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JUNE 2024

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** organized the "*National Workshop on SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women - Launch of the 100-Days Special Awareness Campaign*" at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

The event was chaired by the Union Minister of State for Women & Child Development, **Savitri Thakur**, alongside Secretary Anil Malik.

The workshop marks the commencement of a nationwide **100-day awareness campaign** focused on women-centric issues, scheduled from **21st June to 4th October 2024**.

This campaign aims to amplify awareness and outreach on women's empowerment, encompassing enrolment drives and educational sessions nationwide.

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2. The Government of **Maharashtra** has agreed to host the **27th Edition of the National Conference on E-Governance (NCEG)** in **Mumbai** on the 8th & 9th August 2024.

The Conference is organized every year by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and one of the State Governments which hosts the Annual event.

The theme for this year's conference is "**Shaping Secure and Sustainable E-Service Delivery**".

The National Conference is an important annual event in which the National Award for E-Governance (NAeG) is conferred to National Awardees under different categories.

This year's awards will include a total of **9 Gold, 6 Silver, and 1 Jury Award**, recognizing exemplary contributions and innovations in the field of e-governance. The projects were selected from 375 nominations received under various categories.

The senior officials from DARPG, MeitY, Government of Maharashtra, NeGD, MyGov, NIC, Industry Captains from NASSCOM, Start-Ups, and thought leaders in the e-Governance domain will be participating in the 2-day conference.

3. The **Ministry of Education** constituted a **High-Level Committee of Experts** to ensure transparent, smooth, and fair conduct of examinations through the **National Testing Agency (NTA)**, Department of Higher Education.

The committee will make recommendations on:

- Reform in the mechanism of the examination process;
- Improvement in Data Security protocols;
- Structure and functioning of the National Testing Agency.

Chairman: Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Former Chairman, ISRO and Chairman BoG, IIT Kanpur

Members: Dr. Randeep Guleria, Former Director, AIIMS Delhi; Prof. B J Rao, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Hyderabad; Prof. Ramamurthy K, Professor Emeritus, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras; Shri Pankaj Bansal, Co-Founder, People Strong and Board Member- Karmayogi Bharat; and Prof. Aditya Mittal, Dean Student Affairs, IIT Delhi.

Member Secretary: Govind Jaiswal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

The Committee shall submit its report to the Ministry within two months from the date of issue of this order.

The Committee can co-opt any Subject Matter Expert to assist them.

4. The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has introduced two new standards, **IS 18590: 2024** and **IS 18606: 2024**, aimed at enhancing the safety of electric vehicles in the **L, M, and N categories**.

L refers to two-wheelers, while the M and N categories correspond to four-wheelers and goods trucks, respectively.

These new standards focus on the main parts of electric cars, buses, and trucks, especially the powertrain (which includes parts like the motor and transmission).

With these new standards, BIS has raised the bar, now having a total of **30 Indian Standards** dedicated to electric vehicles and their accessories, including charging systems.

BIS introduced IS 18294: 2023, which establishes safety standards specifically for E-rickshaws and E-Karts vehicles. These standards cover various aspects, from construction to functionality, ensuring the safety of both drivers and passengers.

5. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation **Amit Shah** has inaugurated the '**Fast Track Immigration – Trusted Traveller Programme**' (FTI- TTP) at Terminal-3 of **Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi**.

(FTI- TTP) is a visionary initiative of the Government of India, which has been thoughtfully designed for the benefit of Indian citizens and Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) cardholders.

This facility will be available free of cost for all passengers. It is designed for faster, smoother, and safer immigration clearance for international travelers. The program will run on e-gates or automated border gates which will minimize human intervention in the immigration clearance process.

The program will be implemented in two phases. In the first phase, Indian citizens and OCI cardholders will be covered and in the second phase, foreign travelers will be covered. The objective of this program is to make international travel easy and secure by developing world-class immigration facilities through an accelerated immigration pathway for international travelers screened through automated gates (e-Gates).

The FTI-TTP will be implemented through an online portal and the **Bureau of Immigration** will be the nodal agency for fast-track immigration of various categories of travelers under this program.

FTI-TTP will be launched at **21 major airports** in the country. In the first phase, along with Delhi Airport, it will be launched at 7 major airports - Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi and Ahmedabad.

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6. The **Ministry of Coal, Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL)**, initiated **India's first-ever pilot project for underground coal gasification (UCG)** at the **Kasta coal block** in **Jamtara District** of **Jharkhand**.

This first-ever groundbreaking initiative aims to revolutionize the coal industry by using in-situ coal gasification to convert it into valuable gases such as methane, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide.

These gases can be utilized to produce synthetic natural gas, chemical feedstocks for fuels, fertilizers, explosives, and other industrial applications.

In **December 2015**, the Ministry of Coal approved a comprehensive policy framework for UCG in coal and lignite-bearing areas. In alignment with this policy, Coal India selected the Kasta coal block to implement UCG technology tailored to Indian geo-mining conditions. Managed by ECL in collaboration with CMPDI Ranchi and Ergo Exergy Technologies Inc. (EETI) from Canada, this project spans two years and comprises of two phases.

- The first phase, which commenced on June 22, 2024, involves preparing a Technical Feasibility Report through borehole drilling and core testing.
- The second phase will focus on coal gasification at a pilot scale.

7. The **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** launched an **eSankhyiki portal** during the occasion of National Statistics Day 2024, with the objective of establishing a comprehensive data management and sharing system for ease of dissemination of official statistics in the country. The eSankhyiki Portal has two sections facilitating easy access and re-use of data, namely:

- **Data Catalogue:** The catalogue lists the major data assets of the Ministry such as:
 - ✓ National Accounts Statistics
 - ✓ Consumer Price Index
 - ✓ Index of Industrial Production
 - ✓ Annual Survey of Industries
 - ✓ Periodic Labour Force Survey, and Household Consumption Expenditure Survey at one place.
- **Macro Indicators:** It offers time series data of key macro indicators with features for filtering and visualization. It also allows users to download custom datasets, visualizations and access them through APIs, thereby increasing the re-usability of data.

At present, this section includes four major products of MoSPI: National Accounts Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Index of Industrial Production, and Annual Survey of Industries, encompassing the data of the last ten years.

8. **Jayant Chaudhary**, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), has felicitated **32 healthcare professionals** for successfully completing the B1 level of German language training.

The training aims to equip the nurses with the necessary language skills for a successful career and livelihood in Germany.

The Minister highlighted the successful placement of over 58,000 skilled Indians in various countries as part of India's mission to become a global skilling powerhouse.

All 32 candidates cleared the **B1 German Language Training** through TELC (The European Language Certificates).

The two- to three-month comprehensive residential training program was imparted to all the candidates under the Skill India International initiative who have completed their B.Sc. Nursing or the General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) programs.

NSDC International had partnered with **Auxila Academy**, a Takt Group company, for the German language training program and was instrumental in helping them find the right career opportunities in Germany.

9. The Department of Posts, under the Government of India, in collaboration with the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the United States Postal Service (USPS), hosted the '**India Africa Postal Leaders Meet**' from **21st to 25th June 2024**, with the objective of further

strengthening relationships among the administrations of African countries and India in the postal sector.

The inaugural ceremony took place on 21st June 2024 at Hotel Taj Land's End, Bandra, Mumbai.

This is an initiative under the **"South-South and Triangular Cooperation"** program of the Universal Postal Union.

The key theme of the meeting is capacity building, through study visits.

The postal organizations of **22 African countries** in the Global South have sent **42 heads of postal administrations** and other senior management personnel as delegates to participate in this meeting.

The study visits showcase India's successful model of service delivery through its extensive post office network. India Post's unique approach of combining digital services with traditional postal service delivery to maintain the human touch has garnered international attention and inspired the coordination of this meeting by the Universal Postal Union.

During the study visits, India Post demonstrated the delivery of a wide array of services through India Post, including e-commerce parcels, Dak Niryat Kendras (postal centers supporting export), and postal financial services, and the services provided by the India Post Payments Bank.

A special focus has been given to the transformative Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Aadhaar's role in bolstering digital infrastructure in India.

- 10.** India hosted the **64th International Sugar Organisation (ISO) Council Meeting in New Delhi** from 25th to 27th June 2024. The delegates from more than 30 countries and representatives of many international organizations participated in the meeting.

ISO Council nominated India as the Chair of the organization for 2024.

As part of the meeting, India started the series of events with an industrial tour of the international delegates to one grain-based distillery at **Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh** on 24 June 2024 to showcase India's adoption of the latest technology in the production of biofuels and other by-products.

A workshop titled 'Sugar and Biofuels – Emerging Vistas' was organized at Bharat Mandapam. Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy inaugurated the workshop.

Notably, India is the world's largest consumer and second-largest producer of sugar.

International Sugar Organisation (ISO):

It is an UN-affiliated body having headquarters in **London, UK**. It has about 85 countries as members covering almost 90% of sugar production in the World.

It is mandated to bring major sugar-producing, consuming, and trading nations together to bring mutual understanding and a progressive approach in dealing with issues pertaining to the sugar sector. ISO has also been working on biofuels, especially, ethanol as sugarcane is the second major feedstock for ethanol production in the world.

11. The Government of India (GoI) decided to impose **stock limits on Wheat** applicable to Traders/Wholesaler, Retailers, Big Chain Retailers, and Processors for all States and Union Territories to manage the overall food security and to prevent hoarding and unscrupulous speculation.

The Removal of Licensing Requirements, Stock Limits and Movement Restrictions on Specified Foodstuffs (Amendment) Order, 2024 has been issued with immediate effect from today i.e. 24th June 2024, and will be applicable until **31st March 2025** for all States and Union Territories.

Stock limits will be applicable to each entity individually such as:

- **Traders/Wholesaler- 3000 MT**
- **Retailer- 10 MT for each of the Retail outlets**
- **Big Chain Retailer- 10 MT for each outlet and 3000 MT at all their depots**
- **Processors - 70% of Monthly Installed Capacity (MIC) multiplied by the remaining months of FY 2024-25**

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The respective legal entities, as above, will have to declare the stock position and update them regularly on the portal of the Department of Food and Public Distribution and in case the stock held by them is higher than the prescribed limit then they have to bring the same to the prescribed stock limits within 30 days of issue of this notification.

12. Union Minister of Coal and Mines, **G. Kishan Reddy**, and Minister of State for Coal and Mines, Satish Chandra Dubey, launched the **4th tranche of the auction of critical and strategic minerals** at a program, held at Scope Convention Centre, CGO Complex, New Delhi.
- The 4th tranche of the auction included **21 blocks** of critical minerals. Out of these 21 blocks, 11 are fresh blocks, spanning six States: **Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh**.
 - These blocks contain a variety of minerals including Graphite, Glauconite, Phosphorite, Potash, Nickel, PGE, Phosphate, and Rare Earth Elements (REE).
 - As part of this Tranche, 10 critical mineral blocks are on offer as the “second attempt” blocks of previous tranches of auction. These 10 blocks are located in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu and have important critical minerals like Tungsten, Vanadium, Graphite, Glauconite, Cobalt and Nickel.

The Union Minister also handed over certificates to two newly **Notified Private Exploration Agencies** in the program. This is in line with the aim to increase the pace of exploration in the country and to bring advanced technology in the exploration of minerals.

On the occasion, the Minister also announced a scheme for partial reimbursement of exploration expenses of the Exploration Licence holders. Under the scheme, exploration expenditure of up to **50 percent** of cost subject to the upper limit of **20 Crore rupees** will be reimbursed.

The State Governments of Karnataka and Rajasthan are the first States to notify the auction of Exploration Licence. Currently, auctions for 9 exploration licenses are notified by various States.

The scheme of partial reimbursement of exploration expenditure will encourage junior mining companies to participate in the auction for exploration licenses and will help in building a strong exploration ecosystem in the country.

Earlier, the Central Government had launched 3 tranches of the auction of critical and strategic mineral blocks through NIT dated 29th November 2023, 29th February 2024, and 14th March 2024. In these three tranches, a total of 38 critical mineral blocks were notified for auction, bearing thirteen unique critical and strategic minerals. These blocks are located across 14 States and Union Territory.

Note: The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) was amended on 17th August 2023 whereunder the Central Government was conferred the power to grant mineral concession of 24 critical and strategic minerals.

- 13.** The cross-border train service between **Rajshahi, Bangladesh, and Kolkata** will resume after a 77-year hiatus. This announcement has been made following a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and her Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina in New Delhi.

This will be the **4th international train** between India and Bangladesh after **Kolkata-Dhaka 'Maitree Express', Kolkata-Khulna 'Bandhan Express', and New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka 'Mitali Express'**.

The new train service will not only facilitate travel but also create a new communication link with India.

Rajshahi-Kolkata train service was functional before the India-Pakistan Partition in 1947. Currently, hundreds of patients from Rajshahi travel to India for medical treatment daily, and many people visit West Bengal for family reasons. Traders involved in import-export also frequently travel to Kolkata and other states.

- 14.** The **53rd meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council**, led by Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman**, was held in **New Delhi**. The GST Council made the following recommendations relating to changes in GST tax rates, measures for facilitation of trade, and measures for streamlining compliances in GST.

Key changes related to goods:

- **Aircraft Parts and Tools: 5% IGST** on imports of parts, components, testing equipment, tools, and toolkits of aircraft.
- **Milk Cans: 12% GST** on all steel, iron, and aluminum milk cans.

- **Carton Boxes:** GST on cartons, boxes, and cases of paper was reduced from 18% to **12%**.
- **Solar Cookers:** **12%** GST on all solar cookers whether the single or dual energy source.
- **Poultry Machinery Parts:** **12%** GST on parts of poultry-keeping machinery.
- **Sprinklers:** **12%** GST on all types of sprinklers, including fire water sprinklers.
- IGST exemption for Defence imports has been extended for five years, until 30th June 2029. It is applicable to specified items for defense forces.
- To extend IGST exemption on imports of research equipment/buoys imported under the Research Moored Array for the African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction (RAMA) programme subject to specified conditions.
- To exempt Compensation Cess on the imports in SEZ-by-SEZ Unit/developers for authorized operations w.e.f. 01.07.2017.
- Additional changes included exemptions on the supply of aerated beverages and energy drinks to unit-run canteens under the Ministry of Defence, and ad hoc IGST exemptions on technical documentation for AK-203 rifle kits imported for Indian Defence forces.

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Key changes related to services:

- To exempt GST on the services provided by **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV)** to Indian Railway by way of allowing Indian Railway to use infrastructure built & owned by SPV during the concession period and maintenance services supplied by Indian Railways to SPV.
 - To exempt the services provided by Indian Railways to the general public, namely, the sale of platform tickets, facility of retiring rooms/waiting rooms, cloakroom services, and battery-operated car services and to also exempt the **Intra-Railway transactions**.
 - **Accommodation services** exemptions for relief to students and working professionals. Accommodations up to **Rs 20,000/month per person** for stays of 90+ days have been exempted.
15. The **third round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC)** was held between **India and Benin** in Cotonou, Benin from 24th and 25th June 2024 to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

The Indian delegation, led by Additional Secretary (C&WA) **Sevala Naik Mude**, and the Beninese delegation, led by Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **Frank Armel Afoukou**, discussed a wide range of issues, including political, trade and economic, defense, development partnership, capacity building, cultural relations, and more.

Both sides also discussed regional and global issues of mutual interest and agreed to enhance their cooperation in the multilateral forum.

The consultations also focused on the promotion of developmental cooperation and capacity building in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

The bilateral trade and investment between India and Benin have been growing steadily, with total bilateral trade reaching US\$ 1.34 billion during 2022-23.

- 16. The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM)** has set a higher target of **4.5 crore** plantations for the entire **National Capital Region (NCR)** during the financial year **2024-25**.

The decision follows consultations with the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD), as well as the state governments of Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, along with other central agencies, major academic institutions, and higher education/research institutions in the NCR.

Particularly for the State Govt. agencies in the NCR / GNCT of Delhi, a cumulative target of about 4.29 crore plantations has been set during 2024-25 with individual targets of 56,40,593 for Delhi; 1,32,50,000 for Haryana (NCR); 42,68,649 for Rajasthan (NCR); and 1,97,56,196 for U.P. (NCR) respectively.

Various Central Govt. agencies in the NCR also asked to target about 12,07,000 plantations as per the plans for FY 2024-25 as against 6,29,500 for FY 2023-24, i.e., an increase of over 91%. The Commission has been promoting greening and plantation drives through effective urban forestry initiatives, particularly focusing on the Miyawaki Technique.

In 2023, a target of new plantations of about 3.85 crores had been set in the entire NCR out of which nearly 3.6 crores plantations were successfully carried out during the year.

The commission has advised all the road-owning agencies in NCR to target complete greening of the central verges and medians of major trunk roads, roadsides, and open areas along the right of ways.

Note: The Miyawaki Technique is a method of afforestation developed by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki. It involves planting native species of trees close together in a small area to create dense, biodiverse forests.

- 17. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has handed over the **Medium Range-Microwave Obscurant Chaff Rocket (MR-MOCR)** to the Indian Navy at a ceremony held in New Delhi.

Microwave Obscurant Chaff (MOC), a niche technology developed by DRDO's **Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur**, obscures radar signals and creates a microwave shield around platforms and assets, thus reducing radar detection.

It obscures radar signals and creates a microwave shield around platforms and assets, and reduced radar detection.

The special type of fibres has been assembled in the medium-range chaff rocket.

The rocket forms a microwave obscurant cloud in space when fired, spreading over a sufficient area.

18. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully completed six consecutive developmental trials of **High-Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'ABHYAS'** with improved booster configuration from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha.

With this, ABHYAS has successfully completed 10 developmental trials demonstrating the reliability of the system.

The trials were carried out with improved Radar cross-section and visual and Infrared augmentation systems.

ABHYAS has been designed by **DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment, Bengaluru**, and developed through Production Agencies - Hindustan Aeronautics Limited & Larsen & Toubro.

This indigenous system is designed for autonomous flying with the help of an autopilot, a laptop-based Ground Control System for aircraft integration, pre-flight checks, and autonomous flight.

It also has a feature to record data during flight for post-flight analysis. The booster has been designed by Advanced Systems Laboratory and the navigation system by Research Centre Imarat.

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19. The Director General of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) **Manoj Yadava** has launched the mobile application '**Sangyaan App**', designed and developed by the Tech Team of RPF.

The purpose of this app is to provide in-depth information on three new **Criminal Acts**: the *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023*, the *Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) 2023*, and the *Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) 2023*.

Sangyaan App aims to educate and empower RPF Personnel by providing comprehensive information to understand the provisions of both new and old criminal laws while highlighting the relevance of these new acts in the context of RPF operations.

In addition to the three new laws, the app includes other essential legal acts and rules related to railway security. This includes The Railway Protection Force Act, 1957, The Railway Act, 1989, The Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1966 and RPF Rules, 1987.

20. **India** has made a contribution of **1.16 million dollars** to the United Nations for the **promotion of Hindi**.

R. Ravindra, the charge d'affaires of India's Permanent Mission, handed over the cheque to **Ian Phillips**, the director of the News and Media Division of the UN's Department of Global

Communications (DGC) for **Hindi @ UN' project** to expand the use of Hindi in the world organization.

India partnered with the DGC in 2018 when the Hindi @ UN project was launched to enhance the public outreach of the United Nations in the Hindi language and to spread greater awareness about global issues among millions of Hindi-speaking people around the world. The United Nations produces an audio Hindi news bulletin every week on matters relating to the world organization. The global body also maintains X, Instagram, and Facebook social media accounts in Hindi, in addition to a news website.

- 21. NITI Aayog Member Dr. V. K. Paul** inaugurated the '**National Consultation on Legal Environment Assessment for One Health Activities in India**' in the presence of Health and Welfare Ministry Secretary Apurva Chandra in New Delhi.

The two-day workshop aims to discuss several issues including assessing the current legal framework on Identify strengths, gaps, and overlaps in the existing laws and regulations that impact One Health activities.

- 22.** The two-day **Tourism Development Conclave 2024** concluded at the **Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre in Srinagar** with insightful discussions and strategic deliberations aimed at revitalizing tourism in Jammu & Kashmir.

G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant chaired multiple panel sessions focusing on various aspects of tourism development.

He emphasized the importance of creating transformative experiences in Kashmir, highlighting a shift towards experiential tourism encompassing adventure, cultural heritage, and eco-tourism.

He also urged the tourism department to collaborate with travel writers and operators to showcase Kashmir's unique offerings and improve global perceptions of the region.

- 23. Department of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare (DA&FW)**, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, organized a workshop titled "**Unleashing India's Agribusiness Potential through Innovative Agri Value Chain Financing**" in **New Delhi**.

The event brought together senior officials of the Government of India and the State Government, experts, and stakeholders to discuss the dynamics of agricultural financing. The workshop focused on creating awareness, facilitating collaboration, exploring solutions, and empowering participants with innovative agricultural finance solutions.

- 24.** Director General of Armed Forces Medical Services and Senior Colonel Commandant of the Army Medical Corps **Lt Gen Daljit Singh** unveiled the new **Genome Sequencing Lab** at the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) in **Pune**.

The new lab is equipped with cutting-edge **Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)** facilities, featuring advanced "*Nextseq 2000*" and "*Miniseq*" analyzers.

The NGS technology has extensive applications across various healthcare domains, including inherited diseases, oncology, transplant medicine, and reproductive medicine.

This advanced technology significantly enhances the capabilities of the AFMS by enabling precise diagnosis of rare genetic disorders, molecular prognostication of malignancies, and facilitating organ transplantation.

After the Army Hospital (Research & Referral) in New Delhi, where the NGS facility was launched by DGAFMS earlier this year on 23 January 2024, this is the **second** such facility in the Armed Forces.

- 25.** The two-day **India-Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Cruise Tourism Conference** organized in **New Delhi**. The Conference provided a platform for stakeholders to share best practices and policy initiatives toward developing and strengthening the cruise tourism sector in IORA Member States.

The officials and experts from the Indian Ocean Rim Association, and IORA Member States including Bangladesh, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Seychelles, and Tanzania participated in the Conference.

Discussions covered infrastructure development, regulatory issues, sustainable tourism, employment generation, inclusion of women, and business opportunities among others.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):

IORA is an intergovernmental organization established to promote economic cooperation and regional integration among countries bordering the Indian Ocean. It was established on 7 March 1997.

IORA has **23 member states**: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

IORA has **12 dialogue partners**: China, Egypt, the European Union, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Sri Lanka is the current Chair (2023-25).

- 26.** The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** will host its first multinational air exercise, **Tarang Shakti-2024**, in **August 2024**, and is likely to see the participation of ten countries, in addition to a few others acting as observers.

Tarang Shakti-2024 will now occur in two phases: the first in southern India in early August, and the second in the western sector from late August to mid-September.

Countries such as Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, UAE, UK, and the US are expected to send contingents, with Germany showcasing an A-400M transport aircraft, a contender for an IAF tender.

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27. The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated the **National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH), Hyderabad**, a unit under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of Ayush as a WHO Collaborating Centre (CC) for "Fundamental and Literary Research in Traditional Medicine" (CC IND-177).

This prestigious recognition is granted for a period of four years, starting from June 3, 2024. Notably, CCRAS-NIIMH, Hyderabad, joins the ranks as the **third WHO Collaborating Centre** in the domain of Traditional Medicine, following the Institute for Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, and the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi. NIIMH is tasked with assisting WHO in standardizing terminologies for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa, and updating the Traditional Medicine Module-II for the Eleventh edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

Additionally, the WHO Collaborating Centre will support Member States in developing research methodologies for Traditional Medicine.

The Centre will be led by Prof. Vaidya Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General, CCRAS.

NIIMH Hyderabad:

NIIMH, Hyderabad, is a unique institution dedicated to documenting and showcasing medico-historical research in Ayurveda, Yoga Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, Homoeopathy, Biomedicine, and other related healthcare disciplines in India. It was established in 1956.

28. **Union Ministry of Jal Shakti** has introduced an **e-flow (Environmental Flow)** ecological monitoring system. It is designed to facilitate real-time monitoring of river water quality and support the planning and oversight of projects related to river ecosystems.

- It is developed by the **National Mission for Clean Ganga** (Namami Gange).
- It will allow real-time analysis of the water quality of the Ganga, Yamuna, and their tributaries.
- It will also allow monitoring of the Namami Gange program activities at the central level.

E-flow refers to the flow that is required to meet the ecological functions of the flora and fauna present in the water body.

29. The Indian Army has inducted the **Nagastra-1 Loiter Munition**, the country's first indigenous **suicide drone**. It is developed by **Solar Industries' Economics Explosives Ltd (EEL) Nagpur**.

- Nagastra-I can neutralize hostile threats in 'kamikaze mode' with GPS-enabled precision strikes with an accuracy of up to 2 meters.
- Kamikaze refers to members of a Japanese air attack corps in World War II assigned to make a suicidal crash on a target (such as a ship). However, Nagastra-1 is capable of carrying out precision strikes on enemy camps without endangering the lives of soldiers.

- It is equipped with day-and-night surveillance cameras.
- It carries a 1 kg high-explosive fragmenting warhead.
- Its unique features include abort, recover, and reuse, facilitated by a parachute recovery mechanism.

Suicide drones:

Loiter Munition or suicide drones are single-use weapons that fly into their targets and detonate on impact. They are capable of circling above a target and waiting for the perfect moment to strike. They are typically designed to loiter around a target area until a target is located, then attack the target by crashing into it.

30. The **Truenat platform**, a rapid molecular test for the diagnosis of pulmonary, extrapulmonary, and rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis, received appreciation at the recently held 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

Truenat platform:

- It was developed by **Goa-based Molbio**, a point-of-care molecular diagnostics company. It was first launched in 2017.
 - It is a handheld, battery-operated, real-time, rapid molecular test for the diagnosis of pulmonary, extrapulmonary, and rifampicin-resistant **tuberculosis**.
 - It can be deployed in health centers, labs, and fields.
 - It delivers test results in less than an hour and can serve more than 40 diseases.
31. India's **Crocodile Conservation Project** has completed **50 years** in 2024.

India launched its Crocodile Conservation Project in **Bhitarkanika National Park** of Odisha in **1975** with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Three main species of crocodiles found in India are:

- Saltie or estuarine or saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*): Least concern
- Mugger or marsh crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*): Vulnerable
- Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*): Critically Endangered

This family consists of 24 species and includes 'true crocodiles', alligators, caiman, and the gharial. The saltie is found in only three locations in the country today: Bhitarkanika, the Sundarbans, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Note: World Crocodile Day is observed annually on 17th June.

32. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and his **US counterpart Jake Sullivan** chaired the second meeting of the **India-U.S. initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)** in **New Delhi**.

Both resolved to support enhanced collaboration across the governments, industry, and academia, with a particular focus on semiconductor technology and manufacturing, sustainable agriculture, and food security.

They also agreed to increase cooperation in the field of clean energy, pandemic preparedness, and other critical and emerging technologies.

Both agreed to expand engagement with Indian and US investors in the semiconductor industry in India.

Both exchanged views on securing a carrier for the first-ever joint effort between **NASA and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** astronauts at the International Space Station.

33. According to NITI Aayog, the **National Monetization Pipeline (NMP)** has monetized **Rs 3.85 lakh crore** worth of assets in 3 years.

The total target for the first two years i.e. 2021-22 and 2022-23 under NMP was around Rs. 2.5 lakh crore, against which around Rs. 2.30 lakh crore was achieved.

During the financial year 2023-24, against the target of Rs. 1.8 lakh crore, which is the highest among all the four years, the achievement has been around Rs. 1.56 lakh crore.

This achievement in 2023-24 is around **159%** of the achievement in 2021-22.

In terms of the performance of individual Ministries, in 2023-24, the **Ministries of Road Transport and Highways and the Ministry of Coal** were the top two achievers with a total achievement of **Rs. 97,000 crore**.

With regard to achievement of individual Ministries in 2023-24, Ministries of Road Transport and Highways with Rs 40,314 crore, Coal with Rs 56,794 crore, Power with Rs 14,690 crore, Mines with Rs 4,090 crore, Petroleum and Natural Gas with Rs 9,587 crore, Urban with Rs 6,480 crore, and Shipping with Rs 7,627 crore have achieved more than 70% of the target set for them.

NMP was created in **September 2021**, to bring in private sector efficiency and raise money for the central government through operational and revenue-generating infrastructure assets.

34. Union Minister of Food Processing Industries, **Chirag Paswan**, and Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways, **Ravneet Singh**, launched the website and mobile application for the **3rd edition** of the **World Food India 2024**.

The Ministry of Food Processing is organizing, World Food India, the nation's largest food event, to foster collaboration and partnerships among global and Indian food sector stakeholders from **19th to 22nd September 2024**.

The Ministry is also launching the 2nd edition of the Startup Grand Challenge in collaboration with Startup India to give impetus to the growing startup ecosystem and foster innovation.

Note: The first edition of World Food India was held in 2017.

35. President Droupadi Murmu has appointed **Bhartruhari Mahtab**, a seven-term MP from Odisha, as the **pro-tem Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha**.

The President has appointed him, as Speaker pro-tem under **Article 95(1)** of the Constitution, to perform the duties of Speaker till the election of the Speaker.

The President has also appointed Suresh Kodikunnil, Thalikkottai Rajuthevar Baalu, Radha Mohan Singh, Faggan Singh Kulaste, and Sudip Bandyopadhyay under **Article 99** of the Constitution to assist him in administering the oath to newly elected Members of the 18th Lok Sabha till the election of the Speaker.

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha begins on 24th June 2024. The newly elected members will take oath/affirmation on June 24-25. The election of the Speaker is scheduled to take place on June 26.

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Pro-tem Speaker:

- He is a temporary speaker appointed by the President/Governor for a limited period of time.
 - He presides over the sittings of the newly elected house. Usually, the senior member of the house is made the pro-tem speaker.
 - He administers the oath of office to the newly elected Member of Parliament/ Member of the Legislative Assembly.
 - He is responsible for conducting the votes for the speaker and deputy speaker.
 - He also administers the floor test.
36. The Ministry of Defense issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** for the acquisition of **156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH)** named '**Prachand**'.

This procurement includes **90 helicopters for the Indian Army and 66 for the Indian Air Force**.

It is valued at approximately Rs 45,000 crores.

The company has already delivered the initial 15 LCH contracts received in FY22.

The Prachand helicopters are designed to operate at altitudes up to 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), making them ideal for deployment in high-altitude regions like Eastern Ladakh and the Siachen Glacier.

37. Indian Railways has successfully conducted a trial run of the **MEMU (Mainline Electric Multiple Unit) train** between **Sangaldan – Reasi section** of the Udampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project on the world's highest Chenab Rail Bridge.

Chenab Rail Bridge:

- The Chenab Rail Bridge, standing at a staggering 359 meters (about 1,178 feet) above the Chenab River, is now the world's highest railway bridge.
- It surpasses the height of the Eiffel Tower by approximately 35 meters.
- The **1,315-meter**-long bridge is a crucial component of the ambitious USBRL project. This project aims to integrate the Kashmir Valley with India's expansive railway network.

Presently, train services operate from Kanyakumari to Katra and from Baramulla to Sangaldan in the Kashmir Valley.

- 38.** India hosted the **2nd meeting** of the **India-Cambodia Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment (JWGTI)** in **New Delhi**. This meeting marked the first physical gathering of the JWGTI since its institutionalization.

Director General for International Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia, **Long Kemvichet**, and Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, **Siddharth Mahajan**, co-chaired the meeting.

During the meeting, the two nations discussed cooperation in traditional medicine and e-governance, diversification of the trade basket by identifying new products, a bilateral investment treaty, recognition of the Indian Pharmacopoeia, and collaboration in the pharmaceutical sector.

