, was a deadly and highly destructive tropical cyclone that hit Southeast Asia and South China in early September 2024. It was the eleventh named storm and the first Category 5 typhoon of the season. Yagi was the most intense typhoon to strike Northern Vietnam and Hainan during the autumn season, and the strongest since Typhoon Rammasun in 2014. The name “Yagi” means goat or the constellation Capricornus in Japanese. It was named Yagi by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA).

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched NPS Vatsalya Scheme

- Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched the National Pension System Vatsalya (NPS Vatsalya) scheme on 18 September 2024. NPS Vatsalya, ‘a pension scheme for minors’ was announced by the Finance Minister on 23 July 2024, in her Union Budget 2024-25 speech. The Union Finance Minister also launched an online platform for subscribing to NPS Vatsalya and distribute Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) cards to new minor subscribers.
- NPS Vatsalya will allow parents to save for their children’s future by investing in a pension account and ensure long-term wealth with the power of compounding. NPS Vatsalya offers flexible contributions and investment options, allowing parents to make investment of Rs. 1,000 annually in the name of the child, thus making it accessible to families from all economic backgrounds.
- This new initiative is designed to start early in securing financial future of children, marking an important step in India’s pension system. The Scheme will be run under the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development

Authority (PFRDA). The launch of NPS Vatsalya highlights the Government of India's commitment to promote long-term financial planning and security for all. It's a big step toward making India's future generations more financially secure and independent.

Nirmala Sitharaman is serving as the Minister of Finance and Minister of Corporate Affairs of the Government of India since 2019. She is a member of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament, representing Karnataka since 2016 and previously represented Andhra Pradesh from 2014 to 2016. Sitharaman previously served as the 28th Defence Minister from 2017 to 2019, thereby becoming India's second female defence minister and the second female finance minister after Indira Gandhi, and the first full-time female minister to hold each of those portfolios. Sitharaman featured in the Forbes 2022 list of World's 100 most powerful women and was ranked 36. In 2023, she was ranked 32nd in the Forbes 2023 list of World's 100 most powerful women. Fortune named her the most powerful woman in India.

Mumbai gets India's FIRST short-range weather radar network

- **India's first short-range weather radar network, which will give forecasters high-resolution rainfall maps in real-time, has been commissioned in Mumbai.** Mumbai has become India's first mega metropolitan city to come under the cover of a short-range polarimetric radar network.
- **Four new X-band radars have been installed and are currently undergoing testing, bringing the total number of weather radars monitoring the region to six.** Mumbai will now have a total of six weather radars monitoring its region, making it the most extensively covered city in India with respect to weather surveillance. Two of the currently operational radars are owned and maintained by the IMD. These include an S-band radar located in Colaba and a C-band radar situated in Veravali. In addition, there are hundreds of rain gauges that measure real-time rainfall at regular intervals.

Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, is the capital of Maharashtra and the financial hub of India. With a population of 12.5 million, it is **India's most populous city.** It also anchors the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, home to over 23 million people, making it the sixth most populous metropolitan area globally. Located on the Konkan coast with a deep natural harbor, **Mumbai was designated an alpha world city in 2008. It also boasts the highest number of billionaires in any Asian city.**

Fourth Edition of Global Bio-India 2024 Successfully Concluded

- **The fourth edition of Global Bio-India 2024 successfully concluded after showcasing India's biotech prowess. The global event organized by Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, along with its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) from 12th – 14th September, at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.**
- **Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions inaugurated the annual conference, it being a three-day event was the largest representation of entire biotechnology stakeholders in the country to national and international biotech community.** The three-day event was **themed on the potential and opportunities in 'Biotech Innovation' and 'Bio-manufacturing'** and their impact on the bio economy. In Global Bio India, the country's biotech startups unveiled 11 products that showcased the country's emerging talent in biosciences.

Atishi takes oath as Chief Minister of Delhi

- **AAP leader Atishi Marlena took oath as Delhi Chief Minister on September 21, 2024, a day after President Droupadi Murmu appointed her for the top job in the national capital.** Five Cabinet Ministers — Gopal Rai, Saurabh Bharadwaj, Kailash Gahlot, Imran Hussain, and first-time MLA Mukesh Ahlawat — were also sworn-in by Lieutenant-General V.K. Saxena. A gazette notification by the **Union Home Ministry stated, "The President is pleased to appoint Ms. Atishi as the Chief Minister, National Capital Territory of Delhi, with effect from the date she is sworn in."** She also accepted Arvind Kejriwal's resignation as the CM.
- **AAP leader Atishi took oath as Delhi's third woman Chief Minister on September 21, 2024, becoming the youngest of all three to hold the top office in the national capital. The two other women CM's before her**

were BJP's Sushma Swaraj (took charge at 46) and the Congress' Sheila Dikshit (took charge at 60). She is also the 17th woman to hold the post of Chief Minister in independent India. However, her tenure in office will be brief as Delhi's Assembly Elections are due in February 2025. She is only the second woman chief minister in the country at present, alongside West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee. Sucheta Kriplani was India's first woman Chief Minister of independent India. She served as the head of the Uttar Pradesh government from 1963 to 1967.

In India, a Chief Minister is the elected head of government of each state out of the 28 states and sometimes a union territory (UT). Currently, only the UTs of Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir (currently vacant) and Puducherry have serving Chief Ministers. According to the Constitution of India, the Governor is a state's head, but de facto executive authority rests with the Chief Minister. Following elections to the State legislative assembly or Vidhan Sabha in a state, the state's governor usually invites the party (or coalition) with a majority of seats to form the government. The governor appoints and swears in the Chief Minister, whose council of ministers are collectively responsible to the assembly. Based on the Westminster system, given that they retain the confidence of the assembly, the Chief Minister's term can last for the length of the assembly's life, a maximum of five years. There are no limits to the number of terms that the chief minister can serve. A Chief Minister heads a state government's council of ministers and can be deputised in that role by a deputy chief minister. Pawan Kumar Chamling was the longest served Chief Minister of Sikkim and India, surpassing Jyoti Basu. Pema Khandu is the youngest Chief Minister of India.

Himachal Pradesh is set to become the first state in India to introduce a Horticulture Policy

- Himachal Pradesh is set to become the first state in India to introduce a Horticulture Policy aimed at boosting horticultural production and transforming the region into the nation's fruit bowl. During a review of the HP Shiva Project, he highlighted that the Rs. 1,292 crore initiative will span 6,000 hectares across seven of the state's twelve districts.

Himachal Pradesh ("Province of the Snow-laden Mountains") is a state in the northern part of India. Situated in the Western Himalayas, it is one of the eleven mountain states and is characterized by an extreme landscape featuring several peaks and extensive river systems. The state also shares an international border to the east with the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. Himachal Pradesh is also known as 'Dev Bhoomi' or 'Land of God' and 'Veer Bhoomi' which means 'Land of Braves'. Shimla is the capital of Himachal Pradesh. In 1864, Shimla was declared as the summer capital of British India. Dharamshala is the winter capital city. Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu is serving as the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. Shiv Pratap Shukla is the Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Odisha Govt's Flagship Initiative Subhadra Scheme

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched 'SUBHADRA', the flagship Scheme of Government of Odisha, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It is the largest, single women-centric scheme and is expected to cover more than 1 crore women. Prime minister also initiated the fund transfer into the bank accounts of more than 10 lakh women.
- Eligible beneficiaries between the ages of 21 and 60 will receive 50,000 rupees over a period of five years. Beneficiaries will be credited 10,000 rupees annually in two equal instalments through Aadhaar-linked, DBT-enabled bank accounts. During the launch event, Mr. Modi will initiate the first fund transfer to over 10 lakh women beneficiaries.
- Shri Modi laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation Railway Projects worth more than Rs. 2800 crore, and laid the foundation stone for National Highway Projects worth more than Rs. 1,000 crore. The Prime Minister released the 1st installment of assistance to nearly 10 lakh beneficiaries under PMAY-G of around 14 states, took part in Grih Pravesh celebrations for 26 lakh beneficiaries of PMAY (Gramin and Urban) from across the country and handed over house keys to PMAY (Gramin and Urban) beneficiaries. Further, he launched Awaas+ 2024 App, for survey of additional households for PMAY-G, and the Operational Guidelines of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0. Mr. Modi also interacted with the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana—Urban.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga

War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. The current Chief Minister of Odisha since 12 June 2024 is Mohan Charan Majhi of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Raghubar Das is serving as the current Governor of Odisha. Das has previously served as the sixth Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

India, Singapore eye pan-ASEAN rollout of digital payment links

- India and Singapore have held discussions on framing rules and regulations and enhancing interoperability and cyber security so that the existing link between their digital payments systems can be expanded to other Southeast Asian countries.
- Agreements and understandings reached during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Singapore are also expected to lead to further investments of about \$60 billion into India over the next three years, the people said on condition of anonymity. Total investments into India from Singapore since 2000 are worth nearly \$160 billion.
- One of the memorandums of understanding (MoUs) signed during Modi's visit focuses on cooperation in digital technology to encourage greater interoperability between the digital economies of India and Singapore and build on earlier work, such as the UPI-PayNow linkage. This MoU also covers governance frameworks for data flows, rules for data protection, and enhancing cybersecurity.

Singapore is a sovereign city-state and island country in Southeast Asia. Singapore dollar is the official currency of Singapore. Lawrence Wong is the current Prime Minister of Singapore. Halimah binti Yacob served as the first female President in the country's history. Tharman Shanmugaratnam has been serving as the current President of Singapore since 2023.

India's first CO₂-to-methanol pilot plant to come up in Pune

- In a significant step towards advancing carbon capture and utilisation (CCU) technologies, Abhay Karandikar laid the foundation stone for India's first CO₂-to-methanol pilot plant at Thermax Limited in Pune, Maharashtra. With a capacity of 1.4 tons per day (TPD), the plant marks a pioneering effort in carbon reduction and conversion technology.
- The project is being implemented under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, and Thermax Limited. With an estimated cost of ₹31 crore, the initiative is supported by the DST under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Karandikar emphasised the importance of the pilot plant, describing it as a ground-breaking platform for showcasing and advancing indigenous CCU technologies. This project aligns with India's commitment to the Panchamrit target presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during COP 26, which focuses on reducing carbon emissions and achieving sustainable development goals.

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty on climate change. Adopted in 2015, the agreement covers climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. The Paris Agreement was negotiated by 196 parties at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference near Paris, France. As of February 2023, 195 members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are parties to the agreement. Of the three UNFCCC member states which have not ratified the agreement, the only major emitter is Iran. The United States withdrew from the agreement in 2020, but rejoined in 2021. The Paris Agreement's long-term temperature goal is to keep the rise in mean global temperature to well below 2 °C (3.6 °F) above pre-industrial levels, and preferably limit the increase to 1.5 °C (2.7 °F), recognizing that this would substantially reduce the effects of climate change.

The Prime Minister of India at the COP-26 Glasgow summit presented five nectar elements, Panchamrit, to deal with climate change: 1. India will reach its non-fossil installed electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030. 2. India will meet 50% of its electricity requirements from renewable energy by 2030. 3. India will reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now onwards till 2030. 4. By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by less than 45%. 5. By the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net-zero.

India-Romania 75 Years of Diplomatic Relations: Joint Stamp Release

- A commemorative joint postal stamp marking the 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Romania was released by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia, Minister of Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, and Mrs. Daniela-Mariana Sezonov Tane, Ambassador of Romania to India.
- This milestone highlights the long-standing friendship and cooperation between India and Romania since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. In February 2024, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of their bilateral relations and the 10th anniversary of the Extensive Partnership, both sides issued a Joint Declaration to further deepen their collaboration.

Romania is a country located at the crossroads of Central, Eastern, and Southeast Europe. It borders Ukraine to the north and east, Hungary to the west, Serbia to the southwest, Bulgaria to the south, Moldova to the east, and the Black Sea to the southeast. Bucharest is the capital and largest city of Romania. The Romanian leu is the currency of Romania. Klaus Iohannis has been serving as president of Romania since 2014. Ion-Marcel Ciolacu is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Romania.

National Symposium ‘Exercise AIKYA’ On Disaster Management to Begin in Chennai

- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in collaboration with the Southern Command of the Indian Army, is organised a two-day national symposium, ‘Exercise AIKYA’, on disaster management in Chennai. The exercise will feature simulations, technology discussions, and expert insights into various roles of disaster management. The inaugural session was headed by Lt. Gen. Dhiraj Seth, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-Chief) Southern Command, Lt. Gen. KaranBir Singh Brar, GOC, Dakshin Bharat Area, P. Amudha, Tamil Nadu State Secretary of Revenue Administration and Disaster Management and Lt. Gen. Syed Atna Hasnani, Member, NDMA.
- The primary aim of the exercise is to enhance disaster preparedness and foster robust collaboration among key stakeholders. The exercise will feature simulations, technology discussions and expert insights into various roles of disaster management. Representatives from Railways, transport, civil aviation, health, environment and climate change Departments State and National disaster management authorities and the Indian army will be present.

Raksha Mantri flags-in first-of-its-kind Open Water Swimming Expedition to 21 Islands of Andaman & Nicobar archipelago named after Param Vir Chakra awardees

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-in, in New Delhi, a first-of-its-kind Open Water Swimming Expedition to the 21 Islands of the Andaman & Nicobar archipelago named after the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) Awardees. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had named 21 largest unnamed islands of Andaman & Nicobar after the PVC awardees on January 23, 2023 on Parakram Diwas commemorating the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- To commemorate the first anniversary of the renaming, the Tri-service Andaman & Nicobar Command launched ‘Expedition Param Vir’, wherein a team of personnel from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard undertook swimming to all the 21 islands as a tribute to the valour & sacrifice of the 21 gallantry awardees and unfurled the National Flag at each island. The 11-member expedition team was led by the acclaimed open water swimmer and Tenzing Norway National Adventure Awardee Wing Commander Paramvir Singh.

Bengaluru’s BEML to produce India’s first high-speed 250 kmph bullet train

- Bengaluru is set to produce the country’s first high-speed train, set to operate at 250 km/h, to serve the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail corridor. The Integral Coach Factory (ICF) announced a tender to manufacture two high-speed chair-car trains, capable of reaching a top speed of 280 km/h. Bids were due by September 19, and BEML was the only company to submit a proposal for the two eight-car train sets.
- The first train, set to operate at 250 km/h, is projected to be completed by December 2026, with trials planned for the Surat-Bilimora section. Designed with seven cars in a 3 + 2 seating layout and one executive

car in a 2 + 2 arrangement, it will have a seating capacity of around 174 passengers, with future expansions possible based on demand.

Four Day Long Mega Event World Food India 2024 Concludes

- **The Four day long mega event World Food India 2024 concluded. The event started on 19th September at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. Around 90 countries, 26 states and Union Territories, 18 Central Ministries and allied government bodies are took part in the event.** The event highlighted India's emerging role as a global powerhouse in food processing. The event was a major convergence of innovation, technology, sustainability in the food processing sector. This third edition of World Food India hosted over 40 knowledge sessions, including thematic discussions, state and country-specific conferences.
- **Japan was the partner country and Vietnam and Iran were the focus countries for the event.** The conference tried to bridge the gap between the Industry and government and try to solve most of their problems. **The 2nd edition of the Global Food Regulators Summit hosted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India was also held in conjunction with World Food India.**

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.

Cabinet gives nod to ₹2,602 crore Wildlife Habitats Development scheme

- **The Union Cabinet has approved the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats scheme for the 15th Finance Commission cycle for an overall outlay of ₹2,602.98 crore.** The centrally sponsored scheme includes critical components such as Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Development of Wildlife Habitat. The scheme envisages boosting technological interventions in different thematic areas over the current and next financial year in tiger and other wildlife habitats, the statement read. **Project Tiger currently uses technology such as the M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers, Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) mobile application for day-to-day management practices.**

Centre cleared the Supreme Court collegium's recommendations and appointed chief justices for eight high court

- **In a swift decision, Centre cleared the Supreme Court collegium recommendations and appointed chief justices for eight high courts; just a day after SC sought explanation from it for the delay in appointments.** Significantly, it also appointed chief justice of Jharkhand HC, for which the state had moved a contempt plea against the Centre in SC. President has signed the warrants of appointment for the chief justices of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madras, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Jharkhand. **Govt has appointed acting chief justice of Delhi HC Justice Manmohan as its chief justice. Delhi HC judge Justice Rajiv Shakdher has been appointed as chief justice of Himachal Pradesh HC.**
- **Another Delhi HC judge, Justice Suresh Kait will take charge as chief justice of Madhya Pradesh HC. Calcutta HC judge Justice Indra Prasanna Mukerji has been appointed chief justice of Meghalaya HC. Bombay HC judge, Justice Nitin Madhukar Jamdar will move to Kerala HC as its chief justice. Acting chief justice of J&K and Ladakh HC, Justice Tashi Rabstan has been appointed as chief justice of the same HC. Bombay HC judge, Justice Shriram Kalpathi Rajendran has been appointed as chief justice of Madras HC and chief justice of Himachal Pradesh HC, Justice M S Ramachandran Rao has been transferred to Jharkhand HC.**

Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. As per Article 217, the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI and the State Governor, and, in the case of

appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court. The names are recommended by the Collegium. Collegium System is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court. The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah unveils ‘White Revolution 2.0’

- **Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah chaired a National Conference** in New Delhi on the initiatives taken by the Ministry of Cooperation in the first 100 days of the third term of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi led NDA government. Many dignitaries including Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Shri Lallan Singh, Minister of State for Cooperation, Shri Muralidhar Mohol and Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani were present on the occasion. On this occasion, **Shri Amit Shah launched the ‘Margdarshika’ for the formation and strengthening of 2 lakh new MPACS, Dairy and Fishery Cooperatives.**
- He also **launched the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on ‘White Revolution 2.0’ and ‘Cooperation among Cooperatives’.** **White Revolution 2.0’ will strengthen women’s self-reliance and empowerment as well as the fight against malnutrition.** The programme focuses on four key areas – empowering women farmers, enhancing local milk production, strengthening dairy infrastructure and boosting dairy exports. Shri Amit Shah said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has **launched a huge campaign for natural farming.** He said that natural farming will be strengthened by continuing the business of animal husbandry, because natural farming is successful only with the help of animal dung.

The White Revolution, or Operation Flood, launched on January 13, 1970, was the world’s largest dairy development programme and a landmark project of India’s National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). It transformed India from a milk-deficient nation into the world’s largest milk producer, surpassing the United States in 1998. **Dr Verghese Kurien, the chairman and founder of Amul, was named the Chairman of NDDB by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.** Dr. Kurien has many titles, the most common being **‘the Milkman from Anand’.** He is also recognized as **‘the Father of White Revolution’.** India Today recently wrote on him under the title ‘White Knight’. He was the founder-Chairman of several world class organizations like NDDB, GCMMF (Amul), IRMA and so on. He has been a great institution builder. **India is both the world’s largest producer and consumer of milk**

Indian Navy to commission 6th Kalvari-class submarine Vagsheer in December

- In a boost for its underwater capabilities, the **Indian Navy is likely to commission Vagsheer, its sixth and final Kalvari-class submarine under a ₹23,562-crore programme called Project 75, in December 2025.** The submarine, constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai, is undergoing final trials.
- **The Kalvari-class (Scorpene) diesel-electric attack submarines have been constructed at the yard, with technology transfer from French firm Naval Group.** The boats can carry out various missions like anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, long-range strikes, special operations, and intelligence.
- **India is in talks with France to build three more such submarines at MDL to strengthen its maritime posture in the vast Indian Ocean region,** where the challenges include China’s carefully calculated power play for influence and defending the rules-based international order.

Project-75 (India), simply referred to as the P-75(I) program, is a military acquisition initiative affiliated to India’s Ministry of Defence (MoD), aimed at the planned procurement of diesel-electric submarines for the Indian Navy (IN). Originally conceived in 1997, the initiative’s objective has been to procure a class of six conventionally-powered attack submarines for the Indian Navy Submarine Arm, as a replacement for the force’s **Sindhughosh-class submarines.** The submarines under this project would be equipped with contemporary equipment, weapons, sensors, modern missiles, and state-of-the-art countermeasure systems. The most important improvement over its predecessor, Project-75, is a fuel-cell-based AIP (Air Independent Propulsion) system. This

would provide a major boost to the stealth ability and construction capability of indigenous submarines in India, in addition to bringing in the latest submarine designs and technologies as part of the project under Atmanirbhar Bharat. The number 75 in Project 75 refers to a unique identifier for the Scorpene class. **In 1999, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) approved a plan to construct a total of 24 submarines over a 30-year span. However, due to financial constraints, only six submarines of Kalvari Class - INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, INS Vela, INS Vagir, and INSVagsheer—would be authorised for operational status by the mid-2030s.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches 3 indigenous Param Rudra supercomputers

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched three PARAM Rudra supercomputers, developed indigenously under the National Supercomputing Mission.** The initiative marks a significant step in the country's weather and climate research capabilities. **These supercomputers, built at a cost of ₹130 crore, have been deployed in Pune, Delhi and Kolkata to facilitate pioneering scientific research. Modi also inaugurated the ₹850-crore high-performance computing system tailored for weather and climate research, and described the day as one of a "very big achievement" in the science and technology sector.**
- **With Param Rudra Supercomputers and HPC system, India takes significant step towards self-reliance in computing and driving innovation in science and tech.** The significance of science is not only in invention and development, but also in fulfilling the aspirations of the last person, Modi said. **The new high-power computing systems — named Arka and Arunika — are expected to significantly enhance the accuracy and lead time of predictions related to tropical cyclones, heavy precipitation, thunderstorms, hailstorms, heat waves, droughts, and other critical weather phenomena.**

A supercomputer is a computer that performs at or near the currently highest operational rate for computers. Generally, PETAFL0P is a measure of a Supercomputer's processing speed and can be expressed as a thousand trillion floating point operations per second. FLOPS (floating point operations per second) are typically used to measure the performance of a computer's processor. Using floating-point encoding, extremely long numbers can be handled relatively easily. Supercomputers are primarily designed to be used in enterprises and organizations that require massive computing power. For example: weather forecasting, scientific research, intelligence gathering and analysis, data mining etc. Globally, China has the maximum number of supercomputers and maintains the top position in the world, followed by the US, Japan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland and the United Kingdom. **India's first supercomputer was PARAM 8000. PARAM Shivay, the first supercomputer assembled indigenously, was installed in IIT (BHU), followed by PARAM Shakti, PARAM Brahma, PARAM Yukti, PARAM Sanganak at IIT-Kharagpur, IISER, Pune, JNCASR, Bengaluru and IIT Kanpur respectively. In 2020, PARAM Siddhi, the High-Performance Computing-Artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer, achieved global ranking of 62nd in Top 500 most powerful supercomputer systems in the world. Pratyush and Mihir is India's major supercomputers, installed for weather forecasting, housed at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (Pune) and National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting (Noida). PARAM Yuva-II is developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), it was one of the fastest supercomputers in India, used for scientific research. As of 2024, Frontier, developed by Oak Ridge National Laboratory, is the fastest supercomputer in the world, with a performance exceeding 1 exaFLOP (1 quintillion operations per second).**

Karnataka launched India's First Knowledge Health Innovation Research-City

- **On September 26, 2024, the Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched the Knowledge, Wellbeing, and Innovation (KWIN) City, formerly known as the Knowledge, Health, Innovation, and Research (KHIR) City.** The KWIN City is a 2,000-acre project that will feature world-class universities, hospitals, research institutions, and innovative industries. The project is expected to create around 100,000 jobs and contribute significantly to the state's economy.

Karnataka is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. The capital and largest city is Bengaluru. Siddaramaiah is serving as the current Chief Minister of Karnataka. Thaawarchand Gehlot is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka. Coffee production in India is dominated in the hill tracts of South Indian states, with Karnataka accounting for 71%, followed by Kerala with 21% and Tamil Nadu (5% of overall production with 8,200 tonnes).

PM Narendra Modi pledges USD 7.5 million to Quad Cancer Moonshot to battle cervical cancer

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced support worth USD 7.5 million in sampling kits, detection kits, and vaccines for countries fighting cervical cancer.** Modi emphasized India's commitment to global health care and its initiatives against cervical cancer. "An integrated approach of prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment is necessary to reduce the burden of cancer. In India, a very cost-effective cervical cancer screening program is being carried out". India has also developed its own vaccine for cervical cancer and is introducing new treatment protocols with the help of Artificial Intelligence. Modi highlighted India's efforts to provide affordable health care through the world's largest health insurance scheme and special centers for affordable medicines. **He announced that India will contribute 40 million vaccine doses for the Indo-Pacific under GAVI and QUAD initiatives.**

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".

First ever Tri-services Future Warfare Course conducted

- **The first Tri-services Future Warfare Course was conducted in New Delhi from September 23–27, 2024. The course was organized by the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) under the leadership of Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan.** A pioneering initiative by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, this will be a rank agnostic course for Major Generals to Majors and their equivalent level officers from other services. The course intends to acquaint the officers with the operational and technological aspects of modern warfare. **The course will focus on key areas related to future warfare to develop an understanding on the manner in which future wars will manifest in terms of being contact, non-contact, kinetic, non-kinetic, psychological or informational as also the domains where they will be fought, be it cyber, space or electromagnetic spectrum. It will also throw light on how emerging and disruptive technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, robotics and hypersonics will impact the conduct of warfare.**

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) is the principal military authority and senior-most appointment of the Indian Armed Forces. Deemed the overall professional head of India's three armed services, namely, the Indian Army, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, the CDS is the highest-ranking military officer in service, responsible for overseeing inter-service jointness across all disciplines related to military functioning. **Primarily, the office operates on a status of primus inter pares i.e., first among equals with the chiefs of the three services, and functions as the Permanent-Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) – the inter-service syndicate responsible for ensuring the establishment and preservation of military integration.** Statutorily, the CDS is the presiding secretary of the Department of Military Affairs, the civil-cum-military entity responsible for fostering professional coordination between the services, and by extension, is also the principal military advisor to the nation's civilian leadership i.e., the Ministry of Defence on affairs privy to inter-service integration; as such, the office exists primarily as an advisor and adjudicator position, endowed with no operational command control. Since its formal creation in 2020, the CDS is officiated on a rotational basis by four-star officers nominated from either of the three services. **General Bipin Rawat served as the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces from January 2020 until his death in a helicopter crash in December 2021.** Prior to taking over as the CDS, he served as the 57th Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (Chairman COSC) of the Indian Armed Forces as well as 27th Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army. **General Anil Chauhan is a four-star general of the Indian Army, who is the current and 2nd Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces, since 30 September 2022.**

SC rules downloading, watching child porn an offence; lays down guidelines, legal consequences

- **The Supreme Court ruled that downloading and watching child pornography is an offence under the POCSO and IT laws.** It has recommended that Parliament enact an ordinance to redefine “child pornography” as “child sexually abusive and exploitative material.” The Court clarified that to establish an offence under Section 15(3) of the POCSO Act, it must be demonstrated that the storage of such material was done with the intention of gaining some advantage or benefit. A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra pronounced the verdict.
- **The apex court bench was hearing a plea against a Madras HC ruling that watching child porn not POCSO offence.** In its ruling, the SC reinstated the criminal proceedings in the case, stating that the high court had made an error in dismissing it. The bench further ordered that the sessions court will now revisit the case from the beginning. In order to constitute an offence under section 67B of the IT Act, an accused must have published, transmitted or created material depicting children in a sexually-explicit act or conduct, the HC bench had said. “A careful reading of this provision does not make watching child pornography, per se, an offence under section 67B of the Information Technology Act, 2000,” the high court had added.

Child sexual abuse laws in India have been enacted as part of the child protection policies of India. The Parliament of India passed the ‘Protection of Children Against Sexual Offences Bill (POCSO), 2011’ regarding child sexual abuse on **22 May 2012, making it an Act.** A guideline was passed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, India. The rules formulated by the government in accordance with the law had also been notified on the November 2012. **Census data from 2011 shows that India has a population of 472 million children below the age of eighteen.** Protection of children by the state is guaranteed to Indian citizens by an expansive reading of **Article 21 of the Indian constitution**, and also mandated given India’s status as signatory to the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.**

Quad launches MAITRI maritime initiative in Indo-Pacific; India to host first training workshop in 2025

- **India will host the inaugural symposium of the new regional maritime initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI), to train Quad partners** “to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws, and deter unlawful behaviour.” **The first MAITRI workshop will be hosted by India in 2025**, said Nancy Izzo Jackson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs.
- **The MAITRI initiative was among the major outcomes of the fourth summit level meeting** of the Quad group of countries, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US. President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Delaware. The initiative highlights the Quad’s commitment to regional security and capacity building, particularly in the maritime domain.

Kerala secured top position in FSSAI’s State Food Safety Index 2024 for second time in a row

- **Securing the top position in the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2024 for the second consecutive year, Kerala has once again emerged as a leader in food safety.** This annual ranking, **released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**, evaluates the food safety performance of Indian states and union territories.
- **Kerala’s consistent ranking highlights the state’s commitment to public health through strict food safety measures, advanced infrastructure, and robust surveillance.** According to the FSSAI website, “This index is based on performance of State/ UT on five significant parameters, namely, Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing — Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training & Capacity Building and Consumer Empowerment. **The Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States/UTs.**” While Kerala leads the pack, other states including Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, and Nagaland have also made significant strides and earned their places in the top five rankings.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is a statutory body under the administration of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. It regulates the manufacture, storage, distribution, sale, and import of food articles, while also establishing standards to ensure food safety. The

FSSAI was established by the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which consolidated all former acts and orders related to food safety that were previously handled by various ministries and departments. The FSSAI has its headquarters at New Delhi. The authority also has four regional offices located in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated Second Edition of UP International Trade Show

- Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, showcased production capabilities and diversity at the second edition of the five-day UP International Trade Show held from September 25 to 29. The show, inaugurated by Indian Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, attracted over 2,500 exhibitors and foreign buyers from more than 60 countries, showcasing traditional handicrafts, technology, organic agricultural items, AI solutions, robotics, and food processing. The trade show's visitors this year increased from approximately 300,000 to 550,000, with 260,000 attending through B2B and B2C platforms, according to organizers. It also highlighted Vietnam as the partner country. The first edition of UPITS was inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu last year. Dhankhar also pointed out India's record of 13 billion digital transactions monthly and its status as home to the third-largest startup ecosystem globally, with 107 unicorns, emphasizing the growing importance of the semiconductor industry, projected to surpass \$55 billion by 2026.

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 Collegium recommends Andhra Pradesh HC judge as CJ of Uttarakhand HC

- The Supreme Court Collegium recommended appointment of Justice Narendar G, currently serving as a judge of Andhra Pradesh High Court as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Uttarakhand. The Supreme Court Collegium also recommended elevation of nine advocates as judges of the Bombay High Court.

Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. As per Article 217, the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI and the State Governor, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court. The names are recommended by the Collegium. Collegium System is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court. The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

India surpasses Japan to become third powerful country in Asia for the first time

- For the first time, India has overtaken Japan to bag the third spot, in the list of countries in terms of power in Asia. The Asia Power Index Report 2024 curated by Australian think tank Lowy Institute, suggests that India's power in the continent is growing.
- The index, measuring the resources and influence to rank the 'relative power of states in Asia', ranks 27 countries and territories in terms of their capacity to shape their external environment. The index measures eight aspects: military capability, defence networks, economic capability and relationships, diplomatic and

cultural influence, resilience and future resources. **In its latest rankings, the United States and China rank in the first and second positions.**

- **The report added that India is yet to reach its full potential**, and its influence remains well below the levels promised by its resources. **The Lowy Institute stated that India still has potential for further growth as a major power. “India’s great strength in Asia is the resources it brings from its huge population, landmass, and economy,”** according to the Asia Power Index Report 2024. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership has garnered greater international recognition. India’s non-aligned strategic posture has allowed New Delhi to navigate complex international waters effectively. India ranked 6th in terms of diplomatic dialogues in 2023, reflecting its active engagement in multilateral forums.

Medha AI, India’s first offline teacher assistive AI, debuts in Uttarakhand”

- In a groundbreaking development for the Indian education system, **Medha AI, the country’s first teacher-assistive AI in Uttarakhand, is set to transform how educators teach and students learn. Designed to function seamlessly even without internet connectivity, Medha AI is a robust tool developed by Cograd** to enhance the educational experience, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- **Medha AI was introduced with the vision of bridging the educational divide between urban and rural areas.** Its capability to work offline is a significant advantage, ensuring that teachers in regions with limited internet access can still leverage advanced educational tools. This AI platform is tailored to support teachers by providing real-time assistance in lesson planning, content delivery, and student assessment, thereby reducing their administrative burden and allowing them to focus more on interactive and personalised teaching.

In May 2024, A school in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala has unveiled a groundbreaking innovation in education with the introduction of India’s first Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) teacher robot named ‘Iris’. Developed in collaboration with Makerlabs Edutech, Iris aims to transform traditional teaching methods through personalised learning experiences for students. In August 2023, India inaugurated its first-ever AI school in Kerala.

Kovalam near Chennai hosts India’s first night surf event

- Kovalam’s Pearl beach basks in a resplendent glow. Not of the rising sun this time, but of large floodlights erected on the shore, that put the ocean and its rippling frothy waves under the spotlight. **At India’s first-ever experimental night surfing event, Kovalam’s surfing stars manoeuvred quickly thinning waves, with the moon (and spectators lounging on the beach) as their witness.**
- From the shore, each wave break made for a spectacle as the surfers, clad in reds, blues and whites caught the waves in quick succession. As the night darkened and the winds slowed down, the athletes also encountered long periods of waiting. The surfers balanced the waves, striking poses for the grand spectacle. **Titled Big Air Flo 2024, the event was a spectacle more than a competition, and largely experimental since this was the first time Indian surfers were trying to tame moonlit waves.**

Karnataka launches India’s first GCC policy draft, eyes \$50 billion business in 5 years

- **The Karnataka government unveiled the draft of India’s first global capability centre (GCC) policy, aiming at establishing 500 of these centres by 2029 and generating 3.5 lakh jobs.** The policy is expected to contribute \$50 billion to the state’s economy in the next five years. “Through this policy, we expect the GCC sector to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 12-14 per cent over the next decade. In a major gesture of support to GCCs coming into co-working spaces, the government is offering to bear the cost of vacant seats for the next three years.
- **The state has also earmarked Rs. 100 crore ‘innovation fund’ to support joint research projects between academia and GCCs.** Karnataka is home to over 570 GCCs, the highest in India, and leads the GCC talent with 35 per cent of the total workforce of the country present in the state. Around 1.2 million workers in the sector currently contribute \$22.2 billion to the state’s economy.

India to Host the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) in Delhi

- **As India gears for hosting World Telecom Standardisation Assembly (WTSA2024), Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has set the ball rolling by launching the WTSA2024 Outreach Sessions.** Scheduled in Delhi, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru, the outreach sessions aim to provide a distinctive platform to students for learning and direct engagement with industry experts, fostering meaningful interactions and knowledge exchange.

- The WTSA 2024 is being held for the first time in ITU's history of 150 yrs in India from 14th-24th October 2024. It will be attended by world leader and experts of Telecom field from 190+ countries. The outreach sessions were held at Delhi Technical University (Delhi), Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore) and Indian Institute of Information Technology (Hyderabad).

Nagaland Launches First Electric Bus to Promote Green Tourism

- On the occasion of World Tourism Day, Nagaland Advisor has launched an air-conditioned electric green vehicle as part of the tourists' facilitation program in Dimapur. K Tokugha Sukhalu advocated the need for sustainable tourism practices in the northeastern state, with a particular focus on eco-friendly transportation. The electric green vehicle was an initiative of Greenland Nagaland. This was Nagaland's first 14-seater electric bus designed specifically for tourists.

Nagaland is a state in the north-eastern region of India. It is bordered by the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south, and the Naga Self-Administered Zone of the Sagaing Region of Myanmar (Burma) to the east. Its capital city is Kohima. Neiphiu Guolhoulie Rio is the current Chief Minister of Nagaland. La Ganesan Iyer serves as the current Governor of Nagaland.

Manipur's Andro Village Conferred Best Heritage Tourism Village Of 2024

- The Andro Village of Manipur has been conferred the prestigious award of one of the Best Tourism Village in Heritage category in the 2024 edition of the Best Tourism Villages Competition organised by the Ministry of Tourism. The Ministry facilitated officials of Manipur Tourism and representatives of Andro Village at an event held at the Plenary Hall, Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi during the celebration of World Tourism Day 2024. Andro village's unique cultural heritage and traditional practices have been a major factor in its selection as the Best Tourism village in the Heritage category.
- The village has a temple which showcases the rich cultural and historical heritage of the region. The village's unique cultural heritage includes the centuries old fire worship which attracts tourists from various parts of the world thus contributing income and employment generation to the local people. The villagers of Andro have adopted several strategies to engage the local community in promoting and sustaining their heritage while also involving them in tourism activities.

Manipur is a state in northeast India, with the city of Imphal as its capital. It is bounded by the Indian states of Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south and Assam to the west. It also borders two regions of Myanmar, Sagaing Region to the east and Chin State to the south. Nongthombam Biren Singh is currently serving as the 12th Chief Minister of Manipur since 2017 representing Heingang Assembly constituency in the Manipur Legislative Assembly. The current governor of Manipur is Lakshman Prasad Acharya (additional charge), appointed by President Droupadi Murmu on 31 July 2024. Manipur is home to many sports and the origin of Manipuri dance, and is credited with introducing polo to Europeans. The sangai (Meitei) is an endemic and endangered subspecies of Eld's deer found only in Manipur, India. It is also the state animal of Manipur.

International



Oil-rich UAE completes Arab world's first nuclear plant

- **The United Arab Emirates has successfully completed the Arab world's first nuclear power plant, the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant, the state-owned Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC).** According to ENEC, the four-reactor plant will provide 25 percent of the electricity required by the hot, desert Gulf state, where air-conditioning is widespread—approximately equivalent to New Zealand's annual electricity consumption.
- It will also power major industries such as oil production, steel manufacturing, and aluminum production. **The Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant is situated in Al Dhafra, within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi on the Arabian Gulf, about 53 km west-southwest of the city of Ruwais.** Emirati President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan hailed the completion as a significant step towards achieving net zero emissions. The Barakah plant is part of the UAE's efforts to diversify its energy sources and ensure energy security. **It is also a major step towards achieving the country's goal of covering half of its electricity needs with renewable energy by 2050.**

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

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Inaugurates IIT Delhi-Abu Dhabi Campus

- **Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi has officially inaugurated the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi Abu Dhabi campus.** The event marked a historic moment for international engineering education, bringing the prestigious IIT brand to the UAE. The inaugural batch has 52 students in undergraduate (UG) courses in Computer Science and Engineering and Energy Engineering.
- **Students for the UG programs were rigorously selected through the JEE Advanced exam and the newly introduced Combined Admission Entrance Test (CAET) designed specifically for international students.** The establishment of the campus fulfills a key aspect of the Vision Document launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi had previously launched its first Masters of Technology (M.Tech) programme in Energy Transition and Sustainability.

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Al Nahyan arrives in Delhi

- **Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived to a warm welcome as he kick-started a two-day maiden visit to India to further boost bilateral ties** in a range of areas, including energy and connectivity, amid escalating tensions in West Asia. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal received the Crown Prince at the airport following which he was accorded a ceremonial welcome, in reflection of the importance India has attached to the visit.
- **Both countries signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in February 2022 and a Local Currency Settlement (LCS) System in July 2023 to promote the use of Indian Rupee and AED (United Arab Emirates Dirham) for cross-border transactions.** The two countries are among each other's top trading partners with a bilateral trade of about USD 85 billion in 2022-23, according to official data. The UAE is

also among the top four investors in India in terms of foreign direct investments in 2022-23. About 3.5 million strong and vibrant Indian community forms the largest expatriate group in the UAE. The UAE was invited as a special invitee for G20 during India's Presidency of the grouping.

Nuclear energy race: Japan to launch world's first steady-state fusion reactor

- **A startup is aiming to transform power generation with a cleaner method that could offer limitless energy. Helical Fusion plans to launch a steady-state fusion reactor that would be the first of its kind worldwide.** The Tokyo-based company intends to initially develop a pilot reactor based on the helical method, a magnetic confinement technique. The reactor is projected to have an initial power generation capacity of 50-100 megawatts. The reactor could be a kind of stellarator called a heliotron, composed of two continuous helical coils, similar to the Large Helical Device, and could operate without plasma current.

Nuclear energy is the fifth-largest source of electricity in India, contributing about 2% of the country's total electricity generation. India currently has over 22 nuclear reactors in 7 power plants across the country, which together produce 6,780 MW of nuclear power. Of these reactors, 18 are Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) and 4 are Light Water Reactors (LWRs). In January 2021, the Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3), India's first 700 MWe unit and the biggest indigenously developed variant of the PHWR, was connected to the grid. The government is promoting the expansion of nuclear installations to other parts of the country. For example, an upcoming nuclear power plant in Gorakhpur town in Haryana will become operational in the near future. India is also working on an entirely indigenous thorium-based nuclear plant, "Bhavni," which will be the first of its kind using Uranium-233. The experimental thorium plant "Kamini" already exists in Kalpakkam.

India provided more climate finance in 2022 than many rich nations

- **India contributed USD 1.28 billion in climate finance through multilateral development banks (MDBs) in 2022, surpassing the contributions of many developed countries,** according to a new analysis. The analysis, conducted by the UK-based think tank ODI and the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance, comes amid a renewed push by some developed countries to broaden the donor base for climate finance to include developing countries like China and Saudi Arabia.
- **The report reveals that only 12 developed countries provided their fair share of international climate finance in 2022.** These countries are — Norway, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Japan, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Finland.
- **Researchers noted that the significant gap in climate finance is largely due to the United States failing to contribute its fair share.** Australia, Spain, Canada, and the United Kingdom also performed relatively poorly in this regard. The analysis has identified the top 30 non-Annex II countries that provided substantial climate finance to developing countries in 2022 through multilateral contributions to development banks and climate funds.

PM Narendra Modi visits iconic Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Brunei

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Brunei at the invitation of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah.** In the first-ever bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Brunei, Modi was accorded a ceremonial welcome. **He was received by His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Crown Prince. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the iconic Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei** as part of his visit to Southeast Asian nations. Prime Minister Modi was received by Brunei's minister of religious affairs Pehin Dato Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin. Brunei's minister of health Dato Dr. Haji Mohammad Isham was also in attendance. Members of the Indian community were also present to greet the Prime Minister Modi.
- **The mosque is named after Omar Ali Saifuddien III, the 28th Sultan of Brunei (father of the current Sultan, who also initiated its construction) and was completed in 1958.** Earlier, the Prime Minister inaugurated the new building for the Indian high commission in Brunei. On the occasion, he lit a lamp and unveiled a plaque. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new Chancery premises of the High Commission of India in Brunei.** The chancery complex embodies a profound sense of Indianness, masterfully integrating traditional motifs and lush tree plantations, said the PMO in a release.

Bolivia declares national emergency due to forest fires

- **Bolivia declared a national emergency due to raging forest fires**, the country's defense ministry announced. Bolivia has seen the largest number of wildfires since 2010 with at least 3 million hectares (7.5 million acres) burned this year. Brazil has also seen major blazes in cities and the Amazon rainforest is off to the worst start in two decades after a record drought.

Bolivia is a landlocked country located in central South America. It is bordered by Brazil to the north and east, Paraguay to the southeast, Argentina to the south, Chile to the southwest, and Peru to the west. **Sucre is the de jure capital city of it. The boliviano is the currency of it. Luis Arce is serving as the current President of Bolivia.**

EU's former Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier named new French Prime Minister

- **French President Emmanuel Macron named EU's former Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier as the new Prime Minister**, two months after an inconclusive snap election in early July. **Barnier, led the European Union's talks with Britain over its exit from the bloc from 2016-2021.** Prior to that, the conservative politician held roles in various French governments and was also EU Commissioner. Barnier is a staunch pro-European and a career, moderate, politician, but he toughened his discourse considerably during his failed 2021 bid to get his conservative party's ticket for the presidential election, saying immigration was out of control - something the far-right National Rally (RN) agrees with.

US, Britain, EU sign world's first AI treaty

- **The United States, European Union, and the United Kingdom have taken a landmark step by signing the first legally binding international treaty on artificial intelligence (AI)** during a Council of Europe conference held in Vilnius, Lithuania. **This ground-breaking agreement, known as the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law,** marks a significant milestone in global efforts to regulate AI technologies, underlining the need to balance innovation with the protection of human rights and democratic values.
- **This AI convention is the result of years of negotiations between 57 countries,** including key AI developers like the US, UK, and EU, along with other participants such as Japan, Canada, Israel, Australia, and several others. **The treaty focuses on addressing potential risks posed by AI technologies while promoting responsible innovation. The Council of Europe, a Strasbourg-based international organisation established in 1949, spearheaded the initiative to ensure that AI systems align with fundamental human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.**

Malta Joined EU Member States to Help Africa Reduce Spread Of Mpox

- **Malta has joined other European Union (EU) member states to help Africa reduce the further spread of Mpox.** Malta's Health Ministry said that Malta joined the European Commission's Team Europe initiative to donate vaccines and mobilise resources to help address the public health emergency, adding that together European countries will be donating half a million vaccines. The first case was identified as a less severe strain of the virus known as Clade II. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared Mpox a public health emergency of international concern on the in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa.

Turkiye seeks to join the BRICS bloc of emerging economies

- **NATO member Turkiye has applied for membership in the BRICS bloc of developing economies,** as Russia and China seek to counter the West's global influence.

Turkey, officially the Republic of Turkiye is a transcontinental country located mainly on Anatolia in Western Asia, with a portion on the Balkans in Southeast Europe. It shares **borders with the Black Sea to the north;** Georgia to the northeast; Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to the east; Iraq to the southeast; Syria and the Mediterranean Sea to the south; the Aegean Sea to the west; and Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest. Cyprus is located off the south coast. **Ankara is Turkey's capital. The Turkish lira is the official currency of Turkey and Northern Cyprus. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is serving as the current President of Turkey since 2014.**

Quad Summit 2024 held in Delaware on 21 September 2024

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the sixth Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, Delaware on 21 September 2024, hosted by the President of the United States of America, H.E. Mr. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Prime Minister of Australia, H.E. Mr. Anthony Albanese and Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida also participated. In his address, Prime Minister thanked President Biden for hosting the Summit and for his personal commitment to strengthen the Quad as a force for global good.
- Prime Minister stated that at a time when the world is ridden with tensions and conflicts, the coming together of Quad partners, with shared democratic ethos and values, is important for humanity. **He emphasized that the group stood for upholding the international order based on the rule of law, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and with a commitment to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes. He further stated that a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific was a shared objective of the Quad partners.** He underlined that the Quad was here to stay, to assist, to partner and to complement the efforts of Indo-Pacific countries.
- **Reiterating that the Quad remains to be a “force for global good,”** the Leaders made the following announcements to address the development priorities of the Indo-Pacific region and of the global community as a whole: **“Quad Cancer Moonshot”, a groundbreaking partnership to save lives in the Indo-Pacific region by combating cervical cancer. “Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific” (MAITRI) to enable Indo-Pacific partners to maximize tools provided through IPMDA and other Quad initiatives.**
- **First-ever “Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission” in 2025 to improve interoperability and advance maritime safety.** “Quad Ports of the Future Partnership” which will harness the Quad’s collective expertise to support sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development across the Indo-Pacific. “Quad Principles for Development and Deployment of Digital Public Infrastructure” in the region and beyond. A “Semiconductor Supply Chains Contingency Network Memorandum of Cooperation” to enhance resilience of Quad’s semiconductor supply chains. **Collective Quad effort to boost energy efficiency, including deployment and manufacturing of high-efficiency affordable cooling systems in the Indo-Pacific region.** India’s establishment of a space-based web portal for Mauritius, to support the concept of open science for space-based monitoring of extreme weather events and climate impact. **A new sub-category under the Quad STEM Fellowship, announced by India, for students of the Indo-Pacific region to pursue a 4-year bachelor’s level engineering programme at a Government of India funded technical institute. The Leaders welcomed the next hosting of the Quad Leaders’ Summit by India in 2025.** To take the Quad agenda forward, they adopted the Quad Wilmington Declaration. **The Wilmington Declaration Joint Statement from the Leaders of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States**

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”.

Thailand swears in Paetongtarn Shinawatra as youngest Prime Minister

- Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the heiress of Thailand’s most famous political dynasty, was sworn in as Prime Minister capping a month of turmoil in which her predecessor was thrown out of the office and the main opposition party dissolved. **Ms. Paetongtarn, the youngest daughter of controversial former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, took the oath in a closed-door ceremony with King Maha Vajiralongkorn officially becoming Thailand’s youngest Prime Minister.** He is the third member of the Shinawatra political dynasty to lead the country in the past 23 years, following her father and her aunt, Yingluck Shinawatra.

Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia. Bangkok is the nation’s capital and largest city. The baht is the official currency of Thailand. Vajiralongkorn is the King of Thailand. Paetongtarn Shinawatra is a Thai politician and businesswoman who has been serving as Prime Minister of Thailand since 16 August 2024 and as leader of the Pheu Thai Party since 2023.

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune is re-elected in a landslide in gas-rich Algeria

- **Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the victor in Algeria’s presidential election, winning in a landslide marred by low voter turnout and claims of irregularities from his detractors in the gas-rich North African nation.** In a country where the military has long played a decisive role in politics, Tebboune’s runaway victory will likely fuel claims made by pro-democracy activists who see elections as tools that political elites use to give off an appearance of popular support.

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.

Ukraine appoints new foreign minister, 2 deputy PMs in biggest reshuffle since war began

- **Ukrainian lawmakers voted to appoint a new foreign minister and two deputy prime ministers, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy initiated his largest government overhaul since Russia’s invasion in February 2022.** Andrii Sybiha, a seasoned diplomat with a low public profile, has been appointed as the new foreign minister, replacing Dmytro Kuleba, who has been one of Ukraine’s most recognisable figures in the West.
- **Despite the change, it is not expected to significantly alter foreign policy, as Zelenskyy and his office have primarily managed Ukraine’s foreign affairs during the war.** Parliament also re-appointed 38-year-old **Olha Stefanyshyna as deputy prime minister for European integration, expanding her role to include oversight of the justice ministry.** Additionally, lawmakers approved the appointment of **Oleksiy Kuleba, a former deputy head of Zelenskyy’s office, as deputy prime minister overseeing reconstruction, regional development, and infrastructure.** Further ministerial appointments are expected later as part of the broader government reshuffle.

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

Russia Launches Largest Naval Drill in Decades Involving All 5 Fleets

- **Russia has launched its largest naval drill in decades, involving all 5 fleets. The “Ocean 2024”, will be held simultaneously in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans, as well as the Mediterranean, Caspian, and Baltic Seas.**
- **The exercises will involve more than 400 battleships, submarines, and support vessels from the auxiliary fleet, along with over 120 aircraft and more than 90,000 personnel. China is also participating in the drills, contributing four vessels and 15 aircraft from the People’s Liberation Army.** Mr. Putin noted that representatives from 15 other nations were invited to observe the drills.

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.**

Nepal Becomes 101st Member of International Solar Alliance

- **Nepal has become the 101st country to join the International Solar Alliance-ISA as a full member.** Ministry of External Affairs said that Nepal handed over its Instrument of Ratification to the ISA in New Delhi.

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. Now, any country can become member of it. 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.

Mongolia Hosts the First World Women's Forum

- **Mongolia's feminist foreign policy took another leap by organizing the first World Women's Forum (WWF) in Ulaanbaatar to reaffirm its commitment to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agendas for Sustainable Development.** The WWF was convened in recognition of the centennial anniversary of establishing the Women's Federation of Mongolia. The forum served as a mechanism for female world leaders to discuss issues – and seek solutions – in a united front.

India, UAE sign civil nuclear energy agreement

- **In a first, India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for civil nuclear cooperation.** The deal between the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and the ENEC (Emirates Nuclear Energy Company)-led Barakah Nuclear Power Plant Operations and Maintenance took place during the Indian visit of Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi.
- **During the August 2015 visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the UAE, both countries had agreed to cooperate in “peaceful use of nuclear energy”,** including in areas of “safety, health, agriculture, and science and technology.” Diplomatic sources pointed out that nothing like the agreement between the NPCIL and the ENEC had been signed before. The NPCIL-ENEC agreement is part of the UAE's policy of expanding investments into the nuclear energy sector.

Mexico's sweeping judicial overhaul formally takes effect

- **Mexico's judicial reform overhauling the country's courts, which will allow voters to elect judges, officially took effect after the text of the constitutional changes was published in the government gazette.** The reforms mark a major legislative victory in President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's final weeks in office.

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.**

India signs 3 IPEF agreements at Delaware during PM Narendra Modi's US visit

- **India signed and exchanged the first-of-its-kind agreements focused on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the IPEF Overarching arrangement under Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) for prosperity,** on 21st September, 2024 at Delaware USA, in the presence of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi who is on 3-day visit to the US for the Quad Summit. **IPEF, launched on May 23, 2022, at Tokyo, comprises 14 countries** – Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and USA.
- **Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Modi had accorded the approval earlier this month for signing and ratification of these three agreements focused on the Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the overarching IPEF Agreement** which were signed by other IPEF members on June 6, 2024 in IPEF Ministerial meeting in Singapore, however, India did not formally sign the same then as the domestic approval process was still underway.
- **IPEF Clean Economy Agreement (Pillar-III):** The Agreement on Clean Economy intends to promote technical cooperation, workforce development, capacity building, and research collaborations; and collaborate to facilitate development, access, and deployment of clean energy and climate-friendly technologies with the aim to collectively accelerate efforts of IPEF partners towards energy security and transition, climate resilience and adaptation and GHG emissions mitigation.

- **IPEF Fair Economy Agreement (Pillar-IV):** The Agreement aims to create a more transparent and predictable trade and investment environment across the Indo-Pacific. To achieve these goals, the IPEF partners will collaborate to enhance their efforts in preventing and combating corruption, including bribery, and supporting initiatives to improve tax transparency, the exchange of information, domestic resource mobilization, and tax administration.
- **It focuses on enhancing information sharing among partners, facilitating asset recovery, and strengthening cross-border investigations and prosecutions.** This will also support India's efforts in fighting corruption, money laundering, and terror financing. Recognizing the critical role of technical assistance and capacity building (TACB) in achieving the commitments outlined in the proposed agreement and ensuring effective implementation and enforcement of anti-corruption measures, the partners are committed to identifying and implementing TACB initiatives. These initiatives will strengthen anti-corruption efforts and improve the efficiency of tax administration.
- **Overarching IPEF Agreement: The Overarching Agreement is an administrative agreement establishing an oversight Ministerial-level mechanism.** This Agreement seeks to establish a high-level political oversight framework at the Ministerial level over the various individual IPEF agreements while setting general guidance and goals, and guiding Leaders' vision and mandate for IPEF. This Agreement primarily includes administrative and institutional provisions.
- **This agreement would provide identity to the group and longevity to the IPEF partnership, by creating a formal mechanism and establishing a forum for Ministerial discussions on emerging issues, etc.** This agreement is expected to facilitate the effective implementation of subject agreements (Pillars II-IV), that have the potential to enhance India's productive capacity, and integration into supply chains, and promote innovation, in line with the concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region in 2022. The 14 IPEF partners represent 40 percent of the global GDP and 28 percent of global goods and services trade. IPEF was launched on 23 May 2022 at Tokyo, Japan, comprising 14 countries – Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and USA. The IPEF seeks to strengthen economic engagement and cooperation among partner countries with the goal of advancing growth, economic stability and prosperity in the region. The framework is structured around four pillars relating to Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chain Resilience (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Pillar IV). India has ratified Agreement on Supply Chain Resilience (Pillar II) in February 2024 and has maintained an observer status in Pillar-I.

Quad Summit 2024 held in Delaware on 21 September 2024

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the sixth Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, Delaware on 21 September 2024, hosted by the President of the United States of America, H.E. Mr. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.** Prime Minister of Australia, H.E. Mr. Anthony Albanese and Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida also participated. In his address, Prime Minister thanked President Biden for hosting the Summit and for his personal commitment to strengthen the Quad as a force for global good.
- Prime Minister stated that at a time when the world is ridden with tensions and conflicts, the coming together of Quad partners, with shared democratic ethos and values, is important for humanity. **He emphasized that the group stood for upholding the international order based on the rule of law, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and with a commitment to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes. He further stated that a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific was a shared objective of the Quad partners.** He underlined that the Quad was here to stay, to assist, to partner and to complement the efforts of Indo-Pacific countries.
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Japan’s elderly population hits record high

- **The number of people in Japan aged 65 or older hit a record high of 36.25 million this year,** government data showed, as the country contended with one of the world’s fastest-ageing societies. **The elderly now accounted for 29.3% of Japan’s total population,** also a new high, according to data released by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
- The Ministry said the **proportion of elderly residents put Japan at the top of the list of 200 countries and regions with a population of over 1,00,000.** Italy, Portugal, Greece, Finland, Germany and Croatia represented Europe in the top 10 countries in the list, with rates of over 20%. South Korea stood at 19.3% and China at 14.7%. Japan is facing a steadily worsening population crisis, as its expanding elderly population leads to soaring medical and welfare costs, with a shrinking labour force to pay for it.

Naruhito is the **Emperor of Japan.** He **acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019,** beginning the **Reiwa era,** following the **abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019.** He is the **126th monarch according to Japan’s traditional order of succession.** Tokyo is the **capital city of Japan** and **yen is the official currency of Japan** and it is the **third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro.** **Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan since 4 October 2021.** On 14 August 2024, Kishida announced that he would step down as LDP party leader, thereby not seeking reelection in September. **Shigeru Ishiba is the Prime Minister designate and will assume the office on 1 October 2024.**

The Hague Becomes World’s First City to Ban Oil Ads

- **The Hague became the first city in the world to ban advertisements promoting fossil fuel products and carbon-intensive services including cruise ships and air travel.** The Dutch city’s local council passed legislation that takes effect on Jan. 1, 2025.
- **The decision follows a call from United Nations Chief Antonio Guterres for governments to abolish such ads, similar to actions against tobacco that began in the 1960s.** “The Hague wants to be climate neutral by 2030. Then it is not appropriate to allow advertising for products from the fossil industry,” said Leonie Gerritsen, a member of the city council for the Party for the Animals. Gerritsen was one of the backers of the new local law.

India, EU eye trilateral cooperation in East Africa to protect water bodies

- **The European Union (EU) and India are eyeing the possibility of trilateral cooperation with countries in East Africa to address challenges related to key water bodies such as Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika.** The cooperation, which will leverage the combined strength of India and the EU, was discussed at the EU-India Water Forum, which was held on the sidelines of the India Water Week. Both sides also agreed to enhance cooperation in sustainable water management and river basin management, and to foster innovation and technology transfer while promoting sustainable investments.

Sri Lanka clinches \$12.5 billion bond rework deal in pre-election dash

- **“Sri Lanka reached a draft deal with creditors to restructure \$12.5 billion of international bonds”, in a major boost to the island nation’s fragile recovery** just two days before its Presidential election. The country defaulted on its foreign debt for the first time ever in May 2022, engulfed in a severe crisis and buckling under its high debt burden and dwindling foreign exchange reserves. **The agreement comes after Sri Lanka began a third round of formal debt restructuring talks with bondholders.** “Sri Lanka now expects to receive formal confirmation from International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff that the Agreement in Principle and the Local Option, taken together, are fully consistent with the parameters of Sri Lanka’s IMF-supported Program”.

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.

COP29 in Baku: Azerbaijan to launch new climate fund

- **The Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF) would seek “voluntary” contributions from fossil-fuel producing countries and companies, with Azerbaijan, itself a petroleum economy, making the initial contribution.** It is not clear how much money this new fund is hoping to raise.
- **The CFAF is part of a large package of proposals that Azerbaijan has prepared for inclusion in the final outcome of COP29 (29th edition of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change),** which is to be held in the country’s capital, Baku, from November 11 to 22.
- **The main agenda of COP29 is to finalise an agreement on climate finance, including the amount of money that developed countries must raise in the post-2025 period to help the developing world fight climate change.** The rich and industrialised countries have been under an **obligation to mobilise at least \$100 billion every year from 2020.** The 2015 Paris Agreement, however, mandates that this sum must be scaled up after 2025 and every five years thereafter.

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.

Jordan Becomes First Leprosy Free- Nation

- **The World Health Organization WHO declared Jordan as the first country in the world to eliminate leprosy, marking a significant milestone in global public health efforts.** WHO said that Jordan has not reported any autochthonous cases of leprosy for over two decades. The declaration was made after commissioning an independent team to assess this situation. The disease continues to occur in more than 120 countries. More than two lakh new cases are reported every year.

Leprosy, also known as Hansen’s disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae* or *Mycobacterium lepromatosis*. It can affect the skin, nerves, eyes, and lining of the nose. **Leprosy is not highly contagious and is curable with multidrug therapy (MDT).** Treatment usually lasts between one to two years. Early treatment can prevent most disabilities.

Jordan is a country in the Southern Levant region of West Asia. Jordan is bordered by Syria to the north, Iraq to the east, Saudi Arabia to the south, and Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories to the west. Amman is the country's capital and largest city. **The Jordanian dinar is the currency of Jordan. Jafar Hassan serves as the Prime Minister of Jordan. Abdullah II bin Al-Husseinis is the King of Jordan.**

France's Macron appoints new government in shift to right

- **French President Emmanuel Macron named a new government led by Prime Minister Michel Barnier** marked by a shift to the right, 11 weeks after an inconclusive parliamentary election. The first major task for Mr. Barnier, appointed just over two weeks ago, will be to submit a 2025 budget plan addressing France's financial situation, which the prime minister this week called "very serious".
- **Conservative Mr. Barnier is best known internationally for leading the European Union's Brexit negotiations with the U.K. More recently, he has had the difficult job of submitting a cabinet for Mr. Macron's approval that has the best chance of surviving a no-confidence motion in parliament.**

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.

Sri Lanka has elected Anura Kumara Dissanayake as its new president

- **Sri Lanka has elected Anura Kumara Dissanayake as its new president, marking the first time in the country's history that a Marxist leader has assumed the role.** Dissanayake, the 56-year-old leader of the National People's Power (NPP) alliance, secured a narrow victory in the presidential election after counting of votes entered a second round - another first in the island nation's history.
- **Dissanayake's victory marks a significant shift in Sri Lankan politics, as the country grapples with the aftermath of the mass protests that ousted Gotabaya Rajapaksa in 2022.** The new president will face the challenge of steering the country towards economic recovery while addressing the pressing issues of inflation and the cost of living. Dissanayake is the leader of the historically anti-India Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). JVP's founding leader, the late Rohana Wijeweera, lectured on "Indian expansionism" during the 1980s and the lessons portrayed India as an "enemy of Sri Lankan interests". The party also vehemently opposed the Indo-Lanka accord of 1987 – signed by Sri Lanka's then-president JR Jayewardene and India's Rajiv Gandhi. JVP led an insurrection rooted in opposition to Indian influence over Sri Lanka after the signing of the accord. It was violently put down by government forces.

India signed the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to resolve ethnic conflicts and deployed the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka, which resulted in the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 by LTTE members, this changed India's approach to the conflict. India always supported Sri Lanka's right to resist terrorist forces at the same time he expressed deep concern over the situation of the civilian population. **The nearly three-decade-long armed conflict between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ended in 2009. Sri Lanka faced its worst economic crisis in 2022, which led to a mass protest and the president's resignation.** The economy was shattered by the collapse of the tourism sector due to COVID-19. This situation, combined with rising government debt, has pushed inflation and generated shortages of essential goods. **During this crisis, India provided nearly \$4 billion in assistance to Sri Lanka to manage its financial position and fulfil international obligations.** The situation made Sri Lanka dependent on India's oil supply, and trade relations also strengthened during this period. The new government could not ignore India's role in supporting the economy during the need of the hour.

Sri Lanka President Dissanayake picks Harini Amarasuriya as PM

- **Sri Lanka's new president, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, named Harini Amarasuriya, a college professor and first-time lawmaker, as the new prime minister of the Indian Ocean island nation, making her the third woman to be appointed to the post.** Dissanayake, 55, a Marxist-leaning firebrand politician, who was elected president in the election held, was also scheduled to pick the rest of his cabinet. **Amarasuriya is the third**

woman prime minister of Sri Lanka, following the world's first woman prime minister, Sirimavo Bandaranaike in 1960, and her daughter Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga.

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. Anura Kumara Dissanayake is the current President of Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka. Harini Amarasuriya is the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

India and Uzbekistan sign Bilateral Investment Treaty in Tashkent

- **India and Uzbekistan signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to assure appropriate protection to investors of the two countries.** The treaty was signed by Indian finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Uzbekistan's deputy prime minister Khodjayev Jamshid Abdukhakimovich at Tashkent. It will increase the comfort level and boost the confidence of investors by assuring a minimum standard of treatment and non-discrimination, while providing for an independent forum for dispute settlement through arbitration.

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

Wilmington Declaration Joint Statement from the Leaders of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States

- **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, Prime Minister Kishida Fumio of Japan, and President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. of the United States—met for the fourth in-person Quad Leaders Summit, hosted by President Biden in Wilmington, Delaware.** Four years since elevating the Quad to a leader-level format, the Quad is more strategically aligned than ever before and is a force for good that delivers real, positive, and enduring impact for the Indo-Pacific.
- **We celebrate the fact that over just four years, Quad countries have built a vital and enduring regional grouping that will buttress the Indo-Pacific for decades to come.** Anchored by shared values, we seek to uphold the international order based on the rule of law. Together we represent nearly two billion people and over one-third of global gross domestic product. We reaffirm our **steadfast commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and resilient.**
- **Through our cooperation, the Quad is harnessing all of our collective strengths and resources, from governments to the private sector to people-to-people relationships, to support the region's sustainable development, stability, and prosperity by delivering tangible benefits to the people of the Indo-Pacific.** As **four leading maritime democracies in the Indo-Pacific,** we unequivocally stand for the maintenance of peace and stability across this dynamic region, as an indispensable element of global security and prosperity. We strongly oppose any destabilizing or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion.
- **We condemn recent illicit missile launches in the region that violate UN Security Council resolutions.** We express serious concern over recent dangerous and aggressive actions in the maritime domain. We seek a region where no country dominates and no country is dominated—one where all countries are free from coercion, and can exercise their agency to determine their futures.
- **We are united in our commitment to upholding a stable and open international system, with its strong support for human rights, the principle of freedom, rule of law, democratic values, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and peaceful settlement of disputes and prohibition on the threat or use of force in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter.** Reflecting the Vision Statement issued by Leaders at the 2023 Quad Summit, we are and will continue to be transparent in what we do. Respect for the leadership of regional institutions, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), is and will remain at the center of the Quad's efforts.

US, UAE eye military collaboration, joint exercises with India

- The US and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are eyeing the possibility of military collaboration, including joint exercises, with India following Washington's designation of the West Asian country as a "major defence partner". The US announced the UAE's recognition as a "major defence partner" – a status accorded so far only to India – after a meeting between President Joe Biden and his UAE counterpart Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the White House. **India, the US and the UAE are also members of the I2U2 grouping, along with Israel.** This grouping has worked on various projects focused on connectivity, food security and renewable energy. India and the US have a robust and growing military partnership that includes the joint development of military technology and equipment.

Qatar becomes second Muslim-majority nation to join US visa waiver programme

- Qatar, which has played a significant role in US diplomacy, including efforts in Gaza ceasefire negotiations and supporting the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, now joins the 42 countries in the programme. Most participants are long-term US allies from Europe and Asia. Before Qatar, Brunei was the only other Muslim-majority country in the scheme.
- The Gulf state of Qatar has become the second Muslim-majority country to be included in the US Visa Waiver Programme, allowing its citizens to travel to the United States without obtaining a visa. The US Departments of State and Homeland Security announced that Qatar had met the rigorous eligibility criteria, which include a low rate of visa refusals, minimal overstays, and reciprocal visa-free entry for US travellers to Qatar.

Qatar is a country in Western Asia. It occupies the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, and shares its sole land border with neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Council monarchy Saudi Arabia to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the Persian Gulf. **The capital is Doha,** home to over 80% of the nation's population. **The Qatari riyal is the currency of the State of Qatar.** **Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is the Emir of Qatar.**

Taliban to face international court over gender discrimination

- Canada, Australia, Germany, and the Netherlands decided to take Taliban to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over gender discrimination, marking the first time the court in The Hague has been used for such a case. This move, announced at the UN General Assembly, could open pathways for countries to engage diplomatically with the Afghan leadership while holding them accountable for human rights violations. The case is being brought under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the UN in 1979 and enforced in 1981. Afghanistan ratified this convention in 2003, prior to the Taliban's takeover in 2021.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), or colloquially the World Court, is the only international court that adjudicates general disputes between nations, and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues. It is one of the six organs of the United Nations (UN), and is located in The Hague, Netherlands. The ICJ is the successor of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), which was established in 1920 by the League of Nations. After the Second World War, the League and the PCIJ were replaced by the United Nations and ICJ, respectively. **All member states of the UN are party to the ICJ Statute and may initiate contentious legal cases;** however, advisory proceedings may be submitted only by certain UN organs and agencies. The ICJ consists of a panel of 15 judges elected by the UN General Assembly and Security Council for nine-year terms. No more than one judge of each nationality may be represented on court at the same time, and judges collectively must reflect the principal civilizations and legal systems of the world. **Seated in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, the ICJ is the only principal UN organ not located in New York City.** Its official working languages are English and French. **Nawaf Salam is the current president of the International Court of Justice (ICJ).**

World's first 3D-printed hotel takes shape at Texas in United States

- El Cosmico, an existing hotel and campground on the outskirts of the city of Marfa, is expanding. It is building 43 new hotel units and 18 residential homes over 40 acres (16 hectares) - all with a 3D printer. **It is the world's first 3D-printed hotel,** says El Cosmico owner Liz Lambert and the partners behind the project - Austin, Texas-based 3D printing company ICON and architects Bjarke Ingels Group.

Two-Day Global Aerospace Summit Kicks Off In Abu Dhabi

- **The seventh edition of the Global Aerospace Summit, a premier forum for the world’s aerospace supply chain, commenced in Abu Dhabi.** The two-day event, running from September 25-26 at the St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, brings together industry leaders, government officials, and academics to discuss sustainability, youth engagement, and innovation in the aerospace, space, and defence sectors.

Shigeru Ishiba, set to be Japan’s next prime minister

- **As Fumio Kishida ends his tenure, former defence minister Shigeru Ishida is next in line to become Japan’s prime minister after he won the Liberal Democratic Party’s leadership vote.**
- **Shigeru Ishida will likely take office as prime minister when Parliament re-convenes in October.** Out of nine candidates vying for the position, Ishiba managed to secure 215 votes, defeating economic security minister Sanae Takaichi by only 21 votes.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan’s traditional order of succession. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro.

China’s Gigantic Hydroelectric Dam Has Earth-Shifting Capabilities

- **The dam, located in central China’s Hubei province, is spread across the longest river in Eurasia, the Yangtze River. The world’s largest hydroelectric dam in China called the Three Gorges Dam is a very huge infrastructure project that is affecting the spin of Earth, according to IFL Science.**
- **It uses the flow of water from three nearby gorges - Qutangxia, Wuxia, and Xilingxia - to spin turbines and generate electricity. The dam was first found to have Earth-shifting capabilities in 2005 when US space agency NASA discovered how the rotation of our planet was affected by the 2004 catastrophic Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.**

African countries eye world’s first joint ‘debt-for-nature’ swap

- **At least five African countries are working on what could be the world’s first joint “debt-for-nature” swap to raise at least \$2 billion to protect a coral-rich swathe of Indian Ocean, according to a global conservation group. Debt-for-nature deals are becoming increasingly popular for poorer nations to pay for conservation. Bonds or loans are bought and replaced with cheaper debt, with savings used for environmental protection.**
- **Ecuador, Barbados, Belize, Gabon and Seychelles have all made such swaps in recent years, but the African initiative would be the first to involve multiple countries sharing a distinct ecosystem. Getting more finance to help countries protect biodiversity is a central part of the next round of global talks in Colombia in October after a landmark deal in 2022 to protect 30% of the world’s seas and land by the end of the decade.**

Africa is the world’s second-largest and second-most populous continent after Asia. The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Arabian Plate and the Gulf of Aqaba to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. The continent includes Madagascar and various archipelagos. It contains 54 fully recognised sovereign states. Algeria is Africa’s largest country by area, and Nigeria is its largest by population. African nations cooperate through the establishment of the African Union, which is headquartered in Addis Ababa. Africa was called the “Dark Continent” because it was largely unknown to outsiders until the late 19th century. The term was used by Welsh explorer and journalist Henry Morton Stanley in his book to create a mysterious allure around it and sell more books. The term “Dark Continent” was used to describe Africa as a wild, untamed, and savage land. Colonial rulers used this term to dehumanize the continent and justify their brutal actions against its people.

Spain Builds World’s First High-Speed Hydrail Train

- **Spain’s Talgo is set to build the first-ever high-speed hydrail trains, named Europe’s most efficient high-speed rail network last November. Spain legendary train builders Talgo have rolled out the world’s first**

high-speed hydrogen-powered train, giving the rest of Europe something to chase. Known for leading the way in rail tech, Talgo has put Spain firmly on the map, adding yet another feather to its cap after already boasting the title of Europe's most efficient high-speed rail system. Talgo's new hydrogen trains could revolutionise the future of global high-speed travel.

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.



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ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Indian city overtakes Beijing to become Asia's billionaire capital

- **India's financial capital Mumbai emerged as the "billionaire capital of Asia" with more billionaires than China's capital Beijing**, as per the 2024 Hurun India Rich List. Mumbai saw an increase of 58 billionaire individuals, taking its total to 386 on the list.
- **The Hurun list noted, "Home to 25% of the list - Mumbai is not only the billionaire capital of Asia, overtaking Beijing but also the preferred city for Hurun India Rich Listers, followed by New Delhi and Hyderabad. Among top cities, Mumbai is followed by Delhi, which has added 18 new billionaires, taking its rich list entries to 217.**
- **Hyderabad surpassed Bengaluru for the first time to take the third position in the number of wealthy residents. Surge of 17 new billionaires took the total number in Hyderabad to 104 which is followed by Bengaluru at the fourth position with 100 wealthy individuals. Now, Mumbai is in third position globally in terms of billionaires after New York (119) and London (97).**

MK Stalin signs pact with Google, Microsoft to boost AI, manufacturing in Tamil Nadu

- As part of his visit to the United States, **Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin visited the offices of tech giants Google and Microsoft and signed various pacts towards skilling initiatives in AI.** The pacts also aim to improve Tamil Nadu's capability to manufacture semiconductors and smartphones. **The Tamil Nadu government also signed a pact with Google to skill two million youngsters in the state in AI under the state government's skill development programme "Naan Mudhalvan".** The initiative will help to collaborate with startups, MSMEs, and the rural economy besides making the youth a future-ready force.

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

World Bank hikes India's economic growth projection to 7% for FY 2024-25

- **The World Bank has forecast a growth of 7% for the Indian economy for the current fiscal year, upping its earlier estimate of 6.6%.** In its report, India Development Update: India's Trade Opportunities in a Changing Global Context, released New Delhi the World Bank said India's growth continued to be strong despite a challenging global environment. The World Bank growth projection is in line with those of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Asian Development Bank (ADB). Both the institutions have raised their forecast to 7% for the financial year ending March 2025.

India Achieves 40th Rank in 2023 Edition of Global Innovation Index

- India has achieved 40th rank among 132 economies globally in the 2023 edition of the Global Innovation Index (GII) published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). NITI Aayog said, India is part of the group of countries that has climbed the GII rankings fastest over the last decade.
- India's journey in the Global Innovation Index has been nothing short of remarkable. From a modest rank of 81 in 2015, the country has made significant strides, climbing steadily up the rankings to reach 40th place in 2023. This progress develops from the country's commitment to fostering an environment conducive to innovation, supported by strong government policies, a vibrant start-up ecosystem, and a robust research and development framework.
- As per the report, India has also been making the most headway in innovation over the last decade. India has emerged as a Regional GII leader as it performed above expectations on innovation relative to the level of economic development. It continues to adhere to the record of being innovation over-performers for the 13th consecutive year. The Global Innovation Index 2023 captures the innovation ecosystem performance of 132 economies and tracks the most recent global innovation trends.

Motilal Oswal launches India's first 500 Momentum 50 Index fund

- Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund (MOMF) has launched its new fund offer (NFO), the Motilal Oswal Nifty 500 Momentum 50 Index Fund. This open-ended index fund aims to capture the performance of high-momentum stocks within the Nifty 500 index. This would be India's first 500 Momentum 50 Index fund. The new fund by MOAMC will track the Nifty 500 Momentum 50 Total Return Index. The fund will offer exposure to stocks that are in the highest momentum across the large, mid, and small-cap segments of the Nifty 500 index.

Ashwini Vaishnaw to Anil Kapoor: Indians in the TIME100 Most Influential People in AI 2024 List

- India's Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw secured a coveted spot on TIME magazine's "Most Influential People in AI 2024." India—the world's fifth largest economy—is trying to become a major player in the world of AI.
- While the country has yet to create binding AI laws, for the past year, it has chaired the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence—an international initiative to support states in governing AI, it says. The Indian government has also allocated over \$1.2 billion to support its nascent AI sector. Most of the country's AI efforts have been funneled through its "IndiaAI" initiative, managed by Vaishnaw's ministry.
- The ministry aims to secure over 10,000 Graphic Processing Units, the chips that power most AI technology, to increase the country's computing capacity; provide finance for local startups; increase access to high-quality datasets; expand access to AI educational opportunities for Indians. Notable names on the list include Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet, and Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft. Key Indian figures include Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Nandan Nilekani, and actor Anil Kapoor.

Union Minister of Textiles Shri Giriraj Singh launches India's first fashion forecasting initiative 'VisioNxt'

- Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh launched the 'VisioNxt Fashion Forecasting Initiative' of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), a bilingual web portal and the India-specific Fashion Trend Book 'Paridhi 24x25'.
- In this era of fast fashion, VisioNxt initiative will foster healthy global competition and elevate Indian culture and design to new heights on the global stage. He noted that the fashion industry will benefit from Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) based trend insights offered by VisioNxt. This service will establish India as a leader in the global fashion sector.

Odisha to set up India's first silicon carbide manufacturing facility

- The groundbreaking ceremony for India's first silicon carbide manufacturing facility to be set up by RIR Power Electronics Limited, a leader in India's semiconductor power electronics technology, was held at the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) Park. "The establishment of this facility is another notable step to make Odisha a leading semiconductor hub in India.