The progress of ongoing efforts for collaboration in Unified Payment Interface (UPI) based digital payments to promote trade and tourism was discussed in the meeting.

Both sides agreed on the need for increased interaction to achieve concrete mutual benefits.

Note: The JWGTI was first held virtually in July 2022.

- 39.** India participated in the **BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) Foreign Ministers meeting** held in **Nizhny Novgorod, Russia**. This is the first meeting of foreign ministers since the expansion of BRICS in 2023.

The two-day meeting chaired by Russian Foreign Minister **Sergey Lavrov** comes ahead of the BRICS Summit slated to be held this October.

Dammu Ravi, Secretary (Economic Relations), at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), led the Indian side at the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting.

The 10 full members of the association include Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa with new members Egypt, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Ethiopia joining the grouping in 2023. Russia took over the chairmanship of BRICS on January 1, 2024.

- 40.** The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav has unveiled a new corporate identity with the launch of a logo of its Infrastructure Investment Trust, **National Highways Infra Trust (NHIT)**.

The launch of a new corporate identity marks a significant milestone in NHIT's evolution.

The new logo aims to bolster NHIT's brand visibility with various stakeholders and align its image with its core values of Accountability, Agility, Continuous Learning, Excellence, Integrity, and Collaboration.

NHIT was registered as a trust with SEBI in October 2020, to support the Government of India's National Monetization Pipeline (NMP). With the completion of three rounds of monetization, the total realized value of all three rounds performed by NHIT stands at Rs. 26,125 crore.

41. The Central Government has released **Rs. 1,39,750 crore** installment of **Tax Devolution to States**. The release, which includes both the regular allocation for June 2024 and an additional installment, is aimed at bolstering state government capacity to accelerate development and capital expenditure.

The **Interim Budget 2024-25** has a provision of **Rs. 12,19,783 crore** towards devolution of taxes to States.

With this release, the total amount devolved (for FY 2024-25) to States till 10 June 2024 is **Rs. 2,79,500 crore**.

States with significant allocations include Uttar Pradesh which stands at 25 thousand crores, followed by 14 thousand crores for Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal nearly ten thousand crore rupees each.

42. The **Union Ministry of Education** has formed a **four-member panel** to revisit the results of over 1,500 students who were given grace marks as compensation for loss of time during the National Eligibility Entrance Test (NEET-UG) for admissions to undergraduate medical courses.

The panel will be headed by a **former UPSC chairperson**.

The committee will submit its recommendations within a week and the results of these candidates might be revised.

The results of medical/dental entrance tests were announced on June 4, and thereafter, aspirants have been alleging multiple issues, demanding a fresh examination.

Many aspirants have also approached courts for relief on the matter. The exams recorded over 24 lakh registrations and 97% attendance.

43. The **8th edition** of the bilateral **Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2024 (JIMEX 24)** was held in Yokosuka, Japan. Indian Navy's Indigenous Stealth Frigate **INS Shivalik** participated in the exercise.

The **Guided Missile Destroyer JS Yugiri** of Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) also participated in the exercise.

Integral helicopters from both navies also participated in the joint exercise.

The exercise includes both harbour and sea phases. The harbour phase comprises professional, sports, and social interactions, after which the two navies jointly hone their

warfighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains.
JIMEX was commenced in 2012.

44. The '**Missile Cum Ammunition Barge, LSAM 13 (Yard 81)**', the **fifth** Barge of 08 x Missile Cum Ammunition Barge project, built by MSME Shipyard, M/s SECON Engineering Projects Pvt Ltd (**SEPPL**), Visakhapatnam for Indian Navy (IN), has been launched at M/s Vinayaga Marine Petro Ltd, **Mira Bhayandar, Maharashtra** (launch site of SEEPL).

The launching Ceremony was presided over by Cmde Manish Vig, General Manager (QA), ND(Mbi).

The contract for building **08 x Missile Cum Ammunition Barge** was signed between MoD and M/s SECON Engineering Projects Pvt Ltd, Visakhapatnam on 19 February 2021. The availability of these Barges would provide impetus to operational commitments of IN by facilitating Transportation, Embarkation, and Disembarkation of articles/ ammunition to IN Ships both alongside jetties and at outer harbours.

These Barges are indigenously designed and built under relevant Naval Rules and Regulations of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).

45. **Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev** became the **Indian Navy's first woman helicopter pilot** during a passing out parade held in the naval air station INS Rajali at Arakkonam in Ranipet district. She became the first woman pilot who will be allowed to fly helicopters such as Sea Kings, ALH Dhruvs, Chetaks, and MH-60R Seahawks.

In another feat, Lt Jamyang Tsewang, the first commissioned naval officer from Ladakh, also successfully graduated as a qualified helicopter pilot.

Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B Rajeev and Lt Jamyang Tsewang are among 21 officers awarded the "Golden Wings" by Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command, at the passing-out parade at INS Rajali.

The Navy has already deployed women pilots for its Dornier-228 maritime surveillance aircraft.

Note: In 2018, flying officer Avani Chaturvedi of the Indian Air Force scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo. She flew a MiG-21 Bison on her first solo flight.

46. The Vice Chief of the Indian Army, Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi, has launched the '**Vidyut Rakshak**', a new Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled integrated generator tracking, protection, and control system. The IoT is a network of interrelated devices that connect and exchange data with other IoT devices and the cloud.

The system is developed by the **Army Design Bureau (ADB)**.

This system also enables fault prediction, and prevention and automates manual operation through a user-friendly interface, saving manpower.

Both the Indian Army and the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT) at IIT Delhi worked together to make Vidyut Rakshak. There was a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Aero India 2023 that made it easier to make this new method.

Vidyut Rakshak has been developed by **Major Rajprasad R S** and was displayed recently during the 'Exercise Bharat Shakti'

The Army also secured a patent for another innovation of Major Rajprasad called the 'Portable Multi-Target Detonation Device', which has already been inducted into the Indian Army.

Note: In 2024, the Indian Army is observing the 'Year of Tech Absorption.'

47. The University Grants Commission (UGC) allowed **Indian universities and higher education institutions (HEIs)** to admit students twice a year, similar to foreign universities.

From the 2024-25 academic session, the two admission cycles will be in **July-August and January-February**.

The biannual admissions are not mandatory, but the decision now provides flexibility to institutions that might want to increase their student intake and offer new programs in emerging areas.

The UGC first attempted this biannual admission process with open and distance learning (ODL), and online mode programmes.

This biannual admission system can apply to PhD, postgraduate and undergraduate programmes.

48. The two-day **Annual Conference of Relief Commissioners/secretaries (Disaster Management) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Civil Defence, Home Guard & Fire Services of State/UTs-2024** held in **New Delhi**.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of India, **Dr P. K. Mishra** chaired the valedictory session.

The two-day conference was attended by more than 300 delegates from State Governments / UTs, Ministries/Departments/Organizations of Central Government, and SDRFs/Fire Services in the States/UTs.

During the two-day conference, various sessions were organized and the experts dwelled upon subjects like Early Warning, Post Disaster Loss Assessment, Roles of Disaster Response Forces, Coastal Hazards, satellite-based early warning on tsunami, storm surges, and cyclones, etc.

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** organizes the Annual Conference of Relief Commissioners of States/ UTs to review their preparedness for dealing with any natural disaster, which may occur during the monsoon period.

NDRF organizes capacity-building conferences for State Disaster Response Forces (SDRFs), Civil Defence, Home Guard & Fire Services of States/ UTs for the preparedness of response forces.

49. The **National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM)** organized a two-day National Conference, '**PRANA**' Protecting Rights and Novelties in ASUS (Mind to Market for Indian System of Medicines [ISM] Professionals) in collaboration with All India Council for Technical Education and Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell to mark its **fourth foundation**.

The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine is the statutory body constituted under the NCISM Act, 2020 vide Gazette notification extraordinary part II section 1 dated 21.09.2020 and which came into force on the 11th of June 2021.

The Commission ensures the availability of adequate and high-quality medical professionals of the Indian System of Medicine (ISM); the adoption of the latest medical research by medical professionals of the Indian System of Medicine; and periodic assessment of ISM medical institutions.

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50. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** attended the annual **G7 summit** held in **Borgo Egnazia (Fasano) in Apulia, Italy** from 13 to 15th June 2024. This summit marked the **50th anniversary** of the G7 group.

Key Highlights of the 50th G7 Summit:

- Leaders decided to promote concrete G7 PGII (Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment) initiatives. This initiative was launched by the US and G7 allies at the 48th G7 Summit in 2022 that aims to narrow the USD 40 trillion infrastructure gap in the developing world. Under this, G7 will mobilize **USD 600 billion by 2027** to deliver infrastructure projects to developing and middle-income countries.
- G7 extended support for the Lobito Corridor in Central Africa and Luzon Corridor and the Middle Corridor.
- The G7 leaders commit to step up efforts to enhance interoperability amongst their AI governance approaches to promote greater certainty, transparency, and accountability.
- The G7 agreed to provide financing of approximately **USD 50 billion** in additional funding to Ukraine by the end of 2024.

Group of Seven (G7):

It is an informal forum that brings together **Italy, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America**. The European Union also participates in the Group and is represented at the summits by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission.

51. The **International Procurement and Supply Chain (IPSC) Conference 2024**, a flagship event of Blue Ocean Corporation, has been held at Taj Lands End in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.

Chief Guest: Sourav Ganguly, veteran cricketer, Chairman of the ICC cricket committee, and former President of the BCCI

Theme: 'India Tomorrow: Economic Supremacy through Supply Chain Transformation'.

The IPSC aims to capitalize on these very prospects by bringing together the industry's very best global thought leaders, innovators, and investors.

This is the first time the IPSC conference has been organized in India.

Earlier, the IPSC conference was hosted across the world in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, London, Doha, and Riyadh.

52. The Chief Justice of India, **Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud**, in the exercise of powers conferred by Clause 4(2) of the Gender Sensitization and Sexual Harassment of Women at the Supreme Court of India (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Regulations, 2013 and all enabling provisions in this behalf, has reconstituted its **Gender Sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee**.

The **12-member** committee will now be chaired by **Justice Hima Kohli**.

The panel comprises Justice B V Nagarathna, Additional Registrar Sukhda Pritam, and senior advocates Meenakshi Arora and Mahalakshmi Pavani.

Other members: Advocate and representative of the Supreme Court Bar Association, as stipulated under Clause 4(2)(c), Soumyajit Pani, advocate-on-record Anindita Pujari, advocate Madhu Chauhan, professor Shruti Pandey, senior advocates Jaideep Gupta and Menaka Guruswamy and Leni Chaudhuri, executive director, University of Chicago Centre in India

53. The **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** has collaborated with **Wipro 3D**, a provider of 3D printing services, to manufacture a **PS4 3D-printed rocket engine**.

The rocket engine powers the 4th stage of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), an expendable launch system designed to place earth observation and Scientific satellites into precise orbits enabling multiple applications like remote sensing, oceanography, cartography, mineral mapping, disaster warning, etc.

The PS4 stage is equipped with advanced navigation, guidance, and control systems. Its adaptability for different kinds of spacecraft missions is enhanced by its ability to support multiple restart capabilities and payload adapters.

54. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has participated in the multi-national exercise **Red Flag 24** held at the **Eielson Air Force Base of the U.S. Air Force in Alaska, United States of America** from 30th May to 14th June 2024.

Ex-Red Flag is a two-week advanced aerial combat training exercise aimed at integrating aircrew in a multinational environment.

Participants from India's side: 8 Rafale fighters, three C-17 transport aircraft, and two IL-78 air-to-air refuellers aircraft.

55. The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has introduced a new numbering series, **160xxxxxxx**, which will exclusively be used for **service/transactional voice calls** by the principal entities.

This initiative is a step towards providing citizens with a way to easily identify such legitimate calls and reduce unsolicited calls from telemarketers using 10-digit mobile numbers. Currently, the **140xxxxxxx** series has been allocated to telemarketers for making promotional/service/transactional voice calls.

140 series will continue to be used for promotional calls.

Service Call:

It means a voice call made to the recipient either with his consent or using a template registered for the purpose, the primary purpose of which is to facilitate, complete, or confirm a commercial transaction that the recipient has previously consented to enter into with the sender; or to provide warranty information, product recall information, safety or security information with respect to a commercial product or service used or purchased by the recipient;

Transactional Call:

It means a voice call that is not promotional in nature and is for the purpose of alerts to its own customers or account holders and information to be communicated by the voice call is time-critical in nature;

Promotional Call:

It means a commercial communication voice call for which the Sender has not taken any explicit consent from the Recipient to make such voice calls to him.

56. The **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)**, a unit of ISRO, has developed the Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) software '**PraVaHa**' for aerodynamic design and analysis.

'PraVaHa' stands for "**Parallel RANS Solver for Aerospace Vehicle Aero-thermo-dynamic Analysis.**"

It can simulate both external and internal flows on various aerospace vehicles, including launch vehicles, and winged, and non-winged re-entry vehicles.

It facilitates initial aerodynamic design studies by evaluating numerous configurations, crucial for optimizing vehicle performance and safety.

PraVaHa has been used extensively in the **Gaganyaan program** for aerodynamic analysis of human-rated launch vehicles, viz, HLVM3, Crew Escape System [CES], and Crew Module [CM]. Currently, the PraVaHa code is operational to simulate airflow for Perfect Gas & Real Gas conditions.

- 57.** The **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** has announced that **IndiGo** will host the **81st IATA Annual General Meeting (AGM) and World Air Transport Summit in Delhi, India in June 2025.**

The decision to host the 81st IATA AGM in India was made at the 80th IATA AGM in Dubai. This will be the third time the IATA AGM has convened in Delhi, having previously visited India in 1958 and 1983.

- 58.** India has participated in the **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS + 20) Forum High-Level Event 2024** held in **Geneva, Switzerland**. This marks the 20 years of progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS.

The Indian delegation was led by **Niraj Verma**, Additional Secretary (Telecom). He a session on 'Harmonizing Global Collaborations in AI Industry: A Roundtable on the Future of AI Standardisation, Regulation and Industry Development', in Geneva, Switzerland.

The event has been co-organized by ITU (International Telecommunication Union), UNESCO, UNDP, and UNCTAD and co-hosted by ITU and the Swiss Confederation, with the support of remote participation.

India also participated in the 'AI for Good' Global Summit held at the International Conference Center Geneva (CICG), Geneva, Switzerland. During the summit, India took over the baton of hosting **WTSA (World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly) 2024 in New Delhi from 15-24 October 2024.**

The WTSA is held every four years and defines the next period of study for ITU-T.

During the summit, the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)**, the premier Telecom R&D center of the Government of India, was awarded **UN's WSIS 2024 "Champion" Award for the project "Mobile-Enabled Disaster Resilience through Cell Broadcast Emergency Alerting"**, recognized under AI, C-7, E-environment, in the category of 'Benefits in all aspects of life - E-environment'.

- 59.** S Krishnan, Secretary of the Electronics and IT Ministry, has inaugurated the indigenous Air Quality Monitoring System (AQ-AIMS) and launched the Air-Pravah App on the occasion of World Environment Day.

These are developed under MeitY-supported technologies.

Under the '**National program on Electronics and ICT applications in Agriculture and Environment**', the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Kolkata** in collaboration with **TeXMIN, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad**, and industry partner **J M Envirolab Private Limited** has developed an outdoor air quality monitoring system to monitor environmental pollutants which includes parameters like PM 1.0, PM 2.5, PM 10, SO₂, NO₂, O₃, CO, CO₂, Temperature, Humidity, etc, for continuous air quality monitoring. The AQ-AIMS comes with a mobile application named "Air-Pravah" for real-time Air Quality Index monitoring. It offers quick setup, real-time data visualization, unit conversions, AQI comparison, multi-device support, data analysis tools, remote monitoring, and automatic updates.

60. The **Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)** has observed its **33rd Foundation Day** to commemorate over three decades of unparalleled contributions towards the Indian technology sector in terms of software exports, as well as towards nurturing a modern tech startup ecosystem.

The event was held at the prestigious Ashok Hotel in New Delhi with the theme of "Positioning Bharat as a Tech Product Nation."

During the occasion, STPI launched a networking and resource discovery platform (**SayujNet**) and STPI Workspace portal (**STPI-Workspace**).

The STPI also announced its initiative towards developing India's sovereign cloud journey under the brand name "Ananta", which will be a hyper-scale cloud made by Indians for Indians.

Two MoUs were also signed:

- The first MoU was signed between **Sabudh Foundation** and STPI with the objective of creating skill-development initiatives and nurturing an entrepreneurial training ecosystem in DeepTech for Engineering Graduates.
- The second MoU was signed between **STPINEXT** initiatives and **DBS Bank India Pvt Ltd** aimed at strengthening the tech startup ecosystem in India.

A report on "Cutting-Edge Tech Forging India as a Software Product Nation" was also released.

Software Technology Parks of India (STPI):

STPI was established and registered as an autonomous society under the Societies Registration Act 1860, under the then Department of Electronics (the present Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology), Government of India on 5th June 1991 with an objective to implement Software Technology Park (STP) and Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) schemes, set up and manage infrastructure facilities. STPI also provides High Speed Data Communication (HSDC) facilities, Incubation facilities, especially to local start-ups/ entrepreneurs.

Director General of STPI: Arvind Kumar

61. The **first** meeting of the **Joint Task Force on Investment (JTFI)** between **India and Qatar** held in **New Delhi** to strengthen investment cooperation.

The Joint Task Force was co-chaired by **Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs**, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, and **H.E Mohamed bin Hassen Al-Malki**, Undersecretary of Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of the State of Qatar.

The Joint Task Force on Investment has reaffirmed the commitment of both Nations to strengthen bilateral relations and to leverage the collective potential for accelerated growth, investment opportunities, and synergistic collaboration across diverse sectors ranging from infrastructure and energy to technology and innovation.

62. The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has launched an initiative to monetize its infrastructure, seeking investments from the **UAE** to sustain and enhance India's expanding national highway network.

NHAI aims to build lasting UAE investor relationships, with positive responses in Dubai and upcoming meetings in Abu Dhabi.

This initiative represents a strategic move to secure sustainable funding for India's highway expansion, attract significant capital, and foster a beneficial partnership for both India and investors.

STATES AFFAIRS

63. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu has inaugurated the '**Chadwick House – Navigating Audit Heritage**' Museum at **Shimla, Himachal Pradesh**.

The museum showcases the evolution and milestones of India's federal audit heritage. Among the exhibits is Chanakya writing the Arthashastra, considered the first documented principles of accounting.

During the freedom struggle, Chadwick House was a favoured residence of Mahatma Gandhi while in Shimla. In 1946, during his visit to Shimla for the Cabinet Mission discussions, once again the Father of the Nation stayed at Chadwick.

Post-independence, it housed the first training school for Indian Audit and Accounts Service probationers in 1950.

64. **Ladakh** has become the **first administrative unit** to achieve Full Functional Literacy under the **ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme)**.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Dr BD Mishra made this announcement during a celebration at Sindhu Sanskritik Kendra in Leh.

The Union Territory has surpassed 97% literacy, marking a major success for the centrally sponsored scheme aimed at empowering adults aged 15 and above with foundational literacy, numeracy, and critical life skills.

ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme (NILP)):

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented from 2022-2027.
- The scheme aligns with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and aims to empower those adults aged 15 years and above from all backgrounds who could not get due schooling and mainstream them with society to be able to contribute more to the growth story of the country.

- It covers five key components: foundational literacy and numeracy, critical life skills, basic education, vocational skills, and continuing education.
- The vision of the ULLAS Scheme is to make Bharat Jan Jan Saakshar, which is based on the spirit of Kartvyu Bodh and is being implemented through volunteerism.

65. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation **Amit Shah** has e-inaugurated **30 smart schools** in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**. Out of these, 9 smart schools are in the Ghatlodiya assembly constituency, 10 in the Vejalpur assembly constituency, 4 in Naranpura, and 7 smart schools in Sabarmati.

These schools have been developed by the Ahmedabad Municipal School Board at a cost of **Rs 36 crore** under the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

More than 10 thousand children will directly benefit from NEP and the lamp of knowledge and education will spread in their lives.

Out of a total of 69 schools in Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency, 59 have become smart schools and the remaining schools will soon be upgraded.

Skill development, vocational training, and digital empowerment have been included in the curriculum of these smart schools. Along with this, the practice of Mathematics, Science Laboratories, Future classrooms, 3-D Educational Charts, 3-D Painting, and many other aspects of Indian Culture have also been included.

66. Ambubachi Mela, an annual Hindu festival, is observed at the **Kamakhya Temple** in Guwahati, Assam. The festival marks the annual menstruation of the presiding Goddess in the Kamakhya Temple. The fair is an occasion to promote menstrual hygiene among visitors through the use of sanitary pads.

During the period of Ambubachi from the seventh to the tenth day of the Hindu month of **Asadha**, the doors of the shrine are closed to all as it is believed that Goddess Kamakhya goes through the annual cycle of menstruation.

On the twelfth day, the doors are opened ceremonially and a big fair is held at the temple premises on that day.

In 2024, the fair has been organized from **22 to 26 June**.

Kamakhya Temple:

- Kamakhya is one of 51 Shakti peethas or holy sites for the followers of the Shakti cult, each representing a body part of the Sati, Lord Shiva's companion.
- The temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the yoni (female genital) symbolized by a rock.
- The temple is situated on the Nilachal Hills, whose northern face slopes down to the Brahmaputra River.
- According to the legends, it was built by the demon king Narakasura but records are available only from 1565 when Koch king Naranarayana rebuilt the temple.

Note: The attainment of womanhood of girls in Assam is celebrated with a ritual called *Tuloni Biya*, meaning small wedding.

67. The Government of India has approved new **Interstate Transmission System (ISTS) schemes** to evacuate **9 gigawatts (GW)** of renewable energy (RE) power from **Rajasthan and Karnataka**.

These schemes will be implemented through Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) mode. These schemes are part of 500 GW RE capacity by 2030 out of which 200 GW is already connected.

- The **power evacuation scheme of Rajasthan Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)** will evacuate 4.5 GW of RE power from Rajasthan. It comprises 1 GW from Fatehgarh Complex, 2.5 GW from Barmer Complex, and 1 GW from Nagaur (Merta) Complex. This power will be transferred to the Mainpuri Region, Fatehpur, and Orai of Uttar Pradesh. The completion period of the scheme is two years. The cost of the scheme is about **Rs.12,241 crore**.
- The **System strengthening scheme of Karnataka** will evacuate 4.5 GW RE power from the Koppal area and Gadag area. The scheme will be completed by June 2027. The cost of the scheme is about **Rs.1,354 crore**.

68. The **Sao Joao festival is observed annually on June 24th June** in **Goa** to commemorate Saint John the Baptist, who baptized Lord Jesus on the river of Jordan and is celebrated at the onset of monsoon. Siolim, a village in North Goa, hosts a traditional canoe parade on the occasion of Sao Joao. The festival is celebrated by jumping into wells and lakes.

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69. The **Indian Army** has opened the **Khalubar War Memorial** in **Ladakh** to mark the 25th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas, falling on 26th July. This memorial, located in the renowned Aryan Valley, commemorates the bravery and sacrifices of soldiers who fought to reclaim the valley during the war.

This opening ceremony was part of the 'Forever in Operations' Division's Pre-Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations as this year, the country will celebrate the **25th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas** on 26 July.

Khalubar, a serene valley near the border, became a focal point during the Kargil War when enemy forces captured it. The area was recaptured by the valiant efforts of Indian soldiers, including Captain Manoj Pandey, whose heroic actions are now immortalized at the memorial. Alongside the military, the local men and women played a pivotal role in the battle, cementing the valley's historical and cultural significance.

70. Kozhikode, known for its rich cultural heritage in north Kerala, has been named **India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature.'** According to this status, the city's cultural history should be celebrated and used to help develop literary ability.

In October 2023, Kozhikode earned a place in the 'Literature' category of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

With this recognition, the Kerala state government designated June 23 as 'City of Literature' Day in Kozhikode for the coming years.

Kozhikode:

- Kozhikode, also known as the city of Zamorins or Calicut during British rule, served as the gateway to the coast for many foreigners, such as Persians, Arabs, Chinese, and eventually Europeans, centuries ago.
- It is famous for being where **Vasco da Gama** arrived in 1498, which was a major event in the Age of Discovery.
- It was given the tag of **"City of Sculptures"** in 2012 because of the various architectural sculptures located in various parts of the city. The city is where the famous martial art style **Kalaripayattu** got its start.
- It is famous for 'Mappilappattu', 'Kolkali', and 'Oppana' which are the traditional art forms of the Muslim communities of Malabar.
- It is the food capital of Kerala with its mouth-watering dishes like the 'Kozhikkodan Biryani', 'Chattipathiri', 'Irachipathiri', 'Elanchi', 'Pazham Nirachathu', 'Unnakkaya' 'Sulaimani' – the special Kozhikkodan lemon tea and others.

71. The state government of **Madhya Pradesh** has approved the establishment of one **Prime Minister College of Excellence** in all the districts of the state. This aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Additional posts have been approved in the selected colleges to establish the Prime Minister College of Excellence in 55 districts of the state.

The **'Bhartiya Gyan Parampara Kendra'** means the Centre of Traditional Indian Knowledge will also be established in each PM College of Excellence.

In order to increase awareness about environmental protection amongst students in Madhya Pradesh, Vidyavans, or educational gardens, will be developed in all government, non-government, and aided colleges.

A drone policy will also be made in the state.

72. Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir, has been officially recognized as a **"World Craft City"** by the World Crafts Council (WCC), underscoring its rich heritage and the exceptional skills of its artisans leading to global acclaim.

Srinagar is one of the ancient cities of South Asia with a continuously recorded history of about 1,500 years. The city generated a wealth of ideas related to arts and crafts and facilitated the exchange of activities in trade, cultural practices, and scientific knowledge.

The achievement follows Srinagar's recognition as a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Creative City for Crafts in 2021.

The city has a registered artisan base of 20,822 craftsmen engaged in different traditional crafts, that are papier-mache, walnut wood carving, hand-knotted carpet, kani shawl, khatamband, pashmina, sozni craft.

According to the census of 2011, the total population of the city falling within the municipal limits is 11.8 lakh.

Note: Indian cities Mamallapuram, Jaipur, and Mysore are already added in the list of World Craft City.

73. The **Cabinet of Madhya Pradesh** has decided that **State Ministers will have to pay their Income Tax** on salaries and allowances, instead of the state government bearing such burden.

The cabinet has taken a decision to strike off the 1972 rule, under which the State government was paying the Income Tax on the salaries and perks of Ministers.

The state government paid Rs 79.07 lakh towards the Income tax of its ministers in 2023-24, whereas the figure for the past five years cumulatively stood at Rs 3.17 crore.

Madhya Pradesh has the capacity of 34 ministers in a house of 230 MLAs.

74. The **Bharat Centre of Olympic Research and Education (BCORE)** has been inaugurated at the **Rashtriya Raksha University in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.**

- BCORE has attained official recognition by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as an academic center promoting Olympic values.
- The center will serve as a hub of knowledge, innovation, and performance in the Indian sports ecosystem.
- It now operates within the esteemed Olympic Studies and Research Centers (OSRCs) network, comprising over 70 academic centers globally dedicated to Olympic studies and research.
- BCORE is committed to promote the Olympism and Olympic Movement in India through multidisciplinary research beyond sports training and performance.
- BCORE stands as the first of its kind in India and South Asia, and the 71st Centre in the world.

75. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav handed over **Indian citizenship** certificates to **three applicants** in the state for the first time under the **Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).**

The father of the first applicants under CAA, Sameer Selvani and Sanjana Selvani, was in Pakistan but they have been living in India since 2012.

The third applicant Rakhi Das is from Bangladesh.

So far, 61 citizens have applied for citizenship in Madhya Pradesh under CAA. At present, their applications are being examined.

- 76. Haryana** Chief Minister Nayab Singh flagged off **50 new electric vehicles** for door-to-door garbage collection in **Gurugram**. With this, the number of such vehicles in Gurugram has now increased to more than 500.

The Gurugram Municipal Corporation is incorporating as many electric vehicles as possible for garbage collection to minimize environmental pollution.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated a cloth bag vending machine under the Single-Use Plastic and Polythene Carry Bag Free Gurugram campaign.

- 77. Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research (CSIR-CIMFR), Dhanbad (Jharkhand)** has hosted its two-day workshop, **CARING-2024**, focusing on the challenges and opportunities in coal gasification.

The event was held at the CSIR-CIMFR Digwadih Campus from 26 June to 27 June 2024.

This workshop, under the CSIR One Week One Theme-Energy and Energy Devices Program, aims to foster collaboration, innovation, and knowledge sharing among participants.

It provides a platform for stakeholders to discuss advancements, address challenges, and explore opportunities in gasification technology, ultimately contributing to India's energy security and sustainability.

- 78. The Uttar Pradesh** government will transform the **Ranipur Tiger Reserve in Chitrakoot** into a premier eco-tourism destination. The plan includes allocating an estimated Rs 38 lakh for upgrading tourist facilities within the reserve and enhancing infrastructure in the surrounding buffer zone.

Ranipur Tiger Reserve is the fourth tiger reserve in Uttar Pradesh and the 53rd nationwide. It is spread over a 230 sq km area.

- 79. Raja Parba Festival of Odisha**, also known as **Swing Festival**, is an annual 3-day festival observed during the month of **Asadha** (usually starts on 14th June and ends on 16th June). This festival is dedicated to honor Earth and celebrate womanhood.

The festival also marks the beginning of the monsoon.

The people of Odisha believe that Bhudevi (Earth), the wife of Lord Jagannath (Vishnu) undergoes her menstrual cycle in these days before the onset of rains.

During the festival, women and girls do not participate in cooking and spend their days on the improvised swings.

- **First Day of festival:** Raja Sankranti or Pahili Raja
- **Second Day of festival:** Mithun Sankranti

- **Third Day of festival:** Bhudaha or Basi Raja
- **Fourth Day of festival:** Vasumati Sanana

It is similar to the **Ambubachi Mela of Assam**.

- 80. Assam** has launched a **Mukhya Mantri Nijut Moina (MMNM) scheme** to promote girls' education and to end child marriage in the state. The scheme will benefit approximately 10 lakh girl students in the state.

Under this scheme, female students enrolled in higher secondary education will get Rs 1000 per month from the government.

For girls, students admitted to a three-year or four-year degree graduation course will receive Rs 1200 per month.

Girl students enrolled in Post Graduation or B.Ed degree will get Rs 2500 per month.

The scheme is likely to cost the state government Rs 1500 crore for the next five years. The state government has allocated Rs 300 crore for the first year.

- 81. Gujarat** won the **"1st Rank"** award for the highest wind power installed capacity at a ceremony held in New Delhi under the aegis of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India.

Gujarat had 11,823 MW of installed wind power capacity at the end of May 2024.

Gujarat is followed by Tamil Nadu (10,743 MW) and Karnataka (6312 MW).

Gujarat is second to Rajasthan (22,180 MW) in solar power with an installed solar power capacity of 14182 MW.

Gujarat has a fixed target of achieving a cumulative 100 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030.

- 82. Punjab Police**, in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs), has launched **'Mission Nishchay'** to promote community participation to curb the menace of drugs.

The mission will carry out a one-week drive against drugs in the **Fazilka district**. They will reach out to residents of as many as 42 villages along the India-Pakistan border to gather actionable intelligence about the demand and supply of drugs.

- 83.** The Union Government has approved the **Uttarakhand** government's proposal to rename **Joshimath** tehsil in Chamoli district as **Jyotirmath**, and **Kosiyakutoli** tehsil in Nainital district as **Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham**.

Jyotirmath:

It is believed that the area was originally called Jyotirmath after **Adi Guru Shankaracharya** visited it in the **8th century** to perform penance under the Amar Kalpa tree and attain enlightenment (Divya Gyan Jyoti).

It serves as the gateway to **Badrinath Dham**, one of the most significant pilgrimage destinations in Hinduism.

Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham:

It has been renamed Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham in honor of **Baba Neem Karoli Maharaj's** ashram located there.

- 84. Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the new campus of **Nalanda University at Rajgir, Bihar**. The University is conceived as a collaboration between India and East Asia Summit (EAS) countries.

The Nalanda University Campus has two Academic Blocks with 40 Classrooms having a total seating capacity of around 1900. It has two auditoriums having a capacity of 300 seats each, a student hostel with a capacity of around 550 students, and various other facilities including an International Centre, an Amphitheater that can accommodate up to 2000 individuals, a Faculty Club and a Sports Complex among others.

The Campus is a 'Net Zero' Green Campus. It is Self-Sustainable with solar plants, domestic and drinking water treatment plants, a water recycling plant for reusing wastewater, 100 acres of water bodies, and many other environment-friendly facilities.

The original Nalanda University, established around 1600 years ago, is considered to be amongst the first residential universities in the world.

The ruins of Nalanda were declared as a **UN Heritage Site** in **2016**.

- 85. The International Finance Corporation (IFC)** has pledged **USD 105 million** to part finance a **550-megawatt peak (MWp)** solar power project in **Bikaner, Rajasthan**, which is being developed by Canada-based Brookfield Asset Management Ltd.

This will help boost India's renewable energy capacity and support climate goals.

This is IFC's first investment in Asia and the Pacific using an innovative hybrid offtake structure where the project sells the power generated to C&I (Commercial & Industrial) consumers under long-term corporate PPAs (Power Purchase Agreements) and merchant markets via exchange.

The project will be connected to the inter-state transmission system section of India's green energy corridor.

- 86. The Army Hospital (Research & Referral)** has opened a state-of-the-art **skin bank facility**, a first-of-its-kind to be established within the Armed Forces Medical Services, in **New Delhi**.

This initiative aims to revolutionize the treatment of severe burn injuries and other skin-related conditions among service members and their families.

The new skin bank will serve as a centralized hub for the collection, processing, storage, and distribution of skin grafts, providing a critical resource for military medical centers across the country.

The skin bank will be staffed by a team of highly-trained medical professionals, including plastic surgeons, tissue engineers, and specialized technicians.

- 87.** The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the development of a Major Port at **Vadhavan** near Dahanu in **Maharashtra**.

The Vadhavan Port will be developed as an all-weather **Greenfield deep draft** major port in Vadhavan, Palghar District, Maharashtra.

The Project will be constructed by **Vadhavan Port Project Limited (VPPL)**, an SPV formed by Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB) with a shareholding of 74% and 26%, respectively.

- The total project cost, including the land acquisition component, is **Rs.76,220 Crore**.
- The Port will comprise nine container terminals, each 1000 meters long, four multipurpose berths, including the coastal berth, four liquid cargo berths, a Ro-Ro berth, and a Coast Guard berth.
- The Project involves the reclamation of 1,448 hectares of area in the sea and the construction of 10.14 km of offshore breakwater and container/cargo storage areas.
- The Project will create a cumulative capacity of 298 million metric tons (MMT) per annum, including around 23.2 million TEUs (Twenty-foot equivalents) of container handling capacity.
- The Project is aligned with the objectives of PM Gati Shakti's program.

The cabinet also approved establishing the road connectivity between the Port and National Highways by Ministry of Road Transport & Highways and rail linkage to the existing rail network and the upcoming Dedicated Rail Freight Corridor by Ministry of Railways.

- 88.** **Uttar Pradesh** will establish the **world's first conservation and breeding centre for Asian king vultures or red-headed vultures** in **Maharajganj**.

The facility will improve the population of critically endangered species listed in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list since 2007.

The centre is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre.

Asian king vultures are endangered due to the loss of their habitats and the excessive use of diclofenac, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug, in domestic animals, which becomes poisonous for vultures. The center aims to ensure the good health of growing vultures and provide them with a pair. Once a female lays an egg, the pair will be left free in their natural environment.

89. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the **Janata Bhawan Solar Project**, a **2.5-MW** power generation capacity grid connected to rooftop and ground-mounted solar PV system, at a ceremony held in Guwahati.

This project would yield an average of 3 lakh units of electricity monthly and the investment amount of Rs.12.56 crore is projected to be recovered within a period of 4 years with monthly savings standing at approximately Rs.30 lakhs.

With this launch, the **Assam Secretariat Complex** became the first-ever civil secretariat in the country that relies entirely on solar-generated electricity for daily consumption. With a lifespan of 25 years, this solar plant will cut down 3,060 metric tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

90. The **Delhi Airport**, also known as **Indira Gandhi International Airport**, has introduced the **Self-Service Bag Drop (SSBD) mechanism** to enable passengers to drop in their luggage, collect tags, and print boarding passes to complete check-in in less time.

With this new step, the Indira Gandhi International Airport has become the **first** such facility in the country to offer such a solution after Canada's Toronto Airport.

The airport has installed around 50 SSDB units across Terminal 1 and Terminal 3 for passengers, and they are available with three airlines – Air India, IndiGo, and Air India Express.

91. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the '**Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K**' event at **Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC)** in **Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir**.

During the event, he laid the foundation stone and inaugurated **84** major developmental projects valued at more than **Rs 1,500 crore**. The inaugurations include projects related to road infrastructure, water supply schemes, and infrastructure in higher education, etc. Additionally, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for projects like the improvement of the Chenani-Patnitop-Nashri Section, the development of Industrial Estates, and the construction of 06 Government Degree Colleges.

He launched the **Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture & Allied Sectors (JKCIP) Project** worth Rs 1,800 crores. The project will be implemented in 90 Blocks across 20 districts of J&K and will have the project outreach of 300,000 households covering 15 lakh beneficiaries.

He also distributed appointment letters to more than 2000 persons appointed in government service.

92. S Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) inaugurated the **first National Additive Manufacturing Symposium (NAMS) – 2024** to provide an overview of the Additive Manufacturing (AM) ecosystem in India.

The event featured the release of the Additive Manufacturing Landscape Report and unveiled an indigenously developed additive manufacturing machine.

The National Strategy for Additive Manufacturing (NSAM), released in 2022, embodies a comprehensive vision aimed at harnessing the full potential of this transformative technology to drive industrial growth, innovation, and inclusive development.

Currently, seven centers dedicated to AM technologies are operational, focusing on areas such as optical chip packaging, medical devices, and 3D food printing.

NAMS-2024 saw participation from diverse stakeholders including industry associations like ELCINA and ICEA, government ministries, state representatives, and international companies such as L3D, Divide By Zero Technologies, EOS GmbH, Stratasys Ltd., Hewlett-Packard Company, NIKON SLM Solutions, General Electric and Philips Additive.

- 93.** The **Uttar Pradesh** government has unveiled its plans for the **MotoGP** event as it will be hosted by the city of **Noida** from **2025 until 2029**. The state government has collaborated with **Spain's Dorna Sports** and the Indian partner which is **Fairstreet Sports**. to organize the event.

Initially, the event was to take place in 2024 but resulted in postponement due to weather conditions and is now slated for March 2025.

As per the agreement, the UP government will pay **Rs.80 crore** to Dorna Sports as licensing fee.

In 2023, the MotoGP event was held at Buddha International Circuit in Greater Noida. Italy Marco Bezzecchi emerged as the winner in the event.

- 94.** '**Nakshatra Sabha**', India's first-of-its-kind astro-tourism campaign, was organized by the **Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board** in association with the leading private astro-tourism company, Starscapes at the **George Everest Peak** in **Mussoorie**.

It aims to attract astronomy enthusiasts, adventurers, and travelers to marvel at the wonders of the universe while enjoying the natural beauty of Uttarakhand.

The state is host to popular Hindu pilgrimage sites like Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri, Yamunotri, etc which attract lakhs of pilgrims from the country annually.

- 95.** The **Indore constituency in Madhya Pradesh** has set a new record with the highest-ever number of **NOTA (None of the Above)** votes polled at **218,674**. This is the new record for the highest votes secured by NOTA.

The option of NOTA was introduced in **2013**, which gives voters the option to not select any of the contesting candidates.

- 96.** **Haryana Police** has secured the **first position** in the country in **blocking mobile numbers** involved in cybercrime.

According to the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, a total of 5 lakh 46 thousand mobile numbers involved in cybercrime were blocked across the country from 1st January to 31st April this year, out of which 1 lakh 11 thousand 349 mobile numbers were blocked by Haryana Police.

This is the second major achievement of Haryana Police at the national level regarding cybercrime control.

- 97. Bhajan Lal Sharma**, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, has announced that the state government will develop **the Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit** with an investment of **Rs 100 crore**.

This announcement was made during the inauguration of the Maharana Pratap Jayanti celebration in Udaipur, where the 484th birthday of the legendary Maharana Pratap of Mewar was celebrated on 9 June 2024 (according to the Hindu calendar).

Under the project, the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation will develop museums and basic amenities for tourists and improve the overall connectivity to these places.

The Mewar Complex Circuit was launched by the Rajasthan Government in 2005 with the financial assistance of the central government to develop the tourist spot in the region.

The two phases of the Mewar Complex circuit have been completed and the third phase of the project has been renamed as the Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit.

- 98. The Nagi and Nakti Bird Sanctuaries** in **Bihar** have been recognized as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. This brings the total number of such wetlands in India to **82**.

Bihar now has three Ramsar sites. The first one was Kanwar Lake in Begusarai district, which was declared a Ramsar site in 2020.

Nagi Bird Sanctuary: It was notified as the **81st Ramsar Site** of India. The Nagi wetland area spread over 791 hectares in the Jamuai district of Bihar, is a man-made site created by constructing a dam on the Nagi River.

Nakti Bird Sanctuary: It is the **82nd Ramsar site** in India. It is also a man-made site created by Nakti Dam and is spread across 332 hectares. It is near the Nagi Bird Sanctuary and is also located in the Jamuai district of Bihar.

- 99. The 18th edition** of the **Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF - 2024)** will be held at the National Film Development Corporation – Films Division Complex, Mumbai from June 15 to June 21, 2024.

The film gala, which showcases non-feature films (documentary, short fiction, and animation) will be at the FD-NFDC Complex in Mumbai.

Besides, MIFF screenings will also be held in Delhi at Sirifort Auditorium, Chennai at Tagore Film Centre, Pune at NFAI Auditorium, and Kolkata at SRFTI Auditorium.

The 2024 edition will open with the screening of National Geographic's documentary **"Billy & Molly: An Otter Love Story"**.

The Closing Film of the festival is the film that wins the Golden Conch and will be showcased on 21st June 2024.

DOC Film Bazaar is being organized for the first time, to help boost film production by providing a platform for filmmakers to find buyers, sponsors, and collaborators for their projects.

Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF):

MIFF is the oldest and largest film festival for non-feature films (Documentary, Short Fiction & Animation) in South Asia and a premier international event of the documentary film world, since it started in 1990. It is a biennial event organized once in 2 years.

It is organized by the National Films Development Corporation of India (NFDC), the apex body of filmmaking in India, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, MIFF remains a cornerstone of the Indian cultural landscape.

100. Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) President and its Legislature Party Leader **Prem Singh Tamang** has been sworn-in as the **Chief Minister of Sikkim** for the **second time**.

State Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya administered him oath of office and secrecy. The Governor also administered the oath of office and secrecy to 11 Cabinet Ministers along with the Chief Minister.

101. The **Telugu Desam Party (TDP)** national president **N. Chandrababu Naidu** has been sworn in as the **Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh** for the **fourth term**.

Governor S Abdul Nazeer has administered him the oath of office and secrecy along with 24 other members.

The Cabinet has three women ministers, 12 members from Other Categories, 8 Backward Class, 2 Scheduled Caste, one Scheduled Tribe, and one Muslim.

The swearing-in ceremony was held near Kesarapalli IT Park at Gannavaram in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh.

N. Chandrababu Naidu served as Chief Minister from 1995 to 2004 of Andhra Pradesh before its bifurcation. He was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1978.

TDP along with the Jana Sena Party (JSP) and the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) bagged 164 out of the **175 seats** in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly. The TDP won 135 seats, with the JSP and BJP winning 21 and 8 seats, respectively.

102. **Visakhapatnam Port, Andhra Pradesh** has been ranked **19th in the Container Port Performance Index 2023**. The World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence developed the 4th edition of the CPPI 2023.

The index rates the effectiveness of container ports around the world, mainly looking at how long ships stay in port. This index is an important standard in the maritime business because it shows how productive and well-run ports are.

Mundra Port, Gujarat run by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) has been ranked **27th** in the index.

A total of **12 Indian ports** were featured in the CPPI 2023.

Globally, **Yangchan Port (China)** and Port of Salaah (Oman) ranked at 1st and 2nd position respectively.

103. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister **Dr. Mohan Yadav** has launched the **PM Shri Tourism Air Service** to enhance connectivity for tourist destinations.

Eight cities of the state including Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur, Rewa, Ujjain, Gwalior, Singrauli, and Khajuraho will be connected through air service.

The PM Shri Tourism Air Service is being operated by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board on a Public Private Partnership basis through Jetserve Aviation Private Limited.

104. Mizoram has hosted a two-day **State Sports Conclave** from the 13th to 14th June 2024 in Aizawl. The theme of the conclave is **"Vision 2036"**.

The conclave aims to haunt and nurture young talents so that more athletes and players from Mizoram could participate in the forthcoming Olympics in 2036.

105. Pema Khandu took oath as the **Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh** for the **third consecutive term** at a ceremony held at the DK State Convention Centre in Itanagar.

He first became the CM of Arunachal Pradesh in 2016.

Chowna Mein was sworn in as the deputy Chief minister for the second term.

Arunachal Pradesh Governor **KT Parnaik** administered the oath to Pema Khandu and Chowna Mein along with the other 10 ministers.

The ten other cabinet ministers include Biyuram Wahge, Nyato Dukam, Gabriel Denwang Wangsu, Wangki Lowang, Pasang Dorjee Sona, Mama Natung, Dasanglu Pul, Balo Raja, Kento Jini, and Ojing Tasing.

In the recently concluded Andhra Pradesh assembly election, simultaneously with the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP won 46 out of the **60 seats**.

106. Kerala has introduced **Artificial Intelligence (AI) learning** in the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) textbook for Class 7 students. This aim is to familiarize over 4 lakh students with AI in the upcoming academic year, marking a significant step towards enhancing technological education in the state.

This move will impact over 4 lakh students across Kerala, who will now have the opportunity to delve into the realm of AI in the upcoming academic year.

107. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), inaugurated the **GST Bhawan**, an official complex of CGST Rohtak Commissionerate at **Rohtak, Haryana**.

The newly inaugurated GST Bhawan is easily accessible to help GST taxpayers and is at the center of connectivity to the main districts of Haryana.

The inauguration of the project in Amrit Kaal showcases the strength of New India.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

108. The **United States of America (USA)** has been hosting the **48th edition** of the **Copa América**, the quadrennial international men's soccer championship organized by South America's football ruling body CONMEBOL, from **20th June to 14th July 2024**.

- This is the second time in the 108-year history of the Copa America Cup that the event is being held outside South America.
- In 2016, the United States hosted the Copa America Cup.

The opening match was held at **Mercedes-Benz Stadium** in Atlanta, Georgia, while the final will be held at **Hard Rock Stadium** in Miami Gardens, Florida.

The tournament includes sixteen teams, ten from CONMEBOL and six from CONCACAF.

109. The conservation status of the **Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*)** has been changed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on its Red List of Threatened Species from **'Endangered' to 'Vulnerable'**, reflecting a significant increase in its population through conservation efforts.

The population of the lynx, found in Spain and Portugal, has increased exponentially from 62 mature individuals in 2001 to **648 in 2022**.

At present, the total population, including young and mature lynx, is estimated to be more than 2,000.

Since 2010, more than 400 Iberian lynx have been reintroduced to parts of Portugal and Spain. The Iberian lynx now occupies at least 3,320 km², an increase from 449 km² in 2005.

Note: 2024 marks the 60th anniversary of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, which was set up in 1964.

110. Denmark, a major pork and dairy exporter, will introduce a **tax on livestock carbon dioxide emissions from 2030**. This will make Denmark the first country to introduce a real CO₂ tax on agriculture.

The deal proposed taxing farmers 300 Danish crowns (\$43.16) per tonne of CO₂ in 2030, increasing to 750 crowns by 2035.

Farmers will be entitled to an income tax deduction of 60%, meaning that the actual cost per tonne will start at 120 crowns and increase to 300 crowns by 2035, while subsidies will be made available to support adjustments in farm operations.

The tax could add an extra cost of 2 crowns per kilo (2.2 pounds) of minced beef in 2030. A tax was first proposed in February 2024 by government-commissioned experts to help Denmark reach a legally binding 2030 target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 70% from 1990 levels.

111. China's Chang'e-6 lunar probe has landed back on Earth in the northern Chinese region of Inner Mongolia. With this, China has become the **first country** to bring back samples from the **far side of the moon**.

The capsule carrying lunar soil collected earlier in the month by the probe after a successful landing on the moon's South Pole-Aitken Basin, an impact crater on the side of the Moon that always faces away from Earth.

The Chang'e-6 probe was launched on May 3 on a Long March 5 rocket from the Wenchang Satellite Launch Center on the southern island of Hainan. The samples will be transported by air to Beijing for analysis.

Far side of the Moon:

It refers to the hemisphere of the Moon that always faces away from Earth (hence also referred to as the dark side of the Moon). This happens because the Moon is tidally locked with Earth due to gravitational pull. It has a thicker crust, more craters, and fewer lava plains than the near side.

112. Paraguay has become the **100th country** to join as a full member of the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**. The country has handed over the Instrument of Ratification, during the meeting of Ambassador Fleming Raul Duarte of Paraguay with the Head of Depository, Joint Secretary in the Ministry, Abhishek Singh in New Delhi.

International Solar Alliance (ISA):

The ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France to mobilize efforts against climate change through deployment of solar energy solutions. It was conceptualized on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015.

Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana

Director-General: Ajay Mathur

113. The Dubai Art Centre, one of the city's oldest art institutions, hosted the **"Hunar" exhibition**, a captivating display of Indian folk and tribal art. The exhibition highlights the rich cultural heritage of India's folk and tribal art forms.

Folk art, often associated with rural communities, encompasses a wide range of themes, while tribal art is specifically tied to indigenous communities, reflecting their unique customs, rituals, and deep connection to nature.

The exhibition is organized by **Videsha Pandey**, an advocate for underrepresented Indian art forms.

The exhibition features a diverse range of works, including a Ramayana painting depicting all seven chapters of the epic.

The exhibition features various artistic styles from across India, including Aipan art from Uttarakhand, Madhubani art from Bihar, and Warli art from Maharashtra.

The exhibition also features vibrant murals of Kerala, and intricate Muria art of Chhattisgarh, each piece offering a glimpse into the soul of Indian traditions.

The exhibition provides a unique opportunity for art enthusiasts in Dubai to immerse themselves in the diverse world of Indian folk and tribal art, experiencing firsthand the cultural richness and artistic heritage of India.

114. South Korea, the US, and Japan launched the first trilateral multi-domain exercise. The three-day exercise, named **Freedom Edge**, was organized on the southern island of Jeju in South Korea.

The exercise comes amid efforts to deepen security cooperation against threats from North Korea by its deepening ties with Russia.

The exercise focuses on ballistic missile defense, air defense, antisubmarine warfare, search and rescue, maritime interdiction, and defensive cyber training.

115. Kathmandu (Nepal) hosted a two-day **International Tourism Fair** to promote global tourism, sustainable development, and cultural exchange at the Bhrikutimandap Exhibition Hall.

Nepal's Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation, **Hit Bahadur Tamang** inaugurated the event.

The event is organized with the support of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City in collaboration with the Nepal Tourism Board and other associations.

The expo aims to bring together tourism-related businesses like hotels, resorts, homestays, travel/tour/trekking/mountaineering agencies, airlines, and stakeholders from both domestic and international sectors to promote Nepal's overall tourism and bring in information on tourism from other popular destinations like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Dubai, Bhutan, India, and others.

The **Government of Bihar** participated in the expo to share about opportunities in the Guru Circuit, Jain Circuit, Ramayan Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, and Ecotourism in Valmiki Tiger Reserve.

The expo features panel discussions on various topics related to tourism. These discussions delved into the multifaceted aspects of Nepal's tourism, paving the way for addressing current tourism policies, challenges, and solutions.

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116. Paris hosted the **Eurosatory 2024**, the world's premier defense and security expo, at the expansive Paris Nord Villepinte Exhibition Centre from **17th June to 21st June 2024**.

The event featured more than 40 national pavilions, showcasing new equipment and innovative solutions.

Additionally, a dedicated zone for helicopters displayed models such as the Eurocopter Tiger, NH90 Caiman, H160M Guepard, H135, Apache, Black Hawk, and Chinook.

117. Russian cosmonaut **Oleg Kononenko** has become the first person to spend **1,000 days** in space. The 59-year-old achieved the milestone on 4th June 2024, having made five journeys to the International Space Station (ISS).

His current trip to the ISS began on September 15, 2023, alongside NASA astronaut Loral O'Hara and compatriot Nikolai Chub.

In February 2024, he surpassed the record of 878 days set by his colleague Gennady Padalka for the longest amount of time in space.

118. South Korea, India, the United States, Japan, and the European Union have launched a **Biopharmaceutical Alliance** in response to drug supply shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The announcement was made at the inaugural meeting of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance, held in San Diego, California, during the Bio International Convention 2024, the world's largest biopharmaceutical exhibition.

The primary objective of the alliance is to ensure a reliable and sustainable supply chain for biopharmaceuticals.

The alliance members agreed to:

- Harmonize bio policies, regulations, and research and development (R&D) support measures across member countries.
- Work collaboratively to create a comprehensive map of the pharmaceutical supply chain to identify and address potential vulnerabilities.
- Foster greater collaboration in biopharmaceutical research and development to innovate and improve production processes and product availability.

119. The UN General Assembly has elected five non-permanent members to the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** for the 2025-2026 term.

Somalia (Africa), Pakistan (Asia), Panama (Central America), Greece (Europe), and Denmark (Europe) won elections at the General Assembly.

Somalia received 179 votes, Pakistan 182, Panama 183, Greece 182, and Denmark 184, meeting the criterion of obtaining two-thirds of the votes to replace Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland.

The new members will serve as non-permanent UNSC members from **January 1, 2025, to Decem 31, 2026.**

Pakistan previously served seven times as a non-permanent UNSC member, Panama five, Denmark four, Greece twice, and Somalia once.

In the UN Security Council, which has five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US, there are also 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms. Five of the non-permanent members are elected every year.

Candidates must receive two-thirds of the votes, which corresponds to 129 votes out of the 193-member General Assembly.

120. Portugal has planned to adapt its golden visa scheme to allow wealthy foreigners seeking residency rights to invest in affordable housing for locals or accommodation for migrants.

The scheme, called a **“solidarity visa”**, would complement an existing program, which since 2012 has offered non-EU nationals who invest in Portugal the right to live in the country. The golden visa scheme has attracted more than 7.3 billion euros (\$7.94 billion) of funds since its launch.

121. The East Asia Summit Senior Officials’ Meeting (EAS SOM) and the ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials’ Meeting (ARF SOM) were held on 7-8 June 2024 in **Vientiane, Lao PDR**.

Secretary (East) **Jaideep Mazumdar** represented India in the meeting.

The EAS SOM was chaired by Deputy Foreign Minister of Lao PDR, H.E Mr. Thongphane Savanphet.

The counterparts from 18 EAS Participating Countries (10 ASEAN Member States and 8 Dialogue Partners of ASEAN namely, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, RoK, Russia, and the US) and Timor-Leste took part in the EAS SOM.

Key issues discussed included Indo-Pacific peace, maritime security, and regional conflicts. He emphasized EAS’s role in promoting stability and highlighted India’s maritime security initiatives.

He also held bilateral meetings with counterparts from several countries, discussing regional cooperation and shared perspectives.

122. Israel Aerospace Industries, a world-class aerospace and defence leader, has introduced its new **“Deep Stand-off”** long-range air-launched ballistic missile named **“AIR LORA.”**

The new missile demonstrated its game-changing capabilities in a fire test launched from an F16.

The AIR LORA is a long-range, Air to Ground Missile (AGM) developed for strike missions against high-quality and well-protected targets.

It can be launched from fighter jets and bomber aircraft.

It is capable of hitting a target with supersonic velocity from deep stand-off ranges within a few minutes – providing quick response against Time Critical Targets (TCT) while maintaining low collateral damage.

123. South Korea has officially launched its space agency, the **Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA)**, to lead policy and industrial development in its aerospace sector.

The country plans to make a Mars landing by 2045 and spend 100 trillion won (\$72.6 billion) until then on space exploration.

The country’s first lunar lander is planned for 2032. South Korea plans at least three more space launches by 2027 and has plans to launch military satellites.

124. The **21st Shangri-La Dialogue**, Asia-Pacific's premier defense summit, has been held at the Shangri-La Hotel in **Singapore** from 31 May to 2 June 2024.

The summit has been organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and the Singapore government.

The summit addresses Asia-Pacific security challenges, fostering discussions among defense ministers, officials, and NGOs. The dialogue aims to create a utopian environment for regional security solutions.

The summit gathered over 100 delegates worldwide.

Shangri-La Dialogue:

The Shangri-La Dialogue is Asia's premier defense summit. It is an inter-governmental security forum held annually by a London-based independent think tank, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). It was launched for the first time in 2002 at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

125. The **European Space Agency (ESA)** has launched the **Earth Cloud Aerosol and Radiation Explorer (EarthCARE)** satellite mission via SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, the United States of America (USA).

EarthCARE is an 800-million-euro (\$870 million) ESA-led mission to **study atmospheric clouds and aerosols**. It is a joint venture between ESA and JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency).

Earthcare will circle the Earth at a height of about 400km (250 miles).

126. The **3rd Indian Analytical Congress (IAC)** has been organized at the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR-IIP) in Dehradun, Uttarakhand**.

It is a three-day International Conference cum Exhibition IAC-2024 jointly organized by CSIR-IIP and the Indian Society of Analytical Scientists (ISAS-Delhi Chapter).

"Role of Science and Technology in Green Transitions" is the theme of the conference.

The conference provides a platform for industries, academia, scientists, and technologists in the Analytical Sciences to present the prevalent and upcoming solutions in this area.

The conference witnessed five technical sessions comprising invited talks by eminent speakers, presentations by researchers, and special and plenary sessions.

127. **Boeing's Starliner spacecraft**, carrying astronauts **Sunita "Sunni" Williams**, who piloted the craft, and her crewmate **Barry "Butch" Wilmore**, took off from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida for a test mission to the International Space Station.

With this flight, Sunita Williams has become the **first female** to pilot a crewed spacecraft on its maiden voyage. This flight also marks her **third journey** into space.

She radioed mission control with the message, *"Let's go, Calypso. Take us to space and back,"* referring to the name of the Starliner capsule.

The Starliner's successful mission, dubbed the Crew Flight Test, aims to certify the spacecraft for regular space travel to and from the ISS, a capability already achieved by Elon Musk's SpaceX with its Crew Dragon capsule.

- 128.** An exhibition titled "**Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj: Celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the Great Coronation**" has been inaugurated jointly by the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, (**NGMA**) and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, (**IGNCA**) Ministry of Culture, Government of India at National Gallery of Modern Art, (NGMA) Jaipur House, New Delhi.

The exhibition pays homage to the enduring legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, inviting audiences on a captivating journey through the life and times of one of the nation's most revered historical figures.

The exhibition commemorates and celebrates the 350th anniversary of the grand coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. On **June 6, 1674**, Shivaji was crowned king of Maratha Swaraj at a spectacular ceremony at **Raigad fort** in Maharashtra.

- 129.** The **US Air Force** test-launched its second unarmed **Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

The Minuteman III, deployed in the 1960s, is the sole land-based component of the US nuclear triad, designed by Boeing.

Minuteman III can travel 4,000 miles in 30 minutes, it can hit a target in Moscow in half an hour.

REPORTS & INDICES

- 130.** The **2024 Environmental Performance Index (EPI)** has been released by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network.

The 2024 EPI combines 58 indicators across 11 issue categories, ranging from climate change mitigation and air pollution to waste management, sustainability of fisheries and agriculture, deforestation, and biodiversity protection.

Countries	Rank	Score
Estonia	1	75.3
Luxembourg	2	75.0
Germany	3	74.6

Finland	4	73.7
United Kingdom	5	72.7

India's performance:

India, the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, ranked **176th** in the 2024 EPI out of 180 countries.

India's position was 177 in 2018; 168 in 2020; and 180 in 2022.

The four countries that perform worse than India in the 2024 index are **Myanmar (177th)**, **Laos (178th)**, **Pakistan (179th)**, and **Vietnam (180th)**.

India's performance lags in several indicators mainly because of its heavy dependence on coal, which contributes to not only greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions but also high air pollution levels.

- Biodiversity & Habitat: 178/180
- Forests: 15/180
- Air Quality: 177/180
- Heavy Metals: 147/180
- Climate Change Mitigation: 133/180

In South Asia, which, as a region, ranks the lowest on the EPI 2024.

131. The **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** has estimated India's gross domestic product (GDP) to grow at **8%** in the financial year **2024-25**.

For 2024-25, CII expects agricultural growth at 3.7 percent (1.4 percent); industry at 8.4 percent (9.3 percent), and services at 9 percent (7.9 percent).

This forecast is much higher than the Reserve Bank of India's forecast of 7.2 percent GDP growth for the current fiscal.

132. The first exclusive **All-India survey on 'Ayush'** has been conducted by the **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** from **July 2022 to June 2023**, as part of the 79th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS).

This survey covered the entire Indian Union, excluding a few inaccessible villages in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Key findings:

- In rural India, about **95%** of males as well as females aged 15 years and above have been found to be aware of Ayush while in urban India it has been around **96%**.
- During 2022-23, the **use of Ayush** and average expenditure incurred per person for prevention or treatment of ailments is more in **urban areas** than rural areas.
- Both in rural and urban India, **Ayurveda** has been preferred over other systems of Ayush for the prevention or treatment of ailments.

- It has also been observed that Ayush has been mostly used for rejuvenation or preventive purposes followed by therapeutic or curative treatment.
- About **79%** of households in rural India and about **80%** of the households in urban India have at least one member aware of medicinal plants and home medicines, while around **24%** of the households have at least one member aware of folk medicine or local health tradition in both rural and urban India.

Note: Ayush is an acronym for Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy.

133. The United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has released the **Sustainable Development Report 2024** to review the progress made each year on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 193 UN Member States.

Key Highlights of Report:

- On average, only **16 percent of the SDG targets** are on track to be met globally by 2030, with the remaining 84 percent showing limited progress or a reversal of progress. SDG2 (Zero Hunger), SDG11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) are particularly off track.
- The pace of SDG progress varies significantly across country groups. Nordic countries continue to lead on SDG achievement, with the BRICS countries making significant progress while poor and vulnerable nations lag far behind.
- **Finland is ranked first**, followed by Sweden and Denmark.
- **India is ranked 109th** out of 167 countries, with on-track performance in Poverty reduction and Quality Education targets while decreasing progress in Sustainable Cities and Climate Action targets.
- **South Sudan** is ranked 167th on the list.
- The report's new Index of support to **UN-based multilateralism (UN-Mi)** ranks countries based on their engagement with the UN system. **Barbados** ranks the highest in its commitment to UN-based multilateralism, and the **United States** ranks last.