- This new facility will not only create state-of-the-art products but also open up a wealth of opportunities for our talented youth, providing them with avenues to work at the cutting edge of technology right in Odisha. The facility will attract skilled professionals, foster local innovation, drive economic growth, and further solidify Odisha's position as one of India's most promising destinations for electronics and semiconductor manufacturing.

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

Sebi sets up new expert group of 22 members on listing obligations

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has set up a 22-member advisory committee to streamline the rules for listing obligations and disclosures. The expert group will be chaired by R Gandhi, former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The committee will advise Sebi on corporate governance, harmonisation of listing and post-listing obligations, and disclosure requirements. Other members include NK Dua (joint director in ministry of corporate affairs), Keki Mistry (HDFC Bank's non-executive director), stock exchange heads, proxy advisory firm managing directors, and representatives from industry bodies, corporates, and legal experts.

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.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurate SEMICON India 2024

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated SEMICON India 2024 at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh on 11th September, 2024. It has been the vision of the Prime Minister to position India as a global hub for semiconductor design, manufacturing and technology development.
- SEMICON India 2024 is organised from 11 to 13th September with the theme "Shaping the Semiconductor Future". The three day conference from 11 to 13th September will showcase India's semiconductor strategy and policy which envisions making India a global hub for semiconductor. It will witness participation of top leadership of global semiconductor giants and will bring together global leaders, companies, experts of the semiconductor industry. The conference will witness participation of more than 250 exhibitors and 150 speakers.

Semiconductors are materials which have a conductivity between conductors and insulators. They can be pure elements, silicon or germanium or compounds, gallium, arsenide or cadmium selenide. They are the basic building blocks that serve as the heart and brain of all modern electronics and information and communications technology products. These chips are now an integral part of contemporary automobiles, household gadgets and essential medical devices such as ECG machines. In December 2021, the central government sanctioned Rs. 76,000 crore under the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to encourage the manufacturing of various semiconductor goods within India.

NITI Aayog Hosts National Seminar on 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods'

- NITI Aayog hosted a National Seminar on 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods' chaired by Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog. The seminar focused on critical topics such as enhancing rural livelihoods, market linkages, rural value chains and investments, microfinance, entrepreneurship, job creation for rural youth, resilient agriculture, and water security. The event brought together thought leaders, policymakers, academicians, and community innovators from diverse sectors. Representatives from relevant ministries, international organizations, NGOs, civil society, entrepreneurs, and start-ups facilitated a dynamic exchange of ideas to foster sustainable and inclusive livelihoods in rural areas. Dr. Ramesh Chand underscored the critical importance of agriculture in fostering sustainable rural livelihoods.

- The address was followed by insightful contributions from experts representing the Ministry of Rural Development, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, and the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). The discussions emphasized the necessity of transcending the urban-rural divide, advocating for a more integrated and balanced approach to development.
- The sessions also highlighted that India's future growth hinges on the concept of SMART Villages, stressing the need for innovative strategies to build inclusive and self-reliant rural economies. The inaugural session underscored the rural economy's potential contribution to India's GDP in the coming years. Participants discussed growth in rural infrastructure and integrated strategies for achieving sustainable livelihoods, with a focus on emerging trends in India's rural economy. The session explored inclusive economic growth through financial inclusion, job creation in the gig, care, green, and blue economies, and expanding employment in sectors such as construction, services, and manufacturing. Discussions highlighted empowering rural communities by connecting producers to larger markets and emphasized the importance of Gram Panchayats, women-led institutions, and civil society in driving rural progress through decentralization and community-driven initiatives.
- The second session focused on sustainable livelihoods amidst climate change and associated vulnerabilities. Experts from institutions like NAARM, ICAR, CWC, and IWMI shared innovative research on agriculture, water security, and rural development. The participants opined and stated that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive groundwater law, as well as innovative models in agriculture and rural entrepreneurship to enhance resilience and improve livelihoods in rural India.

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.

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 projects reach \$1.3 trillion in value

- Saudi Arabia has launched \$1.3 trillion in real estate and infrastructure projects over the past eight years as part of its plan to diversify the economy away from oil and become a more attractive place to live, work and travel.
- About \$164 billion worth of real estate contracts have been awarded since 2016, when Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman unveiled his strategy to wean the country off its dependence on petrodollars and improve the quality of life for locals. The largest chunk of that money — \$28.7 billion — has gone to Neom, with heavy spending on the development within it known as The Line, a pair of mirror-clad towers expected to eventually span the length of about 105 miles.

Gravita India to acquire its first recycling facility in Europe

- The company announced that its step down subsidiary, Gravita Netherlands BV has executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to acquire a Waste Tyre Recycling plant in Romania from an existing entity based out in Romania having a capacity of approximately 17,000 MTPA. This will be Gravita's first recycling facility in Europe. This acquisition will be done by forming a separate SPV in Romania in which Gravita Netherlands BV will be holding 80% of equity with management control in the said SPV and remaining equity will be held by other partners based in Romania.

India, UAE sign civil nuclear energy agreement

- In a first, India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for civil nuclear cooperation. The deal between the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and

the ENEC (Emirates Nuclear Energy Company)-led Barakah Nuclear Power Plant Operations and Maintenance took place during the Indian visit of Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. During the August 2015 visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the UAE, both countries had agreed to cooperate in “peaceful use of nuclear energy”, including in areas of “safety, health, agriculture, and science and technology.” Diplomatic sources pointed out that nothing like the agreement between the NPCIL and the ENEC had been signed before. The NPCIL-ENEC agreement is part of the UAE’s policy of expanding investments into the nuclear energy sector.

Delhi airport ranked 24th among top ‘megahub’ airports globally, Mumbai airport at 44th spot

- **Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has been ranked among the top 25 “megahub” airports globally by international aviation data and analytics firm OAG.** IGIA has improved its position to the 24th spot from last year’s 25th in OAG’s latest list of megahub airports—those with the highest ratio of possible scheduled international connections to the number of destinations served.
- **The only other Indian airport among the top 50 megahub airports—Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA)—however dropped 10 spots from last year to the 44th position.** However, both Delhi and Mumbai airports are ranked much higher in the OAG’s list of the top megahub airports for low-cost carrier (LCC) operations, thanks to India’s largest airline IndiGo—also counted among the top LCCs globally—using the two airports as its major hubs. **In this category, the Delhi airport has been ranked fifth, a spot higher from last year, while the Mumbai airport has retained its 11th rank.**
- **India is currently the world’s third-largest aviation market after the US and China,** and is also among the fastest-growing major aviation markets globally. India’s aviation establishment wants to see homegrown carriers dominate international passenger traffic from and to India and major Indian airports transform into international hubs competing with major Asian hubs like Dubai, Doha, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore.

India to set up two mega shipbuilding parks by 2030

- **India will set up two operational Mega shipbuilding parks by 2030, eyeing a share of the \$100 billion global shipbuilding market.** “The immediate target is to have four Mega shipbuilding parks with two each on the East and West coast. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh are showing positive signs,” adding that states reiterated their commitments for these projects at the 20th Maritime State Development Council (MSDC). Sonowal said there will be one operational Mega shipbuilding park each on the West and East coast of the country by 2030.

UPI transaction limit increased to ₹5 lakh for three types of payments

- **The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has increased the transaction limit for three types of payments using UPI to ₹5 lakh for convenience.** It may now become possible to make a single transaction up to ₹5 lakh using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for a few specific purposes which added that the limit per transaction is ₹1 lakh generally and for ones related to capital markets, collections, insurance, and foreign inward remittances, the limit is ₹2 Lakh per day.
- **The NPCI has increased the transaction limit from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh for the following types of transactions:** 1. Tax payments, 2. Hospitals and educational institutions and 3. For IPOs and RBI retail direct schemes.

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, NPCI 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.

EV push: Cabinet approves Rs. 10,900 crore for new scheme

- The Union Cabinet approved a new scheme called PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) for the promotion of electric vehicles (EV) in India, replacing an earlier flagship scheme. The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) will implement the new scheme with a total outlay of Rs. 10,900 crore over a period of two years. The PM E-DRIVE will replace Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME India Phase II). The new scheme offers subsidies/demand incentives worth Rs. 3,679 crore to incentivise adoption of electric two-wheelers, electric three-wheelers, e-ambulances, e-trucks and other emerging EVs.

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme Phase-II is being implemented by the Ministry of Heavy Industries for a period of five years commencing from 1st April, 2019 with a total budgetary support of Rs. 10,000 crore. This phase mainly focuses on supporting electrification of public & shared transportation, and aims to support through demand incentive 7090 eBuses, 5 lakh e-3 Wheelers, 55000 e-4 Wheeler Passenger Cars and 10 lakh e-2 Wheelers. In addition, creation of charging infrastructure is also supported under the Scheme.

Deutsche Digital Assets launches the world's first Bitcoin macro ETP

- The Deutsche Digital Assets GmbH (DDA), a German digital asset manager, has announced the launch of its new Bitcoin macro ETP, becoming the first in the world to do so. Specifically, BMAC offers investors dynamic and systematic exposure to Bitcoin and USDC, using the main macroeconomic factors to optimize exposure to Bitcoin and improve long-term risk management, with a total expense ratio of 2.00%.

Billionaire Kotak's unit to launch its first private credit fund to tap a booming market

- An arm of Indian billionaire Uday Kotak's group is planning to launch its first private credit fund this year, joining industry peers rushing to tap the booming market for direct lending. The fund would aim to raise about 10 billion rupees (\$119 million) depending on investor demand, Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company, which manages 4.8 trillion rupees in assets. While private credit as an asset class has expanded globally, India has become a hotbed for the strategy, where institutions and funds make loans directly to companies, as investors hunt for higher returns.

Salesforce has launched Agentforce Partner Network – the world's first AI agent ecosystem

- Salesforce has launched Agentforce Partner Network – the world's first AI agent ecosystem that will allow its partner companies to build third-party AI agents and actions, which then can be used to take on specific tasks depending on the requirements of businesses. In easier words, Salesforce's Agentforce Partner Network is like an app store for AI assistants/agents from where customers will be able to easily install these agents and deploy them for specialised industry or business needs. The platform not only allows customers to access a catalogue of third-party skills, actions and agents within the Salesforce Platform, but also develop new skills to make AI agents even more capable or use available templates to create new agents.

World Bank boosts climate financing by 10 percent

- The World Bank announced that it delivered a record \$42.6 billion in climate change financing in the last financial year, up 10 percent from a year earlier. The development lender has looked to boost its climate financing commitment under new president Ajay Banga, who took over last year on a pledge to reform the 80-year-old Washington-based institution.
- In December, the Bank committed to raising the proportion of its annual financing that goes to climate change adaptation from 35 percent to 45 percent starting in the fiscal 2025 year, which began in July. Around 44 percent of the World Bank Group's total financing of \$97 billion had a climate financing component. This figure included lending, along with other financial instruments such as grants and guarantees.

Ajay Tyagi-led panel to suggest ways to split marketing and transport companies

- The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has set up a committee to recommend ways to resolve the two most contentious issues in the domestic natural gas sector: splitting entities that engage in

both transport and marketing of gas and ending the monopolies of city gas distributors where required. The eight-member panel will be led by Ajay Tyagi, former chairman of market regulator Sebi, and it is expected to submit its report in three months. “Section 21 of the PNGRB Act, 2006 mandates PNGRB to ensure separation of activities related to natural gas marketing and transportation,” the regulator said which will analyse global practices and hold larger consultations with industry before making recommendations. The committee will “formulate recommendations for PNGRB, including possible models for separation of transportation and marketing activities in the natural gas sector including ownership of the pipeline, implementation strategies, and measures to address identified challenges.”

India Achieves Tier 1 Status in Global Cybersecurity Index 2024

- **India has marked a significant milestone in its cybersecurity efforts by achieving top Tier i.e. Tier 1 status in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2024, published by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).** With a remarkable score of 98.49 out of 100, India joins the ranks of ‘role-modelling’ countries, demonstrating a strong commitment to cybersecurity practices across the globe.
- **The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) played a pivotal role as the nodal agency representing India in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2024.** The GCI 2024 assessed national efforts based on five pillars: legal, technical, organizational, capacity development, and cooperation. The comprehensive questionnaire includes 83 questions, covering 20 indicators, 64 sub-indicators, and 28 micro-indicators, ensuring a thorough evaluation of each country’s cybersecurity landscape.
- **India’s strong performance in cybersecurity is driven by a series of initiatives and measures undertaken by the Government of India to enhance cyber resilience and establish robust frameworks for cybercrime laws and cybersecurity standards.** The country’s legal institutions are well-prepared to address cybersecurity challenges and combat cybercrime, ensuring the protection of its digital infrastructure. Additionally, Sectoral Computer Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) provide sector-specific technical support and incident reporting, further strengthening India’s cybersecurity capabilities. **Education and awareness have been central to India’s cybersecurity strategy.** Targeted campaigns and educational initiatives have promoted secure online practices across sectors, including private industry, public institutions, civil society, and academia. The integration of cybersecurity into primary and secondary education curricula further underscores the country’s dedication to cultivating a knowledgeable and well-prepared digital citizenry.

US India to setup the world’s first multi-chip fabrication unit in Jewar, UP

- **The US military has agreed to a cutting-edge technology partnership with India to set up the world’s first multi-material fabrication unit for national security.** PM Modi and President Biden have signed a watershed arrangement to establish a new semiconductor plant which will make chips used in high-technology warfare platforms including advanced sensing, advanced communications and high voltage power electronics.
- **The new fabrication unit will come up in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh and will be next to the new and upcoming Jewar Airport. India’s current import bill for semiconductors for national security alone is over one billion dollars a year.** This multi-chip military fab will lead to knowledge and tech transfer which will bring about import substitution of close to ₹6000 crores for India. After this technology partnership, India will be a part of a select group of nations which have the ability to make such chips on shore. This is the culmination of growing India-US cooperation on semiconductors under ICET and a recently signed agreement to explore manufacturing in India under CHIPS Act.

Richest and poorest Indian states

- **Southern Indian states have surged ahead of northern states after liberalisation,** in terms of contribution to India’s GDP as well as having higher-than-average per capita incomes. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu collective account for 30% of India’s GDP, according to the report.
- **Maharashtra however, remains India’s top GDP contributor, but its share declined to 13.3% from more than 15% earlier.** However, its per capita income rose to 150.7% of the national average by March 2024. Delhi and Haryana consistently performed well with Delhi having one of the highest per capita incomes.
- **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar saw their GDP contributions dwindle, with Uttar Pradesh’s share falling from 14% in 1960-61 to 9.5%.** Bihar, in spite of being the third-most populous state, only contributed 4.3%. However, Odisha showed a marked improvement, shedding its image as a laggard.

- **West Bengal on the other hand, saw a steady decline from being one of India's top contributors**, accounting for 10.5% of the GDP in 1960-61. Now, it is at 5.6%. Its per capita income, once at 127.5% of the national average, dropped to 83.7%, falling below Rajasthan and Odisha.

Centre raises minimum wages for farm and industrial workers

- **The Union government raised central minimum wages for agricultural and industrial workers**, which are linked to skill levels and sector types, a revision made to account for a rise in prices. **Under the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948**, both the central and state governments are empowered to fix, review and revise floor wages of workers employed in sectors that fall under their jurisdictions.
- The central government's hike in minimum wages will benefit workers engaged in building construction, loading and unloading, security guards, janitors, housekeeping, mining and agriculture. **The new wage rates will take effect from October 1, 2024. The government last enhanced minimum pays in April this year. A minimum or floor wage, the lowest remuneration that employers must pay workers, is protected by law and cannot be overturned by individual or exclusive contracts.** After revision, the minimum wage rates for workers in construction, sweeping, cleaning, loading & unloading for unskilled work will be ₹783 a day or ₹20,358 a month, whichever is higher.

India's GDP set to double to \$7 trillion, third largest in the world by FY30-31: S&P

- **The size of India's nominal GDP would nearly double to over US \$ 7 trillion by fiscal 2030–31 from US \$ 3.6 trillion in fiscal 2023–24**, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence projections. **This would make India the third-largest economy in the world**, raising its share in global GDP from 3.6 per cent to 4.5 per cent and lifting its per-capita income to the upper-middle-income group, S&P said in a report.
- **India is also set to transition to the upper-middle-income category by fiscal 2030–31 if forecast annual growth of 6.7 per cent is realized, according to S&P Global.** This follows an impressive GDP growth of 8.2 per cent in the fiscal year 2024, significantly exceeding the government's earlier estimate of 7.3 per cent. According to the report, fiscal 2024–25 started on a strong note, with goods and services tax (GST) collections at an all-time monthly high of 2.1 trillion Indian rupees in April and remaining healthy in May and June.

Delhi's IGI Airport will get India's first air train by 2027

- **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport plans to introduce India's first air train system by 2027.** This system aims to provide smooth connectivity between the airport terminals, parking lots, and other facilities, reduce travel time across the airport, and ensure convenience for passengers. This proposed air train, also known as Automated People Mover, will connect Terminals 1, 2, 3, Aerocity, and Cargo City at the Indira Gandhi.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attended AIIB annual meet in Uzbekistan

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attended the 9th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) held in Samarkand**, and hold bilateral meetings with her counterparts from Uzbekistan, Qatar, China, and AIIB President.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank and international financial institution that aims to collectively improve economic and social outcomes in Asia. It is the world's second largest multi-lateral development institution. **Headquartered in Beijing, China**, the bank currently has 109 members, including 13 prospective members from around the world. The breakdown of the 109 members by continents are as follows: 42 in Asia, 26 in Europe, 22 in Africa, 9 in Oceania, 8 in South America, and 2 in North America. The bank started operation after the agreement entered into force on 25 December 2015, after ratifications were received from 10 member states holding a total number of 50% of the initial subscriptions of the Authorized Capital Stock. **The starting capital of the bank was US\$100 billion**, equivalent to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the capital of the Asian Development Bank and about half that of the World Bank. **Jin Liqun is the current President** of the bank.

India joins US-led Mineral Security Network to secure critical minerals, fend off Chinese challenge

- **India is now formally a part of the Minerals Security Finance Network, a US-led initiative aiming to strengthen cooperation among members to secure supply chains for critical minerals.** The announcement,

made by the US State Department on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly involved a pact entered by 14 countries and the European Union.

- **The Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN) is a new initiative that stems from the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), a framework established by the US in 2022. India was inducted to the MSP in June 2023.** The strengthening of the MSP with an additional offshoot in the MSFN comes at a time when there is an overwhelming dependence on countries such as China for critical resources, especially with respect to rare earth minerals.
- Under this new partnership, **signatory nations acknowledged that the scope and scale of meeting the rapidly increasing global demand for critical minerals to achieve the proposed clean energy transition was “beyond the purview of any single institution”** and that the public sector and private sector in member countries “would need to work together to deploy capital into new and existing markets in this sector”.

Axis Mutual Fund changes name for 8 schemes

- **Axis Mutual Fund has announced the change in name of eight of its mutual fund schemes.** The fund house informed about these changes to its unit holders through a notice-cum-addendum.

The world’s first transatlantic cable connected continents under the sea

- **TAT-1, the world’s first transatlantic telephone cable system,** which became a remarkable chapter in telecommunications history by enabling the first physical voice link between Europe and America. The journey to TAT-1 began in the early 1950s when the demand for better communication became undeniable.
- **Prior to TAT-1, transatlantic communication relied heavily on radio-based services,** which were limited by factors such as weather conditions and provided only a few thousand calls per year. But businesses were booming, and people wanted to connect with friends and family overseas without the hassle. The need for a more reliable and efficient means of communication led to discussions about laying a submarine cable across the Atlantic Ocean.

India is now the world’s third largest producer and consumer of ethanol

- **India is now the world’s third largest producer and consumer of Ethanol due to the policy changes made by government,** said Shri Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy while addressing India Sugar & Bio Energy Conference. Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme, the Union Minister said that under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister, several steps have been taken to increase ethanol production capacity in India. “In last 10 years, from ethanol sale, sugar mills have earned higher revenue, use of ethanol blended petrol reduced emission of Green House Gases (GHGs), greater investment opportunities emerged, leading to the establishment of new distilleries in rural areas and contributing direct and indirect employment generation as well”.

India’s ethanol production has nearly tripled over the past five years. **The country’s National Policy on Biofuels, released in 2018, set a goal of 20% ethanol blending by 2030. In 2022, the government updated the policy to move the target forward to 2025-26.**

Banks in News

Union Bank of India has announced its decision to become a signatory to the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF)

- **Union Bank of India has announced its decision to become a signatory to the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF).** PCAF's aim is to encourage financial institutions globally to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions from their business operations like investments and loans.
- "This step aligns with the growing global emphasis on climate risk management and the recent draft guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on climate risk disclosures". **PCAF is a global partnership of financial institutions working to develop and implement a harmonized approach to assess and disclose greenhouse gas emissions associated with loans and investments.** By joining PCAF, Union Bank of India demonstrates its commitment to measuring and managing its financed emissions, a crucial aspect of climate risk management for banks.

Union Bank of India is an Indian government-owned bank with 120+ million customers and a total business of US\$106 billion. After the amalgamation with Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank, which came into effect on 1 April 2020, the amalgamated entity became the one of the largest PSU bank in terms of branch network with around 9500 branches. **Union Bank of India** was established on 11 November 1919 in Bombay (now Mumbai) by **Seth Sitaram Poddar**. The bank's corporate office was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi.

New World Bank Loss and Damage fund names first director

- **The board of The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage to help countries ravaged by climate-driven disasters named Senegalese finance specialist Ibrahima Cheikh Diong as its first director, the World Bank announced.** The selection of Diong, a dual U.S. citizen, marks a major milestone in the operationalization of the new World Bank-administered fund, whose creation in 2022 was a breakthrough for developing country negotiators at United Nations climate talks, overcoming years of resistance from wealthy nations.

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

Bank of Baroda unveils Gen AI-powered solutions

- **Bank of Baroda has announced the introduction of three different generative AI-powered solutions for its customers and employees.** These include Aditi, a GenAI powered Virtual Relationship Manager aims to enhance the digital customer service experience, a GenAI-enabled knowledge management platform, 'Gyan Sahay.AI' for its employees and a GenAI powered chatbot 'ADI' to improve digital customer experience and get the required queries solved through chatbot. The bank also plans to recruit specialised and skilled resources for capacity building to drive large adoption of artificial intelligence technologies in banking operations and services.

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.**

SBI aims to become first financial firm to cross milestone of Rs. 1 lakh crore profits

- State Bank of India (SBI) is aiming to become the first Indian financial firm to cross a milestone of Rs. 1 lakh crore net profit in the next 3-5 years, chairman of the country's largest lender C S Setty has said. SBI recorded a standalone net profit of Rs. 61,077 crore in FY24, registering a growth of 21.59 per cent.

State Bank of India (SBI) is an Indian multinational public sector bank and financial services statutory body headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The bank descends from the Bank of Calcutta, founded in 1806 via the Imperial Bank of India, making it the oldest commercial bank in the Indian Subcontinent. The Government of India took control of the Imperial Bank of India in 1955, with Reserve Bank of India (India's central bank) taking a 60% stake, renaming it State Bank of India. It is a public sector bank and the largest bank in India with a 23% market share by assets and a 25% share of the total loan and deposits market. On 16th Aug 2022 an attempt to facilitate and support start-ups in the country, the State Bank of India (SBI) announced the launch of its first "state-of-the-art" dedicated branch for start-ups in Bengaluru. YONO (You Only Need One) is an integrated digital banking platform offered by State Bank of India (SBI) to enable users to access a variety of financial and other services such as flight, train, bus and taxi bookings, online shopping, or medical bill payments. Five associates and the Bharatiya Mahila Bank became part of the State Bank of India (SBI), catapulting the country's largest lender to among the top 50 banks in the world. State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT), besides Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB), merged with SBI with effect from April 1, 2017. Challa Sreenivasulu Setty is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI). He took over the role on August 28, 2024, succeeding Dinesh Khara.

Firms in News

Elon Musk on track to become world's first trillionaire by 2027

- **World's richest person Elon Musk is on track to become the first trillionaire in the world by 2027.** Musk, who is the boss of electric car manufacturing company Tesla, private rocket company SpaceX and social media platform X (formerly Twitter), has seen his wealth growing at an average annual rate of 110%.
- **Musk remains at the pinnacle of the world's rich list with \$237 billion net worth according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.** The report also adds that the **second entrepreneur to hit trillionaire status would be India's businessman Gautam Adani.** Industrial conglomerate Adani Group's founder and chairman Gautam Adani's wealth has been growing at an average annual rate of 123% and if it remains at this pace for some more years, then **Adani would be the second entrant in the trillionaire list by 2028.**

Elon Musk is a business magnate and investor. He is the **founder, CEO and chief engineer of SpaceX;** angel investor, **CEO and product architect of Tesla, Inc.;** owner and **CEO of Twitter, Inc.;** founder of **The Boring Company;** co-founder of **Neuralink and OpenAI;** and president of the philanthropic Musk Foundation. **In 2022, he acquired Twitter for \$44 billion, merged the company into the newly-created X Corp. and rebranded the service as X the following year. In March 2023, Musk founded xAI, an artificial-intelligence company.** He is one of the wealthiest individuals in the world; as of August 2024 Forbes estimates his net worth to be US\$247 billion. **In 1999, Zip2 was acquired by Compaq for \$307 million and Musk co-founded X.com, a direct bank. X.com merged with Confinity in 2000 to form PayPal, which eBay acquired for \$1.5 billion in 2002. In 2006, he helped create SolarCity, a solar energy company that was later acquired by Tesla and became Tesla Energy. In 2015, he co-founded OpenAI, a nonprofit artificial intelligence research company.**

Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI) attains Navratna Status

- **Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI), a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has been granted the Navratna status on 30th August 2024 by the Ministry of Finance.** Completing its 13 years of incorporation, SECI is a leading CPSE dedicated to the development and expansion of Renewable Energy (RE) capacity in India with a cumulative generation awarded capacity of 69.25 GW and an annual power trading volume upwards of 42 Billion Units. SECI is the foremost Renewable Energy Implementing Agency (REIA) of India which is continuously working towards fulfilling climate goals and striving for sustainable development.

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

Singapore Airlines gets FDI nod from Indian govt for Vistara-Air India merger

- **In a move that will create one of the world's largest airline groups, Singapore Airlines has received approval from the Indian government for the foreign direct investment as part of the proposed merger of Vistara with Air India.** With the clearance in place, the merger that will see Singapore Airlines acquiring a 25.1 per cent stake in Air India is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The proposed merger was announced in November 2022. **Air India is owned by Tata Group and Vistara is a 51:49 joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines.** In a regulatory filing, Singapore Airlines (SIA) said it has received approval from the Government of India for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the enlarged Air India as part of the proposed merger.

Swedish startup bets big on zinc-ion batteries with world's first megaplant

- **Swedish startup Enerpoly has opened the world's first zinc-ion battery mega factory.** Its vision is to **scale a better alternative to lithium-ion for storing renewable energy over longer periods of time.** The Enerpoly Production Innovation Center (EPIC) facility is located north of Stockholm. Commissioning has already begun and the plant is expected to make the first zinc-ion batteries next year. The company aims to reach a maximum production capacity of 100 MWh by 2026 — enough energy to power around 20,000 homes.

Reliance wins bid for govt incentives to make EV batteries

- **Reliance Industries has won a bid under an incentives program which supports EV battery production.** Earlier this year, seven companies submitted bids to set up **local manufacturing units for the production of advanced chemistry cells, or ACCs, under the government's production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme.** **Reliance can make up to 10 gigawatts of ACCs.** ACCs are used as EV cells, critical to the development of electric vehicles in the world's third largest car market.

Air India becomes first Indian Airline to launch new booking technology

- **Air India has become the first Indian airline to roll out the New Distribution Capability (NDC), a technology that simplifies booking flights.** With this new move, Air India has adopted the latest 21.3 schema from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which will revolutionize how it sells tickets and services. This new technology will allow Air India to offer a more personalized and efficient booking experience for both leisure and business travelers.

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.** Air India operates a fleet of **Airbus and Boeing aircraft** serving 102 domestic and international destinations. **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).**

Gensol-Matrix consortium wins Rs. 164 crore for first bio-hydrogen project

- **Solar engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) and electric mobility solutions company Gensol Engineering,** along with green hydrogen infrastructure developer and natural gas aggregator **Matrix Gas & Renewables** announced they have emerged as the lowest bidder for the EPC of India's first biomass to green hydrogen project.
- **A consortium of the two companies will develop the Rs. 164 crore project, which seeks to establish a 25 tonnes per day (TPD) bio-waste processing facility, producing 1 TPD green hydrogen infrastructure.** The company has strategically partnered with Westinghouse, USA, which has patented technology and has commissioned multiple plants globally. In this case, the pre-gasification plasma-induced radiant energy-based gasification system technology will be utilised.

Hitachi Introduces India's First Android-based ATM

- **Hitachi Payment Services has created the country's first Android-Based Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) ATM in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).** The Android-based CRM was launched during the Global Fintech Festival 2024. It is capable of functioning not just like an ordinary ATM but like an entire bank branch. The Android-based cash recycling machine is equipped with facilities like applications for Home Loans, credit cards and investments in FD. It is set to be available soon.

- According to RBI, **Android-based CRM will be able to work as a digital banking unit. A digital banking unit is a specialised fixed point business unit/hub that delivers digital banking products and services coupled with existing financial products and services.** It is in a self-service mode. Banking customers can avail a wide range of banking and non-banking services through this ATM. Some of the key features include QR-based UPI cash withdrawal and deposit, account opening, credit card issuance, personal loans, insurance services, MSME loans and FASTag application and recharge.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an **umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems** in India. **Founded in 2008**, the **NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation** registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, the **organization is an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA)** under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, for creating a robust payment and settlement infrastructure in India. It is **headquartered in Mumbai**.

Isha, Akash Ambani, Ghazal Alagh in Hurun's under-35 list of entrepreneurs

- **Isha Ambani, non-executive director at Reliance Retail and Toddle's Parita are the youngest women to feature on the inaugural 2024 Hurun India Under35s list.** "The 2024 Hurun India Under 35s highlights 150 outstanding entrepreneurs under 35, recognizing those with a minimum business valuation of USD 50 million for first-gen and USD 100 million for next-gen leaders." The youngest individual featured in the 2024 Hurun India Under35s was Sharechat's Ankush Sachdeva. Akash Ambani stood at 32nd position in the list. Ghazal Alagh was also recognised by the list for her work at Mamaearth.

Ambuja Becomes World's First Cement Company to Join Alliance for Industry Decarbonization

- **Adani Group owned Ambuja Cements Limited has become the world's first cement company to join the 'Alliance for Industry Decarbonization' (AFID),** a global alliance of companies across industries to accelerate Net Zero transition in the world.
- **The targets and standards of the alliance is in line with the Paris Agreement.** The AFID, is a global platform for exchanging insights and experiences among private and public stakeholders in the energy-intensive sectors. Ambuja Cements aims to achieve Net Zero status by 2050, with targets validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).
- As part of its green energy commitment, the cement player has **announced its plan to invest Rs. 10,000 crore in renewable energy sector. The projects include having 1 GW capacity,** production of 376 MW of energy from Waste Heat Recovery System (WHRS), etc. Ambuja Cements aims to power 60% of its expanded capacity through renewable energy by FY28.

Airtel launches India's first AI-powered network solution for spam detection

- **Bharti Airtel launched India's first network-based, AI-powered spam detection solution to address the issue of spam calls and messages for its customers.** "A first-of-its-kind solution by a telecom service provider in the country, the tool will alert customers in real-time to all suspected spam calls and SMSes.

Zepto ranks first in LinkedIn's 2024 list of India's top startups

- **Quick commerce platform Zepto, for the second consecutive year, has been ranked first in LinkedIn Top Startups India List 2024 – an annual ranking of emerging companies where professionals want to work.** The list draws insights from data based on actions of more than 1 billion LinkedIn members globally. It measures startups based on four pillars: employment growth, engagement, job interest and attraction of top talent. E-commerce platform GoKwik, conversation intelligence platform Convin, biofuel supply chain platform BiofuelCircle, and mental health platform MindPeers are also featured in the list.

Tatas to set up defence factory abroad

- **A Tata Group company is setting up a major defence manufacturing line abroad, in an overseas first for India.** The Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) plant-which will come up in Casablanca-will initially make armoured vehicles for the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces. It plans to serve the larger African market in the long term.

- The unit will produce the Wheeled Armoured Platform (WhAP)-an amphibious infantry combat vehicle capable of navigating all types of terrain. The factory will be capable of producing 100 combat vehicles annually and will be functional within a year, with the first WhAPs projected to be rolled out within 18 months. These vehicles are already in service with the Indian Army in limited numbers and have been deployed at the Ladakh border.

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

Tata Steel commissions ‘India’s largest blast furnace’ at Kalinganagar

- Tata Steel Ltd. said it had commissioned ‘India’s largest blast furnace’ at Kalinganagar, Odisha as part of the Phase II expansion its plant. The company said it has made a total investment of ₹27,000 crore for the Phase II expansion at Kalinganagar that will take the total capacity at the site from 3 million tonne per annum (MTPA) to 8 MTPA.
- “The new blast furnace will significantly boost the plant’s overall production capabilities, allowing Tata Steel to meet the growing demands of various industries, including automotive, infrastructure, power, shipbuilding, and defence. It will also provide advantages in specific areas like oil & gas, lifting & excavation, and construction. “With the Phase II expansion, Odisha has emerged as the largest investment destination in India for Tata Steel, with a total cumulated investment of over Rs. 100,000 crore in the last 10 years.”

Essar Energy Transition, SSE partner to develop 40 MW green hydrogen facility in UK

- Essar Energy Transition (EET) Hydrogen and UK’s leading clean energy company SSE have begun work to develop a new green hydrogen production facility in the North West of England. The 40 MWe Gowy Green Hydrogen facility, which takes its name from the River Gowy and nearby Gowy Meadows Nature Reserve, will deliver hydrogen to industrial offtakers in the region. It will support them to decarbonise their operations, and also help them secure and grow jobs.
- Gowy Green Hydrogen could be operational as early as 2028, with feasibility studies completed and design and site investigation works underway. A planning application is expected to move forward in 2025 ahead of any final investment decision being made by the two parties.

LIC selects Infosys for NextGen digital insurance platform project

- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has selected IT major Infosys to develop its NextGen digital platform. It will be an integrated end-to-end digital insurance solution providing “excellent services to customers, business lifecycle management and operational activities for sales intermediaries and digital front-end platform for branch employees. Selection of Infosys comes in the backdrop of the insurer’s decision to embark on a digital transformation programme DIVE (Digital Innovation and Value Enhancement) to significantly boost its digital platform for providing superior experience to various stakeholders.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is an Indian public sector life insurance company headquartered in Mumbai. It is India’s largest insurance company as well as the largest institutional investor with total assets under management worth ₹52.52 trillion (US\$630 billion) as of March 2024. It is under the ownership of Government of India and administrative control of the Ministry of Finance. The Life Insurance Corporation of India was established on 1 September 1956, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act, nationalizing the insurance industry in India.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Estonia becomes first Baltic state to join CERN

- Estonia is the first Baltic state to become a full member of the CERN particle-physics lab near Geneva. The country, which has a population of 1.3 million, formally became the 24th CERN member state. Estonia is now expected to pay around €1.5m each year in membership fees.
- CERN's member countries, which include France, Germany and the UK, pay costs towards CERN's programmes and sit on the lab's governing council. Full membership also allows a country's nationals to become CERN staff and for its firms to bid for CERN contracts. The lab also has 10 "associate member" and four countries or organizations with "observer" status, such as the US.

Baltic states, the northeastern region of Europe, includes the countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. Estonia is a country in Northern Europe. The capital city is Tallinn. Latvia is a country in the Northern Europe. Its capital and largest city is Riga. Euro is the official currency of Estonia and Latvia. Kristen Michal is serving as the Prime Minister of Estonia since 23 July 2024.

NTCA green-lights world's first melanistic tiger safari near Similipal in Odisha

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority has green-lighted the world's first melanistic tiger safari near Similipal tiger reserve of Odisha. The NTCA has now recommended that it be referred to the Central Zoo Authority that would review the project and suggest any changes that may be required in the detailed project report. After the DPR is approved, it will be forwarded to a Supreme Court committee for approval necessary for safari project on forest land. A 200- hectare site adjacent to National Highway 18 in Baripada has been identified as the site for the safari, touted as world's first such safari of melanistic tigers.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was founded in India in December 2005, based on a recommendation put forth by the Tiger Task Force. The Prime Minister of India established the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to streamline the management of Project Tiger and numerous Tiger Reserves of India. In 1973, the Government of India, in collaboration with the WWF, initiated a conservation program known as the Tiger Protection Program, commonly referred to as Project Tiger.

Earth to get a temporary mini-moon named 2024 PT5

- An asteroid named 2024 ON just passed near Earth without causing any damage, and another asteroid, which might appear like a mini-moon, is on its way. That asteroid, named 2024 PT5, is just 33 feet long and is travelling in cosmic space. It will soon be captured by Earth's gravity for a singular orbit, which means the 2024 PT5 asteroid will make half a revolution in a horseshoe-shaped orbit around the planet before it continues its cosmic journey.
- It is quite rare to see an asteroid being attracted by Earth's gravitational pull, as in most cases asteroids either Miss Earth or burn upon entering the planet's atmosphere. An asteroid that cannot escape Earth's gravitation is called a mini-moon. As 2024 PT5 is a smaller asteroid, despite falling into Earth's gravitational pull, it will be visible only through special telescopes.

India successfully test fires two surface to air missiles in two days

- **India successfully test-fired the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VLSRSAM) for the second consecutive day from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur on the Odisha coast.** “In both the tests, the missile successfully intercepted a high-speed low altitude aerial target mimicking sea skimming aerial target”. For safety reasons, the Balasore district administration temporarily relocated 3,100 residents from six villages within 2.5 km radius of ITR Launch Pad 3. The VLSRSAM system is designed for neutralising various airborne threats at close ranges, including aircraft, helicopters, drones, and incoming missiles.

Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of Odisha, India, approximately 150 kilometres east of the state capital Bhubaneswar. The island was originally named after English commandant Lieutenant Hugh Wheeler. On 4 September 2015, the island was renamed to honour the late Indian president, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. The Integrated Test Range missile testing facility is located on the island, and serves as the test facility for most of India’s missiles such as the Akash, Agni, Astra, BrahMos, Nirbhay, Prahaar, Prithvi, Shaurya Missile, Prithvi Air Defence, SMART missile and ASAT missiles.

Cabinet approves Vigyan Dhara scheme to promote S&T capacity building, research, innovation

- The Union Cabinet approved the **merger of three ongoing umbrella schemes into a unified central sector scheme called ‘Vigyan Dhara’ which seeks to promote science and technology capacity building as well as research, innovation and technology development.** The merger of the Department of Science and Technology schemes into a single scheme would enhance efficiency in fund utilisation and establish synchronisation among the sub-schemes. **The proposed outlay for Vigyan Dhara is ₹10,579 crore during the 15th Finance Commission period from 2021-22 to 2025-26.**

Elon Musk announces new missions to Mars, says ‘everybody may visit the red planet soon’

- **SpaceX plans to launch five uncrewed Starship missions to Mars over the next two years, aligning with the upcoming Earth-Mars transfer window.** CEO Elon Musk announced that these missions aim to pave the way for future crewed flights, potentially starting in four years if successful.
- **The success of these uncrewed missions will influence the timeline for crewed flights to Mars.** If the uncrewed missions land successfully, crewed missions could start in four years. However, any significant issues could delay the crewed timeline by another two years. Earlier, Musk mentioned that the first uncrewed mission to Mars could occur within five years, with humans landing on the planet in seven years.