134. According to the **2024 Mercer's Cost of Living survey**, **Mumbai with a rank of 136th** has been ranked **India's most expensive city** for expats. Mumbai is expensive for personal care, energy, utilities, transportation and house rent.

Hong Kong remained the most expensive city in the world. It is followed by Singapore, Zurich, Geneva, and Basel.

In Asia, Mumbai ranks as the 21st most expensive city, while Delhi holds the 30th position among the surveyed locations.

Other Indian cities rankings:

- Delhi: 164th
- Chennai: 189th
- Bengaluru: 195th
- Hyderabad: 202nd
- Pune: 205th
- Kolkata: 207th

As per the report, Delhi, in 2024, recorded the sharpest rise in housing rents for expats, up by 12-15 percent. Mumbai followed with a 6-8 percent increase. Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, and Chennai have experienced increases ranging from 2-6 percent.

Mumbai leads in transportation costs, particularly for automobiles and auto parts, followed by Bengaluru.

Kolkata has the most economical prices for daily essentials like dairy products, bread, beverages, oils, fruits, and vegetables.

Energy and utility expenses are highest in Mumbai, followed by Pune.

Delhi boasts the lowest costs for alcohol and tobacco items.

135. Indian cricketer **Virat Kohli** has gained the top position in brand value, according to **Kroll's 'Celebrity Brand Valuation Report 2023'**. His brand value is pegged at **\$227.9 million** on the back of his stellar performance in ICC ODI World Cup and boasts of over 40 brands in his endorsement portfolio.

Ranveer Singh secured the 2nd spot with a brand value of \$203.1 million.

Shah Rukh Khan jumped to the third spot with a brand value of \$ 120. 7 million, marking his return to the top five club for the first time since 2020 in Kroll's Celebrity brand valuation rankings.

Akshay Kumar stood at the fourth spot in 2023 at a brand value of \$111.7 million, followed by Alia Bhatt at the fifth spot at \$101.1 million.

Deepika Padukone, MS Dhoni, Sachin Tendulkar, Amitabh Bachchan, and Salman Khan are the other celebs ranked among the top ten most valued celebs in the rankings.

136. The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** has released the 14th edition of the **"Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2024" Report**. The report is based on the **Energy Transition**

Index (ETI) and evaluates 120 countries on their energy system performance and readiness for secure, sustainable, and inclusive energy systems.

Key findings:

- **Top Performers on the ETI:** Sweden (78.4 scores), Denmark (75.2 scores), Finland (74.5 scores), Switzerland (73.4 scores) and France (71.1 scores) are the top five performers.
- **Six G20 countries** are among the top 20 performers: France, Germany, Brazil, China, the UK, and the USA.
- **India is ranked 63rd** on the ETI.
- Eight countries (Bhutan, Comoros, Gabon, Guyana, Madagascar, Niue, Panama, and Suriname) reached net-zero emissions in 2022.
- Clean energy infrastructure investments reached **\$1.8 trillion** in 2023, with nearly 90% of the growth since 2021 occurring in advanced economies and China.
- Generative AI can enable energy companies to save over **\$500 billion** annually.

Note: The energy transition (ET) refers to the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to reduce CO₂ emissions.

137. A report titled "**State of Global Air (SoGA) 2024**" has been published by the **Health Effects Institute**, a US-based research organization, in collaboration with the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**.

This is the 5th edition of the report.

The report presents information on exposures to and health impacts of exposure to common air pollutants including fine particulate matter, ozone, and nitrogen dioxide, from 1990–2021.

Key highlights of the report:

- Globally, **air pollution** accounted for the 2nd largest risk factor of death (**8.1 million deaths**) in 2021, after High blood pressure, with India accounting for one in four of these deaths.
- China (2.3 million deaths) and India (2.1 million deaths) shared 55% of the world's fatalities from air pollution in 2021.
- 99% of the world's population lives in places with unhealthy levels of PM_{2.5} pollution.

- Populations from low- and middle-income countries are exposed to 1.3 - 4 times higher levels of ambient PM2.5.
- Air pollution also worsened the COVID-19 outcomes by compromising immune systems, causing inflammation and oxidative stress in the lungs, etc.
- The report finds that children under five years old are especially vulnerable, with health effects including premature birth, low birth weight, asthma, and lung diseases.
- As per the report, **464 children** under the age of five die in India every day as a result of factors associated with air pollution. The total India toll in 2021 was **2.1 million**, spanning all age categories.
- Air pollution was responsible for almost 40% of heart disease deaths, 33% of lung cancer deaths, 20% of type 2 diabetes deaths, 41% of stroke deaths, and 70% of COPD deaths in 2021.
- **For the first time**, this year's report includes exposure levels and related health effects of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), including the impact of NO₂ exposures on the development of childhood asthma. Traffic exhaust is a major source of NO₂, which means densely populated urban areas, particularly in high-income countries, often see the highest levels of NO₂ exposure and health impacts.

138. The **United Kingdom (UK)** has overtaken **China** to become **India's fourth-largest export market** in May 2024, as per the data released by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

- The UK was India's sixth-largest export destination in May last year.
- Exports to the UK grew by a third to **\$1.37 billion** in May 2024.
- Exports to China saw a 3 percent growth at \$1.33 billion in May 2024.
- Items such as machinery, food items, pharmaceutical products, textiles, jewellery, iron, and steel dominated exports to the UK.
- As per the data, India's top 10 key export markets witnessed positive growth in May 2024. These 10 countries comprise 52 percent of the country's total value of goods exported in May. India's merchandise exports grew 9.13 percent in May to \$38 billion.

- **The United States (US)** continued to remain India's largest export destination, with 13 percent growth, followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which saw a 19 percent jump.
- Export to the Netherlands, which is also India's third-largest export market, soared to \$2.19 billion with nearly 44 percent growth in May.
- Other countries that showed positive growth include Saudi Arabia (8.46 percent), Singapore (4.64 percent), Bangladesh (13.47 percent), Germany (6.74 percent), and France (36.94 percent).

Imports:

- Imports from **Saudi Arabia and Switzerland** in May 2024 contracted 4.11 percent and 32.33 percent, respectively.
- The remaining eight witnessed growth in May, in line with the overall merchandise imports that rose 7.7 percent to **\$61.91 billion**.
- Imports from **Russia** grew 18 percent to **\$7.1 billion**, mainly due to India's dependency on crude oil. The country continued to remain India's second-largest import destination, after China.

139. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released the **18th edition of the Global Gender Gap Index (2024)**. The report this year covers 146 economies. **Guyana** makes a return to the index in 2024, while **Sudan and Uzbekistan** are included for the first time.

Global level:

- The global gender gap score in 2024 for all 146 countries included in this edition stands at **68.5%**.
- **Iceland** topped the index with a score of **93.5 percent**.
- The second position is occupied by **Finland (87.5%), and Norway (87.5%)**.
- The third position is occupied by New Zealand (83.5%).
- **Bottom 3 countries:** Sudan (146); Pakistan (145); and Chad (144)

India's performance:

- India has slipped two places to the **129th position**.
- Within South Asia, India ranked **fifth** after Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan, with Pakistan ranked last.
- India's overall gender gap closure stands at **64.1 percent** in 2024, a slight decline from 64.2 percent in 2023.

- While India's economic parity score has been improving, it needs to increase by 6.2 percentage points to return to its 2012 level of 46 percent.

The Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 to benchmark progress towards gender parity across four dimensions: economic opportunities, education, health, and political leadership.

140. In the latest **BrandZ Most Valuable Global Brands report** released by Kantar, **Infosys** is ranked as the **74th** most valuable brand in the world and ranked as the **20th** most valuable global B2B (business-to-business) technology brand.

Infosys has been ranked, for the **third consecutive year**, among the 100 most valuable brands in the world.

Infosys has been recognized for its capabilities in domains like enterprise artificial intelligence (AI) where emerging technologies like generative AI and foundational technologies like cloud. Infosys is among the top 6 percent of the most trusted brands in both India and the US.

141. According to the latest data by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP) in India** slowed to **5 percent in April 2024**, a three-month low, as against **5.4 percent in March 2024**.

The IIP growth rate was recorded at 4.6 percent in April 2023.

The previous high of IIP was recorded at 11.9 percent in October 2023, which slowed to 2.5 percent in November, 4.2 percent in December and 4.1 percent in January 2024.

As per the data, the growth rates of the three sectors in April 2024, Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity stood at 6.7 percent, 3.9 percent, and 10.2 percent year-on-year respectively. The core sector makes up 40.27% of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), making it a lead indicator of industrial activity.

142. According to the latest data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), the government's **fiscal deficit for 2023-24** stood at **5.63 percent of the GDP** (Gross Domestic Product). In actual terms, the fiscal deficit, the gap between expenditure and revenue, was at Rs.16.53 lakh crore.

In the revised estimate for 2023-24, the government projected a fiscal deficit of Rs.17.34 lakh crore, which is 5.8 percent of the GDP.

The net tax collection was at **Rs.23.26 lakh crore** in FY24, while the expenditure stood at **Rs.44.42 lakh crore**.

The government's revenue collection was 101.2 percent of the revised estimates (RE) presented in the Budget. The expenditure worked out to be Rs.44.42 lakh crore. The expenditure in FY24 was 99 percent of the RE.

For the current financial year (FY25), the government estimates the fiscal deficit at 5.1 percent of the GDP, or Rs.16,85,494 crore.

143. The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), has released the **Provisional Estimates (PE) of Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the Financial Year (FY) 2023-24** and **Quarterly Estimates of GDP for the Fourth quarter (January-March) of 2023-24** along with its expenditure components both at Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices.

Key highlights:

- **Real GDP** has been estimated to grow by **8.2%** in FY 2023-24 as compared to the growth rate of 7.0% in FY 2022-23. Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9.6% in FY 2023-24 over the growth rate of 14.2% in FY 2022-23.
- This is the **ninth time** since 1960-61 that GDP has crossed the 8 percent threshold.
- **Real GVA (Gross Value Added)** has grown by **7.2%** in 2023-24 over 6.7% in 2022-23. This GVA growth has been mainly due to significant growth of 9.9% in the Manufacturing sector in 2023-24 over -2.2% in 2022-23 and growth of 7.1% in 2023-24 over 1.9% in 2022-23 for Mining & Quarrying sector.
- **Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices** in Q4 of 2023-24 is estimated at **Rs.47.24 lakh crore**, against Rs.43.84 lakh crore in Q4 of 2022-23, showing a growth rate of **7.8%**. Nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices in Q4 of 2023-24 is estimated at Rs.78.28 lakh crore, against Rs.71.23 lakh crore in Q4 of 2022-23, showing a growth rate of **9.9%**.
- **Real GVA in Q4** of 2023-24 is estimated at **Rs.42.23 lakh crore**, against Rs.39.74 lakh crore in Q4 of 2022-23, showing a growth rate of **6.3%**. Nominal GVA in Q4 of 2023-24 is estimated at Rs.70.97 lakh crore, against Rs.65.74 lakh crore in Q4 of 2022-23, showing a growth rate of **8.0%**.

144. TIME magazine has released a list of the **World's 100 Most Influential Companies**. This is the fourth edition of the annual TIME100 Most Influential Companies list, highlighting companies making an extraordinary impact around the world.

In the list, **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** secured a spot under the **'Titans'** category (one of the five categories under which the companies were divided, others being Leaders, Disrupters, Innovators, and Pioneers).

This is the **second time** Reliance Industries has made it to the TIME 100 list, making it the only Indian company to be recognized twice.

Earlier, Jio Platforms was included in the inaugural TIME 100 Most Influential Companies List of 2021.

Other notable Indian firms in the list are **Tata Group** under the **'Titans'** category and **Serum Institute of India** in the **'Pioneers'** category.

145. According to the latest data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, India received the **highest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** from **Singapore (USD 11.77 billion)** in FY24 (2023-24) despite FDI equity inflows into the country decreased by about 3.5 percent in FY24, from USD 46.03 billion (FY23) to **USD 44.42 billion (FY24)** due to global economic uncertainties.

Mauritius is the **2nd** biggest investor in India with an investment of USD 7.97 billion in FY24. The USA is the third largest investor in India in 2023-24 with USD 4.99 billion in foreign investments, though it is down from USD 6 billion in 2022-23.

The USA is followed by the Netherlands (USD 4.93 billion), Japan (USD 3.17 billion), the UAE (USD 2.9 billion), the UK (USD 1.2 billion), Cyprus (USD 806 million), Germany (USD 505 million), and Cayman Islands (USD 342 million).

The total FDI, which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings, and other capital, declined marginally by one percent to USD 70.95 billion during 2023-24 from USD 71.35 billion in 2022-23.

146. Goldman Sachs has raised India's GDP growth forecast for the calendar year 2024 (CY24) by 20 basis points to **6.9 percent** from 6.7 percent estimated earlier.

This follows the stronger-than-expected GDP growth print of 7.8 percent for the January-March 2024 quarter on the back of strong investment demand and a recovery in consumption growth.

For the current fiscal (2024-25), Goldman Sachs has projected India's GDP growth at 6.8 percent.

147. As per the latest data by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, **The Netherlands** became **India's third-largest export** market in the fiscal year 2023-24, after the USA and the UAE.

This was the case even though India's total exports of goods fell by **3 percent**.

This rise has been emphasized even though trade between the two countries is going down. In 2022-23, it went from \$27.58 billion to \$27.34 billion, a small drop.

There has been a lot of growth in India's exports to the Netherlands. The main areas of growth are petroleum products, electrical items, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.

Oil goods were the most important, with \$14.29 billion worth of exports in the last fiscal year.

148. In the **QS World University Ranking 2025**, a total of 61 percent of Indian universities have risen in rank this time, while 24 percent have maintained their positions. On the other hand, 9 percent have dropped in rank, and three universities are new entries to the rankings.

The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, and IIT Delhi** are the only two Indian institutes featured among the world's top 150.

The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) has climbed from 149 in 2024 to **118** in the 2025 rankings, that is, a climb of 31 ranks.

IIT-B is followed by IIT Delhi which climbed 47 ranks (from 197 last year to **150** this time), and IISc Bengaluru jumped from 225 to 211 (14 ranks).

IIT Kharagpur has achieved the fourth spot as it went from 271 in the 2024 rankings to 222 in the 2025 rankings. IIT KGP is followed by IIT Madras which climbed 58 ranks (285 to 227).

IIT Indore is the only institute that recorded a decline from 454 in the 2024 rankings to 477 in the 2025 rankings.

In terms of improvement, the **University of Delhi** has made the most significant improvement nationally, climbing 79 places to reach the 328th position this time.

The **Indian Higher Education** system is the **seventh most represented globally and the third in Asia**, trailing only Japan (49 universities) and China (Mainland) (71 universities).

With a score of 37.8, India surpasses the global average of 23.5, securing the second-highest position in Asia among higher education systems with more than 10 ranked universities, only trailing behind China (Mainland).

Globally, the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA** has become the 'best institute in the world' for the 13th time. It is followed by UK's Imperial College London which has improved its ranks from sixth to second this time.

The third rank is jointly achieved by Harvard University which climbed one rank, and University of Oxford.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

149. The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has commemorated the **9th anniversary** of three landmark initiatives: the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), the Smart Cities Mission, and the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U).

These initiatives, launched on **June 25, 2015**, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have collectively transformed urban infrastructure and improved the quality of life for millions of residents across India.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U):

The scheme was launched with a vision of 'Housing for All'. Under PMAY-U, all-weather pucca houses with all basic amenities are provided to eligible beneficiaries of urban India.

- As on date, 114 Lakh have been grounded for construction while more than 84 Lakh houses have already been completed and delivered to beneficiaries. As on date out of committed Central Assistance of ₹2 lakh crore, ₹1.64 lakh crore has been released.
- To empower young professionals and Middle- Income Group (MIG) to own a house, MIG was also added in a government housing scheme for the first time ever through the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) vertical from 2017-2021. Under CLSS for EWS/LIG/MIG, an Interest subsidy of ₹ 58,868 crore has been approved for 25.04 lakh beneficiaries.

Smart Cities Mission:

The Smart Cities Mission has been a beacon of urban transformation, enhancing the quality of life in 100 cities through over 8,000 innovative projects worth approximately ₹1.6 lakh crore.

As on 25 June 2024, 7,160 projects worth ₹ 1,43,778 Crore had been completed and another 854 projects worth ₹ 20,392 crore are in advanced stages of completion. GOI has released ₹46,387 crore to 100 cities. 93% of released GOI funds have been utilized.

AMRUT:

AMRUT has aimed to create an infrastructure that directly improves service provision to citizens. AMRUT 2.0, an extension of the original mission, has made significant strides in water supply, sewerage management, and water body rejuvenation.

150. The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** has introduced the **Safai Apnao, Bimaari Bhagao (SABB)** initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0.

This new initiative is scheduled from **1st July to 31st August 2024.**

This initiative seeks to enhance the preparedness of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), ensuring they are well-equipped to handle the challenges posed by heavy rainfall and heightened health risks during the months of June to August.

The key elements of the campaign will include special cleanliness drives, collection and transportation of waste, regular cleaning of all community and public toilets, sanitation and hygiene facilities for children, adequate sampling of water quality, supply of safe drinking water, maintenance of water works and planning for IEC and door-to-door mobilization.

The initiative also envisages rapid assessments to identify high-risk areas, adoption of the Protect Prevent Treat Strategy (PPTS), and coordination & monitoring.

151. The **Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE)** enhanced the share of allocation for the Fertilizer Sector under the **Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT)** Programme of the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM) from 5.5 lakh tonnes per annum to **7.5 lakh tonnes** per annum of **Green Ammonia.**

Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM), MNRE issued the Scheme Guidelines for implementation of the SIGHT Programme – Component II: Incentive for Procurement of Green Ammonia Production (under Mode2A) of the NGHM on 16 January 2024.

Mode 2A caters to the requirements of the fertilizer sector. As per the said Guidelines, the capacity available for bidding under Tranche I of Mode 2A was 5,50,000 tonnes per annum of Green Ammonia.

National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM):

- The National Green Hydrogen Mission was launched on **4th January 2023** with an outlay of **Rs. 19,744 crores** up to FY 2029-30. It will contribute to India's goal to become Aatmanirbhar (self-reliant) through clean energy and serve as an inspiration for the global Clean Energy Transition.
- The Mission will lead to significant decarbonization of the economy, reduced dependence on fossil fuel imports, and enable India to assume technology and market leadership in Green Hydrogen.

- The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) is implementing the mission with a target to achieve a production capacity of 5 million tonnes per annum of Green Hydrogen in the country by the year 2030.

152. Union Health Minister **JP Nadda** has launched the '**National STOP Diarrhoea Campaign 2024**' in the presence of Union Ministers of State, Anupriya Patel and Jadhav Patraprao Ganpatrao to attain zero child deaths due to childhood diarrhoea.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has rebranded its long-standing **Intensified Diarrhoea Control Fortnight (IDCF)** as the STOP Diarrhoea Campaign. This initiative, which began in 2014, focuses on enhancing the Prevent, Protect, and Treat (PPT) strategy and increasing the use of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) and Zinc.

The campaign's 2024 slogan, "**Diarrhoea ki Roktham, Safai aur ORS se rakhen apna dhyaan**" ("**डायरिया की रोकथाम, सफाई और ओ आर एस से रखें अपना ध्यान**"), highlights the significance of prevention, cleanliness, and appropriate treatment.

The new strategy involves a **2-month** long campaign with pre-positioning of **2 ORS packets and zinc** as a co-packaging to **under-5 children**. It will also involve extensive IEC (Information Education, and Communication) through different platforms and collaboration across multiple sectors, including health, water and sanitation, education, and rural development. While the existing diarrhoea strategy entailed a 2-week campaign with pre-positioning of ORS to under-5 children and limited IEC.

Focus Areas of the STOP Diarrhoea Campaign:

- **Strengthening Health Infrastructure:** Ensuring the proper maintenance and use of health facilities and the availability of essential medical supplies (ORS, Zinc), particularly in rural areas.
- **Improving Access to Clean Water and Sanitation:** Implementing rigorous quality control measures and sustainable practices to provide safe drinking water and better sanitation.
- **Enhancing Nutritional Programs:** Addressing malnutrition, a major contributor to diarrhoeal diseases, through improved nutritional initiatives.
- **Promoting Hygiene Education:** Equipping schools with necessary facilities and fostering healthy habits among children through comprehensive hygiene education programs.

153. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, **Dr Jitendra Singh**, launched the "**One Week One Theme**" (**OWOT**) campaign showcasing recent success stories of India in different streams of **science and technology**.

The aim is to integrate the efforts of all the **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** labs working on similar projects to reduce overlap and optimize resources.

OWOT is the brainchild of Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh. 'OWOT' is built on the legacy and success of the 'One Week One Lab' (OWOL) initiative started in 2023.

The 'One Week One Theme' initiative under CSIR aims to make innovation inclusive for all.

This initiative will help acknowledge the responsible people and also enlighten the shareholders and industry about the relevant scientific developments. It will feature eight different themes such as aerospace, healthcare and energy amongst others. During the launch ceremony, around 24 technology transfers, product launches, and MoUs were signed by the Union Minister.

- 154.** The **Ministry of Education** has unveiled a nationwide campaign to create **Tobacco Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI)** across the nation. The Department of School Education & Literacy launched the **"ToFEI Implementation Manual"** on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day, observed on May 31, 2024.

This manual, developed under the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), aims to guide schools in complying with Tobacco Free Educational Institution (ToFEI) guidelines. The initiative outlines several key measures to be implemented in schools nationwide, including the display of "Tobacco Free Area" signage within school premises, prohibiting evidence of tobacco use on campus, organizing regular tobacco control activities, and nominating "Tobacco Monitors" among staff. Additionally, the plan enforces a 100-yard tobacco-free zone around educational institutions. India, the world's second-largest consumer and producer of tobacco, faces a significant public health challenge with tobacco use accounting for approximately 1.35 million deaths annually. The **Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) 2019** revealed that **8.5 percent** of school students aged 13 to 15 use tobacco in various forms.

- 155.** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the **3rd quarter (Q3)** of the **9th edition of Swachh Survekshan 2024**. The 3rd phase of the survey will centre on evaluating the entire value chain of waste management at **Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs)**.

The 3rd quarter of Swachh Survekshan 2024 will commence on 5 July 2024.

The comprehensive Swachh Survekshan comprises of assessment in 4 quarters. The first two include telephonic feedback from citizens on various parameters of city cleanliness, the third quarter focuses on assessment of processing facilities, while the 4th quarter highlights field assessment on all indicators.

Urban India generates about **150,000 tons** of waste per day.

As per MoHUA, it is estimated that nearly **30 to 40%** of waste in a city is generated by BWG.

The Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016 defines BWG as entities with an average waste generation rate exceeding 100 kgs per day, including all streams of waste. The rule intends to reduce the management and financial burden on urban local bodies (ULB), restrict waste from entering landfills, and reduce air, soil, and groundwater pollution as well as the city's carbon footprint.

Bulk waste generators like residential and commercial complexes, central govt. ministries, public sector undertakings and private bodies, social infrastructure like hotels, universities, railway and bus stations, airports are required to segregate waste at source, ensure scientific processing of bio-degradable waste to produce manure and biogas by setting up composting units on their premises.

The BWGs are to also store separately Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste.

Note: Quarter 4 of Swachh Survekshan 2024 is expected to roll out around September – October 2024.

[Attempt IBPS RRB PO Mock Test 2024](#)

156. Jitan Ram Manjhi, Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), has launched two new schemes on World MSME Day in New Delhi.

MSME TEAM:

This initiative aims to facilitate **five lakh micro and small enterprises for Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)** by providing financial assistance for onboarding, cataloging, account management, logistics, packaging material, and design. Half of these beneficiary MSEs will be women-owned enterprises.

Yashasvini campaign:

It is a series of mass awareness campaigns for formalizing women-owned informal micro enterprises and providing capacity building, training, handholding, and mentorship to the women-owned enterprises.

A series of campaigns will be organized by the Ministry of MSME in collaboration with other Central Ministries/ Departments/ State Governments and Women's Industry Associations during the FY 24-25 in various parts, focusing on Tier 2 and 3 cities in the country.

157. Union Cabinet approved a Central Sector Scheme **National Forensic Infrastructure Enhancement Scheme (NFIES)** with a total financial outlay of **Rs. 2254.43 crore** during the period from **2024-25 to 2028-29**.

The financial outlay of the Central Sector Scheme will be provisioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs from its budget.

Components under this scheme:

- Establishment of Campuses of the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) in the country
- Establishment of Central Forensic Science Laboratories in the country.
- Enhancement of existing infrastructure of the Delhi Campus of the NFSU.

Other Cabinet approvals:

The cabinet approved the proposal of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the development of **Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi** including the Construction of the New Terminal Building, Apron Extension, Runway Extension, Parallel Taxi Track & Allied works.

The estimated financial outgo will be **Rs. 2869.65 Crore** for enhancing the passenger handling capacity of the airport to 9.9 million passengers per annum (MPPA) from the existing 3.9 MPPA.

158. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** scheme for offshore wind energy projects at a total outlay of **Rs.7453 crore**.

This also includes an outlay of **Rs.6853 crore** for the installation and commissioning of 1 GW of offshore wind energy projects (500 MW each off the coast of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu), and a grant of **Rs.600 crore** for the upgradation of two ports to meet logistics requirements for offshore wind energy projects.

The successful commissioning of 1 GW offshore wind projects will produce renewable electricity of about 3.72 billion units annually, which will result in annual reduction of 2.98 million ton of CO2 equivalent emission for a period of 25 years.

Viability Gap Funding (VGF):

The VGF scheme is a major step towards implementation of the National Offshore Wind Energy Policy notified in 2015 with an aim to exploit the vast offshore wind energy potential that exists within the exclusive economic zone of India.

The projects will be established by private developers selected through a transparent bidding process, and the power evacuation infrastructure, including the offshore substations, will be constructed by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (PGCIL).

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, as the nodal ministry, will coordinate with various Ministries/Departments to ensure successful implementation of the scheme.

Under the scheme, two ports in the country will be supported by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways to meet the requirements of offshore wind development.

159. The Union Government has extended the **Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS)** meant for digitizing patients' health records and linking them with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Account (ABHA ID).

The scheme, which was launched on **January 1, 2023**, will now remain in effect till **June 30, 2025**.

It is a part of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

The scheme aims to provide the right incentives to providers of digital health solutions such as Hospital/ Health Management Information Systems (HMIS) and Laboratory Management Information Systems (LMIS) to make available the right software at an affordable cost.

Under the scheme, government and private hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, diagnostic labs, and pharmacies are paid Rs 20 for each additional record they digitize, over and above the threshold of 100 transactions a month.

The scheme applies to both **public and private hospitals and digital solution companies (DSCs)** creating digital health records.

Under it, each facility or digital solution company can earn incentives up to Rs 4 crores.

160. The **Post Office Act 2023** has officially come into effect on **18th June 2024**. The Act replaced the **Indian Post Office Act of 1898**. The Act aims to create a simple legislative framework for the delivery of citizen-centric services, banking services, and benefits of Government schemes at the last mile.

The Parliament passed the Post Office Bill 2023 in December 2023. It received the assent of the President of India on **24th December 2023**.

- As per the provisions of the Act, the government can intercept an article transmitted through India Post on specified grounds, including security of the state and public order.
- An interception may be carried out on the occurrence of any public emergency or in the interest of public safety or tranquility. Such interceptions may be carried out by the central government, state governments, or any officer specially authorized by them.
- An intercepted shipment can be detained or disposed of by the officer in charge. The officer also has powers to open, detain, or destroy shipments carrying items prohibited under the Act or any other law.
- The Act also states that the **Director General of Postal Services** will be appointed to head India Post. He will have powers to make regulations on various matters including tariffs for services and supply of postage stamps.
- No penal provisions have been prescribed in the Act.

161. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has granted certificates to more than **30,000** self-help groups as **Krishi Sakhis** at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

- The **Krishi Sakhi Convergence Program (KSCP)** aims to transform rural India through the empowerment of rural Women as Krishi Sakhi, by imparting training and certification of Krishi Sakhis as Para-extension Workers.
- This certification course aligns with the objectives of the **“Lakhpati Didi” Program**. Under the 'Lakhpati Didi' program, the aim is to create 3 crore Lakhpati Didis, one dimension of which is Krishi Sakhi.
- Krishi Sakhis are chosen as agriculture para-extension workers because they are trusted community resource persons and experienced farmers themselves. They have been trained on various extension services for **56 days**.
- In the first phase, the Krishi Sakhi Training Program has been rolled out in **12 states**: Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Odisha, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Meghalaya.
- **70,000 Krishi Sakhis** are targeted to be certified as Para-extension Workers.

162. Union Cabinet has approved the construction of **3 crore additional houses** under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. A decision in this regard was taken in the first cabinet meeting of the newly-formed NDA government in New Delhi.

The central government has been implementing the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana** since **2015** to provide assistance to eligible rural and urban households for the construction of houses with basic amenities.

Under the scheme, a total of 4 crore 21 lakh houses have been completed for eligible poor families in the last ten years.

All the houses constructed under the scheme are also provided with other basic amenities, including household toilets, LPG connections, electricity connections, functional household tap connections, and others through convergence with other schemes of the Central Government and State Governments.

163. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released the **17th installment of PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi**. This will benefit nine crores 30 lakh farmers by distributing around **Rs.20,000 crores**.

The scheme has benefited more than 11 crore farmer families and over three lakh crore rupees have been transferred in their accounts till date.

PM-KISAN Scheme:

- The scheme was launched in **2019** with an aim to provide income support to all landholder farmer families across the country.
- Under the scheme, a financial benefit of **Rs.6000 per year** is provided to the eligible family of farmers.
- The scheme is being implemented as a **Central Sector Scheme** with 100 percent financial support from the Central government.
- The amount is being transferred directly to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries, in **three installments of two thousand rupees**.

164. **Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog (AIM)** has launched two groundbreaking initiatives aimed at fostering innovation and sustainability in India: the 'AIM – ICDK Water Challenge 4.0' and the fifth edition of 'Innovations for You' handbook, spotlighting SDG entrepreneurs of India.

AIM – ICDK Water Challenge 4.0:

AIM presents the **fourth edition of the open innovation water challenge** in collaboration with the Innovation Centre Denmark (ICDK) at the Royal Danish Embassy in India.

This initiative, a cornerstone of the Indo-Danish bilateral green strategic partnership, endeavours to address critical water-related challenges through inventive solutions.

The selected teams will form the Indian cohort which will participate in the global Next Generation Digital Action program and engage with young talents from leading universities and innovation hubs of 9 countries (India, Denmark, Ghana, Kenya, Korea, Tanzania, South Africa, Ghana, Colombia and Mexico).

Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to showcase innovations at the Digital Tech Summit scheduled in Copenhagen from October 30th to 31st, 2024 funded by the Government of Denmark.

Innovations For You:

AIM also introduced the **fifth edition of 'Innovations For You'**, a coffee table book series spotlighting the endeavours of SDG Entrepreneurs of India. This edition features 60

entrepreneurs from diverse corners of India, each contributing to societal betterment through sustainable innovations.

- 165. Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** is observing the '**Nasha Mukth Bharat Pakhwada**'- नशा मुक्त भारत पखवाड़ा from **12th to 26th June 2024** to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The aim of this observance is to create awareness amongst the public regarding the ill effects of the Drug Menace.

NCB has set a vision to encourage more and more citizens to take the 'e-pledge' against drug abuse.

The Government of India has reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to a 'Drug-Free India'. The United Nations General Assembly declared the 26th of June of each year as the "International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking".

- 166. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)**, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, facilitated the successful export of the first consignment of **MD 2 variety pineapples** to the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**.

The consignment comprises 8.7 metric tons (650 boxes) of the prized MD 2 pineapples. The MD 2 pineapple, also known as "Golden Ripe" or "Super Sweet," has become the gold standard in the pineapple industry, with significant cultivation in countries like Costa Rica, the Philippines, and Thailand. It is renowned for its exceptional sweetness and quality.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research - Central Coastal Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR CCARI) provided essential technical support for post-harvest management and development of sea protocol for the MD 2 pineapple produced in the Sindhudurg district of the Konkan region in Maharashtra.

- 167. Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has launched the '**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**' campaign to commemorate World Environment Day in 2024. He planted a peepal tree sapling at Buddha Jayanti Park in Delhi.

He was accompanied by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Delhi's Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena.

World Environment Day:

World Environment Day, celebrated on June 5, commemorates the inaugural day of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The theme for this year's celebration is "**Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience**," focusing on the urgent need to restore and conserve our land resources.

- 168. The Government of India** has launched the **BIMReN (BIMSTEC-India Marine Research Network)** initiative to enable PhD students from BIMSTEC countries to conduct doctoral

research in India and facilitate collaborative research among scientists/academicians from BIMSTEC countries through:

- **BIMReN Split-Site Doctoral Fellowships**, which offers doctoral candidates in BIMSTEC member countries a Research Grant of up to INR 1 million and the opportunity to pursue studies at Indian research labs for 6-12 months.
- **Twinning Research Projects**, aimed at facilitating collaborations between institutions and individuals from BIMSTEC member countries, to work together on research programs of regional interest, with an associated grant of up to INR 5 million per project of tenure of 24 months.

This is a joint initiative of the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India**, and the **Bay of Bengal Programme-Inter Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO)**.

Researchers and academic institutions engaged in research in fisheries, marine, or ocean sciences from across the BIMSTEC region would stand to benefit from the program.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC):

BIMSTEC is a regional organization that was established on 06 June 1997 with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration. Initially known as BIST-EC (Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation), the organization is now known as BIMSTEC and comprises seven Member States: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Secretariat: Dhaka, Bangladesh

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

169. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)**, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** and the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)**, launched two national-level webinars to discuss the provisions of recently enacted criminal laws: "*Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita*", "*Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita*", and "*Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam*".

The features related to the protection, welfare, safety, and security of women and children were specially discussed.

The event witnessed the overwhelming participation of nearly 40 lakh stakeholders nationwide, including elected women representatives from Panchayati Raj institutions, women's self-help groups, and diverse stakeholders from MWCD, MoRD, and MoPR

170. A total of **10 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** including seven new and three renewed have been signed in the presence of **Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** and her Indian counterpart **Narendra Modi** to further consolidate the ever-growing relationship between the two neighboring countries.

The MoUs were signed at Hyderabad House in Delhi, marking a pivotal moment in India-Bangladesh relations.

Of the seven new MoUs, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of **Blue Economy** and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and India Ocean Region signed between the government of Bangladesh and the government of India

Another MoU has been signed between the Bangladesh Oceanographic Research Institute (BORI) and the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India** for Joint Research on Oceanography of the Indian Ocean and Capacity Building.

An MoU on **Rail Connectivity** between India and Bangladesh has also been signed as two separate shared visions of the Bangladesh Digital Partnership and the shared vision of India Bangladesh Green Partnership for a Sustainable Future.

Another MoU between the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (**IN-SPACE**) and the Department of Space, Government of the Republic of India, and the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology, Government of Bangladesh has been signed for collaboration on a Joint Small Satellite Project.

A MoU between **DSSC, Wellington**, and **DSCSC Mirpur** for cooperation concerning military education in the field of strategic and operational studies has also been signed.

Three renewed MoUs are the MoU for **Fisheries Cooperation**; the MoU for **Disaster Management**; and the MoU on Cooperation in the Field of **Health and Medicine**.

- 171.** The Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Indian Army has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER), an autonomous R&D laboratory under the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)**, to advance collaboration in 'Next Generation Wireless Technologies for Indian Army.'

The MoU has been signed by Lt Gen K H Gawas, Commandant MCTE and Colonel Commandant Corps of Signals, and Dr P H Rao, Director General SAMEER.

This MoU plans to establish an '**Advanced Military Research and Incubation Centre**' at MCTE. This center aims to focus on Advanced Wireless Technologies for the Indian Army.

The MoU also aims at knowledge exchange, training, and development aspects.

The MoU between SAMEER and MCTE aims to enhance national security and technological infrastructure, with potential benefits that will not only be limited to the military but will go much beyond.

The advancements achieved could impact telecommunications, emergency response, and public safety, demonstrating a commitment to a holistic approach to national security.

- 172.** The **Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS)**, an apex autonomous organization under the Ministry of Ayush, has signed two Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with **Shri Krishna Ayush University, Kurukshetra & Dabur** during the one-day National Consultative Meet on "Research Priority Settings in Traditional Medicine" held at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

Under this MoU, both entities will look at fostering the path for academic and research collaborations that provides opportunity to researchers and scientists for exchange of ideas through workshops, seminars, and PhD Studies of CCRAS scientists.

National Consultative Meet on Traditional Medicine:

The meeting has been held in collaboration with the WHO-SEARO (World Health Organisation – South East Asia Region office) office and WHO-GTMC (World Health Organisation – Global Traditional Medicine Centre).

The first-of-its-kind consultative meeting brought together representatives from diverse domains of Traditional Medicine (TM) in India, including policymakers, academic institutions, researchers, patients, and industry stakeholders.

The aim is to identify and prioritize key research areas across various traditional medicine systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, and Homeopathy.

173. Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the flagship initiative of the Ministry of Defence, has inked its **350th contract** with **SpacePixxel Technologies Pvt Ltd** for the design and development of a '*Miniaturised satellite capable of carrying Electro-Optical, Infrared, Synthetic Aperture Radar, and Hyperspectral payloads up to 150 kgs*' for the Indian Air Force (IAF).

This 350th iDEX contract enables innovation in space electronics, wherein many payloads earlier deployed on dedicated large satellites are now being miniaturized.

The modular small satellite will integrate multiple miniaturized payloads as per requirement, providing advantages like faster and more economical deployment, ease of manufacturing, scalability, adaptability, and less environmental impact.

174. The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** to create an ecosystem for human resource development in High Performance Computing (HPC) and allied areas.

Key activities to be taken up under this MoA are:

- These training and refresher programs will be conducted to train the Master Trainers in order to enhance their teaching skills in HPC and allied technologies.
- These training programs will be conducted to enhance the subject expertise in HPC and allied technologies of faculties from streams other than Computer Science.
- Courses in HPC will be offered on the Ministry of Education's SWAYAM platform which offers free online courses in various disciplines to the learners.
- HPC-related courses will be designed in such a way so as to ensure that they are aligned with the current and emerging requirements of the HPC industry.

- C-DAC will offer HPC learning platforms like PARAM Shavak, PARAM Vidya, and other upcoming ones through AICTE to nominated institutes.

175. Union Minister (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has granted **Miniratna Category-I** status to **Central Electronics Limited (CEL)** in recognition of its financial stability, profitability, and operational excellence over recent years.

The status has been granted during CEL's Golden Jubilee (50 years) celebration at the Ghaziabad campus

CEL has made significant contributions in the Defence, Railway, Security, Surveillance, and Solar energy sectors, promoting indigenous technologies.

The company is set to diversify its product portfolio by rolling out the production of Smart Boards, impacting smart education implementation in schools across the country.

Miniratna Category-I status:

The CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) that have made a profit in the last three years continuously, with pre-tax profit is Rs.30 crores or more in at least one of the three years, and have a positive net worth are eligible to be considered for grant of Miniratna-I status.

176. The **Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA)** has inked an agreement with **Bebu Project LLP**, a company owned by notable film producers Bonnie Kapoor and Ashish Bhootani, to develop a film city in **Greater Noida**.

The total project cost is **1,510 crore rupees**.

This project is planned to be completed within the next **eight years**.

The initial phase, expected to be completed in three years, will focus on establishing essential film-related facilities and a film institute.

The film city aims to position itself as a premier destination for filmmakers.

177. The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** has announced to launch the **Exchange Rate Automation Module (ERAM)**.

This automated system of ascertaining and publishing the exchange rate will replace the existing manual process and shall come into effect from **4th July 2024**.

ERAM will enhance trade facilitation for importers and exporters by publishing exchange rates of 22 currencies online.

These exchange rates would be made available on the ICEGATE website twice a month i.e. on the evening of the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month and would be effective from midnight of the following day.

178. Ministry of Finance has announced that **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)**, India's premier warship and submarine builders, has been given the **Navratna status**.

With this recognition, MDL has become the **21st Navratna CPSE** in the country, **3rd in Defence PSUs**, and the **first Shipyard** to receive this status.

With the Navratna status, MDL will have the authority to make investments up to Rs.1,000 crore without requiring government approval.

MDL was given the status of **Miniratna- I** in **2006**.

MDL holds **47.21%** of equity share capital of Goa Shipyard Limited, a PSU under the Ministry of Defence.

Criteria for grant of Navratna status to CPSEs:

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 have composite scores of 60 or above in the following six selected performance indicators are eligible to be considered for grant of Navratna status.

- Net Profit to Net worth (25/100)
- Manpower Cost to Total Cost of Production or Cost of Services (15/100)
- PBDIT to Capital employed (15/100)
- PBIT to Turnover (15/100)
- Earning Per Share (10/100)
- Inter-Sectoral Performance (20/100)

179. Adani Group's **Ambuja Cement** will acquire Hyderabad-based **Penna Cement Industries Ltd (PCIL)** at an enterprise value of **Rs 10,422 crore**.

This is the group's third acquisition since it entered the cement business in September 2022. Ambuja Cement will acquire 100 percent of the shares of PCIL from its existing promoter group — P Pratap Reddy and family.

The acquisition would add 14 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) to Ambuja Cement's capacity, taking the total capacity of Adani Group's cement business (ACC-Ambuja consolidated) to 89 mtpa.

180. Cloud major **Oracle** has announced to support the **training of two lakh students in India** in cloud computing, data science, artificial intelligence (AI), and other emerging technologies.

Oracle and Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation have launched a specialized program under the state's massive skill enhancement initiative, *Naan Mudhalvan*, to provide employment-linked training to students in the state.

Teachers and academicians will deliver the training as part of the curriculum on campus. Specific modules will be offered as a digital learning experience through **Oracle MyLearn**. The program will provide students and professionals with a foundation in cloud computing and a better understanding of other core concepts such as AI, machine learning (ML), data science, or blockchain.

181. The **Bruhat Bengaluru Mahangara Palike (BBMP)** has proposed a **Solid Waste Management (SWM) Cess of Rs.100 per month** for each household. The user fee could be as high as Rs 500 for commercial properties.

Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 enables Urban Local Bodies to levy user fees or SWM cess.

Solid waste refers to the byproducts of household or commercial activities that have lost their value to the original owner(s) but may hold significance for others. e.g., Municipal solid waste (items discarded by households), industrial waste, etc.

- 182.** The Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy (**CCRYN**), in collaboration with Svyasa, deemed to be University, organized a **Conference on "Yoga for Space"** at **S-Vyasa University, Bengaluru**, in observance of International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2024 with the theme "Yoga for Self & Society."

The conference's focus was on the convergence of experts from various fields to enhance society, including astronauts.

The conference outlined the activities and challenges of IDY 2024, orchestrated by the Ministry of AYUSH for society, such as the "Yoga with Family" global video contest, YogaTech Challenges for innovative yoga ideas by Indian Startups, Yoga Quiz, Yoga Jingles, among others.

These initiatives aim to raise awareness in society and promote vigorous yoga practice, recognizing that a healthy individual fosters a healthy society, as proclaimed by the theme of IDY 2024.

- 183.** The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**, in collaboration with the **Australian Government**, hosted a comprehensive and productive roundtable to discuss the learnings from the Australia-India Critical Agriculture Skills Pilot Project.

The roundtable, led by Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, MSDE, and Mathew Johnston, Minister Counsellor, Education and Research, Australian High Commission, focussed on the opportunities that lay beyond in taking the initiative forward, bringing it up to scale and replicating the model to other sectors.

The scoping study involved face-to-face and virtual consultations with 89 experts from 64 organizations.

107 emerging job roles were mapped to identify 5 critical emerging roles for pilot projects. Six pilot projects in four states, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, have been completed, creating new job roles in the sector such as Digital Agriculture Extension Promoter, Carbon Farming Practitioner, Livestock Green Management Promoter, Organic Farm & Business Promoter, and Integrated Farming Practitioner, all aligned with Sustainable Development Goals.

- 184.** The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (Delhi)**, a Technical University established by the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) based solutions for improvement in the availability of road signs on National Highways.

IIIT Delhi will conduct surveys to collect imagery and other data related to the availability and condition of road signages on selected National Highways stretches.

The tentative length to be covered under this project shall be around **25,000 km**.

The data collected through surveys will be processed by IIT Delhi through deployment of Artificial Intelligence for accurate identification and classification of road signs.

The institute will also conduct a gap study that will be carried out by assessing the difference between the survey findings and the requirement of road signs as per the approved road signage plan of the respective Contract Agreement.

- 185.** The **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD)**, Ministry of Fisheries Animal Husbandry and Dairying, signed an agreement with the **National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB)** for the execution of works of “Upgradation of Biocontainment Facility and associated repair works at **Chaudhary Charan Singh National Institute of Animal Health (CCSNAIH)**”, Baghpat.

The estimated budgetary overlay for the work is **Rs. 160 crores** and is planned to be executed within **20 months**.

The bio-containment facility of CCSNAIH was commissioned in 2010 and the Institute has been recognized as Central Drugs Laboratory by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India for undertaking the Quality Control Testing of Veterinary Biologicals HS (Haemorrhagic Septicaemia) and RD (Ranikhet Disease).

- 186.** The **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** has granted its approval for the merger of **Vistara with Air India** allowing a period of nine months for the dissolution of the former.

Tata Sons Private Limited will hold **73.38%** stake in the merged entity, and Singapore Airlines 25.1%. The remaining 1.52% will be held by SBICAP Trustee Limited on behalf of Air India Employee Settlement Trust.

Tata Group took over the reins of loss-making Air India in January 2022.

- 187.** The **Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) Kanpur** has collaborated with the Centre of Excellence for Capacity Building, Training, and Design of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles at IIT Kanpur (Drone CoE Kanpur) and the Drone Federation of India (DFI) to launch the **UAV/UAS/Drone Acceleration and Networking (UDAAN)** program to boost drone startups in India.

The UDAAN program will select **20 startups** annually, divided into two cohorts. These startups will be incubated at SIIC, IIT Kanpur, gaining access to cutting-edge R&D facilities, technical mentorship, financing opportunities, and invaluable industry relationships. Startups interested in participating in the UDAAN program must be registered as private Limited companies with DPIIT, operate within the UAV/Drone sector and focus on product development, testing, design verification, or technical consultancy. Their annual turnover should not exceed **INR 3 crore**.

- 188.** **GAIL (India) Limited** has planned to set up a **1500 KTA (kilotons per annum) Ethane Cracker Project** in **Ashta**, located in the **Sehore district of Madhya Pradesh**.

This project is expected to boost the production of various ethylene derivatives and mark a major expansion in GAIL's business operations.

As part of the preliminary arrangements, the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation Limited (MPIDC) has initiated the process of allocating approximately 800 hectares of land for the project.

The investment required for this project is projected to be around Rs 60,000 crore.

- 189. Wipro** has launched its **Lab45 artificial intelligence (AI) platform**, which leverages generative AI (GenAI), machine learning (ML), and deep learning technologies to help companies increase efficiencies, transform business functions, and enable industry-specific solutions.

Lab45 is Wipro's innovation lab, and the Lab45 AI platform is available to all Wipro employees and clients.

The Lab45 AI platform runs on a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model and supports various state-of-the-art large language models (LLMs) from leading providers as well as custom deep-learning and other models.

The platform allows for seamless integration of language and visual processing for generating images from text prompts, as well as the ability to index, parse, and summarise content.

- 190. Tata Communications** has inked a **five-year** global broadcasting services deal with **World Athletics** to provide broadcasting services, enhancing global coverage of premier events starting from the Tokyo World Championships.

The deal aims to enhance innovation and audience engagement.

Tata Communications will be the host broadcaster for World Athletics Series events, delivering immersive coverage and custom live content across continents.

- 191. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Sansad TV** to make Indian art and culture more accessible to the people.

Under this, programs produced by IGNCA will be telecast on Sansad TV and Sansad TV will also be able to use the content from IGNCA's cultural archives.

- 192. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ)** has inked a concession agreement with the **Tanzania Ports Authority** to operate and manage **Container Terminal 2 at the Dar es Salaam Port, Tanzania**, through its subsidiary Adani International Ports Holdings Pte Ltd.

The concession agreement has been inked for **30 years**.

CT2 has a capacity of 1 million TEUs and handles ~83% of Tanzania's container volume.

Adani Ports-led consortium will acquire the project company in Tanzania, which houses all port handling equipment and employees, for an amount of USD 39.5 million.

193. The **Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad** to collaborate on research and training.

The MoU aims to foster innovation and research in developing novel medical devices and addressing health issues specific to soldiers serving in varied terrains.

IIT Hyderabad, with its departments of Biotechnology, Biomedical Engineering, and Bioinformatics, will provide the necessary technical expertise to tackle the diverse medical challenges faced by the Armed Forces.

The MoU will facilitate student exchange programs, short-term courses for undergraduates, and faculty exchange initiatives

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194. The **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)**, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Reliance Foundation** to empower coastal communities with vital oceanographic information and tools.

This MoU aims to enhance the safety, livelihoods, and resilience of those who depend on the ocean.

This MoU between INCOIS and Reliance Foundation represents a significant step towards a future where coastal communities can not only survive but thrive alongside a healthy and resilient ocean.

195. The **Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK)**, in collaboration with the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), has established a **DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA CoE)** on its campus for interdisciplinary research in next-generation defense technologies.

This initiative aligns with DRDO's strategy of setting up DIA CoEs in key academic institutions to foster technology development through experienced faculty, bright scholars, and DRDO scientists, creating a robust ecosystem for defense innovation.

Sanjay Tandon, former director of the Institute of Technology Management at Mussoorie, serves as the Director of DIA CoE at IIT Kanpur.

This center will focus on specific research and development areas, driving forward innovation in defense technology.

196. **JSW Steel** has launched indigenous coated steel to reduce coated steel imports. The company has become the first Indian company to make a **Zinc-Magnesium-Aluminium alloy-coated steel** product domestically.

JSW Steel has patented the unique chemical composition of JSW Magsure.

JSW Magsure has significant usage in applications in highly corrosive environments.

197. Nokia has inked an agreement with the **Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV)** for carrying out joint research related to 5G/6G communications in the transportation and logistics sector.

Both entities will collaborate on research opportunities in 5G/6G communications targeting air, land, and sea transportation use cases, as well as standards development, smart factory/ automation, and AI/GenAI labs.

Other MoUs signed by GSV:

- GSV has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Plasser India**, a subsidiary of Plasser & Theurer group from Austria, to collaborate in the fields of research, teaching, and training of students to deepen their understanding of the scientific, technological, and management topics pertaining to the rail sector.
- GSV has also signed an MoU with **Jacobs** to enhance advancement in the field of research, teaching, and training activities pertaining to the transport, rail, and semiconductor sector, establishing center(s) of excellence in semiconductors, electronics manufacturing, and railways, including the development of laboratories.

198. Zupree, India's largest skill-based Ludo platform, has joined hands with **Gurugram Cyber Police** for the 11th edition of the Cyber Security Summer Internship Program, titled 'Cyber Warriors'.

The month-long internship aims to train selected candidates in cyber security under the guidance of experts, fostering responsible digital citizenship and tackling real-world cyber threats.

199. The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** to facilitate collaboration between the two ministries in operating a special cell of **Tele MANAS**, the National Telemental Health Helpline of MoHFW, as a pilot project for a period of **two years** at the Armed Forces Medical College in Pune.

The special Tele MANAS cell will serve as a dedicated mental health assistance helpline for all Armed Forces beneficiaries across the country.

Tele MANAS:

- It was launched in October 2022.
- It is the digital extension of the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP), offering comprehensive, integrated, and inclusive 24/7 mental health services.

- The initiative provides a toll-free number, 14416, in each State and Union Territory (UT) for easy access to mental health support.
- Currently, there are 51 operational Tele MANAS cells functioning across all 36 States and UTs, offering services in 20 different languages.

200. Tata Motors has approved to set up a wholly-owned subsidiary for its commercial vehicle business. The company has proposed the name of the new unit as **TML Commercial Vehicles Ltd (TMLCVL)**.

In March 2024, Tata Motors announced the demerger of its commercial and passenger vehicle segments into two separate listed entities to better capitalize on growth opportunities.

TMLCVL is proposed to be incorporated with a paid-up capital of Rs.10,00,000 comprising 5,00,000 equity shares of face value of Rs.2 each fully paid-up cash.

201. Ministry of Mines and the **Central TB Division** of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi for collaborative and convergent action towards the elimination of **Tuberculosis**.

The MoU will forge inter-ministerial collaboration and strategic partnerships to achieve the target of Eliminating Tuberculosis (TB) in India by **2025**.

This MoU aims for collaborative field actions like webinars and other awareness-building initiatives under the National TB Elimination Programme by engaging the CPSEs, attached offices, subordinate offices, and autonomous bodies of the Ministry of Mines.

This will also help in the capacity building of health functionaries of PSUs' hospitals & health centers for specialized campaigns for eradication of TB at the grassroots level.

202. The **United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) South Asia Regional Office**, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, Government of India, hosted the **National Stakeholder Workshop on Safe, Trusted and Ethical AI** at the Taj Palace Hotel, **New Delhi**.

The workshop provided a platform for critical discussions intended to integrate safe, trusted, and ethical AI considerations into the national and state-level AI strategies and programs, ensuring that the deployment of AI technologies aligns with public welfare and adheres to international norms and standards.

The AI is expected to add nearly \$500 billion to India's GDP by 2025.

Tim Curtis is the UNESCO Representative to India and the Director of UNESCO South Asia Regional Office.

203. Volvo Cars, a Swedish multinational manufacturer of luxury vehicles, launched the **world's first EV battery passport** recording the origins of raw materials, components, recycled content, and carbon footprint for its flagship EX90 SUV, which is about to start production.

The passport is developed by Volvo (VOLCARb.ST) which is owned by China's Geely (GEELY.UL), in partnership with UK startup Circular.

Battery passports will be mandatory for electric vehicles (EVs) sold in the European Union from February 2027 showing the composition of batteries, including the origin of key materials, their carbon footprint, and recycled content.

- 204.** A group of teachers and students at the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Dharwad**, directed by Profs. Sudheer Siddapureddy and Ameer Mulla, have developed an innovative **Fire Rescue Assistant drone**.

The project was completed with funding from TiHAN Foundation, IIT Hyderabad (NMICPS, Government of India).

The unveiling and demonstration of the fire rescue assistant drone was held during the two-day workshop on Drone Design and Autonomous Navigation in Fire Rescue (DDANFR 2024) held at IIT Dharwad.

The event was organised by the Fire and Thermal Research Laboratory (FTRL) and the Control Systems and Robotics Laboratory.

- 205.** The Paris-based energy major **TotalEnergies SE** has signed two new **liquefied natural gas (LNG)** contracts in Asia, in line with its strategy of growing its LNG business.

First contract: TotalEnergies SE has signed a sales and purchase agreement (SPA) with **Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL)** for the delivery to India of up to **800,000 tons per year of LNG** for ten years from 2026.

Second contract: TotalEnergies also signed an agreement with **Korea South-East Power** for the delivery to South Korea of up to around **500,000 tons per year of LNG** for five years from 2027.

The agreements allow TotalEnergies to secure medium-term outlets for its global LNG supply portfolio.

- 206.** The **Technology Development Board (TDB)** under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has announced financial assistance to **M/s Krishigati Pvt. Ltd., Pune** for EV technology in Intercultural farming operations.

Krishigati's project titled "Axle-Less Multipurpose Electric Vehicle for Modern and Precision Farming" is a step towards the indigenization of electric vehicle technology for intercultural farming operations.

The focal point of this initiative is **India's first-ever "Self-Propelled Electric Agricultural Tool Bar" (Krishigati Electric Bull)**, an IP-based solution designed for climate-resilient farm mechanization.

The goal of this project is to produce and market these goods, which could have a big effect on the agriculture industry.

207. Axis Bank, a private sector bank, and **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance**, a private general insurer, have entered a strategic bancassurance partnership to boost insurance penetration and financial inclusion in the country.

Under this bancassurance tie-up, a comprehensive suite of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance products will be distributed through Axis Bank's network of 5,250 plus branches. The suite of insurance solutions would include personal insurance products such as motor insurance, health insurance, home insurance, travel insurance, and commercial insurance products, including engineering and marine insurance. Bancassurance is an insurance distribution model where companies partner with banks to sell policies.

BANKING & FINANCE

208. Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB), sponsored by **Canara Bank**, received the national award for significant enrolment under the **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

KVGB had enrolled 4,27,736 cumulative accounts under APY. During 2023-24, the bank enrolled 86,350 accounts against a target of 67,932, achieving the target well ahead of schedule.

While PFRDA had set a target of an average of 100 accounts per branch, KVGB surpassed it with an average of 137 accounts, the highest among all banks in South India.

The chairman of KVG Bank Shreekant M. Bhandiwad received the award from the Secretary, DFS, Government of India Vivek Joshi, and Chairman of PFRDA Deepak Mohanty.

209. Mirae Asset Investment Managers has launched **India's first Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF) focused on the Electric Vehicle (EV)** and new-age automotive segment, named the '*Mirae Asset Nifty EV and New Age Automotive ETF*'.

- This open-ended scheme is crafted to harness the sector's promising long-term growth potential.
- The fund will follow the Nifty EV and New Age Automotive Total Return index.
- During the new fund offer (NFO) period, the scheme requires a minimum initial investment of **₹5,000**, with additional investments in multiples of **Re 1**.
- The scheme will allocate **95-100%** of its funds to securities listed in the Nifty EV and New Age Automotive index, and **0-5%** to money market instruments, including tri-party repo agreements, debt securities, and units of debt/liquid schemes offered by domestic mutual funds.
- The subscription period for the scheme begins on **June 24, 2024**, and concludes on **July 5, 2024**.
- **Ekta Gala and Akshay Udeshi** will serve as the managers for this scheme.

210. BharatPe has joined hands with **Invest India** to promote digital financial inclusion and digital financial literacy across One District One Product (ODOP) producers and sellers across ODOP districts in the country.

This partnership aims to contribute to the government's efforts towards increasing digital financial inclusion and literacy. This will enhance access to digital payment mediums amongst ODOP merchants in tier 3-4 cities and rural areas of India.

This partnership is structured around a robust and customized Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) program.

The programs will be conducted for ODOP stakeholders operating in micro and small-size industries. The targeted locations for this initiative include key districts across Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi NCR, among others.

211. Anuj Tyagi has become the Managing Director (MD) and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **HDFC ERGO General Insurance**. His appointment is effective from **1st July 2024**.

He has replaced Ritesh Kumar, who was the MD & CEO of HDFC Ergo General Insurance since 2008.

He joined the company in 2008. He was serving as the Deputy MD.

212. Action Construction Equipment Ltd. (ACE), a prominent player in India's construction equipment manufacturing sector, has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Bank of Baroda** to facilitate financing solutions for construction equipment businesses.

Under this MoU, ACE customers across the country will have access to tailored financing options provided by Bank of Baroda.

This MoU aims to support construction equipment businesses, local entrepreneurs, and startups by offering seamless access to financing.

213. Universal Sampo General Insurance Company has provided cashless claims approval of Rs.8.03 crore for over 8,170 hospital admissions under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana in the Union Territory Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

The scheme has become operational since 1st February 2024 and the cashless approvals have been made over the past 142 days. This reflects the scheme's efficiency and the substantial financial relief to families.

The administration of PMJAY is supported by the PMJAY-ABHA digital platform, enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of the scheme's implementation.

214. K Paul Thomas, the CEO and Managing Director of ESAF Small Finance Bank, has been named the new **Chairperson of Sa-Dhan**, an association of microfinance and impact finance institutions.

Previously, he served as the co-chair of Sa-Dhan.

Sa-Dhan:

It is an association of Microfinance and Impact Finance Institutions. It is an RBI-appointed Self-Regulatory Organization (SRO) for Microfinance Institutions. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

- 215. ICICI Bank** has introduced '**SmartLock**', a unique safety measure to enable its customers to lock/unlock multiple banking services instantly, without seeking help from a customer care executive through phone or e-mail.

This feature, available on iMobile Pay, empowers customers to lock/unlock access to internet banking, UPI (including payments from other UPI apps linked to the Bank account), and credit and debit cards, simply by clicking a button, thereby taking safety of their account in their own hands.

'SmartLock', the first-of-its-kind measure in the Indian banking sector, also allows customers to lock/unlock the entire iMobile Pay.

The feature allows scheduled standing instructions (SI) and E-mandates to go through, even when a banking service is locked by the customer.

- 216.** The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** issued the corporate agent license to **Muthoot Microfin** to enable it to offer tailored insurance plans to its customer base.

This license strengthens Muthoot Microfin's commitment to financial inclusion by providing insurance coverage that addresses the risks faced by the most vulnerable segments of society.

The corporate agent license will help Muthoot Microfin negotiate better with insurance partners and customize products to suit the needs of its BOP (Bottom of the Pyramid) customers in rural and semi-urban areas across India.

- 217.** New York-based leading Insurtech SaaS platform, **INSILLION**, has partnered with **Royal Sundaram General Insurance (RSGI)** and the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** to revolutionize the travel insurance industry.

Under this partnership, RSGI integrated with IRCTC to enable embedded Group Personal Accident (GPA) policies to be offered alongside e-ticket purchases through INSILLION's API (Application Programming Interface) platform.

- 218. Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management Company (ABSLAMC)** has reappointed **A Balasubramanian** as its Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for a period of **three years**. His appointment is effective from July 25, 2024.

He has been associated with ABSLAMC since 1995.

Before assuming the CEO role in 2009, he served as Chief Investment Officer from 2006 to 2009.

Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Limited (ABSLAMC):

ABSLAMC was incorporated in the year 1994. Aditya Birla Capital Limited and Sun Life (India) AMC Investments Inc. are the promoters and major shareholders of the Company.

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

219. HDFC Bank has launched a new digital investment platform '**SmartWealth**' to take wealth services to every Indian and make investments simple and transparent.

The HDFC Bank SmartWealth comes loaded with first-ever features that allow investors to make the right investment decisions and plan their financial journey.

It has been developed with first-time investors in mind, built with smart intelligence, and has pioneering tools that allow users to make the right investment decisions to plan their finances.

The users can create SmartJars, which gives users personalized portfolio plans that can be modified or paused anytime.

The Portfolio Analytics feature on SmartWealth analyses asset distribution and alerts users to overexposure in a particular fund, thereby mitigating risk.

220. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has constituted a working group to review **derivatives trading norms** with the aim of enhancing investor protection and risk management, said people aware of the development.

The 15-member panel will be headed by **G Padmanabhan**, former executive director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

It will be tasked with market development and regulation to enhance the risk architecture of exchange-traded derivatives and investor protection.