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

India Launches First Comprehensive Cancer Multi-Omics Data Portal

- **The Indian Cancer Genome Atlas (ICGA) announced that it has launched India’s first comprehensive cancer multi-omics data portal.** This pioneering platform provides open access to clinically correlated data from Indian cancer patients, aimed at transforming cancer research and treatment for Indian populations.
- **Historically, cancer treatments in India have been based on Western data sets. However, cancers in Indian patients can differ significantly at the molecular level.** ICGA’s mission is to create Indian-specific datasets to help researchers and clinicians develop personalized treatment protocols. This new open-access portal represents a monumental step in revolutionizing cancer research, specifically for Indian patients.

- In a step towards improving **understanding of the genetic variations of cancer in the Indian population**, the **Indian Cancer Genome Atlas (ICGA) foundation** has launched a portal that expects to be a repository of information on multiple aspects of cancer. **“The portal will be the first in India to offer data that includes DNA, RNA, and protein profiles of breast cancer patients, integrated with clinical outcomes,”**. “Creating a repository of this sort and openly sharing this data, we are empowering researchers, clinicians, and innovators to collaborate, explore new frontiers, and drive transformative breakthroughs in cancer treatment.”

India’s First POEM Experience Centre set up in Ahmedabad

- In a significant milestone for India’s space sector, **TakeMe2Space, a domestic nano-satellite development company, and Azista Aerospace, a satellite development and manufacturing firm, have partnered to establish the country’s first POEM (PSLV Orbital Experimental Module) Experience Centre in Ahmedabad**. This collaborative effort is set to transform how academia, researchers, and startups engage with space experimentation, opening new doors to innovation and accessibility. The POEM platform, developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has already gained recognition for its affordability and reliability. Now, with the creation of this cutting-edge experience centre, space enthusiasts and professionals will have unprecedented opportunities to build, test, and qualify their payloads for POEM missions.
- **The POEM Experience Centre aims to democratize access to space technology by providing participants with state-of-the-art testing resources**. Equipped with advanced facilities, including an Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) chamber, the centre will streamline the complex process of developing and testing payloads. Space innovators can now qualify their payloads with greater ease, speed, and precision.
- **With all the ISRO-qualified test facilities under one roof, Azista Aerospace’s expertise in space-grade manufacturing will play a critical role in supporting multiple payload qualifications simultaneously**. This consolidation will drastically reduce the time and costs associated with launching payloads into space, allowing startups and universities to innovate faster than ever before.

Inventions/Discoveries/Health

NASA adjusts SpaceX crew to rescue Boeing's stranded astronauts

- NASA cut the number of astronauts in the next crew to make space on the return trip for the two astronauts – Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore, who are currently stranded on the International Space Station. NASA astronauts Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov will launch to the ISS in September aboard a SpaceX rocket. They will return to Earth in February, bringing with them astronauts Williams and Wilmore, who have been on the ISS since June.
- This decision was necessitated by the technical issues marred the Boeing Starliner capsule, which was originally intended to transport Williams and Wilmore back to Earth. As a result of this adjustment, NASA astronauts Zena Cardman and Stephanie Wilson, who were initially scheduled to join the upcoming SpaceX mission, have been removed from the crew.
- NASA has assured that they will be assigned to future missions. It will undock from the ISS and land in New Mexico about six hours later. NASA decided not to use the Starliner for the return trip because of safety concerns, specifically problems with its propulsion system.

Sunita Williams is an American astronaut, retired U.S. Navy officer, and former record holder for most spacewalks by a woman (seven) and most spacewalk time for a woman (50 hours, 40 minutes). Williams was assigned to the International Space Station as a member of Expedition 14 and Expedition 15. In 2012, she served as a flight engineer on Expedition 32 and then commander of Expedition 33. In 2024, she returned to the ISS on the Boeing Crew Flight Test, the first crewed mission of the Boeing Starliner; her return to Earth has been delayed until February 2025. As such, from August 2024 until February 2025, Williams and fellow astronaut Butch Wilmore are pivoting ahead to undertake various scientific experiments and maintenance tasks aboard the International Space Station. Butch Wilmore is a NASA astronaut and United States Navy test pilot. He has had three spaceflights, the first of which was an 11-day Space Shuttle mission in November 2009, to the International Space Station. Wilmore was designated as pilot with five other crew members on Space Shuttle Atlantis for the mission STS-129. He served as part of Expedition 41 to the International Space Station, and in 2024 returned to the ISS on the Boeing Crew Flight Test, the first crewed mission of the Boeing Starliner. He is currently in space and is set to return to Earth in 2025.

Chinese scientists unveil world's first AI model for lunar exploration

- The world's first professional multimodal large language model (LLM) for lunar science has been released in China. This model is designed to significantly accelerate the processing speed of massive amounts of lunar data. The new tool was unveiled at the China International Big Data Industry Expo in Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou Province in southwest China, by the Institute of Geochemistry of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Alibaba Cloud Intelligence Group. The Institute of Geochemistry has built a comprehensive "digital moon" platform with the world's most complete bank of data related to the exploration of the moon. There are more than 1 million lunar craters with a diameter of over 1 kilometer, and countless smaller ones, according to Liu Jianzhong, a researcher at the Institute of Geochemistry. Identifying all these craters manually would be impossible.

Stranded in space along with Sunita Williams, Nasa astronaut Barry Wilmore reports 'strange noise' from Boeing's Starliner

- Just days after Nasa officially confirmed that Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams will return to Earth using SpaceX's Dragon capsule in 2025, more issues about Boeing's Starliner have started to appear. This further supports Nasa's decision to use the tried-and-tested Crew Dragon capsule instead of Starliner to bring the astronauts back to Earth safely.
- According to a report by Ars Technica, astronaut Butch Wilmore has sent the following message to Mission Control at Johnson Space Center in Houston: "I've got a question about Starliner. There's a strange noise coming through the speaker ... I don't know what's making it." Wilmore noticed this strange noise from the speaker when he was apparently floating in the Starliner, which, according to the mission control centre, "was kind of

like a pulsing noise, almost like a sonar ping”. It is quite common for astronauts to notice and report such anomalies, and most of these might not significantly impact the spacecraft’s functionalities.

Covid scientist warns the world of deadly virus found in two animals in China

- **Dozens of viruses have been detected mixing in animals at fur farms in China, some of which are new and have the potential to spill over into humans, researchers said on, September 4, 2024.** Since the Covid-19 pandemic, scientists have been warning that farming mammals such as minks for their fur could make it easier for new viruses to cross over from the wild and spark fresh outbreaks. **A recent study published has shed light on the potential dangers posed by animals farmed for fur, food, or traditional medicine.** Species such as raccoon dogs, mink, and muskrats, which are commonly farmed for their fur, have been found to harbor numerous viruses, some of which could pose significant risks to human health.
- **The study’s findings suggest that these animals could serve as reservoirs for emerging pathogens, potentially sparking new pandemics.** Researchers collected samples from 461 individual animals found dead due to disease on fur farms across China between 2021 and 2024. These animals included minks, raccoon dogs, foxes, guinea pigs, and rabbits. The team examined tissues from the lungs, intestines, and other organs of these animals, searching for viral pathogens. Their investigation revealed a startling 125 different viruses, 36 of which were novel.
- **Even more concerning was that 39 of these viruses were classified as high-risk,** meaning they had the potential for cross-species transmission, including to humans. Among the viruses detected, several types of influenza A virus were found in guinea pigs, minks, and muskrats, including H1N2, H5N6, and H6N2. Additionally, multiple coronaviruses were identified, expanding the known host range of these viruses. Seven different species of coronaviruses were detected though none were closely related to SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid.

Hidden craters suggest earth once had a Saturn-like ring

- **The rings of Saturn are some of the most famous and spectacular objects in the Solar System.** Earth may once have had something similar. **The existence of such a ring, forming around 466 million years ago and persisting for a few tens of millions of years,** could explain several puzzles in our planet’s past.
- **Around 466 million years ago, a lot of meteorites started hitting Earth.** We know this because many impact craters formed in a geologically brief period. In the same period we also find deposits of limestone across Europe, Russia and China containing very high levels of debris from a certain type of meteorite. The meteorite debris in these sedimentary rocks show signs that they were exposed to space radiation for much less time than we see in meteorites that fall.

Planet Saturn has made a remarkable comeback to reclaim the title of the “planet with the highest number of moons”, surpassing Jupiter, which temporarily took the lead in February with its 12 newly discovered moons. A new study have unveiled an astonishing 62 new moons orbiting the ringed planet, bringing Saturn’s official count of natural satellites to a grand total of 145. In contrast, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) has confirmed Jupiter’s moon count at 95.

World’s first fully robotic heart transplant

- **Saudi Arabia’s King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center (KFSHRC) has performed rather successfully, the world’s first fully robotic heart transplant.** This procedure, lasting two and a half hours, was carried out on a 16-year-old boy suffering from end-stage heart failure.
- **The patient had requested a less invasive surgery, specifically asking the medical team not to open his chest.** This milestone reflects Saudi Arabia’s growing leadership in healthcare but also marks a leap forward in the use of robotics in complex medical procedures.

NASA discovers Earth’s third energy field called ‘Polar wind’ after 60 years of search

- **Earth’s third energy field known as ‘Polar Wind’, which only existed in theory so far, has now been discovered by Nasa after a search that has lasted 60 years.** Glyn Collinson, principal investigator of Endurance

at Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Centre in Maryland, said that this field is fundamental to understanding the way our planet works.

- According to Collinson, the field has been **there since the beginning alongside the other two energy fields – gravity and magnetic**. The scientists said that although the field is weak, it is significant to Earth as it counters gravity and lifts the skies up. According to the team of scientists, Polar winds have crucial answers about how Earth's atmosphere evaporates rapidly above the north and south poles. They feel that this field of energy may have played a critical role in the evolution of our atmosphere's upper-most layer.
- **In the 1960s, several spacecrafts that flew over the Earth's poles had witnessed a stream of particles from the atmosphere flowing into space at supersonic speeds**. Scientists were aware that sunlight caused particles to leak into space. Regardless, the detected particles did not show any signs that they were heated. Collinson said that there had to be something that was drawing these particles out of the atmosphere. However, back then, the technology that was needed to detect an energy field, which can only be sensed over hundreds of miles, was not available.

World's first nuclear clock on the anvil; its accuracy will blow your mind

- **Scientists at JILA, a research institute that's part of the University of Colorado Boulder and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), are close to finishing the development of the world's first nuclear clock**. They have figured out all the necessary parts to build this clock, marking an important step forward in timekeeping technology. **A new era of timekeeping is set to be unveiled as scientists develop the first prototype of the nuclear clock**, which is much more advanced than the atomic clocks we currently rely on. **In the olden days, sun dials were used to measure time which lacked accuracy**. With the passage of time, came the mechanical and digital clocks which precisely measured the time.
- But timekeeping capability even at this level is not sufficient to support advanced scientific research and applications especially in the fields of space and defence. **The scientists then invented the atomic clock which measures time with exceptional precision, losing only seconds across billions of years**.
- However, for many scientific discoveries and advancements, **this is not precise enough measurement of time and scientists have been working to measure time with far greater accuracy than achieved so far**. These efforts have now started yielding results and a nuclear clock may be closer to reality. In a major breakthrough, scientists have built and tested the first prototype of the nuclear clock.

An atomic clock is a type of clock that measures time using the natural vibrations of atoms. These vibrations are incredibly regular, making atomic clocks highly accurate. Atomic clocks are essential for things like keeping international time zones in sync, helping GPS systems work, and making sure global financial transactions happen at the right time. **While atomic clocks rely on the electromagnetic forces in atoms, nuclear clocks measure time by looking at the energy changes inside the nucleus (the center) of an atom. This difference means that nuclear clocks could be even more accurate than atomic clocks because the energy levels in a nucleus are more stable and less affected by outside forces.**

SpaceX launches all-civilian crew for first private spacewalk

- **SpaceX launched its daring Polaris Dawn mission a multiday orbital expedition carrying a four-member civilian crew for the first spacewalk by non-professional astronauts**. The crew, led by Shift4 Payments CEO Jared Isaacman, is also aiming to fly deeper into space than any other manned mission in more than half a century, reaching a peak altitude of 1,400 km.
- September 10, 2024 — **A commercial space crew has flown higher above Earth than anyone who has traveled since the last Apollo astronauts went to the moon**. The four members of the Polaris Dawn mission, riding aboard SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft "Resilience," climbed into an elliptical orbit with a high point, or apogee, of 870 miles (1,400 kilometers) on September 10, 2024. **"Achievement unlocked — apogee 1,400.7 km," SpaceX confirmed on its X social media account**. The crew's top altitude more than doubled the maximum height that the space shuttle reached when it deployed the Hubble Space Telescope in 1990 and surpassed the previous record for a crewed spacecraft remaining in Earth orbit of 853 miles (1,373 km) as achieved by NASA's Gemini 11 mission in 1966.

- **Jared Isaacman and Sarah Gillis were the two crew members performed the spacewalk during the Polaris Dawn mission. A billionaire and an engineer have become the first non-professional crew to perform one of the riskiest manoeuvres in space - a spacewalk.** Jared Isaacman and Sarah Gillis stepped out of the SpaceX spacecraft around 15 minutes apart, starting at 11:52BST, wearing specially-designed suits. “Back at home we all have a lot of work to do, but from here Earth sure looks like a perfect world,” Mr Isaacman said as he exited. It was commercially funded by Mr Isaacman. Before, only astronauts with government-funded space agencies had done a spacewalk. Astronauts use safety tethers, which are attached to the spacecraft, to keep from floating away during a spacewalk.
- **Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov performed the first spacewalk on March 18, 1965, during the Cold War Space Race between the US and the USSR.** A spacewalk, also known as extravehicular activity (EVA), refers to the time spent by astronauts outside their spacecraft.
- **The Polaris Program, led by Jared Isaacman and SpaceX, seeks to demonstrate important operational capabilities that will serve as building blocks to help further human exploration to the Moon, Mars, and beyond.** The Polaris Program is a first-of-its-kind effort to rapidly advance human spaceflight capabilities, while continuing to raise funds and awareness for important causes here on Earth. Polaris, a constellation of three stars more commonly known as the North Star, has been a guiding light throughout human history to help navigate the world around us and the sky above.

‘God of chaos’ asteroid

- **A massive asteroid, known as 99942 Apophis or the ‘God of Chaos’, has had its trajectory reevaluated, sparking concerns it may be on a collision course with Earth. Initially discovered in 2004, Apophis was previously thought to have a 2.7% chance of impacting our planet in 2029.** However, further observations led scientists to **rule out any potential impact in 2029 or 2036.** Nevertheless, the asteroid’s revised path has raised new concerns about its future trajectory and potential threat to Earth.
- **Recent research by Canadian space expert Paul Wiegert has reignited discussions about Apophis’s potential risk. Wiegert’s findings suggest that while Apophis is on track for a close approach,** its trajectory could shift if it collides with a smaller object in space. He estimates that the odds of such an event happening and altering the asteroid’s course toward Earth are roughly one in two billion.

DRDO successfully conducts first phase of Developmental Field Firing Trials of Indian Light Tank ‘Zorawar’

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the preliminary automotive trials of the Indian light Tank, Zorawar, a highly versatile platform capable of deployment in high-altitude areas.** During the field trials conducted in the desert terrain, the Light Tank demonstrated exceptional performance, efficiently meeting all the intended objectives.
- In the initial phase, the tank’s firing performance was rigorously evaluated and it achieved the required accuracy on designated targets. **Zorawar has been successfully developed by the Combat Vehicles Research & Development Establishment (CVRDE), a unit of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with Larsen & Toubro Ltd.** Numerous Indian industries, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), contributed to the development of various sub-systems, showcasing the strength of indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities within the country.

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.

Iran launches Chamran-1 satellite

- **Iran successfully launched its Chamran-1 research satellite into orbit utilising the Qaem-100 rocket developed by the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.** The launch marks a milestone in Iran’s aerospace program, which has faced scrutiny and criticism from Western nations due to concerns that the technology could be repurposed for ballistic missile development.

- The Chamran-1 satellite, weighing 60 kilograms, was placed into a 550-kilometer orbit and it is designed to test “hardware and software systems for orbital maneuver technology. The Qaem-100 rocket, a solid-fuel, three-stage vehicle, was previously used in January for another successful satellite launch. Footage from the launch showed the rocket blasting off from a mobile launcher at a site near Shahroud, approximately 350 kilometers east of Tehran.

Iran also known as Persia and officially the Islamic Republic of Iran is a country located in Western Asia. Tehran is the capital and largest city of Iran. The rial is the official currency of Iran. Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khamenei is the second and current supreme leader of Iran, in office since 1989. Khamenei is the longest-serving head of state in the Middle East, as well as the second-longest-serving Iranian leader of the last century, after Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. On 19 May 2024, an Iranian Air Force helicopter crashed near the village of Uzi, East Azerbaijan, Iran, killing President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian,

IISc scientists develop brain-inspired analog computing platform capable of storing, processing data

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have developed a brain-inspired analog computing platform capable of storing and processing data in an astonishing 16,500 conductance states within a molecular film. This breakthrough represents a step forward over traditional digital computers in which data storage and processing are limited to just two states, the IISc said.
- The institute said that such a platform could potentially bring complex AI tasks, like training Large Language Models (LLMs), to personal devices like laptops and smartphones, thus taking us closer to democratising the development of AI tools. These developments are currently restricted to resource-heavy data centres, due to a lack of energy-efficient hardware. With silicon electronics nearing saturation, designing brain-inspired accelerators that can work alongside silicon chips to deliver faster, more efficient AI is also becoming crucial. According to IISc, the fundamental operation underlying most AI algorithms is quite basic – matrix multiplication, a concept taught in high school maths. But in digital computers, these calculations hog a lot of energy.
- The platform developed by the IISc team drastically cuts down both the time and energy involved, making these calculations a lot faster and easier. The molecular system at the heart of the platform was designed by Srebrata Goswami, Visiting Professor at CeNSE. As molecules and ions wiggle and move within a material film, they create countless unique memory states, many of which have been inaccessible so far. Most digital devices are only able to access two states (high and low conductance), without being able to tap into the infinite number of intermediate states possible.

Scientists find new blood group called MAL

- Scientists from NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and the University of Bristol have made a groundbreaking discovery by identifying a new blood group system named MAL. This breakthrough addresses a mystery that has persisted for nearly 50 years concerning the AnWj blood group antigen, first noticed in 1972.
- Senior research scientist Louise Tilley led the team that developed a genetic test to identify patients lacking the AnWj antigen. This test will improve care for patients with rare blood requirements and assist in finding compatible donors. Tilley commented, “It’s challenging to quantify the exact number of people who will benefit from this test. However, NHSBT is the last resort for around 400 patients each year worldwide.” The discovery’s implications are extensive, providing benefits to patients worldwide. NHSBT’s International Blood Group Reference Laboratory in Filton supports research by supplying antibodies and has created a test to integrate into current genotyping platforms.
- **AnWj Antigen:** Scientists determined the genetic basis of the AnWj antigen, enhancing understanding and treatment options for individuals lacking this blood group.
- **MAL Blood Group System:** MAL is now recognized as the 47th blood group system, encompassing the AnWj antigen.
- **Genetic Cause:** Researchers linked homozygous deletions in the MAL gene to the inherited AnWj-negative phenotype.

- **Transfusion Safety:** The study aids the creation of new genotyping tests to identify rare AnWj-negative individuals, decreasing complications during transfusions.

Chandrayaan-3 discovers ancient 160-km crater on Moon, sheds new light on lunar history

- **India's Chandrayaan-3 mission has identified a 160-km-wide crater near its landing site on the Moon.** The discovery, made by the Pragyan rover, provides crucial insights into the Moon's early geological evolution. This ancient crater, older than the Aitken basin, offers a rare opportunity to study one of the earliest lunar formations. Chandrayaan-3 lander India's moon mission, Chandrayaan-3, has identified a 160-kilometer-wide crater near its landing site.
- **This discovery, based on data from the Pragyan rover, has been detailed in Science Direct by scientists from Ahmedabad's Physical Research Laboratory.** The crater was found as the rover explored the moon's South Pole region, **approximately 350 kilometers from the Aitken basin, the moon's largest and oldest impact site.** The site's rock and dust are essential for understanding the moon's geological history. The crater formed before the Aitken basin, suggesting it is one of the moon's oldest structures. The rover captured high-resolution images, providing crucial details about the crater's structure. The report stated, "This presents a rare scientific opportunity to study one of the earliest geological formations on the celestial body."

Chandrayaan-3 is the third Indian lunar exploration mission under the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Chandrayaan programme. It consists of a lander named Vikram and a rover named Pragyan, similar to those of the Chandrayaan-2 mission. The propulsion module carried the lander and rover configuration to lunar orbit in preparation for a powered descent by the lander. Chandrayaan-3 was launched on 14 July 2023. The spacecraft entered lunar orbit on 5 August, and the lander touched down in the lunar South Pole region on 23 August 2023, making India the fourth country to successfully land on the Moon, and the first to do so near the lunar South Pole.

New Covid variant XEC 'spreading fast' across Europe, US

- **A new Covid-19 variant, XEC, is "rapidly spreading" and has already been detected in 27 countries,** following the pandemic that severely impacted the world for over two years since its initial detection in 2019. Scientists have raised concerns that the XEC variant, known for being "more contagious" is beginning to spread quickly across Europe and might soon become the dominant strain. **XEC is a hybrid of earlier omicron subvariants KS.1.1 and KP.3.3. XEC variant was first identified in Germany** in June and has since been detected in countries including the UK, US, Denmark, and others. Currently, over 500 samples from 27 countries, such as Poland, Norway, Luxembourg, Ukraine, Portugal, and China, have tested positive for XEC.

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

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Framework Agreement has been approved by the Cabinet recently and India became a member of IBCA

- **The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of India to become a member country of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** by signing and ratification of the Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). Seven big cats include Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar and the Cheetah. Out of these five big cats viz. Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard and Cheetah are found in India. **The Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 29.02.2024 approved the establishment of International Big Cat Alliance with Headquarters in India with a one-time budgetary support of Rs. 150 crores for a period of five years from 2023-24 to 2027-28.**
- **The International Big Cat Alliance aims to be multi-country, multi-agency coalition of 95 big cat range countries**, non-range countries interested in big cat conservation, conservation partners and scientific organizations working in the field of big cat conservation besides business groups and corporates willing to contribute to the cause of big cats, to establish networks and develop synergies in a focused manner so as to bring to a common platform a centralized repository of successful practices and personnel, backed by financial support which can be leveraged to strengthen the conservation agenda in the field to arrest decline in big cat population and reverse the trend.
- **This is a demonstrative step in leadership position on big cat agenda, to bring range countries and others on a common platform. All UN member countries are eligible for becoming the member of IBCA. Twenty-four (24) countries (including India) have consented to be members of IBCA.** Nine International Organizations have also consented to be partner organization of IBCA. Framework Agreement has been approved by the Cabinet recently and India became a member of IBCA. So far 4 countries have become member of IBCA including India, Nicaragua, Eswatini and Somalia.

‘World first’ ruby grown in jewellery setting in lab

- A university lecturer has successfully grown a full-size ruby as it sits in a platinum jewellery setting in what is believed to be a world-first process. **Sofie Boons, who is a senior lecturer and researcher in jewellery design at the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol, has developed a chemical technique to kickstart the growth process.** It enables a tiny fragment of real ruby to multiply as it sits in its jewellery setting. The university believes this “in situ process” has not been successfully achieved before.

From 600 to 3,000: Assam’s rhino population grows fivefold as poaching drops 86% since 2016

- **Assam has seen a significant rise in the population of one-horned rhinoceros over the past six decades.** From a population of approximately 600 in the 1960s, the number has increased to over 3,000 by 2024. **This data was revealed by the Assam government on World Rhino Day. Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam is home to 80% of the country’s rhino population.** Orang National Park holds 4%, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary has 3%, and Manas National Park just 1%. The remaining rhino population in India is distributed among various national parks in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

BRICS adopts comprehensive framework on climate action and sustainable development

- **BRICS countries have reached a significant milestone with the adoption of a comprehensive framework focusing on climate action and sustainable development**, announced by the Russian Economic Development Ministry. This new framework encompasses critical aspects such as mitigation, adaptation, carbon markets, finance, science, and business involvement. It is designed to promote a just transition and facilitate collaborative projects among member nations. All BRICS countries oppose unilateral green protectionist measures by developed nations, as these harm the economies and supply chains of developing countries. This framework aims to address and counteract measures that disadvantage developing economies, ensuring a more equitable approach to global environmental policies.

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 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.

Alaska Triangle, where 20,000+ people have disappeared and never been found

- **The Alaska Triangle, a mysterious area located around Anchorage, Juneau, and Utqiagvik, has been the site of over 20,000 disappearances since the 1970s.** The Alaska Triangle continues to be a source of intrigue and speculation. While some believe that this vast and wild region may never reveal its secrets, the stories of those who disappeared remain a poignant reminder of the area's enigmatic nature. For now, the Alaska Triangle remains an area of unsolved mysteries, with its blend of natural dangers and unexplained phenomena capturing the curiosity of many.

India emerges as the largest plastic polluter globally

- A new study by the University of Leeds revealed **India as the biggest contributor to plastic pollution.** Annually a staggering amount of 57 million tons of plastic pollution are generated which infiltrate every space of the planet - from the deepest trenches, and mountaintops to the human brain.
- **The researchers drew an analogy to explain the enormous scale of plastic waste production.** The annual, global plastic waste is enough to fill New York City's Central Park and pile up as high as 157 Empire State Building. Almost two-thirds of this pollution originates from the uncollected and ill-disposed waste. This is because almost 15% of the world lacks access to proper waste collection services. This prompts a haphazard disposal of the waste that continues to build up.

India's first 'teal carbon' study bets on wetlands to address the challenges of climate adaptation and resilience

- **India's first study on 'teal carbon', undertaken at Keoladeo National Park (KNP) in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district, has highlighted the significance of wetland conservation to address the challenges of climate adaptation and resilience.** The pilot project sought to develop holistic nature-based solutions to address climate change. The concept of teal carbon is a recent addition to the environmental science pertaining to organic carbon in inland fresh wetlands.
- **The study, carried out in the form of the KNP's global review, has depicted the potential of teal carbon as a tool to mitigate climate change if the anthropogenic pollution in the wetlands can be controlled.** Teal carbon refers to carbon stored in non-tidal freshwater wetlands, encompassing carbon sequestered in vegetation, microbial biomass, and dissolved and particulate organic matter. **Though these wetlands play a crucial role in regulating greenhouse gases, they are vulnerable to degradation from pollution, land use changes, water extraction, and landscape modifications.** 'Teal carbon' being a colour-based terminology reflects the classification of the organic carbon based on its functions and location rather than its physical properties. As opposed to teal carbon, black and brown carbon are primarily produced by incomplete combustion of organic matter from sources such as wild fires, fossil fuel combustion, and industrial activities. They contribute to global warming.

Colombia deadliest country for environmentalists in 2023

- **Colombia, host nation for this year's United Nations COP16 biodiversity conference, was the deadliest country for environmentalists and land rights defenders in 2023,** with a record 79 killed according to UK advocacy group Global Witness. At an event to launch the COP 16 agenda in Bogota in July, Colombia's vice president, Francia Marquez - a winner of the Goldman Environmental prize for activism in 2018 - said the conference would honor those killed.

'Doomsday' glacier set to melt faster, swell seas as world heats up

- **Tidal action on the underside of the Thwaites Glacier in the Antarctic will “inexorably” accelerate melting this century, according to new research by British and American scientists.** The researchers warn the faster melting could destabilize the entire West Antarctic Ice sheet, leading to its eventual collapse.
- **The massive glacier — which is roughly the size of Florida — is of particular interest to scientists because of the rapid speed at which it is changing and the impact its loss would have on sea levels (the reason for its “Doomsday” moniker).** It also acts as an anchor holding back the West Antarctic ice sheet.
- **More than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) thick in places, Thwaites has been likened to a cork in a bottle. Were it to collapse, sea levels would rise by 65 centimeters (26 inches).** That’s already a significant amount, given oceans are currently rising 4.6 millimeters a year. But if it led to the eventual loss of the entire ice sheet, sea levels would rise 3.3 meters.

Thwaites Glacier, also known as the “Doomsday Glacier,” is located in the remote Amundsen Sea in West Antarctica. It’s a wide and fast-flowing glacier, roughly the size of Florida or Great Britain, and it has been a significant focus of scientific study due to its sensitivity to climate change. It is one of the most vulnerable and important glaciers in the world in terms of future global sea-level rise. Satellite measurements have shown that the glacier is losing an enormous amount of ice each year, nearly 50 billion tons annually, contributing to rising global sea levels. The glacier already contributes 4% of global sea level rise. If the entire Thwaites Glacier were to melt, it could raise the world’s oceans by about 65 centimeters (over 2 feet).

Zimbabwe to cull 200 elephants to aid communities hit by drought

- **Zimbabwe plans to cull 200 elephants to provide food for communities severely impacted by the worst drought in four decades.** The El Nino-induced drought has devastated southern Africa, leading to widespread crop failures and leaving 68 million people facing food shortages across the region. **This marks the first elephant cull in Zimbabwe since 1988** and will take place in districts including Hwange, Mbire, Tsholotsho, and Chiredzi. The decision follows Namibia’s recent move to cull 83 elephants, distributing the meat to people similarly impacted by the drought.

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

Ancient Hindu text Rig Veda mentions solar eclipse that took place 6,000 years ago

- **Astronomers recently stumbled across what might be the oldest mention of a solar eclipse.** In the ancient Hindu text Rig Veda, they discovered mention of an eclipse that occurred approximately 6,000 years ago. **Researchers say this is the oldest known reference to an eclipse in history.**
- **Compiled around 1500 B.C, the Rig Veda is a collection of sayings and hymns spanning various religious and philosophical schools along with records of historical events.** While most of these events are from when the text was written, some of them date back even further. With the Earth spinning on its axis, the relative position of these important astronomical events change as well. **Currently, the vernal equinox is in Pisces, but it was on Orion somewhere around 4500 B.C and the Pleiades around 2230 B.C.** This makes it possible for astronomers to find the time period when the event occurred.
- **The Rig Veda was compiled around 1500 BC and is the oldest known Vedic Sanskrit text.** It contains hymns and philosophical anecdotes, along with several historical events. Most of these events are from the time the text was compiled, but some also date back to previous years.

Earth is getting a new mini-moon, and it won't be the first or the last

- **Earth is going to have its very own mini-moon from September 29 until November 25.** The regular Moon’s new, temporary friend is 2024 PT₅, an asteroid captured from the Arjuna asteroid group (called the

“Arjunas”). Asteroid 2024 PT5, measuring approximately 33 feet (10 meters) wide, has been captured by Earth’s gravity and will orbit our planet for about two months, till November 25, 2024. Our new mini-moon is approximately 10 metres in diameter and will be captured by Earth’s gravity for 57 days. It’s small and faint, so it won’t be visible by the eye or with small telescopes, but will be visible to larger telescopes.

World’s first bionic eye brings hope for blindness

- With all the technological advancements in the world, we have solutions for nearly every problem. There has been a major medical breakthrough in reshaping the future of blindness treatment. **Researchers from Monash University in Australia have developed the world’s first bionic eye.**
- **This offers hope to millions of people suffering from blindness. It is a cutting-edge technology, known as the ‘Gennaris Bionic Vision System’ that aims to restore vision for those who have lost it.** The ‘Gennaris Bionic Vision System’ is the result of nearly a decade of research and development. This advanced system works by bypassing damaged optic nerves that usually transmit visual information from the eye to the brain. Instead, the system sends signals directly to the brain’s vision centre. This allows the user to perceive images.

IIT Kanpur unveils India’s first detonation tube research facility, aims to advance research in combustion & propulsion

- **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.**
- **The facility, funded by the Aeronautics Research and Development Board, DRDO, and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), has been developed by Prof. Ajay Vikram Singh and his research group from the Department of Aerospace Engineering, a press release issued by IIT Kanpur informed.**

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Paralympic Games: Badminton player Nitesh Kumar wins maiden gold

- **India's Nitesh Kumar clinched his maiden gold medal at the Paralympics, defeating Great Britain's Daniel Bethell in a gripping men's singles SL3 badminton final in Paris.** The player from Haryana showcased incredible resilience and tactical brilliance, overcoming Tokyo silver medallist Bethell in a nail-biting contest that lasted an hour and 20 minutes.

15 Year Old International Master Mayank Chakraborty Wins His 2nd Grand Master Norm In Greece

- **15-year-old Chess International Master Mayank Chakraborty from Assam has won his second Grand Master Norm in a GM Norm Tournament being conducted in Greece.** IM Mayank requires one last norm and to touch the FIDE Rating Point 2500 once to be a Grand Master, in fact the first Grand Master from entire North East India. He had become International Master this year in April only, and right now he is the player with the highest number of Grand Master Norms and highest rating from the entire North East India. **IM Sahil Dey, aged 17 years, is the second player from North East** who is still in the race to be the first Grand Master from North East with one norm and 2375 FIDE rating at the moment.

Former India wicket-keeper Ajay Ratra appointed BCCI selector

- **The BCCI appointed former India wicket-keeper Ajay Ratra as a selector of the men's cricket team, replacing Salil Ankola in the five-man panel.** As per convention, all five selectors represent different zones and Ratra will represent the North Zone in the committee headed by Ajit Agarkar.
- **After Agarkar was appointed chief selector last year,** the selection panel ended up having two selectors from West Zone with Ankola already a part of the committee.

Sumit Antil, Nitesh Kumar Win Gold At Paris Paralympics 2024

- **At the Paris Paralympics 2024, India's Sumit Antil defended his Javelin gold medal, creating a new record to clinch the top podium.** Antil recorded a highest throw of 70.59 meter in his second attempt. India's next Gold medal came from Badminton, where Nitesh Kumar won the Men's Singles SL3 event.
- **Suhas Yathiraj won a Silver in the men's singles SL4 event, after he lost to the defending champion Lucas Mazur in the final.** In Women's singles-SU5, Shuttler Thulasimathi Murugesan claimed silver after losing to China's Qiu Xia Yang in the final match. In the same category, Manisha Ramadass bagged Bronze. Nithya Sre Sivan secured a Bronze medal in the women's singles SH6 category.

Harvinder Singh scripts history, becomes first Indian archer to win Paralympic gold

- **Tokyo Games -winner Harvinder Singh became the first Indian Paralympian archer to clinch gold after beating Lukasz Ciszek of Poland 6-0 in the Men's Individual Recurve Open final at the Paris Paralympics.**

India's Sachin Sarjerao Khilari wins silver medal in men's shot put (F46) event

- India's Sachin Sarjerao Khilari wins silver medal in men's shot put (F46) event with Asian record throw of 16.32m in Paris Paralympics.

Nida, first Indian woman to compete at FEI Endurance World Championship

- Nida Anjum Chelat, a equestrian from Tirur, Kerala, is set to make history as the first Indian woman to compete in the prestigious FEI Endurance World Championship for Seniors. This milestone comes on the heels of her historic participation in last year's FEI Junior Championship, where she became the first Indian to complete the event, further cementing her legacy on the global equestrian stage.

Kapil Parmar scripts history, wins India's first-ever Paralympic medal in judo

- Indian judoka Kapil Parmar made history by winning India's first-ever Paralympic medal in judo at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. He secured a bronze in the men's -60 kg J1 category after defeating Brazil's Elielton de Oliveira in just 33 seconds with an impressive Ippon. Kapil has overcome many obstacles and has created history by becoming the first Indian to win a medal in the judo event at the Paralympics.

Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first footballer to score 900 career goals

- Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first footballer to score 900 career goals. The Al-Nassr forward recorded this feat against Croatia in the UEFA Nations League. Riding on Ronaldo's goal Portugal defeated Croatia in the UEFA Nations League.

Aryna Sabalenka wins U.S. Open women's title

- Aryna Sabalenka the world No. 2 from Belarus, defeated American Jessica Pegula 7-5, 7-5 at Arthur Ashe Stadium to win the US Open for the first time. This is Sabalenka's third career grand slam singles title, having won the Australian Open for the second consecutive year back. She's the first woman to sweep the hard court grand slams since Angelique Kerber in 2016.

Harvinder Singh scripts history, becomes first Indian archer to win Paralympic gold

- Tokyo Games bronze-winner Harvinder Singh became the first Indian Paralympian archer to clinch gold after beating Lukasz Ciszek of Poland 6-0 in the Men's Individual Recurve Open final at the Paris Paralympics. The 33-year-old Indian, who lost to Kevin Mather of the USA in the Tokyo Paralympics semifinals before securing a bronze three years ago, put up a dominant show to knock out Ciszek.

Randhir Singh becomes first Indian to be elected as OCA president

- Veteran sports administrator Randhir Singh became the first Indian to be elected as the president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) during the 44th General Assembly of the continental body. A five-time Olympic shooter, Randhir was the lone eligible candidate for the OCA president's post. His tenure will run from 2024 till 2028, and his election was unanimous.

US Open Tennis: Jannik Sinner Wins Second Grand Slam Victory

- In the US Open Tennis, Jannik Sinner clinched his second Grand Slam victory of the year by defeating Taylor Fritz 6-3, 6-4, 7-5. The world number one, who had previously triumphed at the Australian Open earlier this year, made history by becoming the first Italian man to win the US Open title. The victory marked Sinner's 55th match win and sixth title of the season, further solidifying his position at the top of the rankings.

Indian Boxer Deepali Thapa Becomes 1st Ever Asian Schoolgirl Champion

- Indian boxer Deepali Thapa has made history by becoming the first-ever Asian Schoolgirl Champion in Al Ain, UAE. Her victory led India to secure seven female titles at the Asian Championships.
- In the 33 kg weight category, Thapa defeated Ukraine's Liudmyla Vasylenko in the final. In the 35 kg category, Bhoomi defeated Kazakhstan's Assel Jalimbekova in the final to secure India's second title. Nischal Sharma continued India's winning streak in the 37 kg weight class, overcoming Ukraine's Maria Matsiura in a closely contested final that claimed India's third title.

Paralympic Archery champions Sheetal Devi & Rakesh Kumar team up as ECI National PwD Icons for voter awareness

- Paralympic archery champions Ms. Sheetal Devi and Shri Rakesh Kumar team up to inspire voters nationwide as ECI's national icons for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). In an event organised at Nirvachan Sadan, CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar along with ECs Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu felicitated Arjuna Awardee and ECI's national PwD icon, Ms. Sheetal Devi and her mixed doubles team partner Shri Rakesh Kumar, in recognition of their outstanding achievement in winning a bronze medal in Archery at the Paris Summer Paralympics 2024.
- On the occasion, the Commission also announced Shri Rakesh Kumar, renowned Paralympian as the ECI National icon for PwDs. Ms. Sheetal Devi was announced as ECI National Icon just before the announcement of General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024 on March 16th of this year. At just 17 years old, Sheetal Devi became India's youngest Paralympic medallist. Her accomplishments include gold medals in both Individual and Mixed Team events at the 2023 Asian Para Games, a silver medal at the 2023 World Archery Para Championship, and multiple accolades at the Asian Para Championship.

Anmol Kharb, India's Asian Team Championship golden girl wins first individual international badminton title

- Anmol Kharb, India's breakout badminton prodigy integral to the Asian Team gold medal at the start of 2024, has had an eventful past eight months. Widely lauded for winning decisive tie-clinchers in February, the 17-year-old collapsed in a tearful heap on the court with a viciously swollen ankle at the Uber Cup in May. However, her senior career is properly back on track come September, as she won her first-ever individual title, the Belgian International Challenge at Leuven.

Neeraj Chopra finishes second in Diamond League final; Anderson Peters lifts title

- Paris Olympics silver medallist Neeraj Chopra fell short of securing more title by just 0.1 centimetre as he finished second in the Diamond League final with a best throw of 87.86 metres at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels, Belgium. Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian to win a Diamond League Trophy in 2022. Grenada's Anderson Peters, a Paris 2024 Olympics bronze medallist, won his first Diamond League title with an effort of 87.87 m. The 2023 European Games champion Julian Weber of Germany was third with a distance of 85.97 m.

Oscar Piastri, McLaren big winners at Azerbaijan Grand Prix

- Oscar Piastri won the Azerbaijan Grand Prix after a late crash impacted the race and required it to finish behind a virtual safety car. The win, combined with the fourth-place finish of McLaren teammate Lando Norris. Red Bull had topped the standings for the past 55 races; McLaren last held the position in 2014. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) started from the pole position but Piastri made his move at the start of lap 20, after the drivers' lone pit stop, with a bold decision to pass Leclerc.

Saleema Imtiaz becomes first Pakistan's woman umpire on ICC's International Development Panel

- Pakistan's Saleema Imtiaz became the first woman to be nominated for the ICC International Panel of development umpires. "The journey has been filled with hard work and personal sacrifices, but now, standing at the cusp of this new chapter, it all feels worth it,".

Nazira Banoo Wins Gold in Taekwondo at Khelo India Women's League

- Nazira Banoo, a talented athlete from the LOC village of Lato in Kargil, UT Ladakh, made her region proud by clinching a gold medal in the individual Poomsae under-30 category at the 1st Khelo India Women's Taekwondo League Phase 1, held in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- The tournament, organised by the Taekwondo Federation of India in collaboration with Khelo India, hosted hundreds of participants from different states and union territories across the country. Nazira's gold-medal performance earned her a spot in the upcoming Khelo India Women's League Nationals Phase-III, scheduled to take place in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Asian Champions Trophy final: Jugraj Singh's goal helps India beat China 1-0 to clinch record fifth title

- **Defending champions India beat hosts China 1-0 in the final of the 2024 Asian Champions Trophy to clinch a record-extending fifth title.** Defender Jugraj Singh scored a rare field goal as the defending champions toiled hard before getting the better of their opponents. Before this, China's only appearance in the final of an international tournament was in 2006 Asian Games, where they finished second-best after losing 1-3 to Korea.

Magnus Carlsen, Judit Polgar felicitated at FIDE 100 Awards

- **Magnus Carlsen and Judit Polgar were felicitated with the best male and female player awards, respectively at the FIDE 100 Awards ceremony in Hungary.** The centenary of the International Chess Federation, celebrated the exceptional achievements and contributions of individuals, groups, and organizations within the chess community. Over the past century, chess has evolved and flourished, and the event was all about honoring those who have made remarkable impacts on the game.

Sangram Singh Becomes 1st Indian Male Wrestler to Win MMA Fight at Gama International Fighting Championship

- **Indian wrestler Sangram Singh became the first Indian male wrestler to win an MMA (mixed martial arts) fight at the Gama International Fighting Championship Tbilisi in Georgia.** Commonwealth heavyweight wrestling champion Sangram won in a 90-second match against the Pakistani opponent, Ali Raza Nasir. Moreover, Sangram also registered the fastest win ever by an Indian fighter in the 93 kg division in the championship.

Indian Tennis Duo Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prashant Win Hangzhou Open Doubles Title

- **Indian tennis duo Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth won the doubles title in the ATP 250 Hangzhou Open 2024.** They defeated the German pair of Constantine Frantzen and Hendrik Jebens at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Expo Centre.

Most Test wickets for India: Ashwin second on all-time list, Jadeja nears 300 clubs

- **Kapil Dev still leads the seamers' charts with 434 wickets. The legendary Kumble continues to hold the record for most Test wickets for India** even after 16 years of his retirement. Kumble scalped 619 Test wickets from 132 appearances, the fourth-highest ever in Test cricket. Meanwhile, off-spin wizard Ravichandran Ashwin is closing on Kumble's tally, having reached 522 wickets in 101 games. Among active players, Ashwin is followed by left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who is one short of completing 300 wickets. **Jadeja can become only the seventh Indian to cross 300 Test wickets during the second Test against Bangladesh in Kanpur.**

Kamindu Mendis' world record is a first in 147 years of Test cricket's existence

- **Sri Lanka all-rounder Kamindu Mendis created history by becoming the first cricketer in the 147 years of Test cricket's existence to hit a 50-plus score in all of his first eight Test matches.** Mendis etched his name on the record books in the second Test against New Zealand by slamming his fifth half-century and eighth consecutive 50-plus score. Since making his Test debut against Australia in 2022, Mendis has registered at least a half-century in each of his eight Tests. He has converted four of those to centuries with 164 being his highest score so far.

Indonesian Grand Prix 2024: Spain's Jorge Martin wins MotoGP race

- **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.** This win extends his lead over reigning champion Francesco Bagnaia to 21 points. Starting from pole position, Martin made a strong start in the hot and humid conditions, maintaining his lead despite pressure from Pedro Acosta throughout the race.

Sport Events

Paris 2024 Paralympics: India medals tally and winners list

- India achieved their most successful performance in Paralympic history at the Paris 2024 Games, securing a total of 29 medals - seven gold, nine silver, and 13 bronze. This achievement surpasses the 19-medal haul from Tokyo 2020, which included five golds. The record haul also meant that India crossed the 50-medal mark in their Paralympic history.
- A record 84 para-athletes represented India at the Paris 2024 Paralympics, held in the French capital from August 28 to September 8. India competed across 12 disciplines, three more than at Tokyo 2020. Indian para-athletes participated in three new sports at Paris 2024—para cycling, para rowing, and blind judo. India had some impressive performances at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Avani Lekhara became the first Indian woman to win two gold medals at the Paralympic Games, defending her title in the women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 shooting event with a world record score.
- India recorded a one-two in athletics for the first time, with Dharambir and Parnav Soorma clinching gold and silver, respectively, in the men's club throw F51 event. Dharambir also set a new Asian record of 34.92m. Later, Praveen Kumar also logged an Asian record to win the high jump T64 title and fetched India's sixth gold, their highest ever at the Paralympics. Javelin ace Sumit Antil too made history as the first Indian man to defend his title at the Paralympics, winning gold in the men's javelin throw F64 with a stunning throw of 70.59m—a new Paralympic record. Remarkably, Sumit broke his own previous record, set at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics, not just once, but three times during the competition.
- With a bronze in the high jump T42 class, Mariyappan Thangavelu became the first Indian to win medals at three consecutive Paralympics. He won the gold medal at Rio 2016 and silver at Tokyo 2020. Preethi Pal secured her bronze in the women's 100m T35 race with a personal best time. It was India's first-ever medal in a track event at the Paralympics. Her bronze in the 200m made her India's most successful athlete at the Games, as she was the only one to secure two medals. In all, India won four medals in track events at Paris 2024. It included Deepthi Jeevanji, who became the first intellectually impaired Indian athlete to win a Paralympic medal with a bronze in the women's 400m T20 class.
- Records were set in archery too. Armless archer Sheetal Devi briefly set a world record in the ranking round before finishing in second place. But she teamed up with Rakesh Kumar later to achieve a world record score in the compound mixed team qualification event. At just 17 years old, Sheetal went on to make history as India's youngest Paralympic medallist, securing bronze in the mixed team event alongside Rakesh. Later, India found their first-ever Paralympic archery champion in Harvinder Singh.

2024 Summer Paralympics

- The 2024 Summer Paralympics, also known as the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, and branded as Paris 2024, were the 17th Summer Paralympic Games, an international multi-sport parasports event governed by the International Paralympic Committee. The Games were held in Paris, France, from 28 August to 8 September 2024, and featured 549 medal events across 22 sports. These games marked the first time Paris hosted the Summer Paralympics and the second time France hosted the Paralympic Games, following the 1992 Winter Paralympics in Tignes and Albertville. France also hosted the 2024 Summer Olympics.
- China topped the medal table for the sixth consecutive Paralympics, winning 94 golds and 221 total medals. Great Britain finished second for the tenth time, with 49 golds and 124 total medals. The United States finished third, with 36 golds, and 105 total medals. Additionally, Mauritius, Nepal, and the Refugee Paralympic Team won their first-ever Paralympic medals. The host nation, France, finished eighth with 19 gold and 75 total medals.

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is an international non-profit organisation and the global governing body for the Paralympic Movement. The IPC organizes the Paralympic Games and functions as the international federation for nine sports. Founded on 22 September 1989 in Dusseldorf, West Germany, its mission is to “enable Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world”. The IPC's headquarters is located in Bonn, Germany. Andrew George William Parsons is a Brazilian sports administrator and journalist. He is the current president of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

Syria lifts maiden Intercontinental Cup, registers biggest win over defending champion India

- **Indian team got thrashed 0-3 by Syria, which won its first Intercontinental Cup**, at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium in Hyderabad. Indian football team's hopes of winning the Intercontinental Cup title for the third time were dashed as it lost to Syria 0-3 in the last league match of the three-nation tournament.
- **The highest-ranked team after the round-robin league wins the tournament and there is no final. India had won the title in 2018 and 2023**, while it was the first trophy for Syria who had finished third in 2019. In fact, this was the first time Syria won a title on Indian soil. The West Asian country has a long history of playing tournaments in India, but a title has eluded them.

Kolkata set to host world's first World Athletic Gold Label Race for 25K distance

- **For the first time ever, Kolkata will host World 25K, the world's first World Athletic Gold Label Race for this particular distance when the 9th edition of east India's biggest running festival takes centre stage.** Labelled as the only World Athletics Accredited 25K, the world's richest 25K with prize money of USD 142,214 will be witness to the best and fastest athletes from across the world, which would compete alongside India's elite. The race will also feature a number of formats for amateur runners in the City of Joy.

45th FIDE Chess Olympiad begins in Budapest, Hungary

- **The 45th FIDE Chess Olympiad begins in Budapest, the capital of Hungary.** The 12-day biennial event will feature over 1,800 players, with 193 national teams registered in the open section and 181 teams competing in the women's section.

India Wins 16 Medals & Medallions of Excellence at World Skills 2024

- **India has won 16 medals and Medallions of Excellence at World Skills 2024 in Lyon, France.** The accolades include four Bronze in Patisserie and Confectionery, Industry 4.0, Hotel Reception and Renewable Energy. In addition to that the Indian delegation earned 12 medallions of Excellence, a testament to their exceptional skills and consistent performance across various trades.

ICC announces equal prize money for men and women in World Cups

- **The International Cricket Council announced equal prize money for men and women in World Cups, starting with the women's T20 showpiece in the UAE next month. The winners of the Women's T20 World Cup will be rewarded with \$2.34 million**, a 134% increase on the \$1 million awarded to Australian women when they clinched the title in South Africa in 2023.
- **India, who won the men's T20 World Cup earlier this year, received \$2.45 million in cash prize.** The two losing semi-finalists will earn \$675,000 (up from \$210,000 in 2023), with the overall prize pot totalling \$7,958,080, a massive increase of 225% from last year's total fund of \$2.45 million.

Punjab Lifts Hockey Junior Men's National Championship Trophy

- **Punjab defeated Uttar Pradesh to clinch the 14th Hockey India Junior Men's National Championship 2024 at the Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium in Jalandhar.** After a 3-3 finish, the match was decided in the shootout, with Punjab winning 4-3 to lift the trophy. Haryana defeated Karnataka 5-0 to secure third place on the podium.

In an historic first, Indian men and women teams win gold at Chess Olympiad

- India recorded one of the greatest moments in its sporting history in Budapest **winning the gold medals both in the Open and women's sections of the 45th Chess Olympiad.** The Indian men had been so dominant in the competition that they were almost assured of the gold with a round to spare.
- **In the 11th and final round match, India scored an easy victory against Slovenia. D. Gukesh, R. Praggnanandhaa and Arjun Erigaisi won their games, while Vidit Gujrathi drew. India won 3.5-0.5 against Slovenia, taking its tally to 21 points, out of the possible 22.**

World's First High Altitude, High Performance Parasports Center to Open in Ladakh

- **LAHDC is excited to announce the establishment of the world's first High Altitude, High Performance Parasports Center in Ladakh.** This groundbreaking facility, in collaboration with the Ladakh Government and the Aditya Mehta Foundation, aims to become a global hub for training para-athletes across all 28 parasports disciplines.
- **The mission of the Ladakh Parasports Academy is to screen, identify, and nurture aspiring athletes, guiding them to discover their best fit sport and shaping them into world class competitors.** The Aditya Mehta Foundation is renowned for operating Asia's first Parasports Academy and Rehabilitation Center and has played a pivotal role in integrating parasports into the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), including the BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP, and SSB. The Foundation also collaborates with educational institutions such as Kendriya Vidyalaya and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti to support children with special needs in their athletic journeys.

In their first-ever appearance, India bag bronze medal in Asia Pacific Padel Cup

- **In their first-ever tournament appearance – also the first-ever competition of its kind in the Asia Pacific region – India's padel team has finished third in the Asia Pacific Padel Cup in Bali, Indonesia.** Having lost the opportunity to make it to the final, India managed to defeat Malaysia 3-0 in the bronze medal match.

Scotland to host 2026 Commonwealth Games after Australia backed out

- **Scotland has rescued the Commonwealth Games that were in jeopardy after Australia's Victoria state backed out of plans to host the 2026 sporting event.** Glasgow, which hosted the event 10 years ago, will do so again, though some sports will need to be dropped as the Commonwealth Games Federation aims to reduce costs to make the competition more sustainable in the future.

Lord's to host ICC World Test Championship final for first time, dates revealed

- **The iconic Lord's stadium in London will be hosting the ICC World Test Championship final from June 11 onwards next year.** It will be the first time that Lord's has been used for the World Test Championship final, with Southhampton as the venue for the first edition (2021) and The Oval as the venue for the second edition (2023), that were won by New Zealand and Australia respectively.
- **The match will be played between the top two sides on the standings at the completion of the current cycle,** with Rohit Sharma's India currently sitting in pole position ahead of reigning champions Australia. Men in Blue have featured in both the WTC finals so far but are yet to capture the prestigious mace. There are still plenty of points available for teams though, with New Zealand (third), England (fourth), Sri Lanka (fifth), South Africa (sixth) and Bangladesh (seventh) still well in contention for a place in the one-off decider.

Durand Cup 2024: North East United FC Defeats Mohan Bagan Super Giant 4-3 on Penalties

- **NorthEast United FC completed a brilliant comeback victory after being two goals down to overcome defending champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant on penalties and clinch the 133rd Indian Oil Durand Cup** in a thrilling final played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in West Bengal. This is the Highlanders maiden Durand Cup title and their first ever silverware in Indian football.

AWARDS



2024 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees

- In a global announcement, the **Board of Trustees of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF)** declared that this year, **four individuals from Bhutan, Indonesia, Japan, and Vietnam, and one movement from Thailand, will receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award.**
- **Karma Phuntsho (Bhutan)** is being honoured for **bridging Bhutan’s rich heritage** with modern challenges, inspiring young Bhutanese to embrace their past while confidently moving forward.
- **Miyazaki Hayao (Japan), co-founder of Studio Ghibli, is being honoured for using animation to illustrate the human condition,** especially inspiring children as torchbearers of imagination. He won the 2024 Ramon Magsaysay Award, recognized for his contributions to animated films that resonate across ages. His work is distinguished by its gentle, hand-drawn visuals and deep themes, including pacifism, environmentalism, and strong female characters. Miyazaki’s films, such as Spirited Away and Princess Mononoke, reflect his concerns about modern society, war, and the destruction of nature.
- **Rural Doctors Movement (Thailand) is being recognized for improving public health and empowering rural citizens,** ensuring no one is left behind in the country’s progress.
- **Nguyen Thi Ngoc Phuong (Vietnam) is being honoured for her research on Agent Orange’s/Dioxin’s impact and her dedication to supporting its victims,** highlighting the long-term consequences of war.
- **Farwiza Farhan (Indonesia) is being recognized for her emergent leadership in protecting endangered natural resources, promoting social justice, and advocating for responsible stewardship of nature.**
- **Often called Asia’s Nobel Prize, the Ramon Magsaysay Award was instituted in 1957 in the memory of the late Ramon Magsaysay, the former President of Philippines who died in March that year in a plane crash. Mr. Magsaysay was known for leading the charge against the communist Hukbahalap or Huk movement and was popular among his people.**
- **The first awards were given out in 1958, in five categories. Winning the first award for Community Leadership was Indian freedom fighter Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who led the Bhoodan movement. Dr. Mary Rutnam, who worked for the people of Sri Lanka and introduced women’s institutes known as the Lanka Mahila Samiti, received the inaugural Ramon Magsaysay award for Public Service. Filipino Organisation Operation Brotherhood which provided medical treatment to refugees in Vietnam, received the award for Peace and International Understanding.**

North Maha Governor Honours Seshampatti Sri T. Sivalingam With Sangeetha Kala Vibhushan Lifetime Achievement Award

- **Maharashtra Governor C. P. Radhakrishnan honoured veteran Nadaswaram exponent Seshampatti Sri T. Sivalingam with the Sangeetha Kala Vibhushan Lifetime Achievement Award** at the Nadaswara Thiruvizha programme in Mumbai. The programme was **organised by the Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha.**

- **Mr. Radhakrishnan also presented the fellowship grant of one lakh rupees each to 50 young Nadaswaram musicians during the programme.** The Sabha gives Sri Shanmukhananda Nadaswara Chakravarthi T. N. Raja Rathinam Pillai Fellowship in Nadaswaram to 50 young and promising Nadaswaram musicians with a view to preserve the musical instrument and support its musicians. The fellowship of one lakh rupees is given for three years.

Swachh Vayu Survekshan Award 2024 Presented by Bhupender Yadav and Rajasthan CM

- **The International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies (Swachh Vayu Diwas) was observed on 7th September 2024 in Jaipur.** Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, and Rajasthan Chief Minister, Bhajan Lal Sharma, led the event. Key dignitaries included Rajasthan's Minister of State for Environment, Sanjay Sharma, and Urban Development Minister, Jhabar Singh Kharra.
- **The Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board hosted the event, highlighting air quality improvements in 131 cities under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).** With focused actions, 95 cities saw a decline in pollution, and 51 cities recorded a PM10 reduction of over 20% from the base year 2017-18, with 21 achieving a 40% reduction.
- **Swachh Vayu Survekshan Awards: Best performing NCAP cities were awarded under three categories:**
 - **Category-1 (Population over 10 Lakhs):** Surat, Jabalpur, Agra.
 - **Category-2 (Population 3-10 Lakhs):** Firozabad, Amravati, Jhansi.
 - **Category-3 (Population under 3 Lakhs):** Raebareli, Nalgonda, Nalagarh.
- **Municipal Commissioners received cash prizes, trophies, and certificates.**

National Florence Nightingale Awards 2024

- **On September 11, 2024, the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, presided over a distinguished ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan to present the National Florence Nightingale Awards for the year 2024.** This prestigious event recognized outstanding contributions in the field of nursing, highlighting the crucial role that nursing professionals play in the healthcare system. The National Florence Nightingale Awards were established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. These awards serve a dual purpose:
 - **To recognize the exceptional services provided by nursing personnel across the country.**
 - **To honor the legacy of Florence Nightingale, the pioneering British nurse who set the standards for modern nursing practices.**
- **The 2024 National Florence Nightingale Awards were presented in three main categories:**
 - **ANM (Auxiliary Nurse Midwife):** Recognizing grassroots-level healthcare workers.
 - **LHV (Lady Health Visitor):** Honoring supervisory nursing personnel.
 - **Nurse:** Acknowledging registered nurses across various specializations.

RINL Wins CII-GBC National Energy Leader Award for Sixth Consecutive Year

- **Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, has once again achieved excellence in energy efficiency and conservation by winning the prestigious National Energy Leader Award from the Confederation of Indian Industry – Green Business Centre (CII-GBC).** This marks the sixth consecutive year that RINL has received this accolade, demonstrating its steadfast commitment to sustainable energy practices.
- **In addition to the National Energy Leader Award, RINL also secured the “Excellent Energy Efficient Unit Award” for the eighth consecutive year.** These acknowledgments reflect RINL's ongoing efforts in energy conservation through various initiatives: Harnessing Waste Heat Recovery Systems, Pulverized Coal Injection (PCI) in Blast Furnaces and Waste Recycling and Energy Benchmarking

Booker Prize 2024; Largest Number of Women Represented This Year

- **The 2024 Booker Prize shortlist has been announced, with the largest number of women represented in its 55-year history.** The list includes former Women’s Prize winner Anne Michaels, American writer Percival Everett and British author Samantha Harvey.
- **Five of the six-strong shortlist are women, with authors from five countries represented, including the Netherlands for the first time.** Mr. Everett, a 2022 Booker finalist for “The Trees” is again nominated for “James,” which reimagines Mark Twain’s “Huckleberry Finn” from the point of view of its main Black character, the enslaved man Jim. Rachel Kushner, another former Booker finalist with her bestseller “The Mars Room,” is a contender again with spy story “Creation Lake”.
- **The other finalists vying for the 50,000 pounds award are Britain’s Samantha Harvey, for “Orbital”.** Canada’s Anne Michaels for “Held”, Australia’s Charlotte Wood for “Stone Yard Devotional” and Yael van der Wouden the first Dutch author to be shortlisted for the Booker for her debut, “The Safekeep”.

Dhruvi Patel wins Miss India Worldwide 2024

- **Dhruvi Patel, a Computer Information System student from the USA, has been declared the winner of Miss India Worldwide 2024,** the longest running Indian pageant outside of India. Miss India Worldwide is a beauty pageant which draws contestants from India and from among members of the Indian diaspora residing in other countries. It is conducted by India Festival Committee (IFC), first founded and headed by Dharmatma Saran in New York City, USA.

Aishwarya Rai Wins Best Actress at SIIMA 2024

- **At the South Indian International Movie Awards (SIIMA) 2024, Aishwarya Rai Bachhan stood out as she received the Best Actress (critics) Award for her role as Nandini in Maniratnam’s epic “Ponniyin Selvan 2”.** Ponniyin Selvan directed by Maniratnam, based on a novel and filmed on the daily life of the Chola Empire.

Indian women’s contributions across UAE honored at Indian Women Dubai Awards 2024

- **The Indian Women Dubai Awards 2024 took place in Dubai, honoring the achievements of Indian women who have contributed in various fields of excellence across the UAE.** This event celebrated empowerment, resilience, and unity, showcasing the impact of women who are shaping the community. **The presence of Bollywood icon Sameera Reddy,** known for her impactful roles and empowering stance in the entertainment industry.
- **Indian Women in Dubai is a vibrant community platform created by Reema Mahajan to connect and empower Indian women in the UAE.** It serves as a space for members to collaborate, grow, and unlock their full potential while fostering a strong sense of unity and support. Under the leadership of Reema Mahajan (Founder and CEO), IWD has grown into a powerhouse community with over 150,000 members, fostering an environment where women can thrive, network, and support each other.

Author Jhumpa Lahiri declines NYC’s Noguchi Museum award after keffiyeh ban

- **Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jhumpa Lahiri has declined to accept an award from New York City’s Noguchi Museum after it fired three employees for wearing keffiyeh head scarves, an emblem of Palestinian solidarity.** The museum, founded nearly 40 years ago by Japanese-American designer and sculptor Isamu Noguchi, announced in August that employees could not wear clothing or accessories that expressed “political messages, slogans or symbols” during their working hours.
- Amy Hau, the director of the museum, said in a separate statement published on its website that the policy “is intended to prevent any unintentional alienation of our diverse visitorship, while allowing us to remain focused on our core mission of advancing the understanding and appreciation of Isamu Noguchi’s art and legacy”. **Across the world, protesters demanding an end to Israel’s war on Gaza have worn the black-and-white keffiyeh head scarf, a symbol of Palestinian self-determination.** Anti-apartheid South African leader Nelson Mandela was also seen wearing the scarf on many occasions.

Film Producer Vinod Bachchan Honored at the House of Lords, UK Parliament

- **Renowned Bollywood producer Vinod Bachchan** was honored with the prestigious **Global Prestige Award at the House of Lords, UK Parliament**, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Indian film industry. The award ceremony was held under the auspices of Lord Bellamy KC and Lord Rami Ranger CBE, a distinguished Member of Parliament.

2024 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize

- **Alexander Dunn from Georgia Tech** has been awarded the **2024 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize** for his significant contributions to analytic number theory, particularly for solving the **Kummer-Patterson Conjecture** on bias in cubic Gauss sums in collaboration with Maksym Radziwill. The award will be presented at the International Conference on Number Theory, held from December 20-22, 2024, at SASTRA University in Kumbakonam, India—Ramanujan’s hometown.
- The **SASTRA Ramanujan Prize** is an annual award given to mathematicians under the age of 32 for exceptional contributions to the field of mathematics. The award was established in 2005 by the **Shanmugha Arts, Science, Technology & Research Academy (SASTRA)** in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, India. The prize is named after the famous Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan. The SASTRA Ramanujan Prize includes a cash award of \$10,000 and a citation. The award is presented during an annual international conference at SASTRA University.

Rhea Singha from Gujarat wins Miss Universe India 2024 title

- **Rhea Singha, a 19-year-old model from Gujarat**, was crowned **Miss Universe India 2024 in Jaipur**. She will represent India at the global Miss Universe competition in Mexico. The 19-year-old Gujarati beauty Rhea Singha was recently crowned Miss Universe India 2024. She won the title after defeating 51 candidates, and she has represented India in the next Miss Universe 2024 competition. The judging panel for Miss Universe India 2024, alongside Urvashi Rautela, featured Nikhil Anand, Vietnamese celebrity Nguyen Quynh, fashion photographer Rian Fernandes, and entrepreneur Rajeev Shrivastava.

Odisha swimmer Pratyasa Ray to get Ekalabya Puraskar

- **Emerging swimmer Pratyasa Ray** has been selected for the **32nd Ekalabya Puraskar for 2024** for her achievements in swimming. A proud moment for Odisha’s sporting fraternity. Pratyasa Ray, a promising talent in the field of swimming with a remarkable track record, has been selected for this year’s award in recognition of her exceptional performances.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Tuhin Kanta Pandey appointed Finance Secretary

- The Centre named 1987 batch IAS officer from the Orissa cadre Tuhin Kanta Pandey as the new Finance Secretary, after the incumbent T.V. Somanathan was appointed the Cabinet Secretary by the Cabinet's apex appointment panel.
- Mr. Pandey is currently serving in the Finance Ministry as the Secretary in charge of two key domains — the Departments of Public Enterprises (DPE), and Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). DIPAM is entrusted with the mandate of maximising the value of central government firms and disinvestment of select firms as per the government's policy for public sector enterprises.

Bengal's open water swimmer, Sayani Das became the first Indian woman to cross the Channel

- Bengal's open water swimmer, Sayani Das became the first Indian woman to cross the North Channel. She dived into the North Channel from Donaghadee town in Northern Ireland. She covered 38 km to finally reach her finish point at Portpatrick in Scotland. This was the fifth open water channel swim that Sayani - who aims at completing the Oceans Seven challenge - had conquered so far.

Vir Das becomes the first Indian to host International Emmy Awards

- In a historic first for India, actor-comedian Vir Das has been announced as the host of the upcoming International Emmy Awards. The 2024 International Emmy Awards will take place in New York City.

Mike Pandey wins 2024 Jackson Wild Legacy Award

- Renowned filmmaker and conservationist Mike Pandey has been awarded the 2024 Jackson Wild Legacy Award, one of the most prestigious global honours in wildlife and environmental filmmaking. The award, presented at a ceremony in Maryland, USA, celebrates Pandey's 45 years of impactful storytelling that has raised awareness about crucial wildlife and environmental issues.

Indian Origin lecturer wins the prize for literature in Singapore

- Prasanthi Ram who was an Indian origin lecturer from the University of Nanyang technological University won the Singapore literature prize for English fiction for her short story - 'Nine Yard Sarees' and it was her debut work which was published at the end of year 2023. The short story cycle is about generations of a Tamil Brahmin family dispersed across Singapore, Sydney, New York and Connecticut.

Mohana Singh becomes first woman fighter pilot in LCA Tejas fighter fleet

- Squadron leader Mohana Singh made history after becoming the first woman fighter pilot to join the Indian Air Force's elite 18 'Flying Bullets' squadron, operating India's indigenously 'Made in India' LCA Tejas fighter jet's squadron. Mohana Singh was part of the recent exercise, 'Tarang Shakti' in Jodhpur, where she was part of the historic flight by three vice chiefs of the three forces. Mohana Singh made history in 2016 after she, along with Bhawna Kanth and Avni Chaturvedi, were inducted into the Indian Air Force as the first women fighter pilots.

Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh appointed new IAF chief

- The government announced the appointment of Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh as the next Chief of the Air Staff. Born on October 27, 1964, Air Marshal AP Singh was commissioned into the fighter pilot stream of the IAF in December 1984. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College, the top officer is a Qualified Flying Instructor and an Experimental Test Pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of fixed and rotary wing aircraft. During his service of nearly four decades, he has served in a variety of Command, Staff, Instructional and foreign appointments.

V France's Thierry Breton steps down as European Union Commissioner

- French European Union (EU) Commissioner Thierry Breton resigned from the Bloc's executive body with immediate effect, publishing a picture of his resignation letter to Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Each EU member state will have one seat at the Commission's table, although their political weight and importance varies greatly depending on the portfolio.

Ursula von der Leyen names European Commission's new top team

- **EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen named Spain's Teresa Ribera as the bloc's next antitrust commissioner while Estonia's Kaja Kallas will be in charge of foreign policy.** Lithuania's Andrius Kubilius will be the EU's first defence commissioner - a new role designed to build up European military manufacturing capacity in the face of Russian aggression in Europe's eastern flank. The Commission is the 27-country European Union's most powerful institution. It has the power to propose new EU laws, block mergers between companies and sign free trade deals.

Stalin son Udhayanidhi appointed deputy CM of Tamil Nadu amid cabinet reshuffle

- **Udhayanidhi Stalin, the son of Chief Minister M K Stalin, was elevated to the post of Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.** The decision came along with a cabinet reshuffle, which saw Stalin expanding his cabinet by appointing Dr Govi Chezhiaan as the fourth Dalit minister with the Higher Education portfolio. This decision, announced by Raj Bhavan, marks an important moment in the ongoing leadership consolidation within the ruling DMK.

Chiranjeevi enters Guinness World Records, recognised as most prolific star in Indian film industry

- **Megastar K Chiranjeevi received the Guinness World Records certificate as the most prolific film star in the Indian film industry.** "Mega star Chiranjeevi has performed 24,000 dance moves in 537 songs in his 156 films in a span of 45 years," sources close to the actor said. "22 September also happens to be the day when the mega star made his debut in the year 1978".

Justice KR Shriram sworn in as chief justice of Madras high court

- **Justice Kalpathi Rajendran Shriram was sworn in as the chief justice of the Madras high court.** The oath of office was administered to him by Tamil Nadu governor R N Ravi at the Raj Bhavan in Chennai. He was previously serving as a judge at the Bombay HC where he has been a confirmed judge since March 2016.

TMC's Kirti Azad, Dola Sen set to be nominated as chairpersons of House panels

- **The Trinamool Congress (TMC), which is the fourth largest party in Lok Sabha and third biggest in Rajya Sabha, is set to nominate Kirti Azad and Dola Sen as chairpersons of standing committees.** Azad, a Lok Sabha member, is likely to head the chemical and fertilizers committee and Sen the commerce and industries panel. The party's floor leaders—Sudip Bandopadhyay (Lok Sabha) and Derek O'Brien (Rajya) Sabha—headed two standing committees in the 16th Lok Sabha (the current being the 18th). Bandopadhyay had led the consumer affairs, food and public distribution committee in the 16th Lok Sabha while O'Brien headed the transport, tourism and culture panel. According to an official, Bandopadhyay will remain a member of the co panel.

CAG Murmu assumes charge of chairman of the international audit body

- **Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Girish Chandra Murmu, has assumed chairmanship of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (ASOSAI),** an international body having 48 SAIs as its members. Murmu assumed charge of the 16th Assembly of the ASOSAI, which is going on in the National Capital.
- **The ASOSAI, is an "important" regional group under the umbrella of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), and it was founded in New Delhi in 1979, with only 11 members.** Murmu said that the ASOSAI's focus will be on technology-driven audits, and the audit of local bodies, during India's chair from 2024-2027.
- **"The 16th ASOSAI Assembly symbolizes a renewed commitment to cooperation and capacity-building among SAIs across Asia.** It marks a turning point, with the assembly expected to conclude with the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration, which will lay the roadmap for future collaborations and innovations in public audit practices.

MISCELLANEOUS

International Conference on Spectrum of Literacy Held in New Delhi

- Ahead of the International Literacy day, **School Education and Literacy Secretary, Sanjay Kumar chaired an international conference on Spectrum of Literacy** in New Delhi. The conference aimed at bringing together global and national experts, educators, policymakers, and literacy advocates to explore the diverse and evolving dimensions of literacy in world.
- While addressing the conference, **Mr. Kumar said that the ‘Understanding Lifelong Learning for All Society’ initiative is a framework to bring down the literacy gap between the urban and rural population and between male and females.** Highlighting this year’s theme of Promoting Literacy through multilingualism, he added that one of the central pillars of National Education Policy 2020 is multilingualism.

Prez Murmu Addresses Beneficiaries Of Maha Govt’s ‘Shasan Aplya Dari’ & ‘Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojna’ Schemes

- **President Droupadi Murmu said that the ‘Shasan Aplya Dari’ and ‘Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojna’ are important steps toward building an inclusive and prosperous society and the country.** These schemes of the Government of Maharashtra in Udgir, she expressed her happiness at seeing women in Maharashtra becoming self-reliant through various schemes of the central and state governments.
- The President commended the Maharashtra government for promoting financial literacy, skill development, and livelihood opportunities for women, as well as for its efforts in ensuring transparent and accountable governance by delivering basic services directly to citizens, thus minimising their need to visit government offices. **The President also acknowledged the success of the ‘Lakhpati Didi’ scheme, which has enabled around one crore women across the country to become “Lakhpati Didis,” thereby boosting their self-confidence, awareness, and a renewed sense of empowerment.**

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw holds meeting with President of JETRO Susumu Kataoka

- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw said that he had a productive meeting with **President of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Susumu Kataoka in Tokyo.** Mr Vaishnaw said that the meeting focused on enhancing bilateral trade, investment and economic ties.

Assam government to celebrate August 20 as Sootea Day

- **Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visited Sootea Police Station in Biswanath District, paying tribute to martyrs of the 1942 Quit India Movement.** He announced that **August 20 will be celebrated as Sootea Day and unveiled plans for a heritage monument at the site, allocating Rs. 5 crores for the project.**
- **Sootea has important contribution to the freedom movement of the country. In response to a resolution of hoisting national flag in every police station across the nation on 20 September,** people of Sootea and its adjoining places mobilised themselves by the call of the nation and under the leadership of late Biman Chandra Bora hoisted the national flag at Sootea police station on 20 August 1942.

Shah Rukh Khan tops celebrity taxpayer list at Rs. 92 cr

- **Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has emerged as the top celebrity taxpayer for the fiscal year 2023-24, with an advance tax payment of Rs. 92 crore.** This information is sourced from Fortune India’s latest compilation of celebrity tax payments.
- **Thalapathy Vijay and Others Follow Tamil actor ‘Thalapathy’ Vijay ranks second on the list with an advance tax payment of Rs. 80 crore.** He surpasses other prominent figures such as Salman Khan, who is in third place with Rs. 75 crore, and Amitabh Bachchan, who ranks fourth with Rs. 71 crore.
- In the cricketing world, **Virat Kohli stands out as the highest taxpayer among cricketers, having paid Rs. 66 crore in advance tax.** Other notable cricketers include M S Dhoni, who paid Rs. 38 crore, and Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, who contributed Rs. 28 crore and Rs. 23 crore, respectively.

Five Successful Years of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PM-KMY)

- **Launched on September 12, 2019, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojna (PM-KMY) has been providing social security to all land-holding Small and Marginal Farmers (SMFs) across the country.** This old-age pension scheme is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme.
- Under the initiative, **eligible small and marginal farmers are given a fixed monthly pension of Rs. 3,000 after attaining the age of sixty.** To qualify, farmers contribute monthly to the pension fund during their working years, with matching contributions from the central government.
- Under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojna (PM-KMY), small and marginal farmers can enroll by paying a monthly subscription to the Pension Fund. **Farmers aged between 18 and 40 years need to contribute between Rs. 55 to Rs. 200 per month until they turn 60.**
- **Once they reach the age of 60, enrolled farmers receive a monthly pension of Rs. 3,000,** provided they meet the scheme's exclusion criteria. **The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) manages the pension fund, and beneficiary registration is facilitated through Common Service Centres (CSCs) and State Governments.**
- **All farmers with cultivable land holdings of up to 2 hectares and listed in state/UT land records as of 1st August 2019 are eligible for benefits under the scheme.** As of August 6, 2024, a total of 23.38 lakh farmers have joined the scheme. Under the scheme, Bihar leads with over 3.4 lakh registrations while Jharkhand ranks second with over 2.5 lakh registrations.

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Inaugurates Special Railway Coach Dedicated To Mahatma Gandhi

- **Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat inaugurated a special railway coach dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, New Delhi.** On the occasion, the Minister said, Mahatma Gandhi's life is an inspiration to many and his principle of ahimsa is still relevant in the current geopolitical situation across the world. The unique Railways coach is donated by the Ministry of Railways. The railway coach is enriched with sculptures depicting Gandhi's travels and interactions with fellow travellers, providing visitors with an immersive experience that brings alive Mahatma Gandhi's rail journeys.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojna launched

- **Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojna in an event in New Delhi.** Mr Singh also released Standard Operating Procedure on Production and Processing Clusters in the Fisheries Sector. The event also witnessed the highlighting of national priority projects taken up under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana during the financial year 2024-25.

Cabinet approves health coverage to all senior citizens of the age 70 years and above irrespective of income under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has **approved the health coverage to all the senior citizens aged 70 years and above irrespective of income under the flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).**
- **This aims to benefit approximately 4.5 Crore families with six (6) crore senior citizens with 5 Lakh rupees free health insurance cover on a family basis.** With this approval, all senior citizens of the age 70 years and above irrespective of their socio- economic status would be eligible to avail the benefits of AB PM-JAY. The eligible senior citizens would be issued a new distinct card under AB PM-JAY.
- **The senior citizens of the age 70 years and above belonging to families already covered under AB PM-JAY will get an additional top-up cover upto Rs. 5 lakh per year for themselves** (which they do not have to share with the other members of the family who are below the age of 70 years).
- It has been clarified that senior citizens of 70 years and above who are under private health insurance policies or Employees' State Insurance scheme will be eligible to avail benefits under AB PM-JAY. **AB PM-JAY is the world's largest publicly funded health assurance scheme which provides health cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to 55 crore individuals corresponding to**

12.34 crore families. All members of the eligible families irrespective of age are covered under the scheme. The public has benefited to the extent of over Rs. 1 Lakh crore under the scheme. The expansion of cover to senior citizens of the age of 70 years and above was earlier announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in April 2024.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju Inaugurates 6 Initiatives as Part Of 100-Day Achievements Of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry

- Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju **inaugurated six initiatives as part of the 100-day achievements of the ministry in New Delhi.** The Minister **launched the National e-Vidhan Application 2.0 (NeVA 2.0), Subordinate Legislation Management System, Consultative Committee Management System, National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0, and Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs).**
- According to the Parliamentary Affairs Ministry, **the upgraded version of the National e-Vidhan Application 2.0 (NeVA 2.0) will provide more user-friendly interface and enhanced integration with the legislative processes of State Legislatures.** These initiatives are aimed at achieving a paperless legislative environment, promote real-time governance, and lead to better decision-making. The Minister also launched a new scheme of the National Youth Parliament Competition for students of Eklavya Model Residential Schools. This will strengthen the roots of democracy, and familiarise with the working of Parliament and Parliamentary institutions among the tribal students by organising National Youth Parliament Competitions annually.