The working group has representatives from the market ecosystem like the exchanges, brokers and academicians.

221. The S&P Global Ratings retained its growth forecast for India at **6.8 percent** for **FY25**, citing high interest rates and lower fiscal boost tempering demand in the non-agricultural sectors.

For FY26 and FY27, S&P projected India's economy to grow at 6.9 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

The rating agency expects the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to reduce its policy rate to 6 percent in the current financial year from 6.5 percent at present.

Additionally, it anticipates further cuts in the lending rate to 5.5 percent and 5.25 percent in 2025-26 and 2026-27, respectively.

222. Punjab & Sind Bank has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Army** to provide a defense salary package with a host of facilities including free insurance cover.

The MoU provides the serving personnel, veterans, and trainees with personal accident insurance (Death/Disability) cover up to **Rs 1 crore** and an air accidental cover of **Rs 1.2 crore**.

"PSB Gaurav Bachat SB Salary" account is exclusively designed to cater to the distinct banking requirement of serving and retired personnels. The product is also strategically aimed to tap Agniveers enrolled in the Agnipath scheme, ensuring a comprehensive financial solution that aligns with the distinctive needs of the segment.

The lender has also introduced the **PSB Pink debit card** powered by RuPay for women with a host of benefits during its **117th Foundation Day (24th June 2024)**.

The lender also started demat services through wealth-tech partner **Fisdom**, which allows its customers to make investments in the equity market and purchase mutual funds.

The lender also signed an MoU with **Maruti Suzuki India** for vehicle loans through their Digital Lending Platform 'Maruti Suzuki Smart Finance' and an agreement with IIM Amritsar to promote academic research and industry interactions.

The lender also launched a series of customer-centric digital offerings through its omnichannel PSB UNiC App, designed to ensure secure and hassle-free Banking services.

223. E-commerce giant **Flipkart** has launched the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) app, **Super.Money**, to offer payment, credit, deposits, and other financial services.

Currently, in its beta phase, Super. Money is available to an initial group of 100,000 users. The app offers up to 5 percent cashback on food, travel, and other merchant payments using the app.

A beta version is typically one which is used for testing by a limited user group, before being opened for the general public.

The app is live in partnership with **Axis Bank** while it will also offer credit through **Utkarsh Small Finance Bank**.

DMI Finance and Credit Saison are other financial partners of this app.

224. The **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**, Government of India, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **State Bank of India (SBI)** to provide additional digital payment services of the SBI through a payment gateway called SBlePay to Indian migrant workers, Recruiting Agents (RAs) and other users of the eMigrate portal.

Through the implementation of this MoU, payment of various emigration-related fees would be possible with NIL transaction charges for payment through UPI, credit/debit cards, and NEFT through net banking of all Indian banks.

eMigrate project:

The eMigrate project, launched in 2014, has been assisting Indian workers going to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries for employment by making the emigration process online & transparent and bringing Foreign Employers (FEs), registered RAs and insurance companies issuing Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojna (PBBY) on one common platform to facilitate seamless, safe and legal migration.

The portal also has a mechanism for voluntary registration of emigrants holding ECNR category passports proceeding for overseas employment.

225. Samsung, a consumer electronics brand, has joined hands with **Paytm parent One97 Communications Ltd** to integrate travel and entertainment services to Samsung Wallet in India.

With this partnership, users of Samsung Galaxy smartphones can access Paytm's suite of services, including flight and bus bookings, movie ticket purchases, and event bookings, through the digital wallet.

Samsung Galaxy users using the Paytm and Paytm Insider app can add their tickets directly to Samsung Wallet using 'Add to Samsung Wallet' functionality.

Note: Samsung is a South Korean multinational conglomerate headquartered in Samsung Town, Seoul.

226. Indian Bank has organized a credit camp for the **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector** in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The aim is to support local businesses by providing them with the necessary financial resources.

During the camp, 440+ sanction tickets amounting to over Rs 500.00 crore (Approx.) were distributed to MSME customers.

227. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Mastercard India** for collaboration in cyber security to enhance India's cyber-resilience in the financial sector.

Under this MoU, Mastercard and CERT-In will hold training programs and workshops for cyber capacity building, the latest market trends, and best practices to enhance the cyber security of financial sector organizations.

Both entities will also share relevant cyber threat trends, technical information, threat intelligence, and vulnerability reports to strengthen the financial sector information security of India.

228. India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has collaborated with **Ria Money Transfer (Ria)**, a global leader in the cross-border money transfer industry and business segment of Euronet Worldwide, Inc, to provide customers in remote areas across India with convenient and affordable doorstep financial services.

Under this collaboration, the International Inward Money Transfer service will become available at more than 25,000 Post Office locations immediately with an expected reach of over 100,000 locations through the Post Offices.

India Post Payment Bank:

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by the Government of India. IPPB was launched on September 1, 2018.

229. Fitch Ratings has raised **India's GDP forecast** for **FY25 to 7.2%** from 7% earlier, citing a positive economic outlook driven by recovering consumer confidence and increased investment.

The Indian economy grew at an impressive rate of 8.2 percent in FY24, driven by a stronger-than-expected expansion of 7.8 percent in the fourth quarter.

Fitch expects headline inflation to continue declining to 4.5 percent by calendar year-end, and average 4.3 percent in 2025 and 2026, staying slightly above the mid-point of its target range.

230. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has announced a **lifetime discount of 15%** exclusively for women on all the premiums to be paid, for its best-selling term insurance product, **iProtect Smart**.

Additionally, **salaried women** will be eligible for an extra **15% discount** on the first year's premium, empowering them to provide financial security to themselves and their loved ones. iProtect Smart combined with the critical illness benefit, provides cover against 34 critical illnesses. This combination offers benefits of both health and life insurance.

The critical illness cover amount is paid out on a diagnosis, providing the requisite financial resources for seeking immediate medical treatment, without disrupting the family's savings. The iProtect Smart provides financial protection against life's uncertainties, including death, terminal illness, and disability at affordable premiums. Also, it offers life coverage up to 99 years of age.

231. The provisional payroll data of the **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** has reported a significant increase in new employee registrations for April 2024, with **16.47 lakh new employees** added to its rolls.

Additionally, approximately **18,490** new establishments have been integrated into the ESI Scheme in April 2024.

Out of the total 16.47 lakh new employees, 7.84 lakh, accounting for around **47.60%** of the total registrations, belong to the age group of up to 25 years. This indicates a robust growth in employment opportunities for young individuals entering the workforce.

The gender-wise analysis of the payroll data indicates that the net enrolment of female members has been **3.38 lakh** in April 2024.

A total of **53 transgender employees** have also been registered under the ESI Scheme in the month of April 2024

ESI Scheme:

- It is a social security scheme offered by the Government of India as per the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948. The scheme provides protection to employees against disablement/death due to employment injury, sickness, and maternity.
- The ESI Scheme applies to factories and other establishment viz. Road Transport, Hotels, Restaurants, Cinemas, Newspaper, Shops, and Educational/Medical Institutions wherein 10 or more persons are employed. However, in some States threshold limit for coverage of establishments is still 20.
- It is the employer's legal responsibility to register their factory/ establishment under the ESI Act within 15 days of its applicability to them.

232. IAS officer **Rajeev Krishnamuralilal Agarwal**, former whole-time director of market regulator SEBI, has been appointed as a non-executive independent director of **Paytm**. He has been appointed for a period of 5 years.

He succeeded Neeraj Arora, the former Chief Business Officer of WhatsApp, who has resigned from the board of One97 Communications, the parent company of fintech giant Paytm.

233. **Ajith Kumar KK** has been named the Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Dhanlaxmi Bank** with effect from 20th June 2024. He has been appointed for a three-year term.

Earlier, he served as the Chief Human Resources Officer at Federal Bank in the cadre of president.

234. **ESAF Small Finance Bank (ESAF SFB)** has decided to discontinue the services of business correspondent **ESAF Swasraya Multi-State Agro Co-operative Society Limited (ESMACO)** to reduce concentration risks and absorb its 5,000 plus employees on the rolls of the lender.

The discontinuation will reduce the contribution of ESMACO to the management of the gross advances to **14.90 percent**.

The discontinuation of the scope of services is not expected to have a material adverse financial impact on the bank.

235. Jaipur-based **Namdev Finvest** has teamed up with **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance**, a leading insurance platform, to offer comprehensive financial solutions, including insurance and NBFC services, to its customers.

As part of this collaboration, Namdev strives to enhance its product portfolio, and offer complete risk cover against assets, thereby providing added value to its customers.

236. The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has sanctioned a **USD 170 million** policy-based loan to improve **India's health system preparedness** and capacity to respond to future pandemics.

The loan, under the Strengthened and Measurable Actions for Resilient and Transformative Health Systems (Subprogram 1), will support the government's National Health Policy 2017, which aims to provide quality health care services to all.

The program will strengthen disease surveillance systems to effectively respond to public health threats.

237. The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed a **USD 50 million** commitment to **Actis Asia Climate Transition Fund**, an infrastructure fund managed by Actis, a global sustainable infrastructure investor, to help accelerate the clean energy transition and address development challenges arising from climate change impacts in **Asia and the Pacific**.

The fund will invest in renewable energy, energy solutions, and sustainable transportation companies. Investment size will typically range from USD 50 million–USD 200 million per company.

238. Federal Bank, in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has launched the **RuPay Wave Credit Card** to offer customers UPI-powered transactions on the RuPay network.

This integration offers seamless digital transactions, combining RuPay credit card benefits and features with UPI payment convenience.

By linking the RuPay Wave Credit Card with UPI-enabled apps, Federal Bank customers will experience the convenience of UPI and the benefits of a secure RuPay network.

239. Payment's solutions startup **SabPaisa** has received 'in-principle' approval from the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to operate as a **payment aggregator** under the Payments and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

The license will allow SabPaisa to offer comprehensive payment aggregation services to merchants across India.

The RBI's payment aggregator structure, implemented in March 2020, mandates that only approved entities can provide payment aggregation services to merchants.

240. As per RBI's latest (June 2024) bulletin, **India's GDP** will be **7.3 percent** in **Q1 (April-June) FY25**. The GDP is in line with the projection made by RBI in its 2nd bi-monthly Monetary Policy released on 7th June 2024.

It is also expected that the Current Account Deficit (CAD) for FY24 (2023-24) to be lower than 1 percent of GDP.

RBI highlighted that India's GDP growth rate of 7.8% in Q4 (Jan-March) FY24 (2023-24) was better-than-expected and India's GDP for the full FY24 was at 8.2%.

241. Akhil Gupta has been named the new **Chairman of Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company**, wholly owned by Bharti Group. Presently, he is serving as the Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises Limited.

He has over 40 years of professional expertise and has been instrumental in Bharti Airtel's growth since its inception.

242. The **Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has proposed to raise the threshold for the basic service demat account (BSDA) to **Rs 10 lakh** from the current **Rs 2 lakh** in a bid to boost the participation of retail investors in the securities market.

BSDA is a more basic version of a regular demat account. The facility was introduced by SEBI in 2012 to reduce the burden of demat charges on investors with small portfolios.

At present, an individual can hold debt securities worth up to Rs 2 lakh and other than debt securities worth up to Rs 2 lakh in a single demat account to be eligible for BSDA.

For portfolio values up to Rs 4, SEBI has proposed that the annual maintenance charge for a BSDA should be nil, and for portfolio values of between Rs 4 lakh and up to Rs 10 lakh, the charges should be Rs 100.

However, if portfolio value exceeds Rs 10 lakh then BSDA should automatically be converted into a regular demat account.

243. Asirvad Micro Finance Limited (Asirvad), a subsidiary of Manappuram Finance Limited (MAFIL), has appointed **Satish Nair** as President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Asirvad is the third largest microfinance institution (in terms of AUM as of June 2023), offering microfinance loans to low-income women.

As of June 2023, Asirvad has a presence in 22 States and 4 Union Territories in India through its network of 1,684 branches, with assets under management (AUM) of over Rs10,000 crore.

Chairman: V.P. Nandakumar

Headquarters: Valapad, Kerala

244. PNB MetLife India Insurance Co. Ltd. has appointed **Sameer Bansal** as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company.

His appointment is effective from 1st July 2024.

He will succeed Ashish Srivastava, who has been appointed managing director for New York-based MetLife Inc.'s global shared services team in India.

He joined PNB MetLife in 2007 and currently serves as Chief Distribution Officer and a member of the leadership team.

245. Muthoot Microfin has inked a strategic co-lending partnership with the **State Bank of India (SBI)**. Under this, Muthoot Microfin and SBI will co-lend to members of Joint Liability

Groups (JLGs) who are engaged in agricultural and allied activities as well as other income-generating enterprises.

The loan amounts will range from a minimum of Rs 10,000 to a maximum of Rs 3 lakh. Under the co-lending model, banks are permitted to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) on the basis of a prior agreement.

246. Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has opened a new, exclusive branch on Anna Salai (Mount Road) in Chennai, dedicated entirely to support start-ups. This initiative aims to provide robust financial services and comprehensive support to budding entrepreneurs and emerging enterprises.

During the inauguration, the bank introduced the "IOB start-up current account" and the "IOB Pragati" credit scheme to finance start-ups.

247. SBI General Insurance Company has announced the withdrawal of its **Arogya Plus policy** with effect from **5th October 2024**.

As per the regulatory requirement, insurance companies must give **90 days'** advance intimation to their customers before withdrawing a policy.

Policyholders holding the Arogya Plus policy will be given the option to migrate to a comprehensive health insurance policy like Super Health Insurance or to any other individual health insurance product available with the general insurer, including the Standard Product. Arogya Plus provided coverage up to a specified sum insured at a flat premium. The flat premium was irrespective of the age of the insured and family combination.

The policy was available on an individual basis, family non-floater, and family floater sum insured basis. The policy had no limits on room rent or age-related charges.

248. Credit ratings and research giant, **Moody's** affirmed the **Baa3 ratings** on three Indian public sector banks including **Bank of Baroda (BOB), Canara Bank, and Punjab National Bank (PNB)**.

The rating agency-maintained A stable outlook on the long-term ratings of all three banks. This rating is given because all three banks showed improved credit metrics.

The bank's non-performing loan (NPL) ratios have also declined. It is a ratio of bad or unpaid loans to total loans.

BOB's, Canara's and PNB's NPL ratios respectively declined to 2.9 percent, 4.2 percent, and 5.7 percent as of 31 March 2024 from 3.8 percent, 5.4 percent, and 8.7 percent a year earlier, supported by lower bad loans (or slippage) as well as stronger recoveries and higher write-offs.

249. The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has been awarded the "**Best Conduct of Business Regulator**" for the Asia-Pacific region by The Asian Banker.

The award acknowledges SEBI's significant role in enhancing the regulatory framework of Indian stock markets.

The award was received by SEBI's Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney in a ceremony held in Hong Kong.

SEBI has been actively working towards instantaneous settlement.

In 2021, the T+1 settlement was introduced in a phased manner, which was fully implemented from January 2023.

This move has provided investors with faster access to their funds following trade execution and settlement, enhancing market efficiency and liquidity.

250. The **World Bank** in its Global Economic Prospects report has revised **India's FY25 growth** forecast to **6.6%** from 6.4% projected in January 2024. India will remain the fastest-growing of the world's largest economies, although its pace of expansion is expected to moderate.

For **FY26 and FY27**, the World Bank predicts India's economy will grow at **6.7 percent and 6.8 percent**, respectively.

In FY24, the National Statistical Office estimated gross domestic product (GDP) to have grown at 8.2 percent.

India's FY25 forecasts (%):

ADB	7
OECD	6.6
Fitch	7
SBI	8
World Bank	6.6
Standard Chartered	7
IMF	6.8
RBI	7.2

251. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has introduced the '**SME Digital Business Loans**' with the aim of sanctioning loans in **45 minutes**.

SBI identified the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) line of business as the focal point for the bank's growth and profitability over the next five years.

SME Digital Business Loans leverage technology and an ecosystem of APIs (application programming interfaces) to streamline the lending process.

SBI has developed a data-driven credit assessment engine capable of providing sanction decisions within a remarkable 10 seconds after submitting the required details, without any human intervention.

For loans up to Rs.50 lakhs, SBI has waived the requirement for financial statements, relying instead on transaction history and GST returns for appraisal.

The new loan offering will be accessible to customers through all the Bank's channels, including its website, branches, SME Centres, as well as internet platforms.

252. PhonePe has collaborated with ride-hailing platform **PickMe** to enable UPI-based payments for Indian travellers in Sri Lanka. With this, Indian tourists visiting Sri Lanka can enjoy the ease and security of UPI payments for their rides.

In May 2024, PhonePe entered into a partnership with LankaPay to allow its users to pay using UPI across Sri Lanka.

253. The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has fined over **Rs 1.66 crore** on **Axis Bank** for failure to detect and report suspicious transactions involving a fraudulent account created in the name of the National Security Guard (NSG), a government agency.

The FIU has issued an order under Section 13 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) that empowers its Director to impose a monetary penalty on a reporting entity (like Axis Bank) if the agency finds that its designated director on the board or any of its employees failed to comply with the obligations mandated under the said law.

The reports indicated that a manager at Axis Bank played a role in establishing this account, purportedly for the purpose of aggregating illicit funds.

Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU):

The FIU, under the Union Finance Ministry, is an agency entrusted with implementing certain sections of the anti-money laundering law like the Enforcement Directorate (ED). It conducts an examination of steps taken to check money laundering and other financial frauds, by banks and other financial institutions designated as 'reporting entities' under the PMLA, in the financial channels of the country.

254. HDFC Bank has hiked retail fixed deposit rates by up to **20 bps** across various buckets with effect from 10th June 2024. The move comes even if the Reserve Bank of India decided to keep the policy repo rate unchanged in the June review of monetary policy.

The highest interest rate offered by HDFC Bank is for the 18 months to less than 21 months category where the rate is 7.25 per cent.

The bank offers 7.10 percent for the 15 to 18 months category. In the one-year to 15-month bucket, HDFC Bank will offer 6.60 percent. Senior citizens will get 50 bps more than the rate offered to others.

255. Prem Prabhakar has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **SBICAP Ventures Limited**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of State Bank of India.

In his new role, he will be responsible for overseeing the strategic direction, operational efficiency, and overall growth of the company.

He will lead the executive team, manage investor relations, and drive initiatives that align with SVL's commitment to creating long-term value for its investors and supporting the communities in which it operates.

256. Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance Company Ltd. (Kotak Life) teamed up with **Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Ltd (Mahindra Finance)** to offer life insurance products to the latter's customers.

This association will benefit over 10 million customers of Mahindra Finance by offering a wide range of tailor-made life insurance solutions provided by Kotak Life.

257. The World Bank will lend support to the **Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC)** to achieve sustainable waste management in the city.

The World Bank held discussions on solid waste management with officials of the State government and the GCC to stop waste dumping in Kodungaiyur by 2026-2027.

The GCC intends to take initiatives to minimize the amount of solid waste that is disposed of in landfills or through incineration.

258. Karnataka Bank has introduced the **'KBL WISE' (Wellness Investments & Savings for Elderly) Senior Citizen Savings Account**, a unique banking product designed to cater to the Banking, Healthcare & Wellness needs of our esteemed senior citizens.

The Savings product is available in two exclusive variants:

- KBL Wise Signature, a regular variant
- KBL Wise Advantage, a premium variant

This innovative product offers an array of bundled features like 'Free Top-up Health insurance up to Rs.10 Lakhs, Free MediBuddy Healthcare Benefits, Free HospiCash Facility, Discount on Locker Rentals, a Doorstep Banking facility, a Lifetime Free Ru pay Platinum Debit card, and other features.

The Bank has partnered with Care Health Insurance Co, a leading Health Insurance player, and MediBuddy, one of India's largest Digital Healthcare platforms to bring together the proposition on the Health and Wellness front.

259. The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has selected **NEC Corporation India** as the System Integrator (SI) for its digital platform PFRDA-TRACE.

NEC Corporation has been selected as SI for a period of **six years**.

PFRDA-TRACE (tracking, reporting, analytics, and compliance e-platform) is expected to serve as a comprehensive tool for submitting regulatory and supervisory compliance reports by intermediaries, sharing reports and data with PFRDA, monitoring functions, and facilitating a workflow for PFRDA departments to review and track submissions.

PFRDA-TRACE is the second phase of its technology architecture (TARCH) project to digitize and automate its operations.

The system integrator will be responsible for studying existing processes, proposing improved workflows and providing design, development, customization, implementation, and maintenance services for PFRDA-TRACE.

The technology architecture envisaged for PFRDA will have four modules: Website revamp and chatbot; PFRDA online intermediary supervision engine (POISE); PFRDA repository and information systems management: data and analytics platform (PRISM); and PFRDA Intranet — internal digitalization (PINTRA).

260. The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has reduced the minimum staggered delivery period for commodity derivatives to **3 days** from 5 days.

The circular shall be effective from **1st July 2024**, for contracts where staggered delivery is scheduled after this date.

The move will boost volumes of derivatives trading in agriculture commodities, and a few metals as investors will be left with more days to trade without taking delivery.

Staggered delivery is the period during which traders can submit their intention to either take or give delivery.

261. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has approved the appointment of **Sandeep Batra**, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of **ICICI Prudential Life Insurance**. His appointment is effective from 30th June 2024.

He has been associated with ICICI group since September 2000 and is currently an Executive Director on the Board of ICICI Bank since July 2018, in charge of Corporate Centre.

262. Capital Small Finance Bank (CSFB), a small finance bank, has inked a bancassurance tie-up with **ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd. (ICICI Lombard)**, a private general insurer.

Under this association, CSFB will leverage its network and customer base to distribute ICICI Lombard's suite of general insurance products, including health, motor, home, travel, and rural insurance.

Bancassurance:

It is an insurance distribution model where insurance companies partner with banks to sell policies. Both the bank and insurance companies get to benefit from this arrangement. While the bank earns a commission from the insurance company, the insurer gains from the distribution network of the bank.

263. NSE Indices Limited, formerly known as India Index Services & Products Limited – IISL, has launched **India's first-ever Electric Vehicle Index** called the **Nifty EV & New Age Automotive index**.

The 33-stock index will track the performance of companies which form a part of the electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem or are involved in the development of new-age automotive vehicles or related technology.

Bajaj Auto, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Maruti Suzuki are the top four components of the index.

The base date for the new thematic index is **April 2, 2018**, and the base value is **1,000**.

The index will be reconstituted semi-annually and rebalanced on a quarterly basis. The new index is expected to act as a benchmark for asset managers and be a reference index tracked by passive funds in the form of Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), index funds, and structured products.

264. Canara Bank has granted approval for initiating the process of diluting a **14.50 percent stake** of the bank in its subsidiary **Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company** by listing the company in Stock Exchanges (BSE/NSE) through an Initial Public Offer (IPO).

This is subject to the approval of the Reserve Bank of India and the Department of Financial Services, Government of India.

Presently, Canara Bank owns a **51 percent stake**, while HSBC Insurance (Asia Pacific) Holdings Ltd as a foreign partner owns 26 percent, and Punjab National Bank, holds a 23 percent stake in the life insurer.

265. Axis Bank has introduced the **NFC Soundbox** in collaboration with **Mastercard**. The new soundbox will act as an all-in-one solution that will allow the users to accept Bharat QR, UPI, Tap & Pay, and Tap + Pin payments.

The new Soundbox will be powered with 4G + Wifi capability. It will also be available on all leading payment networks, such as Visa, RuPay, and American Express.

With this launch, Axis Bank will be the **first bank in India** to introduce a Soundbox that can accept Tap + Pin payments, enabling merchants to accept transactions greater than Rs 5000 via card instruments.

266. The All-India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) has launched the "**Bank Clinic**" initiative to assist bank customers with grievance redressal amid the rapid expansion of technology and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines on retail banking.

It is a non-resolving advisory platform guiding customers on the remedies available as per RBI guidelines.

Under this initiative, customers can register their complaints on the Bank Clinic website, and within five working days, they will receive a reply detailing the available remedies and relevant RBI guidelines for their specific issue.

It serves as an additional channel alongside the normal Banking Ombudsman process.

267. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has unveiled '**Saaṛthi 2.0**' mobile app to help investors manage their finances. The app is packed with tools to make complex financial concepts easier to understand.

Key features:

- Financial calculators: Helps investors make informed financial decisions.
- Educational modules: Explains KYC procedures, mutual funds, ETFs, and the process of buying and selling shares on stock exchanges.

- Investor support: Provides information on the investor grievances redressal mechanism and the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform.
- Video content: Offers a variety of videos to guide investors in personal finance planning.

The app is particularly beneficial for young investors who are just starting their financial journeys.

268. Adani One has introduced **India's first co-branded credit cards** with airport-linked benefits in collaboration with a card network **Visa and ICICI Bank**. The cards will be available in two variants:

- **Adani One ICICI Bank Signature Credit Card** (Rs. 5,000 annual fee with Rs. 9,000 joining benefits)
- **Adani One ICICI Bank Platinum Credit Card** (Rs. 750 annual fee with Rs. 5,000 joining benefits)

Key features of the Adani One ICICI Bank Credit Cards:

- Earn up to 7% reward points on Adani Group spends.
- Airport benefits like free lounge access, meet-and-greet services, and priority parking.
- Discounts on duty-free shopping and airport dining.
- Reward points on groceries, utilities, and international spends.

Note: Adani Group launched the Adani One app in December 2022.

269. The Department of School Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India, has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **National Book Trust** under the aegis of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education in New Delhi to create an institutional framework for the Digital Library Platform, **Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya**.

- Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya will offer over 1,000 non-academic books to children and adolescents published by over 40 reputed publishers in more than 22 languages besides English.
- It will be aimed at facilitating the availability of quality books across geographies, languages, genres, and levels and providing device-agnostic accessibility for children and adolescents in the country.
- The books will be categorized by **four age groups**, as per NEP 2020, for readers aged **3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years**.

- The books will foster cultural awareness, patriotism, and empathy with an intent to realize Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

270. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has become the **first public sector bank and the seventh Indian company** to cross the **Rs 8 lakh crore** in market capitalization (**m-cap**).

HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank are the only other lenders with m-cap of over Rs 8 lakh crore. Among Indian banks, SBI has the largest number of branches and ATMs. It also has the highest number of foreign branches and offices amongst the Indian banks.

SBI joins the ranks of Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, and ICICI Bank in achieving this milestone.

Market Capitalization, or Market Cap, is a term used to represent the market value of a company based on its current share price and the total number of its outstanding shares.

271. Singapore-based **DBS Bank** has expected India's economic growth to stay in the **7 percent** handle in the **April-June 2024 quarter**. It also retained its **India GDP growth** forecast for the current fiscal (**2024-25**) at **7 percent**.

The DBS outlined various factors that support their GDP prediction for India for FY25: stable economic growth, public, and household capex investments, rural recovery, a normal monsoon, and better composition of trade.

India's economy grew at a faster-than-expected pace of 7.8% year-on-year in the January-March 2024 quarter (Q4).

Gross Value Added (GVA) stood at 6.3% Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y) in Q4FY24.

272. Universal Sompo General Insurance, in collaboration with **Maruti Suzuki Insurance Broking**, has launched an initiative aimed at enhancing insurance penetration and awareness in **Andhra Pradesh**.

This partnership is part of Universal Sompo's commitment to aligning with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (IRDAI) vision of "Insurance for All by 2047." Under the banner '**Insure today for a safe tomorrow**,' the initiative includes free vehicle check-ups designed to highlight the importance of insurance in protecting against unforeseen risks.

The campaign featured crucial activities such as free car inspections, detecting and insuring uninsured vehicles, and educating the public about the benefits of property insurance, and encouraging them to purchase on-the-spot insurance policies.

[Attempt IBPS RRB PO Mock Test 2024](#)

273. The Indian delegation, led by the **Secretary of the Department of Commerce, Sunil Barthwal** participated in the inaugural **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Clean Economy Investor Forum** held in **Singapore**.

The forum brought together the region's top investors, clean economy companies, and start-ups to mobilize investments into sustainable infrastructure, climate technology, and renewable energy projects.

During the two-day event, more than 300 participants from financial institutions, multilateral development banks, venture capital funds, project owners, entrepreneurs, and government agencies from IPEF partners actively participated in the Sustainable Infrastructure and Climate Tech engagement tracks.

10 Indian companies among the top 100 climate tech start-ups/ companies selected by IPEF. The first-of-its-kind Forum resulted in **USD 23 billion** in investment opportunities for sustainable infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific.

The event also witnessed the signature of an Offtake Agreement between **Sembcorp Green Hydrogen India Private Limited, Kyushu Electric, and Sojitz** for the production and export of **200 KTPA green ammonia** from **India to Japan**. The agreement aims to increase the production and export of 200 KTPA green ammonia capacity in Phase-I (a total of 800 KTPA in 4 phases) at **Tuticorin Port** in India and export to Japan.

The IPEF partners and the Private Infrastructure Development Group announced the operational launch of the **IPEF Catalytic Capital Fund**. The Fund's founding supporters include Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States, which plan to provide USD 33 million in initial grant funding to catalyze up to **USD 3.3 billion** in private investment.

274. Punjab National Bank (PNB) has planned to sell a **10 percent stake** in **Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company**, an associate company of the Bank, by listing the Company in Stock Exchanges (BSE/NSE) through an Initial Public Offer (IPO).

Currently, PNB holds a **23 percent** stake in the insurance firm. Canara Bank has a 51 percent stake in the life insurer, while HSBC has a 26 percent stake in the joint venture.

The decision is subject to regulatory approval.

[Attempt IBPS RRB PO Mock Test 2024](#)

275. Punjab National Bank (PNB), a leading public sector bank, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL)**, a state-owned company, to collaborate in financing of infrastructure projects.

Under this MoU, the parties can mutually participate under consortium/multiple lending arrangements to provide financial support to the prospective borrowers subject to due diligence and on a case-to-case basis.

276. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has formed a committee to review the ownership and economic structure of clearing corporations and suggest measures to ensure that those entities function as resilient, independent, and neutral risk managers.

The ad-hoc committee will be chaired by **Usha Thorat**, who was a former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The committee has been entrusted with the task of reviewing ownership structure as well as the finances of clearing corporations.

The committee will examine the feasibility, and broaden the list of eligible investors, who are allowed to take a shareholding in a clearing corporation and suggest categories of investors who can acquire stakes in such corporations.

It will examine the need to alter the caps on the shareholding of various entities in a clearing corporation.

277. Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance has rebranded as **Edelweiss Life Insurance**. The move aligns with the company's aim to focus on innovation, simplicity, and a new-age approach to insurance.

The company has also refreshed its logo but retained its brand positioning of 'zindagi unlimited.'

Since its inception (2011), the life insurer has grown at a CAGR of 40%. In FY24, it reported a claim settlement ratio of 99.23%, and an NPS (indicator of customer satisfaction) of 56.

278. Defence Accounts Department (DAD), Ministry of Defence has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with **Bank of India, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India, and Utkarsh Small Finance Bank** in New Delhi to onboard them as **SPARSH [System for Pension Administration (Raksha)] Service Centres** across 1,128 branches of the four banks across the country.

The MoUs will provide last-mile connectivity to pensioners, especially in remote areas where they do not have the technical wherewithal to log on to SPARSH.

With these MoUs, SPARSH Services would now be available at over 26,000 branches of a total of 15 banks across the country. This is in addition to 199 dedicated service centers of DAD, and more than 3.75 lakh Common Service Centers across the country.

SPARSH:

It is an initiative of the Ministry of Defence that aims to provide comprehensive solutions to defense pensioners. It is a fundamental change in managing defense pensions as it focuses on bringing in efficiency, responsiveness, and transparency.

279. NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) collaborated with the **Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCRP)** to enable the deployment of a UPI-like real-time payments system in Peru.

This collaboration marks a significant milestone, making Peru the first country in South America to adopt the globally renowned Unified Payment Interface (UPI) technology—a symbol of India's pioneering excellence in digital payments.

This collaboration empowers the BCRP to establish a reliable and efficient real-time payment platform within the country.

280. Abhaya Hota, former MD & CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has been appointed as an **Independent Director of Cashfree Payments**.

Abhaya Hota, a former chief general manager with the Reserve Bank of India, was the first chief executive officer of NPCI. He retired from his position in August 2017. He also serves as an independent director at Federal Bank, NSE Clearing, Protean e-Gov Technologies and RBI Innovation Hub.

281. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has imposed a penalty of **Rs 2.5 lakh** on stock broker **Samco Securities** for alleged discrepancies in the client onboarding process and usage of common emails and phone numbers for multiple unique client codes. Their signatures were auto-populated across all segments and exchanges.

The stock broker allegedly did not give a choice of nomination for trading and demat accounts and the option to opt out of the same. The company did not provide any evidence to show that the instances where common mobile numbers or email IDs were mapped for multiple unique client codes were of the same family or relatives, as mandated by the regulations.

RBI IN NEWS

282. APIX, the leading global collaborative innovation platform for financial institutions and fintechs, has collaborated with the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to host **HaRBInger 2024: Innovation for Transformation**, a global hackathon addressing critical financial challenges.

This is the **3rd edition of HaRBInger**.

The hackathon features two key themes: **'Zero Financial Frauds' and 'Being Divyang Friendly'**, emphasizing innovation in fraud prevention and inclusivity in financial services for persons with disabilities.

Participants, including individuals, teams, and entities from the hardware/software and coding communities, are invited to develop solutions to specific problem statements within a defined timeframe.

The hackathon challenges participants to tackle four critical problem statements focused on real-time fraud detection, ensuring transaction anonymity, identifying mule accounts, and empowering the visually impaired in financial transactions.

283. The **Second edition** of the **Global Conference on Financial Resilience** has been organized by the College of Supervisors (CoS) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.

The theme of the conference is **'Keeping the Financial System Resilient, Future-Ready and Crisis-Immune'**.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das addressed the conference and emphasized the transformative potential of advanced and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and big data analytics in financial institutions. He stressed the need to strengthen governance and risk management practices, employ sustainable business models, and embrace technological advances to our advantage.

284. The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has won the "**Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024**" by Central Banking, a leading publication based in London, UK.

This honor recognizes RBI's exemplary strides in enhancing its risk culture and awareness, affirming its pivotal role in safeguarding the stability of the Indian financial system. Executive Director Manoranjan Mishra received the award on behalf of the RBI.

285. The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has cancelled the licence of **Purvanchal Co-operative Bank, Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh** as it does not have adequate capital and earning prospects.

The bank has been prohibited from conducting the business of banking' which includes, among other things, acceptance of deposits and repayment of deposits. On liquidation, every depositor would be entitled to receive a deposit insurance claim amount of his/her deposits up to Rs 5 lakh only from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).

286. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of former MD and CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India, **A P Hota**, to examine various aspects of setting up a digital public infrastructure for the **Digital Payments Intelligence Platform**.

The Committee is expected to give its recommendations within two months. The number of frauds in the banking sector increased over four times in the past five years to 36,075. In terms of the number of frauds, these have predominantly been witnessed through digital payments (card or internet). That number rose to 29,082 in FY24 as compared to 2,677 in FY20, data from RBI's annual report shows.

287. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a facility to allow customers to automatically replenish their UPI Lite wallets to promote small-value digital payments.

- UPI Lite was introduced in September 2022.
- UPI Lite is a simplified version of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). It acts as an on-device wallet for small-value transactions.
- Currently, the UPI Lite has a daily limit of Rs 2,000, while the upper limit for a single payment is Rs 500.
- Presently, the UPI Lite app can only hold a maximum of **Rs 2000** at a time.

288. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of **Rs 88.70 lakh** on **SBM Bank (India)** for non-compliance with certain regulatory norms.

The penalty has been imposed for non-compliance with licensing conditions imposed by the RBI, and specific directions to stop undertaking Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS) transactions with immediate effect.

289. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced its **2nd bi-monthly monetary policy for the Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25)**. The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting on 5-7 June 2024 and has decided to keep the rates unchanged.

This is the **eight consecutive time** that the MPC has maintained the status quo.

MPC has also decided to remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns to the target, while supporting growth.

The decisions made align with the goal of achieving a medium-term target for the consumer price index (CPI) or retail inflation rate, which is 4% with a band of +/- 2 percent.

RBI last increased the repo rate by 25 basis points (bps) on February 8, 2023, to 6.5 percent.

The **CPI Inflation for FY25** is projected at **4.5%** with Q1FY25 at 4.9%, Q2FY25 at 3.8%, and Q3FY25 at 4.6%, and Q4FY25 at 4.5%.

India's GDP projection for FY25 raised to **7.2 percent** with Q1 at 7.3 percent; Q2 at 7.2 percent; Q3 at 7.3 percent; and Q4 at 7.2 percent.

Policy rates as of June 2024	
Repo rate	6.50%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate	6.75%
Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) Rate	6.25%
Bank Rate	6.75%
Reserves Ratio as of June 2024	
Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)	4.50%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	18%

Note: The next meeting of the RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is scheduled to be held during August 6 to 8, 2024.

Additional Information:

Monetary Policy Committee is a **statutory body** under the **Reserve Bank of India Act 1934**. It is headed by the **RBI Governor** including **5 members** (2 officials of the RBI and 3 external members nominated by the Government of India). It meets **4 times** in a year.

Current Monetary Policy Committee structure is:

- **Shaktikanta Das:** RBI Governor as a Head

- **Other members:** Dr. Shashanka Bhide, Dr. Ashima Goyal, Prof. Jayanth R. Varma, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan, and Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra.

290. The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has **cancelled the auction of 10-year green bonds** as traders refused to pay greenium. The cancellation to the absence of a “greenium,” indicates investors’ reluctance to accept lower yields.

The cancellation of the green bond sale for 2024-25 marks the 1st instance of such an auction since the inception of green bond sales in January 2023.

The government plans to issue green bonds worth Rs 12,000 crore in the first half of the current financial year. The green bonds were planned to be issued in two tranches of Rs 6,000 crore each for a period of 10 years.

Note: Greenium signifies the premium investors are willing to pay for green bonds because of their sustainability impact.

291. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted permission to **Zurich Insurance Company** to acquire a **70% stake** in **Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company** for a cash consideration of **Rs.5,560 crore**.

According to current regulatory guidelines, a foreign company can own up to 74% in an insurance business in India.

In November 2023, Zurich Insurance Company announced its plans to acquire a 51% stake in Kotak Mahindra General through share purchase and capital infusion. Subsequently, Zurich would acquire an additional 19% in the next three years from the initial acquisition of Rs.5,560 crore.

Note: Zurich Insurance Company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Zurich Insurance Group Ltd. (Zurich Insurance Group), which is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

292. **THDC India Limited (THDCIL)** has been awarded the PSU Leadership & Excellence Award 2024 in the category of ‘Leadership in Digital Transformation.’

THDCIL director (Personnel) Shallinder Singh received the award on behalf of the company. The award serves as a testament to THDCIL’s dedication to innovation and transformation within public sector enterprises.

293. Booker Prize-winning author **Arundhati Roy** has been given the **Pen Pinter Prize 2024** for her “unflinching and unswerving” writings. She will receive the award in a ceremony co-hosted by the British Library on 10 October 2024.

She won the Booker Prize for her debut novel *"The God of Small Things."*

PEN Pinter Prize:

The prize was established in 2009 by the charity English PEN, which defends freedom of expression and celebrates literature, in memory of Nobel-Laureate playwright Harold Pinter. The prize is awarded annually to a writer of outstanding literary merit resident in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, or the Commonwealth.

294. V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award 2024 has been given to **Subbiah Nallamuthu**, a renowned, award-winning Wildlife filmmaker from Chennai.

He has made exceptional contributions to wildlife cinematography, earning him global acclaim.

He gained prominence with his work on Living on the Edge, India's longest-running Panda Award-winning environment series.

His expertise extends to his tenure with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as a high-speed cameraman.

His prolific filmography includes Tiger Dynasty (2012-2013), Tiger Queen (2010), and The World's Most Famous Tiger (2017).

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V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award:

The prestigious Dr V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award is presented in every edition of the Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF), to a filmmaker for a seminal contribution to documentary films and its movement in India. It carries a cash award of **10 lakh rupees**, a trophy, and a citation.

295. The **Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in Bhuj, Gujarat** has been listed among the 7 most beautiful museums in the world under the prestigious **Prix Versailles Award 2024**, which is announced annually by UNESCO for architecture and design.

Smriti Van celebrates the resilience of the people who endured the 2001 earthquake, which had its epicenter in Bhuj and claimed around 13,000 lives.

The Memorial, which includes the names of those who perished in the disaster, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August 2022.

The Memorial is organized into seven thematic blocks: Rebirth, Rediscover, Restore, Rebuild, Rethink, Relive, and Renew.

The Prix Versailles is a series of architectural competitions that shine a light on the finest contemporary projects worldwide.

The shortlisted museums will all be competing for three 2024 World Titles – Prix Versailles, Interior, and Exterior – whose laureates will be announced at UNESCO headquarters by November 2024.

296. Eight scientists are awarded the **2024 Kavli Prize** for their contributions to astrophysics, neuroscience, and nanoscience. All eight scientists awarded the Prize this year are professors at leading American universities.

Field	Winners 2024
Astrophysics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Charbonneau (Canada, USA) • Sara Seager (Canada, USA)
Nanoscience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert S. Langer (USA) • Armand Paul Alivisatos (USA) • Chad A. Mirkin (USA)
Neuroscience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Kanwisher (USA) • Winrich Freiwald (Germany, USA) • Doris Ying Tsao (USA)

Kavli Prize:

This biennial award was established by Norwegian-American philanthropist Fred Kavli (1927-2013). It is given by the US-based Kavli Foundation in partnership with the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research in three areas: **astrophysics, nanoscience, and neuroscience**. Each award includes a USD 1 million cash prize, a scroll, and a 7 cm diameter medal. The first award was given in 2008.

297. Renowned children's filmmaker **Vinod Ganatra** has become the **first Indian** to be conferred the prestigious '**Nelson Mandela Lifetime Achievement Award**' of South Africa for his contribution to films.

He has been honored with the coveted award at the ongoing 7th Nelson Mandela Children's Film Festival, for his immense contributions to the world of cinema for kids.

He has bagged 36 national and international awards, including the 'Janakinath Gaur Award' from Doordarshan for his children's programme, '*Baingan Raja*.'

He became the only Indian filmmaker to receive the 'Liv Ullmann Peace Prize', in Chicago, for his Gujarati film, '*Harun-Arun*'.

He has edited and directed more than 400 documentaries and newsreels, apart from producing 25 multilingual television programs for children and youth.

298. The Sahitya Akademi has announced the **2024 winners of Yuva Puraskar and Bal Sahitya Puraskar**. The winners in both categories receive a cash prize of **Rs 50,000** and an engraved copper plaque.

A total of **24 writers** have been selected for Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2024 and **23 writers** for Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar 2024.

Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar 2024:

Language	Name of the Book (Genre)	Awardee's Name
Assamese	Jaal Kota Jui (Short-Stories)	Nayanjyoti Sarma
Bengali	Deraje Halud Ful, Gatajanma (Poetry)	Sutapa Chakraborty
Bodo	Saikhlum (Short-Stories)	Self-Made Rani Baro
Dogri	Ik Rang Tere Range Chaa (Poetry)	Heena Choudhary
English	Homeless: Growing up Lesbian and Dyslexic in India (Memoir)	K. Vaishali
Gujarati	...To Tame Raaji? (Ghazal)	Rinku Rathod
Hindi	Smritiyon Ke Beech Ghiri Hai Prithvi (Poetry)	Gaurav Pandey
Kannada	Zero Balance (Poetry)	Shruthi B. R.
Kashmiri	Aene Baedas (Articles)	Mohd. Ashraf Ziya
Konkani	Pedanyacha Samaaram (Essays)	Adwait Salgaonkar
Maithili	Nadi Ghati Sabhyata (Poetry)	Rinki Jha Rishika
Malayalam	Meeshakkallan (Short Stories)	Shyamkrishnan R.
Manipuri	Ashiba Turel (Poetry)	Waikhom Chingkheinganba
Marathi	Usvan (Novel)	Devidas Saudagar
Nepali	Canvas Ko Xitiz (Poetry)	Suraj Chapagain
Odia	Hu Baieaa (Short-Stories)	Sanjay Kumar Panda
Punjabi	Khat Jo Likhno Reh Gaye (Poetry)	Randhir
Rajasthani	Sudh Sodhun Jag Angane (Poetry)	Sonali Suthar

Santali	Jangbaha (Poetry)	Anjan Karmakar
Sindhi	Paper Parya (Articles)	Geeta Pradeep Rupani
Tamil	Vishnu Vandhar (Short Stories)	Lokesh Raghuraman
Telugu	Dhaavlo (Short Stories)	Ramesh Karthik Nayak
Urdu	Stepney (Short-Stories)	Javed Amber Misbahi

Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2024

Language	Title (Genre)	Author
Assamese	Biponna Bismoi Khel (Novel)	Ranju Hazarika
Bengali	Mahidadur Antidote (Novel)	Dipanwita Roy
Bodo	Buhuma Boynibw (Poetry)	Virgin Jekova Machahary
Dogri	Kukdu Kadoon (Poetry)	Bishan Singh 'Dardi'
English	The Blue Horse and Other Amazing Animals from Indian History (Historical Fiction)	Nandini Sengupta
Gujarati	Hasati Haveli (Stories)	Gira Pinakin Bhatt
Hindi	51 Baal Kahaniyan (Stories)	Devender Kumar
Kannada	Choomantrayyana Kathegalu (Short Stories)	Krishnamurthy Biligere
Kashmiri	Sone Gobrew (Poetry)	Muzaffar Hussain Dilbar

Konkani	Ek Ashil'lem Bayul (Novel)	Harsha Sadguru Shetye
Maithili	Anar (Short Stories)	Narayanjee
Malayalam	Algorithangalude Nadu (Novel)	Unni Ammayambalam
Manipuri	Malem Atiya (Novel)	Kshetrimayum Subadani
Marathi	Samsheer Aani Bhootbangala (Novel)	Bharat Sasane
Nepali	Desh Ra Fuchhey (Poetry)	Basanta Thapa
Odia	Gapa Kalika (Short Stories)	Manas Ranjan Samal
Punjabi	Mai Jalianwala Bagh Bolda Haan (Play)	Kuldeep Singh Deep
Rajasthani	Mhari Dhani (Poetry)	Prahlad Singh 'Jhorda'
Sanskrit	Bubhukshitah Kakah (Short Stories)	Harshdev Madhav
Santali	Miru Arang (Poetry)	Dugai Tudu
Sindhi	Dostan ji Dosti (Stories)	Lal Hotchandani 'Lachaar'
Tamil	Thanviyin Piranthanal (Stories)	Yuma Vasuki
Telugu	Maya Lokam (Novel)	P. Chandrashekhara Azad
Urdu	Barf Ka Des Antarctica (Short Stories)	Shamsul Islam Farooqi

BOOKS & AUTHORS

299. The **Governor of Maharashtra Ramesh Bais** released a book titled '**Gateways to the Sea: Historic Ports and Docks of Mumbai Region**' at Raj Bhavan Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The book has been published by the **Publications Division**, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

This book compiled by the **Maritime Mumbai Museum Society (MMMS)** is a compilation of authoritative articles on the history of various ports and docks of the Mumbai Region like Sopara, Vasai, Versova, Mahim, Kalyan, Thane, Panvel, Alibag, Chaul, Mandad, and Janjira. Historians, researchers, maritime experts, conservation architects, and writers have contributed to all the 18 chapters.

The book also covers the development of modern ports and docks of Mumbai including Mazagon Dock, Mumbai Port, Bombay Dock, Sassoon Dock and Ferry Wharf also known as Bhaucha Dhakka.

300. Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt has penned her debut book titled **“The Adventures of Ed-a-Mamma: Ed Finds A Home”**. The book is inspired by her kids wear brand Ed-a-Mamma, featuring illustrations by Tanvi Bhat.

‘Ed Finds A Home,’ described as a picture book about caring for the planet and friendship with pets, is published by Puffin Books India, Penguin Books India's children's imprint.

301. Nar Singh and Rohini Lokhande have been awarded the **Dilip Bose Award** for lifetime achievement by the All-India Tennis Association (AITA).

Rohini Lokhande was the first woman tennis coach to qualify from the National Institute of Sports.

302. Vellayan Subbiah, Executive Vice-Chairman of Tube Investments of India (TII) and Chairman of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co Ltd. has been named the **EY World Entrepreneur of The Year 2024**.

He is the **fourth Indian** to receive this coveted award. Earlier, it was given to NR Narayana Murthy, Uday Kotak, and Kiran Majumdar Shaw.

India has become the only country among EY regions to win the global entrepreneurship award four times.

303. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) has announced the **third edition of Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman 2024**. Under the Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman 2024, **33 Sammans** will be given out under three categories viz Print, Television, and Radio in twenty-two Indian languages and English:

- 11 Sammans in 22 Indian languages and English – to be conferred under the category “Best Media Coverage in Yoga in Newspaper”.
- 11 Sammans in 22 Indian languages and English – to be conferred under the category “Best Media Coverage in Yoga in Electronic Media (TV)”.
- 11 Sammans in 22 Indian languages and English – to be conferred under the category “Best Media Coverage in Yoga in Electronic Media (Radio)”.

The Samman, comprising a special medal/plaque/trophy and a citation, is recommended by an independent Jury.

The awards are open to all Media Houses/Companies engaged in Print Media, Radio, and Television having registration/permission of the Ministry of I&B.

304. Tredence, a global data science and AI solutions company and an Elite partner of Databricks, has been named the **2024 Databricks Retail and CPG Partner of the Year**.

Tredence has been selected from over 2,500 consulting and system integrator partners for this award, reflecting the company's exceptional expertise in leveraging the Databricks Data Intelligence Platform to deliver unmatched value to retailers and CPG companies.

Tredence and Databricks have together solved last-mile analytics and AI challenges for eight of the world's top 10 retailers and eight of the top 10 CPG firms.

305. Nethra Gururaj, a dynamic cinematographer from Bengaluru, has been selected for the prestigious **2024 Oscar Academy Gold Rising Program**. This honour places her among the most promising young filmmakers and cinematographers globally, highlighting her significant achievements and potential.

Nethra Gururaj, currently based in Los Angeles, has a diverse portfolio that includes short films, feature films, documentaries, music videos, and experimental pieces.

Oscar Academy Gold Rising Program:

The Oscar Academy Gold Rising Program is a two-month internship hosted by the Academy in Hollywood, Los Angeles. It offers students and recent film school graduates a unique opportunity to shadow industry professionals, network with key figures in the film industry, and connect with production and media houses.

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306. The United Nations General Assembly has declared **2025** as the **International Year of Quantum Science and Technology**. On June 7, 2024, the 193-member Assembly passed a resolution co-sponsored by **Ghana** and six other countries, acknowledging the significance of this groundbreaking field of study.

The year 2025 marks **100 years** since the publication of a paper by the **German physicist Werner Heisenberg**, which laid the foundation for quantum mechanics.

Earlier, the United Nations had declared 2025 as the:

- **International Year of Cooperatives**
- **International Year of Peace and Trust**
- **International Year of Glacier's Preservation**

Note: 2024 is being observed as the International Year of Camelids.

The United Nations can declare one or more themes as the focus of an International Year in order to promote, through awareness and action, the objectives of the theme.

307. The **National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS)**, Bengaluru, an Institute of National Importance under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,

Government of India, has been awarded the **Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion for 2024** by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Notably, the year 2024 marks the 50 years of NIMHANS formation.

The Nelson Mandela Award for Health Promotion, established by WHO in 2019, recognizes individuals, institutions, and/or governmental or non-governmental organizations that have demonstrated remarkable contributions to health promotion.

308. Poet and playwright **Siddhalinga Pattanashetti** has been named the recipient of the **Gudleppa Hallikeri Award for 2024**. He has been honoured with a monetary prize of Rs.25,000 and a memento.

This recognition marks him as the 19th distinguished individual to receive the award.

Gudleppa Hallikeri Award:

It is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to literature, society, or social service. It is named after the esteemed freedom fighter Gudleppa Hallikeri. The award honours those who share his values and principles, similar to those of Mahatma Gandhi.

309. Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), a leading Indian shipyard, has won the bidding process for a new research vessel for the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**).

This significant win marks another milestone for GRSE and signifies its expertise in constructing specialized vessels.

The exact value of the contract remains undisclosed, estimates suggest it could surpass Rs.500 crore, signifying a substantial project for the shipyard.

310. Krishna Prakash, Head of Mumbai Police's elite counter-terrorism unit, has been honoured with the prestigious Annual **Hindi Sahitya Bharati Award**. This recognition has been bestowed during the Sab Me Ram Shashwat Shri Ram multicultural festival in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Notably, Krishna Prakash is a two-time Guinness World Record holder for initiating the maximum number of letters through postcards to Lord Ram, enabling the common man's direct connection with the divine.

PERSON IN NEWS

311. Bharatiya Janata Party MP **Om Birla** has been elected as the **Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha** after a voice vote. He will steer the Lower House for the second time.

- He was also the Speaker from 2019 to 2024 (17th Lok Sabha).
- He is a three-time MP from **Kota, Rajasthan**.

The opposition party had filed K Suresh, an eight-term parliamentarian from Mavelikara, Kerala, as the Speaker candidate of the INDIA bloc.

The voting for the Lok Sabha Speaker happened for the first time.

Traditionally, the Lok Sabha Speaker and Deputy Speaker were elected through consensus between the ruling party and the opposition.

This time the opposition has put forth a condition for the deputy speaker, which is that democracy does not run on conditions.

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha commenced on June 24 and is scheduled to conclude on July 3.

Note: As per Article 93 of the Indian Constitution, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha is elected on a simple majority. It means that a candidate who receives

312. Rear Admiral Nelson D'Souza has taken charge as **Commandant of the Military Institute of Technology (MILIT), Pune**. He has succeeded Air Vice Marshal Vivek Blouria.

In his new role, he will focus on further strengthening MILIT's academic programmes and give a push to ongoing efforts at Jointness & Integration in training among tri-services and enhancing collaboration with the industry and academia in the field of Niche Technologies. Under the new leadership, MILIT aims to continue nurturing highly skilled techno-warrior officers who would chart the course of the armed forces in India into a future-ready force.

313. Atul Kumar Chaudhary has been appointed as the new **Secretary of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)**. He is a 1989-batch Indian Telecommunication Services (ITS) officer.

He replaced V Raghunandan who retired on 31st May 2024.

He was working as a deputy director general at the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

He worked in various capacities in the personnel, human resource (HR), administration, licensing, and vigilance divisions of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

314. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the extension in service of **Tapan Kumar Deka** as the **Director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB)**. He has been given a year extension until **June 2025**.

He is a 1988-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre.

His extension is in relaxation of the provisions of FR 56 (d) and Rule 16 (1A) of All India Services (Death cum Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958. The rules allow the central government to extend in "public interest" the services of the chiefs of IB and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Cabinet Secretary, Home Secretary, and others, beyond 60 years age of superannuation.

He was appointed as the IB Chief in June 2022 for two years.

315. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the extension in the tenure of **Bharat Lal** as **Secretary General of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** in the rank and pay of Secretary to the Government of India on contract basis for one year beyond 30 June 2024.

He is a 1988 batch (retired) Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officer of the Gujarat cadre. He was appointed to the post in June 2023.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India was established on 12 October, 1993. The statute under which it is established is the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993 as amended by the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2006. The Commission consists of a chairperson, five full-time Members, and seven deemed Members.

Headquarters: New Delhi

Chairperson (acting): Vijaya Bharathi Sayani

316. Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president **JP Nadda** has been appointed as the **Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha**.

He has succeeded **Piyush Goyal**, who is now a member of the Lok Sabha from Maharashtra's North Mumbai.

He was nominated by the BJP to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat in February 2024. This is his third term as a Rajya Sabha member.

Rajya Sabha

The Rajya Sabha should consist of not more than 250 members - 238 members representing the States and Union Territories, and 12 members nominated by the President. Rajya Sabha is a permanent body and is not subject to dissolution. However, one-third of the members retire every second year and are replaced by newly elected members. Each member is elected for a term of six years.

The Vice President of India is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The House also elects a Deputy Chairman from among its members. Besides, there is also a panel of "Vice Chairmen" in the Rajya Sabha. The senior minister, who is a member of the Rajya Sabha, is appointed by the Prime Minister as Leader of the House.

317. **Girija Subramanian**, CMD, Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC), has been named the **CMD (Chief Managing Director) of the New India Assurance (NIA) company**. This is the first time that NIA is being headed by an officer who is not from the company.

She will have a tenure up to **July 2026** at NIA. She had joined AIC in September 2022. The post of CMD of NIA felt vacant after Neerja Kapur retired in April 2024.

318. Professor Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, and Dr Parvinder Maini, Scientific Secretary, attended the **23rd** Foundation Day of the **Society for Electronic Transactions and Security (SETS)** in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.

He has also inaugurated the **Quantum Security Research Lab** on the occasion. The foundation day celebration also witnessed Technology Sessions hosted by SETS' scientists and provided a technical deep dive into topics including post-quantum cryptography, side-channel analysis & hardware security, quantum communication security, security for blockchain, and network & IoT Security areas.

Society for Electronic Transactions and Security (SETS):

SETS, an initiative of the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, was conceived by Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in 2002. It is a cybersecurity R&D organization pursuing research in the core areas of cyber security, cryptology, hardware security, quantum security, and network security.

- **Executive Director:** Dr N Subramanian
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319. Mrinal Kumar Das (IRS) has been appointed as the **Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs** under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

He has been appointed to the post under the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS) for a period of five years from the date of taking over charge of the post or until further orders, whichever event takes place earlier.

320. Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte has been selected as the next **Secretary General** of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (**NATO**). He will assume his functions as Secretary General from **1 October 2024**.

He will succeed Jens Stoltenberg whose term will expire after ten years at the helm of the Alliance.

He has gained the support of all 32 member countries.

Mark Rutte, whose 14-year term as Dutch Prime Minister is set to end within weeks, will be the fourth Dutchman to head the alliance.

The Netherlands is a founding member of NATO.

321. The Government of India has officially approved the appointment of **Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani** as the next **Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS)**. His appointment is effective from 20th June 2024.

He has succeeded Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi, who will become Chief of Army Staff (COAS) when Gen. Manoj Pande retires on 30th June 2024.

He is currently the commander of the Army's Central Command.

The Vice Chief of Army Staff is the second-highest-ranking officer in the Indian Army. This statutory position involves acting as the deputy professional head of the Army and serving as a senior adviser to the Minister of Defence.

322. Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** has been named the **Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the 18th Lok Sabha**. The position of LoP was left vacant for the past 10 years because no Opposition party met the minimum strength criterion for the post.

He is the third member of the Gandhi family to hold the Leader of Opposition post. Before him, his parents Sonia and Rajiv Gandhi held the LoP post.

He is a Member of Parliament (MP) from **Raebareli** in Uttar Pradesh.

He has been recognized as the leader of opposition under Section 2 of the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

As a LoP, he will be a member of several Joint Parliamentary Committees, the committees of Public Accounts, Public Undertakings, Estimates, and many more. He will also have a say in the appointment of bureaucrats to key posts.

He will also be entitled to be a member of certain committees responsible for appointing the heads of statutory bodies Central Vigilance Commission, the Central Information Commission, the Central Bureau of Investigation, the National Human Rights Commission of India, Lokpal, and more.

He will also enjoy the rank of a cabinet minister and get an office and staff in the Parliament building.

Note: The position of the leader of opposition is not mentioned anywhere in the Constitution of India. However, it is mentioned in parliamentary statutes that a party must have at least **10% of the total strength of the house (55 seats in the case of Lok Sabha and 25 seats in the case of Rajya Sabha)** in order to receive informal recognition in either the upper or lower houses. It must be noted that an alliance of opposite parties cannot nominate a leader of the opposition.

323. **Dr Kapil Dua**, co-founder of AK Clinics, has been appointed as the **President of the Asian Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons (AAHRS)**.

The announcement was made at the 8th Annual Scientific Meeting and Surgical Workshop of AAHRS, held from June 6th to 9th in China.

Earlier, he served as President of the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgery (ISHRS) in 2022-2023 and the Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons (AHRs) India in 2016-2017.

He is the only Indian hair transplant surgeon to have led national, global, and now Asian organizations in hair restoration.

Asian Association of Hair Restoration Surgeons (AAHRS):

The AAHRS is dedicated to promoting the highest standards in hair restoration surgery across Asia. Through annual conferences, workshops, and educational programs, the

association provides a platform for surgeons to exchange knowledge, refine skills, and collaborate on research to enhance patient care and outcomes.

324. Cyril Ramaphosa has secured a second term as the **President of South Africa** after he was elected by the South African Parliament.

He was re-elected after a deal was signed between his African National Congress (ANC) Party, the center-right Democratic Alliance (DA), and other smaller parties to form a coalition government.

He was elected as the President of South Africa for the first time on 15 February 2018.

325. Peter Pellegrini became the new **President of Slovakia**. He succeeded Zuzana Caputova, the country's first female head of state and a staunch backer of neighbouring Ukraine in its fight against Russia's invasion.

He is the 6th President of Slovakia.

Slovakia gained independence after the disintegration of Czechoslovakia in 1993.

326. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has assumed the charge as the Chairman of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) for the third consecutive term.

Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA):

The Indian Institute of Public Administration was created under the Societies Act of 1860. The Institute was formally inaugurated by the first Prime Minister of India, as the first President of the Society, on March 29, 1954, in New Delhi.

The Institute has been set up to equip public servants with domain knowledge, functional skills, and behavioural competencies required for managing the task of governance.

The institute provides technical skills of management, human skills for coordination roles, and conceptual skills for taking up leadership roles in public policy planning and execution.

President: Jagdeep Dhankhar (Vice President of India)

327. Girish Tanti, Vice-Chairman of Suzlon Group, has been elected as the **Chair of the Global Wind Energy Council India (GWEC India)**.

The position plays a key role in driving GWEC India's work with national and state governments that assist government and industry's efforts for building the right momentum and establishing policy frameworks that will ensure India delivers on its enormous wind energy and supply chain potential, both onshore and offshore.

He has succeeded Sumant Sinha.

328. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has appointed IAS officer Ashwani Kumar as the Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

He is a 1992-batch Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre IAS officer.

He is currently serving as Delhi Divisional Commissioner and Principal Secretary (Home). He will replace Gyanesh Bharti as MCD Commissioner.

329. Priyanka Jarkiholi from Chikkodi has become the **youngest tribal woman** to enter Parliament from an unreserved seat in **Karnataka** since Independence. The BJP has won all the seats in Mumbai Karnataka, except Chikkodi.

During the 18th Lok Sabha elections, she defeated incumbent MP and BJP leader Annasaheb Jolle.

She is the daughter of Satish Jarkiholi, minister of the Public Works Department, Karnataka.

330. Indian Revenue Service officer **Inder Pal Singh Bindra** has been appointed as the new **Secretary of the Competition Commission of India (CCI)**. He will replace Anupama Anand, who has resigned after being appointed in September 2023 for a period of 3 years.