Centre to launch rankings for working women's hostels

- **The Centre is all set to launch a ranking system for working women's hostels across the country based on certain parameters, mostly relating to their security.** The move assumes significance amid cases of violence against women, including the rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata which has led to widespread calls for safe working conditions for women.
- **The rankings, to be made available on a website, would be a one-stop portal of all working women hostels in the country.** The move was aimed at ensuring better female work force participation, especially in urban areas. The portal would list and rank all existing hostels run by private players, institutions and Central and State governments in each city across the country.
- **The WCD Ministry has held meetings with the Quality Council of India (QCI) to develop certain parameters based on which the ranking would be done.** The QCI has already sent a proposal, which has been discussed with the State governments as well. Once finalised, the parameters would be sent to State governments, who are then expected to circulate the parameters among the hostels in their territorial jurisdiction.

UAS Dharwad hosted Krishi Mela

- **The 34th Krishi Mela was held in the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad** from September 21 to 24. **This year's theme is 'Agricultural technologies for management of climate change'.** The university expects around 15 lakh visitors to the four-day fair. He will present the best farmer and best farm-women awards. For the first time, UAS will enable farmers to register their names using QR codes. UAS Vice-Chancellor P. L. Patil said that the main objective of this year's Krishi Mela is to provide information on various aspects of climate change to farmers.

Maharashtra to Establish Tribal University in Nashik With 80% Reservation for Tribal Students

- **Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan has said that a Tribal University with 80 percent reservation for students from tribal communities will be set up in Nashik.** The Governor, who is also the Chancellor of all universities in Maharashtra, said that the university will bring social development, adding that top notch infrastructure for imparting IT, engineering and other fields will be made available.

University of Melbourne launches Global Centre in Delhi

- **The University of Melbourne opened its first centre in Delhi to showcase its educational offerings and attract potential students from India among other activities.** The Melbourne Global Centre will facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange across education, research, industry, and the community, serving as the university's central hub in India.

Piyush Goyal launches Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry

- Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said that a decision has been taken to **set up a not-for-profit company under Section 8 of the Companies Act to include all initiatives and bodies of Startup India under one roof.** At present, Startup India is housed in Invest India, the country's national body to promote investments.

Govt hikes PF withdrawal limit to Rs. 1 lakh

- The subscribers of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), **the State-run retirement savings manager, can now withdraw up to Rs. 1 lakh at once for personal financial needs from their accounts, which was earlier capped at Rs. 50,000.** The labour ministry has also introduced several changes in the EPFO's operations, including a new digital architecture, as well as norms to make it more flexible and responsive so that subscribers don't face inconveniences. Employees who are new and have not completed six months in the current job are now also eligible to withdraw amounts, which was earlier prohibited.

SC permits petitions against new criminal laws to be withdrawn

- **The Supreme Court allowed two petitions seeking stay of the three new criminal laws to be withdrawn, noting that petitions challenging constitutionality of a law is a serious issue** that needs to be carefully drafted. A bench headed by justice Surya Kant said, "You need to be very careful as you are challenging the constitutional vires of a provision." The court was hearing two petitions challenging the three laws, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam as being ambiguous and not accurate. One of the petitions was filed by two Delhi residents while the other one was by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BNS) leader Vinod Kumar Boinapally. Senior advocate S Nagamuthu appearing for the latter requested that instead of withdrawal, he could add additional grounds. However, the court asked him to incorporate the same in a fresh petition.

Puducherry Education Dept Starts Music Scheme in Government Schools

- **The Department of Education in Puducherry has taken the initiative to make the students engage in activities of dance and music.** A new scheme is started for the same by the department, involving the students from government schools. The scheme is called Isai Kudil, which aims to familiarise the government schools' students with the activities of dancing and singing, along with their studies. A music institution in Puducherry, the Bharathiar University, prioritises a candidate's skills in dancing, singing and music for admission. **To better equip the students with the skills, the Education Department of the region has initiated the scheme. It is developed to teach the students on the basics of the mentioned arts.** The department has created a musical hut project at the Chinnatha Government Girls Higher Secondary School, in Muthialpet, as part of the scheme.

CM launches A.P. Sand Management System

- **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the A.P. Sand Management System (APSMS) and an online portal thereof.** The system is in pursuit of the Government's Free Sand Policy released where sand is sought to be supplied to consumers by only charging the cost of operations, statutory levies and taxes.
- **The APSMS helps in improving the effectiveness of the above policy by providing end-to-end digital solutions to the consumers, from the booking of sand till its delivery.** The portal facilitates ease of booking sand online and helps streamline the operations through designated delivery slots, issuing of e-permits/way-bills, transportation at minimum cost, and strengthening vigilance mechanisms.

Aamir Khan-Kiran Rao's 'Laapataa Ladies' is India's official entry for Oscars 2025!

- After winning the hearts of the audience through its simple yet poignant story, **'Laapataa Ladies' will now be heading to the Oscars. According to a statement released by the Film Federation of India, the Kiran Rao directorial has been declared as India's official entry to the Oscars 2025.**
- It surged ahead 29 contenders such as 'Animal' and 'Aattam', by Jahnu Barua-led selection committee, to seize the coveted spot. **Helmed by Kiran Rao and produced by her ex-husband, superstar Aamir Khan, 'Laapataa Ladies' is a wholesome tale of mistaken identities set in rural India.** This heartwarming tale revolves around a pair of young brides who switch places by accident. The movie marks the cinematic debut of Pratibha Ranta, Nitanshi Goel etc. The movie was screened at the 48th Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

Upon release, the film bagged rave reviews from critics for its screenplay as well as nuanced performances from the leads.

Delhi government to conduct psychological tests on selected children to identify gifted students

- **Around 6,000 children** have been selected from all government schools in Delhi from classes six and nine based on their academic performances for psychological testing to identify gifted students under “**Project Abhishikt**”. Students who score above 80 per cent in the CFIT test will be further taken for a second round of testing the Intelligence Quotient test. Further, students who pass the IQ test will be transferred to 15 specially designated schools in different districts of Delhi where they will receive specialised theoretical and practical learning. These students will be taught various subjects based on the NCERT curriculum, including English, Hindi, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Domestic Sciences, Social Studies, Computer Science, Physical Education, Sanskrit, and Fine Arts.

Kolkata: 150-year-old tram service to be discontinued

- **The 150-year-old trams system in Kolkata will be discontinued by the West Bengal government.** The West Bengal government has decided to suspend the historic tram services in Kolkata on all routes, **except for one from Esplanade to Maidan.** Trams were first introduced in Kolkata as horse-drawn cars rolled on tracks, on February 24, 1873 by the British.

Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud laid the foundation stone of the Bombay High Court’s new complex in Mumbai’s Bandra East

- **Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud laid the foundation stone of the Bombay High Court’s new complex in Mumbai’s Bandra East.** The Bombay High Court, founded on August 16, 1862, is currently located in a majestic building near Flora Fountain (Hutatma Chowk) that the court has occupied since November 1878. The Bombay High Court exercises jurisdiction over Maharashtra through the Principal Seat in Mumbai and benches at Nagpur and Aurangabad as well as Goa. It also exercises jurisdiction over the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. The High Court has a sanctioned strength of 94 judges, while the current strength being 66 sitting judges.

Centre to launch pilot project on urban poverty alleviation in 25 cities

- **The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) organised a workshop on 23rd September, 2024, on Urban Poverty Alleviation.** During the workshop, deliberations were held on the various aspects of poverty in urban areas, and methods that can be adopted to address the same. **The workshop was attended by 28 States /UTs and the officials of 25 select cities.** Valuable suggestions were given by States/UTs/Cities to help in designing the contours of an upcoming poverty alleviation programme. The pilot is to be launched in 25 diverse cities—including industrial hubs, migrant centres, aspirational districts, and port cities utilizing a Test-Learn-Scale approach. Set to commence from 1st October, 2024, the pilot will span three months, with a preparatory phase of one month to ensure effective implementation.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day for People of African Descent 31 August

- Nations across the globe unite on August 31 on the United Nations International Day for People of African Descent to celebrate their collective ancestry, varied traditions, and significant impact on the world and the worldwide African diaspora. This day also acts as a chance to increase worldwide consciousness about the obstacles of entrenched racism, prejudice, and marginalisation that people of African descent around the globe encounter. As proclaimed by the General Assembly, the theme for the International Decade is “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development.”

World Skyscraper Day

- World Skyscraper Day, celebrated every year on September 3, is a tribute to the breathtaking structures that have transformed the cities. These structures are testaments to human creativity, engineering prowess and an unwavering drive to reach for the skies.

International Day of Charity 5 September

- The International Day of Charity was established with the objective of sensitizing and mobilizing people, NGOs, and stakeholders all around the world to help others through volunteer and philanthropic activities. The date of 5 September was chosen in order to commemorate the anniversary of the passing away of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 “for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitute a threat to peace.”

Teachers’ Day 2024

- The annual celebrations of Teachers’ Day take place on September 5 in India. On the other hand, World Teachers’ Day is celebrated after a month on October 5. Teachers’ Day marks the birth anniversary of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan - the first Vice-President and the second President of India. In India, the birthday of the second president Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, 5 September, is celebrated as Teachers’ Day since 1962. He was a great philosopher and scholar. He was awarded Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in India, in 1954 and honorary membership of the British Royal Order of Merit in 1963. He served as the second president of India from 1962 to 1967. He previously served as the first vice president of India from 1952 to 1962.

International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, 7 September

- The International Day of Clean Air for blue skies is designated by the United Nations General Assembly on 7 September to strengthen international cooperation in improving air quality and reducing air pollution. The resolution was adopted without a vote, generally indicating all countries recognized the importance of the subject, were united on the issue, and no obvious divisions were present. The theme for the 2024 International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies is “Invest in #CleanAirNow”.

World Physiotherapy Day

- World Physiotherapy Day is observed on 8 September to generate awareness about the crucial contribution physiotherapists make to society, enabling people to be mobile, well, and independent. Designated in 1996, World PT Day is promoted by World Physiotherapy. The theme for World Physiotherapy Day 2024 is “Lower Back Pain (LBP)”.

International Day to Protect Education from Attack, 9 September

- The International Day to Protect Education from Attack is an international observance established by a unanimous decision of the United Nations General Assembly in 2020. It is observed on September 9 of each year. The day generates attention to attacks on students, teachers, and education institutions during armed conflict, the use of schools for military purposes, as well as efforts aimed at promoting and protecting the right to education and facilitating the continuation of education in armed conflict, including the Safe Schools Declaration.

- **UNICEF (the UN’s children’s rights agency) and UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) were invited to facilitate the day’s observance.** The resolution proclaiming the Day was presented by Qatar and co-sponsored by 62 countries.
- **The theme for the 2024 International Day to Protect Education from Attack is “When the noise of guns silences education”.** The theme highlights the importance of education as a fundamental human right, and the need to protect education from attack.

International Day of Democracy 15 September

- **The International Day of Democracy is celebrated around the world on 15 September each year. The International Day of Democracy provides an opportunity to review the state of democracy in the world.** Democracy is as much a process as a goal, and only with the full participation of and support by the international community, national governing bodies, civil society and individuals, can the ideal of democracy be made into a reality to be enjoyed by everyone, everywhere.
- **Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** But around the world, there are governments and those wielding power who find many ways to obstruct it. **This year’s theme for the International Day of Democracy is focused on the importance of Artificial Intelligence as a tool for good governance.**

World Ozone Day 2024 celebrated in New Delhi with the theme: “Montreal Protocol - Advancing Climate Actions”

- **International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated on September 16** designed by the United Nations General Assembly. This designation had been made on December 19, 2000, in commemoration of the date, in 1987, on which nations signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.
- **The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change organised an event to mark the 30th World Ozone Day in New Delhi. The theme for World Ozone Day 2024 is “Montreal Protocol: Advancing Climate Actions”** reflecting the Montreal Protocol’s crucial role in both protecting the ozone layer and driving broader climate action initiatives globally. World Ozone Day reminds us that the ozone layer is essential for life on Earth and highlights the need for ongoing climate action to protect it for future generations.

International Day of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South

- On January 9, 2024, **the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution officially proclaiming September 16 as the International Day of Science, Technology, and Innovation for the South.** The resolution underscores the importance of leveraging scientific and technological achievements for sustainable development, aligning with the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the SDGs.

World Patient Safety Day

- **World Patient Safety Day calls for global solidarity and concerted action by all countries and international partners to improve patient safety.** The Day brings together patients, families, caregivers, communities, health workers, health care leaders and policy-makers to show their commitment to patient safety. The resolution WHA 72.6 ‘Global action on patient safety’ recognizes patient safety as a global health priority and **endorses the establishment of World Patient Safety Day to be observed annually on 17 September.**
- **The theme for World Patient Safety Day 2024 is “Improving Diagnosis for Patient Safety”** emphasising the vital role of accurate and timely diagnosis in safeguarding patients and improving healthcare outcomes.

International Equal Pay Day 18 September

- **To mark World Equal Pay Day on 18 September,** the International Federation of Journalists and the Media Diversity Institute call on governments to implement legislation closing the gender pay gap in journalism and for the media industry to adopt concrete policies to eradicate wage discrimination. **The theme for International Equal Pay Day 2024 is “Need to Eliminate Wage Discrimination”.** The day is observed on September 18, 2024.

World Bamboo Day

- **World Bamboo Day is celebrated globally on September 18 to raise awareness about bamboo.** This day highlights bamboo's numerous medicinal and practical uses, and the World Bamboo Organisation (WBO) has taken steps to promote its conservation, sustainable use, and the protection of our environment. **World Bamboo Day was established on September 18, 2009, during the eighth World Bamboo Congress in Bangkok, with unanimous support from delegates representing nearly 100 countries. The theme for World Bamboo Day 2024 is “Next Generation Bamboo: Solution, Innovation, and Design”.**

World Cleanup Day 20 September

- **The theme of the inaugural event, taking place on 20 September in the city of Tromsø, Norway, is “Arctic Cities and Marine Litter”.** This year's World Cleanup Day took place on 20 September, 2024, in its first year as an International Day on the United Nations Calendar!

International Day of Peace 21 September

- **Every year, the United Nations (UN) marks the International Day of Peace on 21 September.** It was first declared 43 years ago as a shared date for the world to build a culture of peace. **The theme for the 2024 International Day of Peace is “Cultivating a Culture of Peace”.** The United Nations announced the theme to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace by the United Nations General Assembly in 2024.

World Rhino Day

- **World Rhino Day, celebrated on September 22, is a global event dedicated to raising awareness and promoting the conservation of rhinoceros species.** In India, the one-horned rhinoceros, or Indian rhino, holds a special place in wildlife heritage, and the country is home to several national parks where you can witness these majestic creatures in their natural habitat. **The organization uses the general theme “Keep the Five Alive.”**

International Day of Sign Languages 23 September

- **The UN General Assembly has proclaimed 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages** in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language. **The theme for the 2024 International Day of Sign Languages is “Sign up for Sign Language Rights”.** The theme highlights the importance of advocating for the legal protection and recognition of national sign languages.

World Rivers Day

- **World Rivers Day is a day of celebration held on the fourth Sunday of September** to highlight the importance of our rivers and promotes active participation to ensure our waterways are protected worldwide. **The theme for World Rivers Day 2024 is “Waterways of Life”.** The theme highlights the importance of rivers to the environment, wildlife, agriculture, and communities.

International Red Panda Day

- **International Red Panda Day is celebrated on the third Saturday in September — September 21 this year — to spread awareness regarding yet another species that is near extinction.** Red Pandas are adorable creatures that reside in the Eastern Himalayas region of the world. This includes places like China, Nepal, and Bhutan. Like hundreds of other animals on Earth, this species also faces a threat of extinction soon.

World Maritime Day 26 September

- **The World Maritime Day 2024 takes place on 26 September 2024. This year's World Maritime Day theme is “Navigating the future: safety first!”.** This year's theme reflects the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) work to enhance maritime safety and security, in tandem with the protection of the marine environment, whilst ensuring its regulatory development process safely anticipates the fast pace of technological change and innovation.

Ministry of Tourism celebrated World Tourism Day with the theme ‘Tourism and Peace’

- **Ministry of Tourism celebrated the World Tourism Day-2024 on 27th September, with the theme ‘Tourism and Peace’**, highlighting the crucial role of tourism in fostering development and global harmony. The celebration program will be organized at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.
- With the aim of using tourism as a major means for sustainable development and especially poverty alleviation, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) decided to celebrate World Tourism Day on 27th September every year. World Tourism Day was celebrated for the first time in 1980. The date marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Organization’s Statutes in 1970, which paved the way for the establishment of United Nations Tourism, five years later. Every year World Tourism Day is celebrated with a special theme. **This year’s theme is “Tourism and Peace”.**

International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction 29 September

- **The International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction is celebrated on September 29th to raise awareness and promote action to reduce food loss and waste.** The day is co-convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).



QUESTIONS

- Every year on _____, the world comes together through the UN International Day for People of African Descent to honor the shared heritage, diverse culture, and profound influence of Africans.
(a) August 26 (b) August 29
(c) August 31 (d) September 4
- Recently, India's first Integrated Aqua Park (IAP) inaugurated in _____.
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Nagaland (c) Sikkim (d) West Bengal
- Which of the following countries recently launched world's first steady-state fusion reactor?
(a) Japan (b) India (c) South Korea (d) Canada
- Which of the following teams recently clinched the 133rd Indian Oil Durand Cup?
(a) Northeast United (b) Mohun Bagan (c) Downtown Heroes (d) Indian Air Force
- What central symbols are featured on the newly unveiled flag of the Supreme Court of India?
(a) Ashoka Chakra, the Parliament building, and the National Flag
(b) Ashoka Chakra, the Supreme Court building, and the Constitution of India
(c) Ashoka Chakra, the India Gate, and the Supreme Court building
(d) Ashoka Chakra, the National Flag, and the Parliament building
- What status was recently granted to the Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI)?
(a) Mini Ratna (b) Navratna (c) Maharatna (d) Mini Ratna II
- Recently, Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw unveiled India's first Vande Bharat Sleeper trainset at BEML Complex in _____.
(a) Bengaluru (b) New Delhi (c) Bhopal (d) Guwahati
- According to the 2024 Hurun India Rich List, which of the following cities has emerged as the "billionaire capital of Asia"?
(a) Beijing (b) Tokyo (c) Mumbai (d) Singapore
- Recently, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated the state-of-the-art sports academy, sports complex, and Sports University on the occasion of National Sports Day at _____.
(a) Rajgir (b) Vaishali (c) Darbhanga (d) Buxar
- Recently, the world's first professional multimodal large language model (LLM) for lunar science has been released in _____.
(a) China (b) USA (c) France (d) Germany
- World Skyscraper Day, celebrated every year on _____, is a tribute to the breathtaking structures that have transformed the cities.
(a) August 29 (b) August 31 (c) September 3 (d) September 7
- Recently, India's Nitesh Kumar clinched his maiden gold medal at the Paralympics, defeating Great Britain's Daniel Bethell in a gripping men's singles SL3 _____ in Paris.
(a) Table Tennis Final (b) Badminton Final
(c) Lawn Tennis Final (d) Chess Final
- Recently, Renowned film director and co-founder of Studio Ghibli, Hayao Miyazaki of _____ has been awarded the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for 2024.
(a) South Korea (b) Thailand (c) Vietnam (d) Japan

14. Which of the following companies is a joint venture partner in Vistara along with Tata Group?
(a) Emirates (b) Qatar Airways (c) Singapore Airlines (d) Lufthansa
15. Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved a _____ rail line project between Mumbai and Indore at a total cost of ₹18,036 crore.
(a) 233-km (b) 267-km (c) 309-km (d) 365-km
16. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme was launched in year _____ for creation of Post-harvest Management infrastructure and Community farming assets.
(a) 2014 (b) 2017 (c) 2019 (d) 2020
17. The 2024 bilateral naval 'Exercise Varuna' takes place between _____.
(a) India and Germany (b) India and France (c) India and USA (d) India and Canada
18. Where is the Enerpoly Production Innovation Center (EPIC) facility, the world's first zinc-ion battery mega factory, located?
(a) Germany (b) Sweden (c) Canada (d) South Korea
19. Which of the following states recently signed a pact with Google to skill two million youngsters in the state in AI under the state government's skill development programme "Naan Mudhalvan"?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
20. Which of the following space agencies recently cut the number of astronauts in the next crew to make space on the return trip for the two astronauts – Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore?
(a) NASA (b) ESA (c) JAXA (d) ISRO
21. What is India's rank in the 2023 edition of the Global Innovation Index (GII) published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)?
(a) 50th (b) 30th (c) 40th (d) 60th
22. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to travel to _____.
(a) New Zealand (b) Brunei (c) Panama (d) Suriname
23. Recently, Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi has officially inaugurated the _____ Abu Dhabi campus.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (b) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Madras (d) Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur
24. President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Vishwashanti Buddha Vihara in _____.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh
25. What is the revised growth forecast for the Indian economy by the World Bank for the current fiscal year?
(a) 6.6% (b) 6.8% (c) 7.0% (d) 7.2%
26. Which of the following states recently announced that August 20 will be celebrated as Soota Day?
(a) Assam (b) Tripura (c) Meghalaya (d) Uttar Pradesh
27. Which of the following states in India, in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), has introduced 24-hour grain dispensing machines called 'Annapurta' to boost food security?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Odisha (c) Karnataka (d) Gujarat
28. Who among the following defended his gold medal in the Javelin event at the Paris Paralympics 2024 with a new record throw of 70.59 meters?
(a) Nitesh Kumar (b) Suhas Yathiraj (c) Sumit Antil (d) Lucas Mazur

29. During his visit to Brunei, which significant landmark did Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit?
(a) Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah Mosque
(b) Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque
(c) Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Bridge
(d) Sultan Mohammad Bin Salman Brunei Museum
30. Which of the following countries have reached a significant milestone with the adoption of a comprehensive framework focusing on climate action and sustainable development?
(a) ASEAN (b) BRICS (c) G20 (d) SAARC
31. Recently, the Union Government set up the _____ Law Commission for a period of three years to identify laws that have become obsolete and can be repealed.
(a) 21st (b) 23rd (c) 25th (d) 27th
32. Recently, Indian Army launched the first phase of Project _____.
(a) PAHUCH (b) PRAMAAN (c) NAMAN (d) PRANAM
33. Which of the following NATO members has recently applied for membership in the BRICS bloc of developing economies in 2024?
(a) France (b) Turkiye (c) Canada (d) Italy
34. Which of the following companies recently won a bid under the Indian government's incentives program for supporting EV battery production?
(a) Amara Raja Energy and Mobility (b) JSW Energy
(c) Tata Motors (d) Reliance Industries
35. Which of the following companies recently launched India's first 500 Momentum 50 Index fund?
(a) Motilal Oswal (b) Suzlon Energy (c) Adani Industries (d) Reliance Industries Limited
36. The International Day of Charity is an international day observed annually on _____.
(a) 1 September (b) 3 September (c) 5 September (d) 8 September
37. What is the significance of the recently discovered 'Polar Wind' energy field according to NASA?
(a) It pulls Earth's atmosphere towards space.
(b) It plays a role in countering gravity and lifting the skies up.
(c) It strengthens the Earth's magnetic field.
(d) It reduces the impact of solar radiation on Earth's surface.
38. Which of the following signed a pact with the General Court of Audit of Saudi Arabia to strengthen cooperation in public sector auditing?
(a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) (b) Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)
(c) Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) (d) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
39. Which of the following cities of Rajasthan was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019, will now be taken up for redevelopment with a budgetary expenditure of Rs.100 crore?
(a) Ajmer (b) Jaipur (c) Udaipur (d) Alwar
40. Which of the following developed countries did **NOT** contribute their fair share of international climate finance in 2022?
(a) Norway (b) Germany (c) United States (d) Japan
41. Which of the following states became the first in India to introduce amendments to Central laws, 'Aparajita' bill in 2024 dealing with offences of rape, gang-rape, and sexual assault?
(a) Maharashtra (b) West Bengal (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Uttar Pradesh

42. Who among the following has French President Emmanuel Macron recently appointed as the new Prime Minister after an inconclusive snap election in early July?
(a) Jean-Luc Mélenchon (b) Michel Barnier (c) Marine Le Pen (d) Édouard Philippe
43. Recently, Indian President addressed beneficiaries of _____ Govt's 'Shasan Aplya Dari' & 'Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojna' Schemes.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Karnataka
44. Recently, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the two-day first International Solar Festival through video conferencing, being held in _____.
(a) Pune (b) New Delhi (c) Bharuch (d) Panaji
45. Who among the following emerged as the top celebrity taxpayer for the fiscal year 2023-24 according to Fortune India's latest compilation of celebrity tax payments?
(a) Amitabh Bachchan (b) Salman Khan (c) Shah Rukh Khan (d) Thalapathy Vijay
46. Name India's Union Minister who recently secured a coveted spot on TIME magazine's "Most Influential People in AI 2024".
(a) Ashwini Vaishnaw (b) Nirmala Sitharaman
(c) Amit Shah (d) Jagat Prakash Nadda
47. World Teachers' Day is an international day held annually on _____ to celebrate the work of teachers.
(a) 25 September (b) 29 September (c) 2 October (d) 5 October
48. Who among the following won the silver medal in the men's shot put (F46) event at the Paris Paralympics with an Asian record throw of 16.32m?
(a) Devendra Jhajharia (b) Mariyappan Thangavelu
(c) Sachin Sarjerao Khilari (d) Varun Bhati
49. Which of the following Indian cities hosted a two-day Global Artificial Intelligence Summit-2024-themed "Making AI Work for Everyone"?
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Mumbai (d) Gandhinagar
50. Recently, Under the aegis of National One Health Mission (NOHM), a comprehensive national mock drill, "Vishanu Yuddh Abhyas" (Virus War Exercise), was conducted in _____ to assess pandemic preparedness.
(a) Udaipur (b) Darjeeling (c) Ajmer (d) Varanasi
51. The _____ is a mysterious area located around Anchorage, Juneau, and Utqiagvik, has been the site of over 20,000 disappearances since the 1970s.
(a) Bermuda Triangle (b) Pacific Triangle
(c) Alaska Triangle (d) Unique Triangle
52. The International Day of Clean Air for blue skies is designated by the United Nations General Assembly on _____ to strengthen international cooperation in improving air quality and reducing air pollution.
(a) 2 September (b) 5 September (c) 7 September (d) 10 September
53. Where is India's first silicon carbide manufacturing facility being set up by RIR Power Electronics Limited?
(a) Karnataka (b) Maharashtra (c) Odisha (d) Gujarat
54. Recently, Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh launched the 'VisioNxt Fashion Forecasting Initiative' of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), a bilingual web portal and the India-specific Fashion Trend Book _____.
(a) 'Bharat 24x25' (b) 'Paridhi 24x25' (c) 'Kaustubh 24x25' (d) 'Nidhi 24x25'

55. Where is the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant located?
(a) Dubai, UAE (b) Abu Dhabi, UAE (c) Sharjah, UAE (d) Fujairah, UAE
56. Which of the following international organisations spearheaded the development of the first legally binding AI treaty?
(a) United Nations (b) European Union (c) Council of Europe (d) NATO
57. What significant development did Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently announced regarding India's cultural presence in Singapore?
(a) Establishment of a university
(b) Opening of the first Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centre
(c) Launch of a new trade corridor
(d) Creation of a digital knowledge hub
58. Recently, India and the _____ held a fresh round of “productive” defence dialogue with a focus on the situation in the Indian Ocean and ways to expedite implementation of ongoing defence projects.
(a) Maldives (b) Mauritius (c) Sri Lanka (d) Seychelles
59. Which of the following states was ranked the top performer under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for promoting ease of doing business?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Gujarat (c) Kerala (d) Rajasthan
60. Which European Union (EU) initiative did Malta join to help reduce the spread of Mpox in Africa?
(a) European Vaccination Program (b) Team Europe
(c) Africa-Europe Health Coalition (d) EU Public Health Alliance
61. Which of the following states / union territories is likely to introduce specialised classrooms Known as ‘Abhishikt’ for students in 15 of its schools following the mid-term exams?
(a) Delhi (b) Puducherry
(c) Goa (d) Madhya Pradesh
62. Who among the following has been named as the new Finance Secretary of India, succeeding T.V. Somanathan?
(a) Vipul R Gupta (b) Tuhin Kanta Pandey
(c) Sanjeev C Subramaniam (d) Ajay Bhushan Pandey
63. Who among the following recently became the first footballer to score 900 career goals?
(a) Lionel Messi (b) Neymar Jr
(c) Cristiano Ronaldo (d) Kylian Mbappé
64. Which of the following planets is known as the “Red Planet”?
(a) Venus (b) Mars (c) Jupiter (d) Saturn
65. Which of the following agreements was signed between India and the UAE in July 2023 to promote cross-border transactions using local currencies?
(a) Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)
(b) Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
(c) Local Currency Settlement (LCS) System
(d) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Agreement
66. What is the purpose of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO)?
(a) To manage petroleum and liquor trading in Andaman and Nicobar
(b) To commercially exploit natural resources for balanced and environment-friendly development
(c) To promote tourism exclusively in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands
(d) To develop only fisheries infrastructure in the Andaman Islands

67. Which of the following constellations marked the vernal equinox around 4500 B.C., according to astronomers analyzing the Rig Veda's records of astronomical events?
(a) Pisces (b) Orion (c) Pleiades (d) Taurus
68. Who of the following became the first Indian judo player to win a Paralympic medal in judo at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games?
(a) Sushil Kumar (b) Kapil Parmar (c) Vikas Kumar (d) Deepak Kalra
69. The Hangul is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer endemic to _____.
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Jammu and Kashmir (d) Sikkim
70. According to a new study by the University of Leeds, _____ is the biggest contributor to plastic pollution in world.
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) Brazil
71. Who among the following recently won the women's singles tennis title at the 2024 US Open?
(a) Aryna Sabalenka (b) Jessica Pegula (c) Emma Navarro (d) Coco Gauff
72. Who among the following chairs the newly established 22-member advisory committee set up by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to streamline listing obligations and disclosures?
(a) NK Dua (b) Keki Mistry (c) R Gandhi (d) Mahesh Kumar Jain
73. Recently, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched _____, a series of blockchain-based solutions, aimed at enhancing transparency, security, and efficiency in digital service delivery
(a) Vishvasya-Blockchain Technology Stack (b) Visakha-Blockchain Technology Stack
(c) Viplav-Blockchain Technology Stack (d) Vibhuti-Blockchain Technology Stack
74. Recently, which of the following states launched the "Samrudha Krushak Yojana" for farmers?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha
(c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Rajasthan
75. Recently, India's first study on 'teal carbon' is undertaken at _____.
(a) Kanha National Park (b) Jim Corbett National Park
(c) Gir National Park (d) Keoladeo National Park
76. Indian Prime Minister will attend the Quad Summit 2024 in _____.
(a) Michigan (b) Melbourne (c) Alaska (d) Delaware
77. Which of the following companies form the consortium awarded the Rs. 164 crore bio-hydrogen project?
(a) Gensol Engineering and Matrix Gas & Renewables
(b) Gensol Engineering and Esson Power
(c) Matrix Gas & Renewables and Westinghouse World
(d) Gensol Engineering and Tata Power
78. Who is "Paetongtarn Shinawatra"?
(a) Former Prime Minister of Vietnam (b) Thailand's youngest Prime Minister
(c) The youngest President of Singapore (d) The Queen of Japan
79. Name the renowned filmmaker and conservationist who has been recently awarded the 2024 Jackson Wild Legacy Award, one of the most prestigious global honours in wildlife and environmental filmmaking.
(a) Mike Pandey (b) Peter Mishra (c) Jackie Rana (d) Aneesh Kukreza
80. Recently, Abdelmajid Tebboune has been named the victor in the presidential election of _____.
(a) Algeria (b) Nigeria (c) Chad (d) Namibia

81. Which of the following countries has recently become the first Baltic state to be a full member of CERN, joining as the 24th member?
(a) Latvia (b) Lithuania (c) Sweden (d) Estonia
82. Which of the following organizations is working with the WCD Ministry to develop the parameters for ranking working women's hostels in India?
(a) National Commission for Women (NCW) (b) Quality Council of India (QCI)
(c) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) (d) Indian National Congress (INC)
83. Who among the following was the head of the Standing Committee on Statistics (SCoS) before its dissolution when members question census delay?
(a) Geeta Singh Rathore (b) Pronab Sen
(c) Mahesh Nagarath (d) Dr. Deepanshu Chandra
84. Which of the following military exercises involves the Indian Air Force along with aircraft from eight countries and 17 nations as observers, scheduled to be held in Jodhpur?
(a) Yudh Abhyas (b) Malabar Exercise (c) Tarang Shakti (d) Indra
85. Which of the following organizations has Union Bank of India decided to become a signatory to in order to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions from its business operations?
(a) Green Climate Fund (GCF)
(b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
(c) Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF)
(d) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
86. Who is predicted to become the world's first trillionaire by 2027?
(a) Bill Gates (b) Elon Musk
(c) Jeff Bezos (d) Gautam Adani
87. Who has recently created the country's first Android-Based Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) ATM in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)?
(a) Union Payment Services (b) Indian Payment Services
(c) Bharat Payment Services (d) Hitachi Payment Services
88. What is the key difference between a nuclear clock and an atomic clock?
(a) The nuclear clock is based on sun dials.
(b) The nuclear clock is more precise than the atomic clock.
(c) The nuclear clock relies on digital mechanisms.
(d) The atomic clock is less accurate than a sundial.
89. Who among the following recently became the first Indian to be elected as the president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)?
(a) Manish Gupta (b) Deepanshu Jha
(c) Randhir Singh (d) Biplav Saha
80. When is the International Day to Protect Education from Attack observed each year?
(a) June 5 (b) September 9 (c) November 20 (d) December 10
91. Which of the following countries recently became the 101st full member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Bhutan (c) Nepal (d) Bangladesh
92. Recently, Indian Navy launched two anti-submarine warfare (ASW) shallow water crafts, named _____, at Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL) in Kochi.
(a) Mashu and Maksh (b) Meena and Malu (c) Malpe and Mulki (d) Mani and Malku

93. Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated SEMICON India 2024 in _____.
(a) Vijaywada (b) Guntur (c) Greater Noida (d) Vadodara
94. The Second International Buddhist Media Conclave organised in _____ on 11th September.
(a) Delhi (b) Kolkata (c) Mumbai (d) Hyderabad
95. Which of the following has become the first Indian airline to roll out the New Distribution Capability (NDC), a technology that simplifies booking flights?
(a) Vistara (b) Go Air (c) Indigo (d) Air India
96. The Line, a pair of mirror-clad towers expected to eventually span the length of about 105 miles are being built in _____.
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Canada (c) USA (d) Singapore
97. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has green-lighted the world's first melanistic tiger safari near _____.
(a) Kanha Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh (b) Melghat Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra
(c) Similipal Tiger Reserve of Odisha (d) Palamau Tiger Reserve of Jharkhand
98. Recently, Yannik Sinner made history by becoming the first man from which country to win the US Open title?
(a) Spain (b) Italy (c) Switzerland (d) France
99. How many medals did the Indian contingent secure, and what was their rank in the medal tally at Paris Paralympics 2024?
(a) 25 medals; 12th position (b) 29 medals; 18th position
(c) 22 medals; 19th position (d) 30 medals; 23rd position
100. Which of the following states has the highest number of registrations under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojna (PM-KMY) as of August 2024?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Jharkhand (c) Bihar (d) Punjab
101. Who has been requested to inaugurate the International Cooperative Alliance General Assembly and global conference in India in November 2024?
(a) President of India (b) Prime Minister of India
(c) Minister of Agriculture (d) Chief Justice of India
102. Which of the following cities will host the first Greenfield 'Global MedTech University' in India?
(a) Hyderabad (b) Bangalore (c) Visakhapatnam (d) Chennai
103. Who among the following launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojna in India?
(a) Ashwini Vaishnav (b) Rajiv Ranjan Singh
(c) Mansukh Mandaviya (d) Amit Shah
104. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the delimitation commission in Madhya Pradesh?
(a) The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh
(b) The Governor of Madhya Pradesh
(c) Retired Additional Chief Secretary Manoj Shrivastava
(d) The Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Vipul Gupta
105. Name the largest naval drill in decades, which was launched by Russia involving all 5 fleets.
(a) Russia 2024 (b) Asia 2024 (c) Ocean 2024 (d) Sea 24
106. Gravita Netherlands BV will acquire a Waste Tyre Recycling plant in Europe in _____.
(a) France (b) Germany (c) Romania (d) Netherlands

107. Which of the following two entities recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for civil nuclear cooperation between India and the UAE?
(a) Department of Atomic Energy, India & UAE Nuclear Authority
(b) Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) & Emirates Nuclear Energy Company (ENEC)
(c) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) & UAE Space Agency
(d) Ministry of External Affairs, India & UAE Ministry of Energy
108. Which of the following countries was the deadliest for environmentalists and land rights defenders in 2023, with a record 79 people killed according to UK advocacy group Global Witness?
(a) Brazil (b) Colombia (c) Mexico (d) Indonesia
109. Which of the following countries won its first Intercontinental Cup recently at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium in Hyderabad by defeating India 3-0?
(a) India (b) Syria (c) Nepal (d) Iraq
110. Who among the following recently inaugurated the special railway coach dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, New Delhi?
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
(c) Ashwini Vaishnav (d) Rajnath Singh
111. Under the new GNSS-based toll collection system, how much distance can a vehicle travel on a national highway each day without being charged a toll?
(a) 10 kilometres (b) 15 kilometres (c) 20 kilometres (d) 25 kilometres
112. Recently, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved _____ with an outlay of Rs.2,000 crore over two years.
(a) Mission Bharat (b) Mission Indradhanush (c) Mission Sansar (d) Mission Mausam
113. Which of the following was **NOT** one of the initiatives launched by the Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju as part of the 100-day achievements of the ministry?
(a) National e-Vidhan Application 2.0 (NeVA 2.0)
(b) Consultative Committee Management System (CCMA)
(c) National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0 (NYPS2)
(d) Digital Voting System for General Elections (DVSGN)
114. Who is the Chairman of the Governing Body of Gujarat State Institution for Transformation (GRIT)?
(a) The Finance Minister (b) The Agriculture Minister
(c) The Chief Minister (d) The Education Minister
115. Recently, Essar Energy Transition (EET) Hydrogen and UK's leading clean energy company SSE have begun work to develop a new green hydrogen production facility in _____.
(a) England (b) Russia (c) Canada (d) Germany
116. Which of the following Indian airports has been ranked 24th in the OAG's latest list of top 25 megahub airports globally?
(a) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA)
(b) Kempegowda International Airport (KIA)
(c) Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA)
(d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA)
117. What is the key objective of SpaceX's Polaris Dawn mission?
(a) To land on the Moon
(b) To conduct the first spacewalk by non-professional astronauts
(c) To establish a colony on Mars
(d) To dock with the International Space Station

118. Who among the following recently became India's youngest Paralympic medallist at the age of 17 at the Paris Summer Paralympics 2024?
(a) Shri Rakesh Kumar (b) Shri Rajiv Kumar (c) Ms. Sheetal Devi (d) Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu
119. Who has been announced as the host of the upcoming 2024 International Emmy Awards, marking a historic first for India?
(a) Priyanka Chopra (b) Vir Das (c) Ayushmaan Khurana (d) Deepika Padukone
120. Under the recently approved expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), what is the amount of free health insurance coverage provided specifically to senior citizens aged 70 years and above?
(a) ₹3 lakh per family per year (b) ₹4 lakh per individual per year
(c) ₹5 lakh per family per year (d) ₹7 lakh per family per year
121. Two Indian Navy women officers – Lt Cdr Roopa A and Lt Cdr Dilna K would be embarking on the extraordinary expedition of circumnavigating the globe - Navika Sagar Parikrama II onboard _____ very shortly.
(a) INSV Kapila (b) INSV Taruna
(c) INSV Tarangini (d) INSV Tarini
122. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the country's first 'Vande Metro' service in _____.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Bihar
123. The Union environment ministry has granted in-principle approval to divert around 4.50 hectares of forest land in _____, home to the endangered hoolock gibbon, for oil and gas exploration by a Vedanta Group company.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Himachal Pradesh
(c) Assam (d) Karnataka
124. The BRICS Literature Forum 2024 commenced in _____.
(a) Brasilia, Brazil (b) Beijing, China
(c) Kazan, Russia (d) Bengaluru, Karnataka
125. India will set up two operational Mega shipbuilding parks by year _____.
(a) 2025 (b) 2026 (c) 2028 (d) 2030
126. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the preliminary automotive trials of the Indian light Tank, _____ a highly versatile platform capable of deployment in high-altitude areas.
(a) Zareena (b) Uday (c) Zorawar (d) Utkarsh
127. Name Indian Boxer who recently became the first-ever Asian Schoolgirl Champion in Al Ain, UAE.
(a) Deepali Thapa (b) Meenakshi Jha
(c) Kartika Gupta (d) Mridula Kumari
128. The 45th FIDE Chess Olympiad started in _____.
(a) London (b) Brussels (c) Budapest (d) Calgary
129. The 34th Krishi Mela will be held in the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in _____.
(a) Dharwad (b) Kota (c) Gwalior (d) Bhopal
130. The United Nations General Assembly resolved to observe _____ as the International Day of Democracy.
(a) 8th September (b) 12th September (c) 15th September (d) 18th September
131. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has increased the transaction limit for three types of payments using UPI to _____ for convenience.
(a) ₹2 lakh (b) ₹4 lakh (c) ₹5 lakh (d) ₹7 lakh

132. Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that the Indian government has decided to rename the island of Port Blair as _____.
- (a) 'Shri Vijayapuram' (b) 'Shri Vinayakpuram'
(c) 'Shri Rangapuram' (d) 'Shri Bharatpur'
133. The government is planning to introduce the _____ initiative aimed at recognising cities that consistently excel in various development indicators.
- (a) 'Diamond City Club' (b) 'Silver City Club'
(c) 'Golden City Club' (d) 'Bharat City Club'
134. As part of Exercise _____, India's largest multinational air exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational coordination among Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs), the Indian Air Force (IAF) organized a multinational symposium on 'Air Domain Awareness' at Jodhpur.
- (a) Bharat Shakti (b) Union Friendship
(c) Tarang Shakti (d) Vishwashakti
135. Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare participated in the G20 Agriculture Ministerial Meeting held in _____ on 12th-14th September 2024.
- (a) Moscow, Russia (b) Durban, South Africa
(c) Cuiaba, Brazil (d) Hyderabad, India
136. Which of the following country's judicial reform overhauling the country's courts, which will allow voters to elect judges, officially took effect after the text of the constitutional changes?
- (a) Mexico (b) Argentina (c) Brazil (d) Peru
137. Recently, A massive asteroid, known as 99942 Apophis or the _____, has had its trajectory reevaluated; sparking concerns it may be on a collision course with Earth.
- (a) 'God of Beauty' (b) 'God of Purity' (c) 'God of Chaos' (d) 'God of Unity'
138. A state-of-the-art submarine escape training facility, named _____ was commissioned at INS Satavahana in Visakhapatnam.
- (a) "Vinashak" (b) "Vibhuti" (c) "Vinetra" (d) "Vighnaharta"
139. Recently, Neeraj Chopra finished _____ in the Diamond League final with a best throw of 87.86 metres at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels, Belgium
- (a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fourth
140. International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated on _____ designed by the United Nations General Assembly.
- (a) September 11 (b) September 13 (c) September 16 (d) September 18
141. Recently, India launched _____ to send urgent supplies to Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar – the countries devastated by Typhoon Yagi that has claimed more than 200 lives so far.
- (a) Operation Sahyog (b) Operation Sadbhav
(c) Operation Sahayata (d) Operation Mitra
142. Which of the following states/union territory has taken the initiative "Isai Kudil", which aims to familiarise the government schools' students with the activities of dancing and singing, along with their studies?
- (a) Puducherry (b) Lakshadweep
(c) Odisha (d) Tamil Nadu
143. Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal launched _____, an interactive online platform to further boost world's third largest startup ecosystem.
- (a) BHASKAR (b) UDAYA (c) SURYA (d) SHAURYA

144. Name the first city in the world to ban advertisements promoting fossil fuel products and carbon-intensive services including cruise ships and air travel.
(a) The Hague (b) Helsinki (c) Brussels (d) Stockholm
145. India has sent its contingent for the ongoing India-Oman Joint Military _____ which is scheduled to be conducted from 13th to 26th September 2024 at the Rabkoot Training Area in Salalah, Oman.
(a) Exercise Al Hind (b) Exercise Al Noor
(c) Exercise Al Najah (d) Exercise Al Nigeban
146. The Union Cabinet approved a new scheme called _____ for the promotion of electric vehicles (EV) in India, replacing an earlier flagship scheme.
(a) PM E-SELF (b) PM E-SERV (c) PM E-NATURE (d) PM E-DRIVE
147. Which of the following countries successfully launched its Chamran-1 research satellite into orbit utilising the Qaem-100 rocket developed by the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard?
(a) Iran (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Iraq (d) Malaysia
148. Recently, Researchers at the _____ have developed a brain-inspired analog computing platform capable of storing and processing data in an astonishing 16,500 conductance states within a molecular film.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
(b) Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
149. Who among the following recently won the Azerbaijan Grand Prix Formula One motor racing event?
(a) Valtteri Bottas (b) Oscar Piastri (c) Sergio Pérez (d) Max Verstappen
150. Recently, Pakistan's _____ became the first woman to be nominated for the ICC International Panel of development umpires.
(a) Nida Daar (b) Saleema Imtiaz (c) Salima Farooqi (d) Benazir Akhtar
151. Which of the following Indian cities has become the first mega metropolitan city to be covered by a short-range polarimetric radar network?
(a) New Delhi (b) Chennai (c) Kolkata (d) Mumbai
152. What is the primary characteristic that allows the asteroid 2024 PT5 to be called a “mini-moon”?
(a) It will crash into Earth.
(b) It will orbit Earth indefinitely.
(c) It will be captured by Earth's gravity for a singular orbit.
(d) It will burn upon entering Earth's atmosphere.
153. At the World Skills 2024 in Lyon, France, how many medals did India win in total?
(a) 12 (b) 16 (c) 22 (d) 26
154. What is the minimum annual contribution required for parents to invest in NPS Vatsalya for their child?
(a) Rs. 500 (b) Rs. 1,000 (c) Rs. 5,000 (d) Rs. 10,000
155. World Patient Safety Day is observed annually on _____.
(a) 13 September (b) 15 September (c) 17 September (d) 19 September
156. India recently successfully test-fired the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VLSRSAM) from which location?
(a) Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh (b) Wheeler Island, Odisha
(c) Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur (d) Pokhran Test Range, Gujarat

157. Which of the following companies has been recently selected by Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to develop its NextGen digital platform?
(a) Infosys (b) Tech Mahindra (c) TCS (d) HCL
158. How many seats does each EU member state have in the European Commission?
(a) One (b) Two
(c) Depends on the country's size (d) None
159. During Global Bio-India 2024, how many biotech products were unveiled by Indian biotech startups?
(a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 11 (d) 15
160. What percentage of Japan's total population is aged 65 or older as per recent government data?
(a) 19.3% (b) 29.3% (c) 34.6% (d) 41.4%
161. Which of the following states in India is set to become the first to introduce a Horticulture Policy aimed at boosting horticultural production?
(a) Kerala (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Gujarat
162. Who has been unanimously agreed upon as the new Chief Minister of Delhi, succeeding Arvind Kejriwal?
(a) Kailash Gehlot (b) Sanjay Singh (c) Atishi Marlena Singh (d) Manish Sisodia
163. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently launched the _____ government's flagship initiative, the Subhadra Scheme.
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Jharkhand
164. Recently, India and _____ have held discussions on framing rules and regulations and enhancing interoperability and cyber security so that the existing link between their digital payments systems can be expanded to other Southeast Asian countries.
(a) Malaysia (b) Indonesia (c) Singapore (d) Mauritius
165. Where is Startup India currently housed?
(a) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(b) NITI Aayog
(c) Invest India
(d) Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
166. The University of Melbourne recently opened its first centre at which Indian place to showcase its educational offerings and attract potential students?
(a) Mumbai (b) Delhi (c) Bengaluru (d) Chennai
167. Uday Kotak Group is planning to launch its first private credit fund this year. Uday Kotak is the founder of _____ Group.
(a) Kotak Mahindra (b) Kotak Escorts (c) Swaraj Kotak (d) TVS Kotak
168. Who has been named the European Union's next antitrust commissioner by EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen?
(a) Kaja Kallas (b) Andrius Kubilius (c) Teresa Ribera (d) Ursula von der Leyen
169. What is the name of Bank of Baroda's GenAI-powered Virtual Relationship Manager?
(a) Aditya (b) Aditi (c) Gyan (d) Sameer
170. The 2024 ICC Women's T20 World Cup is scheduled to be the ninth edition of ICC Women's T20 World Cup tournament to be held in _____.
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) England
(c) Australia (d) India

171. India's first CO₂-to-methanol pilot plant is to come up in _____.
(a) Ranchi (b) Guwahati (c) Pune (d) Bhopal
172. Name the first government initiative through which beneficiaries will have the option to receive Rs. 10,000 annually in the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), popularly known as the 'digital rupee'?
(a) Subhadra Yojana (b) Saubhagya Yojana (c) Samman Yojana (d) Sugama Yojana
173. The European Union (EU) and India are exploring trilateral cooperation with East African countries to address challenges related to which key water bodies?
(a) Lake Superior and Lake Huron (b) Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika
(c) Lake Baikal and Lake Balkhash (d) Lake Titicaca and Lake Malawi
174. The Deutsche Digital Assets GmbH (DDA), a _____ digital asset manager, has announced the launch of its new Bitcoin macro ETP, becoming the first in the world to do so.
(a) Mexican (b) French (c) German (d) Japanese
175. Why is Zimbabwe planning to cull 200 elephants?
(a) To reduce the overpopulation of elephants in national parks
(b) To provide food for communities affected by a severe drought
(c) To protect endangered crops from elephants
(d) To promote wildlife tourism in drought-hit regions
176. Salesforce has launched _____, the world's first AI agent ecosystem that will allow its partner companies to build third-party AI agents and actions, which then can be used to take on specific tasks depending on the requirements of businesses.
(a) Union Partner Network (b) Indian Partner Network
(c) Agentforce Partner Network (d) Bharat Partner Network
177. What is the revised withdrawal limit for personal financial needs from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) accounts?
(a) ₹25,000 (b) ₹50,000 (c) ₹1, 00,000 (d) ₹2, 00,000
178. Where was the XEC variant of Covid-19 first identified?
(a) United Kingdom (b) United States (c) Germany (d) Portugal
179. Which of the following countries recently won the 2024 Asian Champions Trophy hockey final to clinch a record-extending fifth title?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) South Korea (d) India
180. When is World Bamboo Day celebrated globally?
(a) September 15 (b) September 18 (c) October 18 (d) November 18
181. Which of the following states recently launched the A.P. Sand Management System (APSMS) and an online portal thereof?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Arunachal Pradesh
182. Recently, A commemorative joint postal stamp marking the 75 years of diplomatic relations between _____ was released by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia.
(a) India and Mexico (b) India and Senegal
(c) India and Romania (d) India and Bulgaria
183. A two-day national symposium of the National Disaster Management Authority and the Army Southern Command entitled Exercise AIKYA will begin in _____.
(a) Bengaluru (b) Chennai (c) Hyderabad (d) Shimla

184. Recently, the government accepted the recommendations of the High Level Committee constituted under chairmanship of _____ for exploring the idea of One Nation, One Election.
(a) Ram Nath Kovind (b) Yashwant Sinha
(c) Ranjan Gogoi (d) Deepak Misra
185. COP29 (29th edition of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) is scheduled to be held _____.
(a) Turkmenistan (b) Azerbaijan (c) Kyrgyzstan (d) Israel
186. Recently, the World Bank has announced that it delivered a record \$42.6 billion in climate change financing in the last financial year, up _____ from a year earlier.
(a) 5 percent (b) 10 percent (c) 15 percent (d) 20 percent
187. Who among the following will lead the eight member panel set up by Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) to suggest ways to split marketing and transport companies of gas and end city gas monopoly?
(a) Meena Jha (b) Ajay Tyagi (c) Biplav Saha (d) Arindam Singh
188. Recently, Scientists from NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and the University of Bristol have made a groundbreaking discovery by identifying a new blood group system named _____.
(a) GAR (b) TAM (c) MAL (d) SAL
189. According to new research by British and American scientists, Tidal action on the underside of the Thwaites Glacier in the _____ will “inexorably” accelerate melting this century.
(a) Pacific (b) Antarctic (c) Indian (d) Atlantic
190. The World Cleanup Day is observed on _____.
(a) 16th September (b) 18th September (c) 20th September (d) 22nd September
191. Which of the following countries has been declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the first in the world to eliminate leprosy?
(a) Chile (b) Peru (c) Jordan (d) Thailand
192. Prime Minister Modi addressed the ‘Summit of the Future’ at the United Nations General Assembly on September 23, 2024. What is the theme of it?
(a) Climate Change Solutions (b) Global Health Cooperation
(c) Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow (d) Trade and Economic Development
193. Recently, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-in a first-of-its-kind Open Water Swimming Expedition to the 21 Islands of the _____ archipelago named after the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) Awardees.
(a) Andaman & Nicobar (b) Lakshadweep (c) Puducherry (d) Goa
194. What is the top operating speed of India’s first high-speed train being produced in Bengaluru?
(a) 200 km/h (b) 250 km/h (c) 280 km/h (d) 300 km/h
195. Recently, Tata Steel Ltd. had commissioned ‘India’s largest blast furnace’ at _____.
(a) Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (b) Bhilai, Chhattisgarh
(c) Kalinganagar, Odisha (d) Jamshedpur, Jharkhand
196. Which of the following organizations publishes the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI), in which India achieved Tier 1 status in 2024?
(a) World Economic Forum (WEF)
(b) International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
(c) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
(d) World Bank

197. Which of the following big cats are found in India, as part of the International Big Cat Alliance's focus?
(a) Tiger, Lion, Jaguar, Puma, Cheetah (b) Lion, Snow Leopard, Leopard, Tiger, Cheetah
(c) Snow Leopard, Puma, Tiger, Leopard, Jaguar (d) Cheetah, Leopard, Jaguar, Lion, Tiger
198. Which of the following cities will host the World 25K, the world's first World Athletic Gold Label Race for 25K distance?
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai
199. Which of the following teams won the 14th Hockey India Junior Men's National Championship 2024?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Punjab (c) Haryana (d) Karnataka
200. When is the International Day of Peace observed by the United Nations?
(a) 1st January (b) 21st September (c) 24th October (d) 10th December
201. Who has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court recently?
(a) Justice Rajiv Shakdher (b) Justice Manmohan
(c) Justice Indra Prasanna Mukerji (d) Justice Suresh Kait
202. Which technology is currently used in Project Tiger for day-to-day management and ecological data collection?
(a) GIS Mapping (b) M-STrIPES (c) GPS Collar Tracking (d) Satellite Imaging
203. Which of the following agreements did India sign under the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Delaware, USA?
(a) Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and Global Prosperity
(b) Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and IPEF Agreement
(c) Clean Energy, Digital Economy, and Global Security
(d) Renewable Energy, Fair Trade, and Economic Cooperation
204. Who has been appointed as the next Chief of the Air Staff?
(a) Air Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria (b) Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari
(c) Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh (d) Air Marshal Anil Khosla
205. Who is the newly appointed Prime Minister of France, known for leading the European Union's Brexit negotiations with the U.K.?
(a) Jean Castex (b) Édouard Philippe (c) Michel Barnier (d) François Fillon
206. Who was named the first director of The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage by World Bank?
(a) Ibrahima Cheikh Diong (b) Kristalina Georgieva
(c) David Malpass (d) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
207. Recently, the world's first fully robotic heart transplant was performed in _____.
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Canada (c) USA (d) France
208. Where did Nazira Banoo recently win a gold medal in the individual Poomsae under-30 category?
(a) Bhubaneswar, Odisha (b) Vadodara, Gujarat
(c) Lato, Kargil (d) Leh, Ladakh
209. Which of the following countries won gold medals in both the Open and women's sections of the 45th Chess Olympiad held in Budapest?
(a) Russia (b) China (c) India (d) USA
210. World Rhino Day is celebrated on _____, a global event dedicated to raising awareness and promoting the conservation of rhinoceros species.
(a) September 17 (b) September 20 (c) September 22 (d) September 24

211. Which of the following countries has recently elected Anura Kumara Dissanayake as its new president?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Mauritius (c) Maldives (d) Seychelles
212. Recently, Union Cabinet approved the merger of three ongoing umbrella schemes into a unified central sector scheme called _____ which seeks to promote science and technology capacity building as well as research, innovation and technology development.
(a) 'Vigyan Sarita' (b) 'Vigyan Pravaah' (c) 'Vigyan Dhara' (d) 'Vigyan Bharat'
213. Name the Indian actor who recently received the Guinness World Records certificate as the most prolific film star in the Indian film industry.
(a) Amitabh Bachchan (b) Ajay Devgan (c) K Chiranjeevi (d) Ram Charan Teja
214. Which of the following southern Indian states collectively accounts for 30% of India's GDP?
(a) Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra
(b) Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
(c) Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Goa
(d) Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Odisha, West Bengal
215. What amount of support did Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently announced for countries fighting cervical cancer?
(a) USD 5 million (b) USD 7.5 million (c) USD 10 million (d) USD 15 million
216. Recently, which of the following states inaugurated its ambitious "Knowledge Health Innovation Research-City" (KHIR-City) project?
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
217. Around 6,000 children have been selected from all government schools in Delhi from classes six and nine based on their academic performances for psychological testing to identify gifted students under _____.
(a) "Project Shikshit" (b) "Project Gyaan" (c) "Project Abhishikt" (d) "Project Abhishikt"
218. Who among the following laid the foundation stone of the Bombay High Court's new complex in Mumbai's Bandra East?
(a) Om Birla (b) DY Chandrachud (c) Draupadi Murmu (d) Kiren Rijiju
219. Recently, the UN General Assembly has proclaimed _____ as the International Day of Sign Languages in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language.
(a) 15 September (b) 18 September (c) 21 September (d) 23 September
220. The first Indian male wrestler to recently win an MMA (mixed martial arts) fight at the Gama International Fighting Championship Tbilisi in Georgia is _____.
(a) Sangram Singh (b) Abhijeet Nayak (c) Nirmal Luthra (d) Biplav Narain
221. Which national park in Assam is home to the largest percentage of the country's one-horned rhinoceros population?
(a) Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (b) Manas National Park
(c) Orang National Park (d) Kaziranga National Park
222. When will India host the first MAITRI workshop under the Quad's new maritime initiative?
(a) 2024 (b) 2025 (c) 2026 (d) 2027
223. Which of the following countries is not part of "Wilmington Declaration"?
(a) Australia (b) France (c) India (d) Japan
224. USA and India is to setup the world's first multi-chip fabrication unit in _____.
(a) Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh (b) Jewar, Uttar Pradesh
(c) Rewari, Haryana (d) Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

225. Which of the following Indian movies has been recently declared as India's official entry to the Oscars 2025?
(a) Laapataa Ladies (b) Animal (c) Stree 2 (d) Aattam
226. What is the projected size of India's nominal GDP by fiscal 2030–31 according to S&P Global Market Intelligence projections?
(a) US \$3.6 Trillion (b) US \$5 Trillion (c) US \$7 Trillion (d) US \$10 Trillion
227. Which of the following space companies plans to launch five uncrewed Starship missions to Mars over the next two years, aligning with the upcoming Earth-Mars transfer window?
(a) SpaceX (b) Virgin Galactic (c) Skyroot Aerospace (d) AgniKul Cosmos
228. Recently, India's _____ mission has identified a 160-km-wide crater near its landing site on the Moon. The discovery is made by the Pragyan rover, provides crucial insights into the Moon's early geological evolution.
(a) Chandrayaan-5 (b) Chandrayaan-2 (c) Chandrayaan-3 (d) Chandrayaan-4
229. The world's first High Altitude, High Performance Parasports Center has been recently announced to be established in _____.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Sikkim (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Ladakh
230. When is World Rivers Day celebrated each year?
(a) First Sunday of September (b) Fourth Sunday of September
(c) Second Sunday of August (d) Last Saturday of September
231. Who was recently appointed as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, making her the third woman to hold the post?
(a) Harini Amarasuriya (b) Sirimavo Bandaranaike
(c) Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (d) Sunaiya Wickremesinghe
232. Which of the following countries will be the partner country for the second edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS)?
(a) China (b) Vietnam (c) Japan (d) South Korea
233. Which of the following Indian states recently secured the top position in the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2024 for the second consecutive year?
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Kerala
234. Which Indian International airport planned to introduce India's first air train system?
(a) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport
(b) Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport
(c) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
(d) Indira Gandhi International Airport
235. Who will represent India at the 9th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in Samarkand?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (b) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
(c) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar (d) RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das
236. Who among the following recently developed a world-first process to grow a full-size ruby in its jewellery setting, marking a world-first achievement?
(a) Dr. Sophie Wilson (b) Dr. Sofie Boons (c) Dr. Sarah Johnson (d) Dr. Emma Thompson
237. Who was recently honored with the prestigious Global Prestige Award at the House of Lords, UK Parliament, for his outstanding contributions to the Indian film industry?
(a) Vinod Bachchan (b) Aamir Khan (c) Karan Johar (d) Rakesh Roshan

238. Name the Indian tennis duo who recently won the doubles title in the ATP 250 Hangzhou Open 2024.
(a) Anniruddha Shanghvi and Sandeep Lalitkar
(b) Biplav Lakhera and Anuj Rawat
(c) Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth
(d) Mohan Kumar and Prashant Thiagrajan
239. Which team did India defeat recently to secure the bronze medal at the Asia Pacific Padel Cup?
(a) Indonesia (b) Thailand (c) Japan (d) Malaysia
240. International Red Panda Day is celebrated annually on _____.
(a) First Saturday in September (b) Second Sunday in September
(c) Third Saturday in September (d) Last Friday in September
241. India has recently overtaken which country to claim the third spot in the Asia Power Index Report 2024?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) South Korea (d) Russia
242. Which of the following countries recently became the second Muslim-majority country to join the US Visa Waiver Programme?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Kuwait (c) Brunei (d) Qatar
243. In a groundbreaking development for the Indian education system, _____, the country's first teacher-assistive AI in Uttarakhand, is set to transform how educators teach and students learn.
(a) Baudhikta AI (b) Shiksha AI
(c) Medha AI (d) Gyan AI
244. Who is aiming to become the first Indian financial firm to cross a milestone of Rs. 1 lakh crore net profits in the next 3-5 years?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank
(c) Life Insurance Corporation (d) State Bank of India
245. The Central Government would soon launch a programme dedicated to urban poverty alleviation, the pilot for which would be set in motion in _____ across the country on October 1.
(a) 25 cities (b) 35 cities (c) 50 cities (d) 75 cities
246. Who has been recently recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium to be appointed as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Uttarakhand?
(a) Justice Sanjiv Khanna (b) Justice Biplav Bhatt
(c) Justice M Mohinder Singh (d) Justice Narendar G
247. Which of the following companies topped the LinkedIn Top Startups India List for 2024?
(a) GoKwik (b) Zepto (c) Convin (d) MindPeers
248. What is the name of the asteroid that will temporarily become Earth's mini-moon from September 29 to November 25, 2024?
(a) 2024 PT₅ (b) 2024 PZ₅
(c) 2024 AB₅ (d) 2024 QX₅
249. Where was India's first-ever night surfing event held recently?
(a) Mumbai's Juhu Beach (b) Chennai's Marina Beach
(c) Kovalam's Pearl Beach (d) Chennai's Radhanagar Beach
250. This year, the World Maritime Day is taking place on _____.
(a) September 28 (b) September 26 (c) September 29 (d) September 30

251. Recently, _____ has assumed chairmanship of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (ASOSAI), an international body having 48 SAIs as its members.
(a) Mukesh Chandra Meena (b) Deepak Chandra Mahajan
(c) Girish Chandra Murmu (d) Dheeraj Sahani
252. The Union government raised central minimum wages for agricultural and industrial workers. After revision, the minimum wage rates for workers in construction, sweeping, cleaning, loading & unloading for unskilled work will be _____ a day or ₹20,358 a month, whichever is higher.
(a) ₹654 (b) ₹717 (c) ₹765 (d) ₹783
253. Recently, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched three _____ Rudra supercomputers, developed indigenously under the National Supercomputing Mission.
(a) SUPER (b) PARAM (c) MAHA (d) SHAKTI
254. World's first 3D-printed hotel took shape at _____.
(a) Munich in Germany (b) London in United Kingdom
(c) Beijing in China (d) Texas in United States
255. Recently, _____ has become the world's first cement company to join the 'Alliance for Industry Decarbonization' (AFID), a global alliance of companies across industries to accelerate Net Zero transition in the world.
(a) Ultratech Cement Company (b) Gallant Cement Limited
(c) Ambuja Cements Limited (d) ACC Cement Limited
256. The Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN) is a new initiative that stems from the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), a framework established by the _____ in 2022. India was inducted to the MSP in _____.
(a) UK, 2022 (b) France, 2024 (c) Japan, 2024 (d) USA, 2023
257. Recently, TakeMe2Space, a domestic nano-satellite development company, and Azista Aerospace, a satellite development and manufacturing firm have partnered to establish the country's first POEM (PSLV Orbital Experimental Module) Experience Centre in _____.
(a) Pune (b) Varanasi (c) Ahmedabad (d) Mumbai
258. Name the cricketer who recently created history by becoming the first cricketer in the 147 years of Test cricket's existence to hit a 50-plus score in all of his first eight Test matches.
(a) Kamindu Mendis (b) Dinesh Chandimal (c) Rishabh Pant (d) Travis Head
259. The Ministry of Tourism celebrated the World Tourism Day-2024 on _____, with the theme 'Tourism and Peace', highlighting the crucial role of tourism in fostering development and global harmony.
(a) 27th September (b) 28th September
(c) 29th September (d) 30th September
260. Name the Pulitzer Prize winning author who has recently declined to accept an award from New York City's Noguchi Museum after it fired three employees for wearing keffiyeh head scarves, an emblem of Palestinian solidarity.
(a) Jhumpa Lahiri (b) Aravind Adiga (c) Geeta Anand (d) Siddharth Mukherjee
261. Which of the following countries will host World Telecom Standardisation Assembly (WTSA2024)?
(a) India (b) Australia (c) USA (d) Germany
262. Which of the following states recently unveiled the draft of India's first global capability centre (GCC) policy, aiming at establishing 500 of these centres by 2029 and generating 3.5 lakh jobs?
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Telangana

263. In India, The 150-year-old trams system in _____ will be discontinued by the state government.
(a) Kolkata (b) Chennai (c) Darjeeling (d) Shimla
264. The seventh edition of the Global Aerospace Summit, a premier forum for the world's aerospace supply chain recently commenced in _____.
(a) Sharjah (b) Ottawa (c) Abu Dhabi (d) Mexico City
265. Shigeru Ishiba is set to become _____ next Prime Minister.
(a) Japan's (b) South Korea's (c) Malaysia's (d) Singapore's
266. TAT-1, the world's first transatlantic telephone cable system, became a remarkable chapter in telecommunications history by enabling the first physical voice link between _____.
(a) Europe and America (b) Asia and Europe (c) Africa and America (d) Australia and Africa
267. Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) is establishing a defence manufacturing plant in _____ marking India's first overseas defence factory.
(a) Iceland (b) Suriname (c) Canada (d) Morocco
268. Recently, Researchers from Monash University in _____ have developed the world's first bionic eye.
(a) Australia (b) USA (c) Mexico (d) France
269. Which of the following countries is to host 2026 Commonwealth Games after Australia backed out?
(a) New Zealand (b) Scotland (c) Canada (d) India
270. The International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction is celebrated on _____ to raise awareness and promote action to reduce food loss and waste.
(a) September 25th (b) September 27th (c) September 29th (d) September 30th
271. Recently, The Andro Village of _____ has been conferred the prestigious award of one of the Best Tourism Villages in Heritage category in the 2024 edition of the Best Tourism Villages Competition organised by the Ministry of Tourism.
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Tripura (d) Assam
272. The world's largest hydroelectric dam in _____ called the Three Gorges Dam is a very huge infrastructure project that is affecting the spin of Earth.
(a) China (b) USA (c) Australia (d) Canada
273. Which of the following countries recently built the World's First High-Speed Hydrail Train?
(a) Portugal (b) South Korea (c) Japan (d) Spain
274. At present, India is the world's _____ largest producer and consumer of Ethanol.
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Seventh
275. At least five African countries are working on what could be the world's first joint "debt-for-nature" swap to raise at least \$2 billion to protect a coral-rich swathe of _____.
(a) Mediterranean Sea (b) Indian Ocean (c) Suez Canal (d) Pacific Ocean
276. The Indian Navy is likely to commission _____, its sixth and final Kalvari-class submarine under a ₹23,562-crore programme called Project 75, in December.
(a) Vipul (b) Vinashak (c) Vageesh (d) Vagsheer
277. Recently, India and _____ signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to assure appropriate protection to investors of the two countries.
(a) Uzbekistan (b) Kazakhstan (c) Turkmenistan (d) Kyrgyzstan

278. Recently, Justice Kalpathi Rajendran Shriram was sworn in as the chief justice of the _____.
(a) Bombay high court (b) Madras high court (c) Calcutta high court (d) Delhi high court
279. Recently, Udhayanidhi Stalin, the son of Chief Minister M K Stalin, was elevated to the post of Deputy Chief Minister of _____.
(a) Puducherry (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Karnataka
280. Who has been recently awarded the 2024 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize for his significant contributions to analytic number theory?
(a) Sam Guret (b) Steven Gerald (c) Alexander Dunn (d) Thomas Mull



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. c Nations across the globe unite on August 31 on the United Nations International Day for People of African Descent to celebrate their collective ancestry, varied traditions, and significant impact on the world and the worldwide African diaspora.
2. a PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 218 fisheries projects virtually, including India's first Integrated Aqua Park (IAP) in Ziro, Lower Subansiri district.
3. a Nuclear energy race: Japan to launch world's first steady-state fusion reactor.
4. a NorthEast United FC completed a brilliant comeback victory after being two goals down to overcome defending champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant on penalties and clinch the 133rd Indian Oil Durand Cup in a thrilling final played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in West Bengal.
5. b The newly unveiled flag of the Supreme Court of India features symbols central to India's legal and cultural heritage: the Ashoka Chakra, the Supreme Court building, and the Constitution of India. This design highlights the significance of these elements in representing the values and functions of the Supreme Court.
6. b SECI was granted the Navratna status by the Ministry of Finance. This status is awarded to Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) to enhance their financial and operational autonomy.
7. a Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw unveiled India's first Vande Bharat Sleeper trainset at BEML Complex in Bengaluru.
8. c The 2024 Hurun India Rich List highlighted Mumbai as the "billionaire capital of Asia" due to its higher number of billionaires compared to Beijing. Mumbai had a total of 386 billionaires, surpassing Beijing.
9. a Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated the state-of-the-art sports academy, sports complex, and Sports University on the occasion of National Sports Day at Rajgir.
10. a The world's first professional multimodal large language model (LLM) for lunar science has been released in China.
11. c World Skyscraper Day, celebrated every year on September 3, is a tribute to the breathtaking structures that have transformed the cities.
12. b India's Nitesh Kumar clinched his maiden gold medal at the Paralympics, defeating Great Britain's Daniel Bethell in a gripping men's singles SL3 badminton final in Paris.
13. d The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation announced five recipients from five countries of its annual prize: Farwiza from Indonesia, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Phuong from Vietnam, Miyazaki Hayao from Japan, Karma Phuntsho from Bhutan, and the Rural Doctors Movement (RDM) from Thailand. Renowned film director and co-founder of Studio Ghibli, Hayao Miyazaki, has been awarded the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for 2024. Often referred to as Asia's Nobel Prize, the award recognises individuals who have made exceptional contributions to society.
14. c Vistara is a 51:49 joint venture between Tata Group and Singapore Airlines. As part of the proposed merger with Air India, Singapore Airlines will hold a 25.1% stake in the enlarged Air India.
15. c The Union Cabinet has approved a 309-km rail line project between Mumbai and Indore at a total cost of ₹18,036 crore.
16. d Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme was launched in 2020 for creation of Post-harvest Management infrastructure and Community farming assets.
17. b "The 2024 edition of Indo-French bilateral naval 'Exercise Varuna', scheduled from September 2 to 4 in the Mediterranean Sea, included advanced tactical exercises underscoring the deepening synergy and interoperability between the two navies,".
18. b The Enerpoly Production Innovation Center (EPIC) facility, recognized as the world's first zinc-ion battery mega factory, is situated north of Stockholm, Sweden. This location has been chosen for its strategic importance in Enerpoly's vision to scale zinc-ion batteries as a better alternative for long-term energy storage compared to lithium-ion batteries.
19. b The Tamil Nadu government also signed a pact with Google to skill two million youngsters in the state in AI under the state government's skill development programme "Naan Mudhalvan".

20. a NASA cut the number of astronauts in the next crew to make space on the return trip for the two astronauts – Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore, who are currently stranded on the International Space Station.
21. c In the 2023 edition of the Global Innovation Index (GII), India achieved the 40th rank among 132 economies globally. This ranking reflects India's growing innovation capacity and progress over the past decade.
22. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Brunei on the first leg of his two-nation trip that will also include Singapore. He is the first Indian Prime Minister to travel to Brunei on a bilateral visit.
23. b Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi has officially inaugurated the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi Abu Dhabi campus.
24. a President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Vishwashanti Buddha Vihara in Udgir in Latur, Maharashtra.
25. c The World Bank has revised its growth forecast for the Indian economy to 7% for the current fiscal year, up from its earlier estimate of 6.6%. This adjustment reflects the strong performance of India's economy despite global challenges.
26. a Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visited Sootea Police Station in Biswanath District and announced that August 20 will be celebrated as Sootea Day and unveiled plans for a heritage monument at the site, allocating Rs. 5 crores for the project.
27. b The Government of Odisha, in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), has introduced 24-hour grain dispensing machines known as 'Annapurti' across the state. This initiative aims to enhance food security in the region.
28. c Sumit Antil successfully defended his gold medal in the Javelin event at the Paris Paralympics 2024. He set a new record with a throw of 70.59 meters in his second attempt, securing the top podium position.
29. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, as part of his visit to Southeast Asian nations. This mosque is named after Omar Ali Saifuddien III, the 28th Sultan of Brunei, and was completed in 1958.
30. b BRICS countries have reached a significant milestone with the adoption of a comprehensive framework focusing on climate action and sustainable development, announced by the Russian Economic Development Ministry.
31. b The Union Government set up the 23rd Law Commission for a period of three years to identify laws that have become obsolete and can be repealed, carry out audits of laws that affect the poor and give its views on any law that the Law and Justice Ministry conveys to it.
32. c The Indian Army launched the first phase of Project NAMAN.
33. b In 2024, NATO member Türkiye applied for membership in the BRICS bloc, which consists of developing economies like Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This move is seen as a strategic effort by Türkiye to strengthen ties with emerging markets and participate in counterbalancing Western global influence.
35. d Reliance Industries won a bid under the government's production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, which aims to boost the production of advanced chemistry cells (ACCs) used in EV batteries. The company outperformed six other competitors, including Amara Raja Energy and JSW Energy.
35. a Motilal Oswal launches India's first 500 Momentum 50 Index fund.
36. c The International Day of Charity is an international day observed annually on 5 September. It was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012.
37. b The 'Polar Wind' is described as an energy field that counteracts gravity, helping to lift the skies up. This discovery is fundamental to understanding how Earth's atmosphere functions, especially around the poles. It complements the existing gravity and magnetic fields, influencing the behavior of the atmosphere.
38. c The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has signed an agreement with the General Court of Audit of Saudi Arabia to enhance cooperation and exchange of expertise in public sector auditing. The collaboration includes conducting joint training programs and sharing audit methodologies.

39. b The heritage conservation and development of the Walled City of Jaipur, which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019, will be taken up with a budgetary expenditure of ₹100 crore.
40. c The report identified that the United States failed to contribute its fair share of international climate finance in 2022. While countries like Norway, Germany, and Japan met or exceeded their obligations, the U.S., along with countries such as Australia, Spain, Canada, and the United Kingdom, performed poorly in this regard.
41. b West Bengal became the first state in India to introduce amendments to Central laws regarding rape, gang-rape, and sexual assault after the Assembly unanimously passed the anti-rape ‘Aparajita’ bill in 2024. This bill provides stricter punishments, including the death penalty for such heinous offences.
42. b Michel Barnier, the EU’s former Brexit negotiator, was appointed as the new Prime Minister by President Macron after the snap election in early July. Barnier is a seasoned politician who led the Brexit talks for the EU and has held various political roles both in French governments and in the EU.
43. a Prez Murmu Addresses Beneficiaries Of Maha Govt’s ‘Shasan Aplya Dari’ & ‘Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojna’ Schemes.
44. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing the two-day first International Solar Festival through video conferencing, being held in New Delhi.
45. c Shah Rukh Khan was reported to have paid the highest amount of advance tax, contributing Rs. 92 crore for the fiscal year 2023-24, making him the top celebrity taxpayer according to Fortune India’s compilation.
46. a India’s Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw secured a coveted spot on TIME magazine’s “Most Influential People in AI 2024.”
47. d World Teachers’ Day is celebrated after a month on October 5.
48. c Sachin Sarjerao Khilari won the silver medal in the men’s shot put (F46) event at the Paris Paralympics. His throw of 16.32 meters set a new Asian record, highlighting his exceptional performance in the competition.
49. b Hyderabad hosted a two-day Global Artificial Intelligence Summit-2024-themed “Making AI Work for Everyone”.
50. c Under the aegis of National One Health Mission (NOHM), a comprehensive national mock drill, “Vishanu Yuddh Abhyas” (Virus War Exercise), was conducted in Ajmer district of Rajasthan state, from August 27 to August 31, 2024 to assess pandemic preparedness.
51. c The Alaska Triangle, a mysterious area located around Anchorage, Juneau, and Utqiagvik, has been the site of over 20,000 disappearances since the 1970s.
52. c The International Day of Clean Air for blue skies is designated by the United Nations General Assembly on 7 September to strengthen international cooperation in improving air quality and reducing air pollution.
53. c The groundbreaking ceremony for India’s first silicon carbide manufacturing facility by RIR Power Electronics Limited took place at the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) Park in Odisha. This facility aims to make Odisha a leading semiconductor hub in India.
54. b Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh launched the ‘VisioNxt Fashion Forecasting Initiative’ of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), a bilingual web portal and the India-specific Fashion Trend Book ‘Paridhi 24x25’.
55. b The Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant is situated in the Al Dhafra region within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, about 53 km west-southwest of the city of Ruwais, on the Arabian Gulf. It plays a crucial role in the UAE’s energy diversification efforts.
56. c The Council of Europe, founded in 1949 and based in Strasbourg, led the initiative to create the AI convention, focusing on aligning AI technologies with human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.
57. b Prime Minister Modi announced that India’s first Thiruvalluvar Cultural Centre would be opened in Singapore. This move highlights the cultural ties and strong connection shared by the two countries, particularly with the large Indian-origin population in Singapore.

- 58. a** India and the Maldives held a fresh round of “productive” defence dialogue with a focus on the situation in the Indian Ocean and ways to expedite implementation of ongoing defence projects.
- 59. c** According to the ranking by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Kerala was the top performer in promoting ease of doing business, followed by Andhra Pradesh and other states.
- 60. b** Malta joined the European Commission’s Team Europe initiative to donate vaccines and mobilize resources to combat the spread of Mpox in Africa. This collective effort aims to address the public health emergency by contributing half a million vaccines.
- 61. a** The Delhi government is likely to introduce specialised classrooms for gifted students in 15 of its schools following the mid-term exams. Known as ‘Abhishikt’, these classrooms will serve students in classes VI and IX, focusing on nurturing those identified as exceptionally intelligent through a thorough screening process.
- 62. b** Tuhin Kanta Pandey, a 1987 batch IAS officer from the Orissa cadre, has been appointed as the new Finance Secretary. He succeeds T.V. Somanathan, who has been appointed as the Cabinet Secretary.
- 63. c** Cristiano Ronaldo made history by becoming the first footballer to score 900 career goals, further cementing his legacy as one of the greatest footballers of all time.
- 64. b** Mars is often called the “Red Planet” due to its reddish appearance, which is caused by iron oxide (rust) on its surface. This distinctive color makes it easy to identify in the night sky. Mars has been a subject of interest for space exploration due to the possibility of past or present life.
- 65. c** In July 2023, India and the UAE signed the Local Currency Settlement (LCS) System, promoting the use of the Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham for cross-border transactions, thus boosting financial cooperation between the two nations.
- 66. b** ANIIDCO was incorporated with the aim of developing and commercially exploiting natural resources in a way that balances growth with environmental sustainability. This includes activities beyond just managing tourism, fisheries, or trading petroleum products. While it is involved in various sectors, its primary mandate is to drive development that is both balanced and environmentally conscious.
- 67. b** The position of astronomical events like the vernal equinox changes over time due to the Earth’s axial precession. Around 4500 B.C., the vernal equinox was in the constellation Orion, which helps astronomers estimate the time period of historical celestial events mentioned in texts like the Rig Veda.
- 68. b** Kapil Parmar made history as the first Indian judoka to win a Paralympic medal in judo by securing a bronze at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games in the men’s -60 kg J1 category.
- 69. c** The Kashmir stag also called hangul is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer endemic to Kashmir and surrounding areas. It is found in dense riverine forests in the valleys and mountains of Jammu and Kashmir and northern Himachal Pradesh. In Kashmir, it is found primarily in the Dachigam National Park and in Tral Wildlife Sanctuary where it receives protection, and elsewhere it is more at risk.
- 70. a** A new study by the University of Leeds revealed India as the biggest contributor to plastic pollution.
- 71. a** Aryna Sabalenka defeated Jessica Pegula in the final, 7–5, 7–5 to win the women’s singles tennis title at the 2024 US Open. It was her third major singles title. Sabalenka was the first individual Belarusian woman to win the US Open, and the fifth player to win both hardcourt majors (Australian Open and US Open) in the same calendar year (after Steffi Graf, Monica Seles, Martina Hingis and Angelique Kerber). The final was a rematch of the Cincinnati final three weeks prior, also won by Sabalenka.
- 72. c** R Gandhi, the former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has been appointed as the chairperson of the 22-member advisory committee set up by SEBI. The committee aims to provide advice on corporate governance, harmonisation of listing and post-listing obligations, and disclosure requirements.
- 73. a** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched a series of blockchain-based solutions, aimed at enhancing transparency, security, and efficiency in digital service delivery. The Vishvasya-Blockchain Technology Stack is designed to offer Blockchain-as-a-Service (BaaS) with a geographically distributed setup to support a range of permissioned blockchain applications.

- 74. b** The chief minister of Odisha recently released the budget for the financial year 2024-25. Under this budget, various schemes were introduced. The Samrudha Krushak Yojana is one of the schemes launched for the farmers.
- 75. d** India's first study on 'teal carbon', undertaken at Keoladeo National Park (KNP) in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district, has highlighted the significance of wetland conservation to address the challenges of climate adaptation and resilience.
- 76. d** The prime minister will attend the Quad Summit on September 21 in Wilmington, the home town of outgoing US president Joe Biden in Delaware.
- 77. a** Gensol Engineering and Matrix Gas & Renewables comprising these two companies won the bid for India's first biomass to green hydrogen project. Westinghouse is a strategic partner but not part of the consortium.
- 78. b** Paetongtarn Shinawatra is the youngest daughter of Thaksin Shinawatra, a former Prime Minister of Thailand. She recently became Thailand's youngest Prime Minister.
- 79. a** Renowned filmmaker and conservationist Mike Pandey has been awarded the 2024 Jackson Wild Legacy Award, one of the most prestigious global honours in wildlife and environmental filmmaking.
- 80. a** Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the victor in Algeria's presidential election, winning in a landslide marred by low voter turnout and claims of irregularities from his detractors in the gas-rich North African nation.
- 81. d** Estonia has become the first Baltic state to be a full member of CERN, joining as the 24th member.
- 82. b** Quality Council of India (QCI) has been involved in developing the parameters for ranking the working women's hostels, and the WCD Ministry has held meetings with them to finalize these parameters.
- 83. b** Pronab Sen, an eminent economist and former chief statistician of the country, was the head of the Standing Committee on Statistics (SCoS) before it was dissolved. His leadership was notable until the committee was dismantled due to overlaps in responsibilities with the new Steering Committee for National Sample Surveys.
- 84. c** The Indian Air Force's largest multilateral exercise, Tarang Shakti, involves participation from eight countries, including India, with 17 countries as observers. This exercise is held in Jodhpur and features significant aircraft deployments, including the U.S.'s A-10 Thunderbird and F-16 jets.
- 85. c** Union Bank of India has decided to join the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF), a global initiative that helps financial institutions assess and disclose greenhouse gas emissions related to their loans and investments. PCAF encourages banks and financial organizations to contribute to climate risk management by reporting their carbon footprint.
- 86. b** Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla, SpaceX, and X (formerly Twitter), is projected to become the world's first trillionaire by 2027. His wealth has been growing at an average annual rate of 110%.
- 87. d** Hitachi Payment Services has created the country's first Android-Based Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) ATM in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- 88. b** The atomic clock, while incredibly precise, loses only seconds over billions of years. However, for advanced scientific applications, this is still not precise enough, prompting the development of the nuclear clock, which offers even greater precision in measuring time.
- 89. c** Randhir Singh, a veteran sports administrator and five-time Olympic shooter, was unanimously elected as the president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) during the 44th General Assembly. He is the first Indian to hold this position.
- 90. b** The International Day to Protect Education from Attack is observed annually on September 9. This day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2020 to raise awareness about the attacks on education during armed conflicts.
- 91. c** Nepal recently joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as its 101st full member by handing over its Instrument of Ratification to the ISA in New Delhi. The ISA is an international organization aimed at promoting solar energy among countries located in the tropics and beyond.
- 92. c** The Indian Navy launched two anti-submarine warfare (ASW) shallow water crafts, named Malpe and Mulki, at Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL) in Kochi.

- 93. c** Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated SEMICON India 2024 at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida, and Uttar Pradesh on 11th September, 2024.
- 94. a** Second International Buddhist Media Conclave organised in Delhi on 11th September.
- 95. d** Air India has become the first Indian airline to roll out the New Distribution Capability (NDC), a technology that simplifies booking flights.
- 96. a** The Line is a linear smart city under construction in Saudi Arabia in Neom, Tabuk Province, which is designed to have no cars, streets or carbon emissions.
- 97. c** The National Tiger Conservation Authority has green-lighted the world's first melanistic tiger safari near Similipal tiger reserve of Odisha.
- 98. b** Jannik Sinner became the first Italian man to win the US Open title, marking a historic moment for his country in tennis.
- 99. b** India secured a total of 29 medals, including seven gold, nine silver, and 13 bronze, and climbed to the 16th spot in the medal tally.
- 100. c** As of August 2024, Bihar leads in the number of registrations under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojna, with over 3.4 lakh farmers having registered for the scheme. Jharkhand ranks second with over 2.5 lakh registrations.
- 101. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been requested to inaugurate the International Cooperative Alliance General Assembly, which will be held in November 2024 in New Delhi. The other individuals mentioned do not have direct roles in inaugurating this event.
- 102. c** The Andhra Pradesh Medical Technology Zone (AMTZ), located in Visakhapatnam, has announced plans to establish the first Greenfield 'Global MedTech University' in India. This university will focus on medical technology education and regulatory affairs.
- 103. b** Rajiv Ranjan Singh, the Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, is launching the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojna at an event in New Delhi.
- 104. c** The Madhya Pradesh government appointed Retired Additional Chief Secretary Manoj Shrivastava as the chairman of the three-member delimitation commission. This commission is responsible for the fresh demarcation of divisions, districts, and tehsils in the state.
- 105. c** Russia has launched its largest naval drill in decades, involving all 5 fleets. The "Ocean 2024", was held simultaneously in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans, as well as the Mediterranean, Caspian, and Baltic Seas.
- 106. c** Gravita Netherlands BV has signed an MOU to acquire a Waste Tyre Recycling plant in Romania with a capacity of approximately 17,000 MTPA. This will be Gravita's first recycling facility in Europe.
- 107. b** The MoU for civil nuclear cooperation was signed between the NPCIL (India) and the ENEC (UAE). This marks the first such agreement between the two nations in the nuclear energy sector. The collaboration focuses on nuclear energy's peaceful use and operational aspects.
- 108. b** According to the UK advocacy group Global Witness, Colombia was the deadliest country for environmentalists and land rights defenders in 2023, with 79 reported deaths. This is especially significant as Colombia will also be the host nation for the United Nations COP16 biodiversity conference.
- 109. b** Syria won its first Intercontinental Cup by defeating India 3-0 at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium in Hyderabad. This victory marked Syria's first title win in India after a long history of participation in tournaments in the country.
- 110. b** Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, inaugurated a special railway coach dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, New Delhi. This coach, enriched with sculptures depicting Gandhi's travels, was donated by the Ministry of Railways to honor Mahatma Gandhi's legacy.
- 111. c** According to the new rules, vehicles equipped with GNSS will be allowed to travel up to 20 kilometres in each direction on national highways or expressways without being charged a toll. If they exceed this distance, the toll will be calculated based on the actual distance travelled.

- 112. d** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved 'Mission Mausam' with an outlay of Rs.2,000 crore over two years.
- 113. d** The initiatives launched by the Parliamentary Affairs Minister include the National e-Vidhan Application 2.0, Consultative Committee Management System, National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0, and others. However, there was no mention of a "Digital Voting System for General Elections" among the initiatives.
- 114. c** The Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel, serves as the Chairman of the Governing Body of GRIT. The governing body is responsible for the overall direction of the institution, with other key ministers serving as members.
- 115. a** Essar Energy Transition (EET) Hydrogen and UK's leading clean energy company SSE have begun work to develop a new green hydrogen production facility in the North West of England.
- 116. c** In the latest rankings by OAG, Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) secured the 24th position among the top 25 megahub airports globally, improving from last year's 25th spot. It is one of two Indian airports in the top 50 list.
- 117. b** The Polaris Dawn mission is notable for attempting the first spacewalk by non-professional astronauts. This makes it a significant milestone for civilian space travel, as previous spacewalks have been conducted by trained astronauts.
- 118. c** Ms. Sheetal Devi became India's youngest Paralympic medallist at just 17 years old. She has achieved multiple accolades, including a bronze medal in Archery at the Paris Summer Paralympics 2024 and gold medals at the 2023 Asian Para Games.
- 119. b** Vir Das, an actor and comedian from India, has made history as the first Indian to be announced as the host of the 2024 International Emmy Awards. This event marks a significant milestone in his career and India's representation on the international stage.
- 120. c** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, has approved health coverage under AB PM-JAY for all senior citizens aged 70 years and above. They will be eligible for health insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. This expansion benefits around 6 crore senior citizens across India.
- 121. d** Two Indian Navy women officers – Lt Cdr Roopa A and Lt Cdr Dilna K would be embarking on the extraordinary expedition of circumnavigating the globe - Navika Sagar Parikrama II onboard INSV Tarini very shortly.
- 122. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the country's first 'Vande Metro' service during his two-day visit to Gujarat. The Ahmedabad-Bhuj Vande Metro is a fully unreserved air-conditioned train for which passengers can buy tickets from the counter shortly before its departure.
- 123. c** The Union environment ministry has granted in-principle approval to divert around 4.50 hectares of forest land in Assam, home to the endangered hoolock gibbon, for oil and gas exploration by a Vedanta Group company.
- 124. c** BRICS Literature Forum 2024 commenced in Kazan, Russia.
- 125. d** India will set up two operational Mega shipbuilding parks by 2030, eyeing a share of the \$100 billion global shipbuilding market. "The immediate target is to have four Mega shipbuilding parks with two each on the East and West coast.
- 126. c** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the preliminary automotive trials of the Indian light Tank, Zorawar, a highly versatile platform capable of deployment in high-altitude areas.
- 127. a** Indian boxer Deepali Thapa has made history by becoming the first-ever Asian Schoolgirl Champion in Al Ain, UAE.
- 128. c** The 45th FIDE Chess Olympiad begins in Budapest, the capital of Hungary.
- 129. a** The 34th Krishi Mela will be held in the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad from September 21 to 24.
- 130. c** In 2007 the United Nations General Assembly resolved to observe 15 September as the International Day of Democracy—with the purpose of promoting and upholding the principles of democracy—and invited all member states and organizations to commemorate the day in an appropriate manner that contributes to raising public awareness.
- 131. c** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has increased the transaction limit for three types of payments using UPI to ₹5 lakh for convenience.

- 132. a** Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that the Indian government has decided to rename the island of Port Blair as ‘Shri Vijayapuram,’ in a bid to “rid the country of all symbols of slavery.”
- 133. c** The government is planning to introduce the ‘Golden City Club’ initiative aimed at recognising cities that consistently excel in various development indicators.
- 134. c** As part of Exercise Tarang Shakti, India’s largest multinational air exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational coordination among Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs), the Indian Air Force (IAF) organized a multinational symposium on ‘Air Domain Awareness’ at Jodhpur.
- 135. c** Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare Shri Ram Nath Thakur along with Ambassador of India to Brazil Shri Suresh Reddy and Joint Secretary (NRM), Department of Agriculture & Farmers’ Welfare participated in the G20 Agriculture Ministerial Meeting held in Cuiabá, Brazil on 12th-14th September 2024.
- 136. a** Mexico’s judicial reform overhauling the country’s courts, which will allow voters to elect judges, officially took effect after the text of the constitutional changes was published in the government gazette.
- 137. c** A massive asteroid, known as 99942 Apophis or the ‘God of Chaos’, has had its trajectory reevaluated, sparking concerns it may be on a collision course with Earth. Initially discovered in 2004, Apophis was previously thought to have a 2.7% chance of impacting our planet in 2029.
- 138. c** A state-of-the-art submarine escape training facility, named “Vinetra,” was commissioned at INS Satavahana in Visakhapatnam.
- 139. b** Paris Olympics silver medallist Neeraj Chopra fell short of securing more title by just 0.1 centimetre as he finished second in the Diamond League final with a best throw of 87.86 metres at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels, Belgium.
- 140. c** International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated on September 16 designed by the United Nations General Assembly.
- 141. b** India launched Operation Sadbhav to send urgent supplies to Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar – the countries devastated by Typhoon Yagi that has claimed more than 200 lives so far.
- 141. a** The Department of Education in Puducherry has taken the initiative to make the students engage in activities of dance and music. The scheme is called Isai Kudil, which aims to familiarise the government schools’ students with the activities of dancing and singing, along with their studies.
- 143. a** Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal launched Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR), an interactive online platform to further boost world’s third largest startup ecosystem and to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of youth converting ideas into businesses.
- 144. a** The Hague became the first city in the world to ban advertisements promoting fossil fuel products and carbon-intensive services including cruise ships and air travel.
- 145. c** India has also sent its contingent for the ongoing India-Oman Joint Military Exercise Al Najah, which is scheduled to be conducted from 13th to 26th September 2024 at the Rabkoot Training Area in Salalah, Oman.
- 146. d** The Union Cabinet approved a new scheme called PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) for the promotion of electric vehicles (EV) in India, replacing an earlier flagship scheme.
- 147. a** Iran successfully launched its Chamran-1 research satellite into orbit utilising the Qaem-100 rocket developed by the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.
- 148. b** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have developed a brain-inspired analog computing platform capable of storing and processing data in an astonishing 16,500 conductance states within a molecular film.
- 149. b** Oscar Piastri won the Azerbaijan Grand Prix after a late crash impacted the race and required it to finish behind a virtual safety car.
- 150. b** Pakistan’s Saleema Imtiaz became the first woman to be nominated for the ICC International Panel of development umpires.

- 151. d** Mumbai has become India's first mega metropolitan city to be extensively covered by a short-range polarimetric radar network. This network consists of six radars, making Mumbai the most thoroughly monitored city in India for weather surveillance.
- 152. c** A "mini-moon" is an asteroid that is temporarily captured by Earth's gravity for a limited orbit. In this case, 2024 PT5 will make a singular orbit around Earth before continuing its cosmic journey, making it a mini-moon. It will not crash into Earth or burn upon entering the atmosphere, nor will it orbit Earth indefinitely.
- 153. b** India won 16 medals at the World Skills 2024 event, including four bronze medals and 12 medallions of excellence. This reflects the exceptional performance of the Indian delegation across various trades.
- 154. b** The NPS Vatsalya scheme allows parents to make a minimum annual contribution of Rs. 1,000 in the name of their child, making it accessible to families from all economic backgrounds. This initiative promotes early financial planning and long-term wealth creation.
- 155. c** World Patient Safety Day, observed annually on 17 September, aims to raise global awareness about patient safety and call for solidarity and united action by all countries and international partners to reduce patient harm.
- 156. c** The Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VLSRSAM) was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, located on the Odisha coast. This is a key test location for India's defense missile systems.
- 157. a** The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has selected IT major Infosys to develop its NextGen digital platform.
- 158. a** Each EU member state is allocated one seat in the European Commission, though the importance of the portfolio each commissioner holds varies, reflecting the political weight of the country within the EU.
- 159. c** At Global Bio-India 2024, Indian biotech startups showcased 11 new products, highlighting the growing talent in the biosciences sector in the country.
- 160. b** The data shows that the elderly population in Japan has reached a record high, accounting for 29.3% of the total population, making Japan one of the world's fastest-aging societies.
- 161. b** Himachal Pradesh is planning to become the first state in India to introduce a comprehensive Horticulture Policy. This initiative aims to enhance horticultural production and turn the state into the nation's fruit bowl, showcasing its commitment to agriculture and horticulture.
- 162. c** In a meeting of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legislators, Arvind Kejriwal proposed Atishi as his successor, and the party unanimously agreed. Atishi, a senior leader of AAP, will become the new Chief Minister of Delhi.
- 163. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Odisha government's flagship initiative, the Subhadra Scheme, in Bhubaneswar.
- 164. c** India and Singapore have held discussions on framing rules and regulations and enhancing inter-operability and cyber security so that the existing link between their digital payments systems can be expanded to other Southeast Asian countries.
- 165. c** Startup India is currently housed within Invest India, which is the national body responsible for promoting investments in the country. The new not-for-profit company will bring all the initiatives under one organization.
- 166. b** The University of Melbourne opened its first centre in Delhi, India, known as the Melbourne Global Centre. The purpose of this centre is to showcase the university's educational offerings and attract potential students from India.
- 167. a** Uday Kotak's group, through Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company, is planning to launch its first private credit fund. Uday Kotak is the founder of Kotak Mahindra Group, which is one of India's leading financial services conglomerates.
- 168. c** Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission, named Spain's Teresa Ribera as the next antitrust commissioner. The antitrust commissioner is responsible for enforcing rules to ensure fair competition within the European Union, such as blocking mergers that harm competition.
- 169. b** Bank of Baroda has introduced a GenAI-powered Virtual Relationship Manager named Aditi to enhance the digital customer service experience. The name "Aditi" is specifically associated with the role of a virtual relationship manager.

- 170. a** The 2024 ICC Women's T20 World Cup is scheduled to be the ninth edition of ICC Women's T20 World Cup tournament. It was scheduled to be hosted in Bangladesh from 3 to 20 October 2024; however, it has now been relocated to the United Arab Emirates for the same dates due to ongoing political unrest in Bangladesh.
- 171. c** India's first CO₂-to-methanol pilot plant to come up in Pune.
- 172. a** Subhadra Yojana, the new direct transfer scheme for women in Odisha, has become the first govt initiative through which beneficiaries will have the option to receive Rs. 10,000 annually in the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), popularly known as the 'digital rupee'.
- 173. b** The EU and India are looking to cooperate with East African nations to address challenges related to key water bodies in the region, specifically Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika, as discussed during the EU-India Water Forum. These lakes are crucial to the local ecosystem and economy in East Africa.
- 174. c** The Deutsche Digital Assets GmbH (DDA), a German digital asset manager, has announced the launch of its new Bitcoin macro ETP, becoming the first in the world to do so.
- 175. b** Zimbabwe is planning to cull 200 elephants primarily to provide food to communities severely impacted by the worst drought in four decades. The El Niño-induced drought has caused widespread crop failure, leaving millions facing food shortages across southern Africa, and the culling is intended to address these food needs.
- 176. c** Salesforce has launched Agentforce Partner Network – the world's first AI agent ecosystem that will allow its partner companies to build third-party AI agents and actions, which then can be used to take on specific tasks depending on the requirements of businesses.
- 177. c** The EPFO has recently revised the withdrawal limit for personal financial needs, allowing subscribers to withdraw up to ₹1 lakh at once. Previously, the limit was capped at ₹50,000, but it has been increased to provide more flexibility for subscribers.
- 178. c** The XEC variant was first identified in Germany in June. It has since spread to various countries, including the UK, US, and others.
- 179. d** Defending champions India beat hosts China 1-0 in the final of the 2024 Asian Champions Trophy to clinch a record-extending fifth title.
- 180. b** World Bamboo Day is celebrated on September 18 to raise awareness about the importance of bamboo. The day was established in 2009 during the eighth World Bamboo Congress to promote the sustainable use of bamboo for environmental conservation.
- 181. a** Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the A.P. Sand Management System (APSMS) and an online portal thereof.
- 182. c** A commemorative joint postal stamp marking the 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Romania was released by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia.
- 183. b** A two-day national symposium of the National Disaster Management Authority and the Army Southern Command entitled Exercise AIKYA will begin in Chennai.
- 184. a** The government accepted the recommendations of the High Level Committee constituted for exploring the idea of One Nation, One Election, paving the way for simultaneous elections across the country. The Union Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said a high-level committee constituted under the chairmanship of former President Ram Nath Kovind held extensive deliberations with stakeholders, including political parties and experts.
- 185. b** COP29 (29th edition of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) is to be held in the country's capital, Baku, from November 11 to 22.
- 186. b** The World Bank announced that it delivered a record \$42.6 billion in climate change financing in the last financial year, up 10 percent from a year earlier.
- 187. b** Ajay Tyagi-led panel to suggest ways to split marketing and transport companies, end city gas monopoly.

- 188. c** Scientists from NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and the University of Bristol have made a groundbreaking discovery by identifying a new blood group system named MAL.
- 189. b** Tidal action on the underside of the Thwaites Glacier in the Antarctic will “inexorably” accelerate melting this century, according to new research by British and American scientists.
- 190. c** On 8 December 2023, the United Nations General Assembly, in its seventy-eighth session, unanimously adopted resolution “World Cleanup Day”, which proclaims 20 September as World Cleanup Day.
- 191. c** Jordan has been recognized by the WHO as the first country to eliminate leprosy. This declaration was made after Jordan reported no autochthonous (locally transmitted) cases of leprosy for over two decades, marking a major milestone in global public health.
- 192. c** The theme of the ‘Summit of the Future’ at the United Nations General Assembly, which PM Modi addressed on September 23, 2024, is “Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow.” This summit focuses on fostering global collaboration to address future challenges.
- 193. a** Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-in, in New Delhi, a first-of-its-kind Open Water Swimming Expedition to the 21 Islands of the Andaman & Nicobar archipelago named after the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) Awardees.
- 194. b** The first high-speed train produced in Bengaluru is set to operate at a top speed of 250 km/h. It will serve the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail corridor, with trials planned for the Surat-Bilimora section.
- 195. c** Tata Steel Ltd. said it had commissioned ‘India’s largest blast furnace’ at Kalinganagar, Odisha as part of the Phase II expansion its plant.
- 196. b** The Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) is published by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which assesses countries’ cybersecurity commitments. In 2024, India achieved Tier 1 status in this index, demonstrating its strong global standing in cybersecurity.
- 197. b** The seven big cats focused on by the IBCA are the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar, and Cheetah. Out of these, the five big cats found in India are the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, and Cheetah.
- 198. c** Kolkata is set to host the World 25K, marking the first time this event will be held in the city. It is recognized as the world’s first World Athletic Gold Label Race for the 25K distance, attracting top athletes from around the globe.
- 199. b** Punjab defeated Uttar Pradesh in the final match of the 14th Hockey India Junior Men’s National Championship 2024. After a 3-3 tie, Punjab won 4-3 in the shootout, securing the championship title.
- 200. b** The United Nations (UN) observes the International Day of Peace annually on 21st September. It is a day dedicated to promoting peace, both within and among nations, and fostering a culture of peace globally. The day was first declared 43 years ago and serves as a reminder for the world to come together in harmony.
- 201. b** The government appointed Justice Manmohan, who was previously the acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, as its Chief Justice. Justice Rajiv Shakhder, another Delhi HC judge, was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh HC.
- 202. b** Project Tiger uses the M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers, Intensive Protection, and Ecological Status) mobile application for day-to-day management practices. It was used extensively during the 5th cycle of the All-India Tiger Estimation in 2022 to collect field-level ecological data and monitor tiger habitats efficiently.
- 203. b** India signed three agreements under the IPEF during Prime Minister Modi’s visit to the US, which focused on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the overarching IPEF Agreement. These agreements were part of the broader Indo-Pacific cooperation on economic development and sustainability.
- 204. c** The government recently announced the appointment of Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh as the next Chief of the Air Staff. His extensive experience as a fighter pilot and his credentials, including over 5,000 flying hours, make him a suitable candidate for this high-ranking position.
- 205. c** Michel Barnier is internationally recognized for his role as the European Union’s chief Brexit negotiator. Recently, he was appointed as the Prime Minister of France, leading a government under President Emmanuel Macron with a conservative agenda.

- 206. a** Senegalese finance specialist Ibrahima Cheikh Diong was selected as the first director of The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage, as announced by the World Bank. His appointment marks a significant step in managing the fund, which aims to assist countries affected by climate-driven disasters.
- 207. a** Saudi Arabia's King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center (KFSHRC) has performed rather successfully, the world's first fully robotic heart transplant.
- 208. b** Nazira Banoo clinched the gold medal at the 1st Khelo India Women's Taekwondo League Phase 1, which was held in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- 209. c** India achieved a historic moment in the 45th Chess Olympiad held in Budapest by winning gold medals in both the Open and women's sections. This victory marked a significant achievement in the country's sporting history.
- 210. c** World Rhino Day, celebrated on September 22, is a global event dedicated to raising awareness and promoting the conservation of rhinoceros species.
- 211. a** Sri Lanka has elected Anura Kumara Disanayake as its new president, marking the first time in the country's history that a Marxist leader has assumed the role.
- 212. c** The Union Cabinet approved the merger of three ongoing umbrella schemes into a unified central sector scheme called 'Vigyan Dhara' which seeks to promote science and technology capacity building as well as research, innovation and technology development.
- 213. c** Megastar K Chiranjeevi received the Guinness World Records certificate as the most prolific film star in the Indian film industry.
- 214. b** According to the report, the southern Indian states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu collectively account for 30% of India's GDP, highlighting their significant economic contribution after liberalisation.
- 215. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced support worth USD 7.5 million in sampling kits, detection kits, and vaccines for countries fighting cervical cancer, emphasizing India's commitment to global health care.
- 216. b** Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will inaugurate Karnataka government's ambitious "Knowledge Health Innovation Research-City" (KHIR-City) project.
- 217. c** Around 6,000 children have been selected from all government schools in Delhi from classes six and nine based on their academic performances for psychological testing to identify gifted students under "Project Abhishikt".
- 218. b** Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud laid the foundation stone of the Bombay High Court's new complex in Mumbai's Bandra East.
- 219. d** The UN General Assembly has proclaimed 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language.
- 220. a** Indian wrestler Sangram Singh became the first Indian male wrestler to win an MMA (mixed martial arts) fight at the Gama International Fighting Championship Tbilisi in Georgia.
- 221. d** Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve is home to 80% of the one-horned rhinoceros population in India, making it the most significant habitat for these animals. The remaining populations are found in other parks, such as Orang National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary.
- 222. b** India will host the inaugural MAITRI workshop in 2025. This workshop is part of the broader MAITRI initiative, announced at the sixth summit of the Quad nations, which focuses on enhancing maritime capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region.
- 223. b** Wilmington Declaration Joint Statement from the Leaders of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.
- 224. b** US India to setup the world's first multi-chip fabrication unit in Jewar, UP.
- 225. a** After winning the hearts of the audience through its simple yet poignant story, 'Laapataa Ladies' will now be heading to the Oscars. According to a statement released by the Film Federation of India, the Kiran Rao directorial has been declared as India's official entry to the Oscars 2025.

- 226. c** According to S&P Global Market Intelligence projections, India's nominal GDP is expected to nearly double from US \$3.6 trillion in fiscal 2023–24 to over US \$7 trillion by fiscal 2030–31. This significant growth would make India the third-largest economy in the world.
- 227. a** SpaceX plans to launch five uncrewed Starship missions to Mars over the next two years, aligning with the upcoming Earth-Mars transfer window.
- 228. c** India's Chandrayaan-3 mission has identified a 160-km-wide crater near its landing site on the Moon. The discovery, made by the Pragyan rover, provides crucial insights into the Moon's early geological evolution.
- 229. d** LAHDC is excited to announce the establishment of the world's first High Altitude, High Performance Parasports Center in Ladakh.
- 230. b** World Rivers Day is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of September each year to raise awareness about the importance of rivers and encourage global action to protect them. This day emphasizes the environmental, social, and economic significance of rivers across the world.
- 231. a** Harini Amarasuriya, a college professor and first-time lawmaker, was appointed as Sri Lanka's Prime Minister by the newly elected President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. She is the third woman to hold the position, following Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her daughter Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga.
- 232. b** Vietnam has been highlighted as the partner country for the second edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS). This international collaboration aims to showcase not only Uttar Pradesh's trade and culture but also foster international ties with Vietnam.
- 233. d** Kerala secured the top position in the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) 2024 for the second consecutive year, showcasing its dedication to public health and food safety. The State Food Safety Index is an annual ranking released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) that evaluates the food safety performance of Indian states and union territories.
- 234. d** Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport plans to introduce India's first air train system.
- 235. b** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will attend the 9th Annual Meeting of the AIIB in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. This event focuses on infrastructure investment and development, with representatives from several countries.
- 236. b** Dr. Sofie Boons, a senior lecturer and researcher in jewellery design at the University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol, developed a chemical technique to grow a ruby directly in its jewellery setting, marking a world-first achievement.
- 237. a** Vinod Bachchan, a renowned Bollywood producer, was honored with the Global Prestige Award at the House of Lords, UK Parliament, in recognition of his significant contributions to the Indian film industry.
- 238. c** Indian tennis duo Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth won the doubles title in the ATP 250 Hangzhou Open 2024.
- 239. d** India secured the bronze medal by defeating Malaysia 3-0 in the third-place playoff at the Asia Pacific Padel Cup in Bali, Indonesia.
- 240. c** International Red Panda Day is celebrated annually on the third Saturday in September to raise awareness about red pandas, which face the threat of extinction due to habitat loss, poaching, and other factors. In 2024, this day falls on September 21.
- 241. b** In the Asia Power Index Report 2024, published by the Lowy Institute, India has overtaken Japan to become the third most powerful country in Asia. The index measures various factors such as military capability, economic relationships, and cultural influence to rank the power of 27 countries in the region.
- 242. d** The US Departments of State and Homeland Security announced that Qatar met the eligibility criteria for joining the US Visa Waiver Programme, allowing its citizens to travel to the United States without obtaining a visa. Before Qatar, Brunei was the only other Muslim-majority country in the programme.
- 243. c** In a groundbreaking development for the Indian education system, Medha AI, the country's first teacher-assistive AI in Uttarakhand, is set to transform how educators teach and students learn.

- 244. d** State Bank of India (SBI) is aiming to become the first Indian financial firm to cross a milestone of Rs. 1 lakh crore net profit in the next 3-5 years.
- 245. a** The Central Government would soon launch a programme dedicated to urban poverty alleviation, the pilot for which would be set in motion in 25 cities across the country on October 1.
- 246. d** The Supreme Court Collegium recommended Justice Narendar G, who is currently serving as a judge in the Andhra Pradesh High Court, to be appointed as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Uttarakhand. This recommendation was made in light of the upcoming retirement of the current Chief Justice, Justice Ritu Bahri, on October 10, 2024.
- 247. b** Zepto, a quick commerce platform, was ranked first in the LinkedIn Top Startups India List for the second consecutive year in 2024. This annual ranking evaluates emerging companies where professionals aspire to work.
- 248. a** The asteroid that will become Earth's mini-moon is specifically identified as 2024 PT₅. It belongs to the Arjuna asteroid group and will be captured by Earth's gravity for a period of 57 days.
- 249. c** India's first experimental night surfing event took place at Kovalam's Pearl Beach near Chennai. The event was highlighted by the use of floodlights that illuminated the ocean, providing a unique nighttime surfing experience.
- 250. b** This year, the World Maritime Day is taking place on September 26.
- 251. c** Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Girish Chandra Murmu, has assumed chairmanship of the Asian Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (ASOSAI), an international body of 48 SAIs as its members.
- 252. d** After revision, the minimum wage rates for workers in construction, sweeping, cleaning, loading & unloading for unskilled work will be ₹783 a day or ₹20,358 a month, whichever is higher.
- 253. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched three PARAM Rudra supercomputers, developed indigenously under the National Supercomputing Mission.
- 254. d** World's first 3D-printed hotel takes shape at Texas in United States.
- 255. c** Adani Group owned Ambuja Cements Limited has become the world's first cement company to join the 'Alliance for Industry Decarbonization' (AFID), a global alliance of companies across industries to accelerate Net Zero transition in the world.
- 256. d** The Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN) is a new initiative that stems from the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), a framework established by the US in 2022. India was inducted to the MSP in June 2023.
- 257. c** In a significant milestone for India's space sector, TakeMe2Space, a domestic nano-satellite development company, and Azista Aerospace, a satellite development and manufacturing firm, have partnered to establish the country's first POEM (PSLV Orbital Experimental Module) Experience Centre in Ahmedabad.
- 258. a** Sri Lanka all-rounder Kamindu Mendis created history by becoming the first cricketer in the 147 years of Test cricket's existence to hit a 50-plus score in all of his first eight Test matches.
- 259. a** Ministry of Tourism will celebrate the World Tourism Day-2024 on 27th September, with the theme 'Tourism and Peace', highlighting the crucial role of tourism in fostering development and global harmony.
- 260. a** Pulitzer Prize winning author Jhumpa Lahiri has declined to accept an award from New York City's Noguchi Museum after it fired three employees for wearing keffiyeh head scarves, an emblem of Palestinian solidarity.
- 261. a** India gears for hosting World Telecom Standardisation Assembly (WTSA2024)
- 262. c** The Karnataka government unveiled the draft of India's first global capability centre (GCC) policy, aiming at establishing 500 of these centres by 2029 and generating 3.5 lakh jobs.
- 263. a** The 150-year-old trams system in Kolkata will be discontinued by the West Bengal government.
- 264. c** The seventh edition of the Global Aerospace Summit, a premier forum for the world's aerospace supply chain, commenced in Abu Dhabi.

265. a Shigeru Ishiba to become Japan's next Prime Minister.
266. a TAT-1, the world's first transatlantic telephone cable system, which became a remarkable chapter in telecommunications history by enabling the first physical voice link between Europe and America.
267. d Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) is establishing a defence manufacturing plant in Casablanca, Morocco, marking India's first overseas defence factory.
268. a Researchers from Monash University in Australia have developed the world's first bionic eye.
269. b Scotland to host 2026 Commonwealth Games after Australia backed out.
270. c The International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction is celebrated on September 29th to raise awareness and promote action to reduce food loss and waste.
271. a The Andro Village of Manipur has been conferred the prestigious award of one of the Best Tourism Village in Heritage category in the 2024 edition of the Best Tourism Villages Competition organised by the Ministry of Tourism.
272. a The world's largest hydroelectric dam in China called the Three Gorges Dam is a very huge infrastructure project that is affecting the spin of Earth
273. d Spain Builds World's First High-Speed Hydrail Train.
274. b India is now the world's third largest producer and consumer of Ethanol.
275. b At least five African countries are working on what could be the world's first joint "debt-for-nature" swap to raise at least \$2 billion to protect a coral-rich swathe of Indian Ocean.
276. d In a boost for its underwater capabilities, the Indian Navy is likely to commission Vagsheer, its sixth and final Kalvari-class submarine under a ₹23,562-crore programme called Project 75, in December.
277. a India and Uzbekistan signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to assure appropriate protection to investors of the two countries.
278. b Justice Kalpathi Rajendran Shriram was sworn in as the chief justice of the Madras high court.
279. c Udhayanidhi Stalin, the son of Chief Minister M K Stalin, was elevated to the post of Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.
280. c Alexander Dunn from Georgia Tech has been awarded the 2024 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize for his significant contributions to analytic number theory, particularly for solving the Kummer-Patterson Conjecture on bias in cubic Gauss sums in collaboration with Maksym Radziwill.