His tenure at the CCI is slated for a period of three years from the date he assumes office. The CCI is tasked with monitoring and curbing unfair business practices while promoting an environment of fair competition.

331. Lieutenant General Waker-Uz-Zaman has been appointed as the **Chief of the Bangladesh Army**. His appointment will be effective from 23 June 2024.

He has been appointed for three years. He will be promoted to a general and take over the role of the chief of the army.

He currently serves as the Chief of General Staff of the Bangladesh Army.

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332. Former Congress president **Sonia Gandhi** has been unanimously re-elected as the **chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP)**.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge proposed Sonia Gandhi's name as the chairperson of CPP.

She was elected to the Rajya Sabha in February 2024.

333. Kamal Kishore Soan has been appointed as the **Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** under the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India.

He is a senior 1998 batch's IAS officer from Jharkhand Cadre.

He is currently serving as an Additional Secretary and Director General of Labour Welfare in the Ministry of Labour & Employment.

Employees' State Insurance Corporation is one of the two main statutory social security bodies under the ownership of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, the other being the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. The fund is managed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) according to rules and regulations stipulated in the ESI Act 1948.

334. Raj Priy Singh has been selected for the appointment as **Director of the Department of Rural Development** under the Ministry of Rural Development. He is a 2010 batch IFOs (Indian Forest Service) officer of the Nagaland cadre.

He has been selected for the appointment under the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS) for a period with effect from the date of taking over charge of the post until further orders, whichever is earlier.

335. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was sworn in as the **Prime Minister of India** for the **third consecutive term** along with his 71 ministers on 9th June 2024. He equaled the feat of the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who won in the 1952, 1957 and 1962 general elections.

He allocated portfolios to the newly elected ministers in his cabinet on 10th June 2024.

Cabinet Ministers:

1	Shri Raj Nath Singh	Minister of Defence.
2	Shri Amit Shah	Minister of Home Affairs; and Minister of Cooperation.
3	Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari	Minister of Road Transport and Highways.
4	Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda	Minister of Health and Family Welfare; and Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
5	Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan	Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; and Minister of Rural Development.
6	Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman	Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs.
7	Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	Minister of External Affairs.
8	Shri Manohar Lal	Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs; and Minister of Power.
9	Shri H. D. Kumaraswamy	Minister of Heavy Industries; and Minister of Steel.
10	Shri Piyush Goyal	Minister of Commerce and Industry.
11	Shri Dharmendra Pradhan	Minister of Education.
12	Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi	Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
13	Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh	Minister of Panchayati Raj; and Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
14	Shri Sarbananda Sonowal	Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
15	Dr. Virendra Kumar	Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment.
16	Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu	Minister of Civil Aviation.

17	Shri Pralhad Joshi	Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Minister of New and Renewable Energy.
18	Shri Jual Oram	Minister of Tribal Affairs.
19	Shri Giriraj Singh	Minister of Textiles.
20	Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw	Minister of Railways; Minister of Information and Broadcasting; and Minister of Electronics and Information Technology.
21	Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia	Minister of Communications; and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region.
22	Shri Bhupender Yadav	Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
23	Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat	Minister of Culture; and Minister of Tourism.
24	Smt. Annpurna Devi	Minister of Women and Child Development
25	Shri Kiren Rijju	Minister of Parliamentary Affairs; and Minister of Minority Affairs.
26	Shri Hardeep Singh Puri	Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas
27	Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya	Minister of Labour and Employment; and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports.
28	Shri G. Kishan Reddy	Minister of Coal; and Minister of Mines.
29	Shri Chirag Paswan	Minister of Food Processing Industries.
30	Shri C R Patil	Minister of Jal Shakti.

Ministers of State (Independent Charge)

1	Rao Inderjit Singh	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Planning; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Culture.
2	Dr. Jitendra Singh	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Earth Sciences; Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office; Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Minister of State in the Department of Atomic Energy; and Minister of State in the Department of Space.

3	Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Law and Justice; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.
4	Shri Jadhav Prataprao Ganpatrao	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Ayush; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
5	Shri Jayant Chaudhary	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Education.

Ministers of State

1	Shri Jitin Prasada	Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
2	Shri Shripad Yesso Naik	Minister of State in the Ministry of Power; and Minister of State in the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
3	Shri Pankaj Chaudhary	Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance.
4	Shri Krishan Pal	Minister of State in the Ministry of Cooperation.
5	Shri Ramdas Athawale	Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
6	Shri Ram Nath Thakur	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
7	Shri Nityanand Rai	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
8	Smt. Anupriya Patel	Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
9	Shri V. Somanna	Minister of State in the Ministry of Jal Shakti; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways.
10	Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani	Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications.
11	Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel	Minister of State in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
12	Sushri Shobha Karandlaje	Minister of State in the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

13	Shri Kirtivardhan Singh	Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs.
14	Shri B. L. Verma	Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
15	Shri Shantanu Thakur	Minister of State in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
16	Shri Suresh Gopi	Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism.
17	Dr. L. Murugan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.
18	Shri Ajay Tamta	Minister of State in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
19	Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
20	Shri Kamlesh Paswan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development.
21	Shri Bhagirath Choudhary	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
22	Shri Satish Chandra Dubey	Minister of State in the Ministry of Coal; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Mines.
23	Shri Sanjay Seth	Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence.
24	Shri Ravneet Singh	Minister of State in the Ministry of Food Processing Industries; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways.
25	Shri Durgadas Uikey	Minister of State in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
26	Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse	Minister of State in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
27	Shri Sukanta Majumdar	Minister of State in the Ministry of Education; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.
28	Smt. Savitri Thakur	Minister of State in the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
29	Shri Tokhan Sahu	Minister of State in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
30	Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary	Minister of State in the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
31	Shri Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma	Minister of State in the Ministry of Heavy Industries; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel.

32	Shri Harsh Malhotra	Minister of State in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
33	Smt. Nimuben Jayantibhai Bambhaniya	Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
34	Shri Murlidhar Mohol	Minister of State in the Ministry of Cooperation; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
35	Shri George Kurian	Minister of State in the Ministry of Minority Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
36	Shri Pabitra Margherita	Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Textiles.

336. Bisleri International has announced Bollywood actor **Aditya Roy Kapur** as the new brand ambassador for **Bisleri Limonata**.

The #DoubleTheChill campaign aims to promote this product and its distinctive flavour blend.

337. The Government has appointed **Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi**, PVSM, AVSM, presently serving as Vice Chief of the Army Staff, as the next **Chief of the Army Staff** with effect from the afternoon of **June 30, 2024**.

The present Chief of the Army Staff Gen Manoj C Pande, PVSM, AVSM, VSM demits office on June 30, 2024.

Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi was commissioned into the Infantry (Jammu & Kashmir Rifles) of the Indian Army on 15th December 1984.

338. **Puja Tomar** has become the **first Indian to win a fight** in the **Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC)**. She defeated Rayanne dos Santos of Brazil at UFC Louisville 2024.

She hails from Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh.

She had already broken new ground last year by becoming the first Indian woman to secure a UFC contract.

In her debut fight in the women's strawweight division, she triumphed by split decision with scores of 30-27, 27-30, and 29-28.

339. **Abhijit Kishore**, Chief Operating Officer, Vodafone Idea Limited, has been appointed as the President of the **Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)** for the 2024-25 term, effective from June 2024.

Rahul Vatts, Chief Regulatory Officer (CRO) of Bharti Airtel, has been appointed as the Vice-President of COAI.

340. Mohan Charan Majhi has become the new **Chief Minister of Odisha**. He is the first BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) chief minister of Odisha.

Two deputy chief ministers, **Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida**, and 13 ministers also took oath along with the chief minister.

Odisha Governor Raghubar Das administered him the oath of office and his council of ministers.

Mohan Charan Majhi won the Keonjhar assembly seat in the Odisha assembly elections, defeating Biju Janata Dal's Mina Majhi by 11,577 votes.

In the recent elections, the BJP won 78 out of **147 seats** in the Odisha assembly.

341. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has appointed **Jyoti Vij** as its new Director General.

She is currently the additional director general at FICCI.

342. The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet has approved the reappointment of **Dr Pramod Kumar Mishra** as the **Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister**. He has been appointed for his second consecutive term.

His appointment comes into effect on 10 June 2024.

He will continue in office until the term of the incumbent Prime Minister or until further order.

During the term of his office, he will be assigned the rank of a cabinet minister.

He is a 1971 batch IAS (retd.) officer of the Odisha cadre who retired in 2008.

Other appointments:

- **Amit Khare and Tarun Kapoor** have been appointed as **Advisors to PM**, for a period of two years with effect from 10-06-2024.
- **Ajit Doval** has been reappointed as the **National Security Advisor** for a third consecutive term. He is a 1968-batch IPS officer from the Kerala cadre.

343. Muthoot Pappachan Group (MPG), popularly known as Muthoot Blue, has roped in Bollywood actor **Shah Rukh Khan** as its brand ambassador. This strategic collaboration marks a significant milestone for MPG, aimed at reinforcing its brand presence and establishing a new connection with a diverse audience across the country.

He will be featured in MPG's campaigns across multiple channels, promoting their diverse range of services.

344. Indian-American **Bruhat Soma**, a 12-year-old from Tampa, Florida, has won the **2024 Scripps National Spelling Bee**, claiming the coveted Scripps trophy and a check for USD 50,000.

He spelled 29 out of 30 words correctly in Scripps' second-ever spell-off, in which competitors have 90 seconds to spell as many words given to them as possible.

This victory marks him as the 28th Indian-American to win the prestigious title. This year's win was his third attempt at the national level.

345. Renowned Indian artist **Krishn Kanhai** unveiled his latest collection, "**The Golden Krishna**," in a grand opening ceremony in Dubai, UAE. The exhibition showcased his exquisite new works centered around Lord Krishna.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a breathtaking life-sized, three-dimensional painting of Tirupati Balaji, meticulously crafted with 24-karat gold and measuring an impressive 5 feet by 8 feet.

The exhibition features a captivating selection of contemporary paintings incorporating gold leaves alongside traditional themes that evoke the profound emotions associated with Krishna.

Note: Krishn Kanhai hails from Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. The Government of India honored him with Padma Shri in 2004.

346. Ruchira Kamboj, India's first woman Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has retired after 35 years of service, during which she served as Indian envoy in Bhutan, South Africa, and UNESCO.

- She had joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1987.
- She was the All-India women's topper of the 1987 Civil Services batch and the topper of the 1987 Foreign Service batch.
- She became Permanent Representative/Ambassador of India to New York, on August 2, 2022.
- She began her diplomatic career in Paris as the Third Secretary of the Indian Embassy to France from 1989-91.
- She was Counsellor at India's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York from 2002-05.
- From 2011-14, she was India's Chief of Protocol, the first and the only woman so far in Government to have held this position.

347. Businesswoman and B Team CEO **Halla Tomasdottir** has been elected as the seventh **President of Iceland**. She will take over from Guana Johannesson on 1st August 2024.

She will be the **second woman** to hold the office after Vigdis Finnbogadottir, who was the first woman in the world to be democratically elected as President in 1980.

348. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of **Sushil Kumar Singh**, IRSME (Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineering - 1992) as

Chairperson, Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla (Gujarat) under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.

He is a joint secretary in charge of ports, PPP, and PHRD in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.

He has succeeded S. K. Mehta.

349. Dr Helen Mary Roberts, a woman hailing from the Christian community, has become the first woman brigadier in the Pakistan Army from the minority community.

She has been serving in the Army for 26 years.

She is a senior pathologist in the Pakistan Army Medical Corps.

As per the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in 2021, there are 96.47 percent Muslims in the country, followed by 2.14 percent Hindus, 1.27 percent Christians, 0.09 percent Ahmadi Muslims, and 0.02 percent others.

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350. Claudia Sheinbaum, a candidate of the ruling Morena party, has become the **first female President of Mexico**. She has succeeded her mentor and outgoing leader, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.

She won the elections with 58.3 percent and 60.7 percent of the votes.

She defeated her nearest rival Xochitl Galvez, who was representing a coalition of largely conservative parties.

She will officially swear in as the President of Mexico for a 6-year term on **1st October 2024**.

351. Sheikh Sabah Khaled al-Hamad al-Sabah has been sworn in as the **Crown Prince of Kuwait** before the Emir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (head of state of Kuwait).

This nomination marks the first time a Kuwaiti crown prince is named whose father had not ruled as emir.

Earlier, he was the Prime Minister of Kuwait from 2019 to 2022.

352. Rakesh Mohan Joshi, an international trade and management expert, has been appointed as the **Vice-Chancellor** of the **Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT)**, a prestigious business school under the Ministry of Commerce.

He is a former Dean of the institute and was on deputation to the Indian Institute of Plantation Management as Director.

He has joined the institution as a VC with immediate effect.

OBITUARIES

353. Indian musician **Rajeev Taranath**, a disciple of Ali Akbar Khan, has passed away at the age of 91 in Mysuru, Karnataka. He was born on 17th October 1932 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

He was a **Sarod** maestro.

He has composed music for many internationally acclaimed Kannada films including Samskara, Kanchana Sita and Kadavu.

He served as the head of the Indian music program at the World Music Department of the California Institute of the Arts.

He was the recipient of the **Padma Shri** award in **2019** and the Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1999-2000.

354. Indian politician **Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare** has passed away at the age of 95. He was born on 10 December 1928 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

He served as a Rajya Sabha member for three terms during 1980–1982, 1982–1988, and 1988–1994.

He practiced as a Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of India and was President of the Supreme Court Bar Association for two terms.

He served as the **Governor of Odisha** from 2007 to 2013.

His autobiography is titled *"The Arc of Memory: My Life and Times."*

355. Prof C. V. Chandrasekhar, a renowned **Bharatanatyam** dancer, and Padma Bhushan awardee, has passed away at the age of 89 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He was born on 22nd May 1935 in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.

He was also known as Chandru Anna.

He has his own dance institution 'Nrityashree' in Chennai.

Awards & Honours:

- He was awarded the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Bharatnatyam** in **1993**, by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India's National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama.
- He received the **Kalidas Samman** in **2008**.
- He was honoured with the **Padma Bhushan** by the Government of India in **2011**.

356. Noted Indian wildlife conservationist and biologist **Asir Jawahar Thomas Johnsingh**, also known as A J T Johnsingh, has passed away in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

He has authored over 70 scientific papers and more than 80 popular articles on wildlife conservation.

He was born in Nanguneri in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu in 1945.

He was awarded the 2004 Distinguished Service Award for Government from the Society for Conservation Biology, the Carl Zeiss Wildlife Conservation Award 2004 for lifetime service to Indian wildlife, and the ABN AMRO Sanctuary Lifetime Wildlife Service Award in 2005.

His pioneering work in elephants in the early 1980s was instrumental for the Government of India to formulate Project Elephant. He also conducted an international conference bringing elephant experts across the world to Mudumalai wildlife sanctuary.

357. Noted Indian businessman, media proprietor, and film producer, **Cherukuri Ramoji Rao**, has passed away in Hyderabad, Telangana. He was born on 16th November 1936 in Pedaparupudi of Krishna District, Madras Presidency, India.

He was head of the **Ramoji Group** which owns the world's largest film production facility **Ramoji Film City**, Eenadu newspaper, ETV Network of TV channels, and film production company Ushakiran Movies.

He received four Filmfare Awards South, five Nandi Awards, and the National Film Award for his works in Telugu cinema.

He was honoured with the **Padma Vibhushan**, India's second-highest civilian honour, for his contributions to journalism, literature, and education in **2016**.

358. President of the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA), Amol Kale, has passed away following a cardiac arrest in New York. He was at the Nassau County Cricket Ground in New York, watching the T20 World Cup 2024 match between India and Pakistan.

He had become the MCA president after defeating former India and Mumbai cricketer Sandip Patil in the elections held in October 2022.

During his tenure, the MCA had taken some vital decisions including the move to match the BCCI match fee for all its red-ball players for the upcoming 2024-25 season.

359. T K Chathunni, former football player and noted football coach, has passed away at a private hospital at Karukutty in Ernakulam district of Kerala.

He was the coach for various clubs in the **National Football League** from 1997-98.

He represented both **Kerala and Goa** in the **Santosh Trophy**.

He coached several football clubs including FC Kochin, Churchill Brothers, Dempo SC, Mohan Bagan, Salgaocar, and the Kerala Police Football team.

SPORTS

360. Four Indian Armed Forces Medical Service (AFMS) Officers have bagged **32 Medals** in the **43rd World Medical and Health Games** held in **Saint-Tropez, France**, from 16 to 23rd June 2024.

These Officers, namely **Lt Col Sanjeev Malik, Maj Anish George, Capt Stephen Sebastian, and Capt Dania James**, made history by winning 19 Gold Medals, 09 Silver Medals, and 04 Bronze Medals in the World's largest sports event for health professionals.

The performances by the Indian AFMS Officers not only highlight their excellence but also showcase the dedication of healthcare professionals globally, blending their medical expertise with athletic achievements.

This will inspire thousands of Doctors and Nurses across the length and breadth of the country to be ambassadors of fitness, too.

The World Medical and Health Games, often regarded as the Olympic Games for Health Professionals, has evolved into the most prestigious global sporting event within the medical community. With a legacy dating back to 1978, the Games annually attract over 2500 participants from more than 50 different nations.

361. Indian wrestlers won a total of 11 medals (4 Gold, 2 Silver, and 5 Bronze) at the Under-17 Asian Wrestling Championships in Amman, Jordan.

Women wrestlers grabbed all four **gold medals**.

- Dipanshi in 46 kg
- Muskan in 53 kg
- Rajnita in 61 kg
- Mansi Lather in 69 kg

Silver medals:

- Raja Bala in 40 kg
- Samarth Gajanan Mhakave in 55 kg

Bronze medals:

- Akash in 65 kg
- Sachin Kumar in 71 kg
- Bikash Kacchap in 48 kg
- Tushar Tukaram Patil in 60 kg
- Ronak in 110 kg

362. Red Bull's Max Verstappen won the F1 Spanish Grand Prix title for the third year in succession. This is his seventh win in 10 races so far this season.

McLaren's Lando Norris finished second and Mercedes's Lewis Hamilton finished third in the race.

The year 2024 is the 75th season of the F1 world championship.

363. Sreeja Akula of Hyderabad has become the **first Indian table tennis player** to win a WTT (World Table Tennis) Contender single title. She defeated the 16-year-old Yijie Ding of China 4-1 (10-12,11-9,11-6,11-8,11-6) in the final of the WTT Contender Lagos 2024 held at the Sir Molade Okoya Thomas Indoor Sports Hall in Lagos, Nigeria, from 19 June to 23 June 2024.

She won both the women's singles and doubles titles at the WTT Contender Lagos 2024 event.

Other winners:

Men's Singles: Dimitrij Ovtcharov (Germany)

Women Doubles: Sreejas Akula and Archana Kamath (India)

Men's Doubles: Harmeet Desai and Manav Thakkar (India).

364. The Swimming Federation of India has announced that **Indian swimmers Dhinidhi Desinghu and Srihari Nataraj** have qualified for the **2024 Paris Olympics** through the Universality quota.

In February 2024, 14-year-old Dhinidhi Desinghu set a record-breaking swim, clocking the 'Best Indian Time' in the girls' 100m freestyle event and finishing fourth at the 11th Asian Group Aquatics Championships in the Philippines. Her performance surpassed that of Olympian Maana Patel and 21-year-old Shivangi Sarma at the event. She was also a national record holder in women's 200m freestyle. She has been in exceptional form in 2024, winning two gold and two silver medals across events in Singapore, India, and Malaysia. Ace swimmer Srihari Nataraj, the national record holder in 200m freestyle, secured a gold medal in the men's 100m backstroke at the same event.

University quota:

The Universality quota aims to enhance the diversity of sports at the Olympics by providing opportunities for athletes from countries with traditionally smaller delegations.

These quota places are allocated to eligible National Olympic Committees by the Olympic Games Tripartite Commission, comprising representatives from the International Olympic Committee, the Association of National Olympic Committees, and the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations.

365. The Equestrian Federation of India (EFI) has selected **Anush Agarwalla** to represent India in the dressage event at the **2024 Paris Olympics**. EFI selected him over Shruti Vora based on a thorough assessment of their recent performances, where Anush Agarwalla demonstrated a superior average.

It will be **India's first-ever entry** at the **dressage event** at the Olympics as largely riders in past editions competed in eventing categories only.

He emerged winner with an average score of 67.695 percent against Shruti's 67.163 percent.

Note: As per the criteria set by the Equestrian Federation of India (EFI), a rider-horse combination is required to achieve a minimum of 67 percent twice between January 1, 2023 and June 24, 2024 to be eligible for the Paris Games qualification.

366. Olympic and World Champion **Neeraj Chopra** has won the **gold medal** in the men's javelin throw competition at the World Athletics Continental Gold Tour at the Paavo Nurmi Stadium in Turku, Finland.

He topped an eight-man field with a best effort of **85.97 meters**.

Finland's Toni Keränen won the silver medal with a personal best of 84.19m throw while his compatriot Oliver Helander took the bronze with 83.96m.

The two-time world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada was fourth with 82.58m.

367. Indian equestrian Shruti Vora from Kolkata (West Bengal) has created history and become the **first Indian rider** to win a three-star Grand Prix event. She scored 67.761 points in the CDI-3 event held in Lipica, Slovenia.

She finished ahead of Moldova's Tatiana Antonenco (Aachen), who scored 66.522. Austria's Juliane Jerich (Quarter Girl) completed the top three with a score of 66.087.

She had a commendable show in the Grand Prix Special, which was held at the same venue simultaneously. She finished second behind the Antonenco-Aachen combo with a score of 66.085.

Earlier, she had represented India in the Dressage World Championship (2022) and the Asian Games (2010, 2014).

368. Indian chess player Divya Deshmukh has won the **FIDE World Junior Chess Championship 2024** title in the **girl's section** after beating Bulgaria's Beloslava Krasteva in the final round at the Gift City Club in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- She defeated Beloslava Krasteva in the 10th round with just 26 moves to claim her maiden U-20 title.
- She finished unbeaten in the championship by winning nine of her games while drawing the other two.

Kazybek Nogerbek from **Kazakhstan** won the title in the **open section**.

Note: The World Junior Chess Championship is an under-20 chess tournament organized by the World Chess Federation (FIDE).

369. Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana has become the **second-highest international run-getter** in women's cricket. She played a fighting knock of 117 off 127 deliveries against South Africa, which took her overall international tally to 7,059 runs.

She is only behind India legend Mithali Raj in the list of highest run-getters in women's cricket.

Her tally at the global stage is only bettered by former captain Mithali's 10,868 runs.

370. Olympic medallist Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain bagged a **silver medal** in the **Grand Prix 2024** competition held in the Czech Republic. She (in the 75 kg women's weight category) lost 2-3 in her third bout against Li Qian of China.

She won her first bout 3-2 against England's Chantal Reid but lost the second bout 0-5 against Cindy Ngamba of the Olympic Refugee team.

She will be one of the boxers to represent the country in the Paris 2024 Olympics, which will be held from July 26 to August 11.

371. India's highest-rated chess player Grandmaster (GM) Arjun Erigaisi has won the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 crown in Jermuk, Armenia.

The 20-year-old chess player from Telangana has defeated Russian GM Volodar Murzin in 63 moves in the eighth and penultimate round to take his six points with four wins and as many draws.

This win helped him jump to a career-high live rating of No. 4.

In April 2024, he won the Menorca Open crown.

372. The **2024 French Open**, a Grand Slam tennis tournament, was held at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France, from 26 May to 9 June 2024.

World No. 1 **Iga Swiatek of Poland** won the **women's singles** title after defeating Italy's Jasmine Paolini. She became only the third woman in the Open era to clinch three straight French Open titles.

In the men's singles, **Carlos Alcaraz (Spain)** defeated Alexander Zverev (Germany) in the final match.

Men's doubles: Marcelo Arévalo (El Salvador) and Mate Pavic (Croatia)

Women's doubles: Coco Gauff (USA) and Kateřina Siniaková (Czech Republic)

Mixed doubles: Laura Siegemund (Germany) and Edouard Roger-Vasselin (France)

373. Dutch-Belgian racing driver **Max Verstappen of Red Bull** won the **2024 Canadian Grand Prix** for the **third** straight year. This marks his 60th Formula 1 victory and sixth in nine races this season.

He has a staggering 50 victories in the last 75 F1 races.

He finished 3.879 seconds ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris in the 70-lap race on the 2.71-mile (4.36-kilometer) road course.

The 9th round of the 2024 F1 championships, was held at the iconic Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

374. Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal won the men's singles title at the Heilbronn Neckarcup 2024 ATP Challenger Tennis tournament in Germany. This is the sixth ATP Challenger title for India's top-ranked men's tennis singles player.

He defeated Alexander Ritschard of Switzerland in three sets 6-1, 6(5)-7(7), 6-3.

This win will improve the ATP ranking of Sumit Nagal making him eligible for the 2024 Summer Paris Olympics.

ATP Challenger Tour Tennis Tournament:

It is organized by the apex men's professional tennis organization, the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP). It is the second-highest-ranking tennis tournament organized by the ATP after the ATP tour.

375. **Saurabh Sharma** has won two **gold medals** in the ongoing **World Para Athlete Grand Prix** in Nottwil city, Switzerland. He emerged victorious in 155-meter and 5000-meter races.

He hails from Ropa Khayah village of the Nadaun area in the Hamirpur district of **Himachal Pradesh**.

He is representing the Indian team in the T12 category.
He had earlier won seven gold medals at the national level.

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376. The **Boxing Federation of India (BFI)** has agreed to become a member of **World Boxing**, the International Federation established to ensure boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic Movement.

The membership application has been approved by the BFI's General Assembly and will be ratified by World Boxing's Executive Board.

377. The **Indian athletes** have bagged a total of **7 medals** including **3 golds, 3 silvers, and 1 bronze medals** in the **Taiwan Athletics Open 2024**.

Gold medal winners:

- In the women's Long Jump, **Nayana James** clinched the gold medal, registering the best jump of 6.43 meters.
- In Men's 800 meters, **Ankesh Choudhary** clinched the gold, clocking 1 minute 50.63 seconds.
- In the Men's Javelin throw, **DP Manu** clinched the gold medal with the best effort of 81.58 meters.

Silver medal winners:

- In Men's 800 meters, **Somnath Chouhan** won the silver medal clocking 1 minute 50.88 seconds.
- In Men's pole vault, **Dev Meena** won the silver medal.
- In women's 100-metre hurdles, **Nithya Ramraj** bagged the silver medal with a timing of 13.23 seconds.

Bronze medal winners:

- Vismaya V K won the bronze in the women's 400m race.

378. Indian shuttler **Tanvi Sharma**, who is ranked 181st in the world, has bagged the **women's singles title at the Bonn International Badminton Tournament** in Germany. She has defeated Wang Pei Yu of Taiwan in straight sets, 21-19, 22-20.

This is the first senior title for the 15-year-old Tanvi.

She hails from Punjab.

In February 2024, she secured a gold medal for the Indian women's team at the Badminton Asia Team Championships in Selangor, Malaysia.

379. Indian wicketkeeper-batter **Dinesh Karthik** has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. He played 26 Tests, 94 ODIs, and 60 T20Is for India.

He made his **Test cricket debut** in the fourth Test between Australia and India in Mumbai in **October 2004**.

He finished his IPL career with 4,842 runs in 257 matches (joint second-most with Rohit Sharma), studded with 22 fifties.

He played for **six IPL franchises** in the cash-rich league. He made his debut in the inaugural season in 2008 with the Delhi Daredevils (now Delhi Capitals).

He switched to Punjab in 2011 and went on to play for the Mumbai Indians, Gujarat Lions, Kolkata Knight Riders, and the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB).

380. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced a record prize money of **USD 11.25 million** (approx INR 93.5 crore) for the 2024 T20 World Cup with the **winners** pocketing at least **USD 2.45 million** (approx INR 20.36 crore).

The 2024 winners will receive the highest amount in the tournament's history.

The **runners-up** will earn at least **\$1.28 million**, while the losing **semi-finalists** will take home **\$787,500** each. Teams that do not advance past the second round will receive **\$382,500 each**, and those finishing between ninth and 12th place will get **\$247,500** each. Teams ranking from 13th to 20th place will each earn **\$225,000**. Additionally, every team will receive an extra **\$31,154** for each match won, excluding the semi-finals and finals.

This ninth edition will see 20 teams competing over 28 days across nine venues in the West Indies and the USA, making it the largest event of its kind.

The final match will take place at the **Kensington Oval in Barbados**, where the 2024 men's champions will be crowned.

381. Kedar Jadhav has announced his retirement from all forms of **cricket** at the age of 39. He played 73 ODIs and nine T20s for India after making his international debut in 2014.

He scored 1,389 runs at an average of 42.09 with two centuries and six fifties for India in 73 ODIs.

He also made 122 runs in the six innings of the nine T20 Internationals that he played.

382. Real Madrid has won the **UEFA Champions League 2023/24 title** for the **15th** consecutive time. The players of Real Madrid have defeated Borussia Dortmund in the final match held at Wembley Stadium in London, UK.

With this triumph, Real Madrid extended their remarkable run of success in Europe, securing their sixth Champions League title in 11 seasons.

Real Madrid have now won their last 10 consecutive European finals, a streak that stretches back 41 years to their last defeat against Aberdeen in the Cup Winners' Cup final.

383. Indian badminton star, two-time Olympic medalist, and World Champion **PV Sindhu** has become the brand ambassador for **Greenday's 'Better Nutrition'**. She has also invested in the company.

The collaboration aims to combat micronutrient deficiencies in India, thereby improving consumer health and boosting farmer livelihoods.

Greenday:

Greenday is founded by IIM Ahmedabad alumni Prateek Rastogi and Aishwarya Bhatnagar. It is dedicated to increasing the nutritional value of staple crops, allowing consumers to access essential vitamins and minerals through their everyday meals.

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- 384.** The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) announced the inclusion of **Armrestling** as an official sport in the **2025 Asian Youth Para Games**. The Games will take place in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan** in September-October 2025.

Armrestling, a popular sport in the Asian region and in fact all over the World, will be introduced in the sports program of an Asian Youth Para Games for the first time in Tashkent.

The governing body of the sport, the **World Armrestling Federation (WAF)**, is a recognized International Federation by the International Paralympic Committee. In India, the People's Armrestling Federation India, is the only affiliated unit of WAF.

IMPORTANT DAYS

- 385. Global Day of Parents** is observed annually on **1st June** to honour all parents around the world for their selfless commitment and lifelong sacrifice they make for their children. It also aims to raise awareness about the importance of quality parenting and family life. The day was first observed in 2013.

Theme 2024: "The Promise of Playful Parenting"

- 386. World Milk Day** is observed annually on **1st June** to recognize milk as a global food and to celebrate the dairy industry. The goal of World Milk Day is to reach 'Dairy Net Zero' by lowering greenhouse emissions and improving waste management over the next 30 years. The day was established by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in 2001.

Note: India is the largest producer of milk followed by the US, Pakistan, and China, and also accounts for 22 percent of the global milk production.

- 387.** Telangana Formation Day is observed annually on **2nd June** to celebrate the foundation of the youngest state of India which was formed on the same day in **2014**. The year 2024 marks the **10th Formation Day** of Telangana.

Telangana became India's 29th state, however, at present, it is the 28th state as Jammu and Kashmir were made UT in 2019.

The day commemorates the official separation of Telangana from the state of Andhra Pradesh.

388. International Sex Workers Day, also known as International Whores Day, is observed annually on **2nd June** to recognize the exploited working conditions of sex workers and honour the sex workers who are the victims of cruelty and violence. The day is organized by the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP).

389. World Bicycle Day is observed annually on **3rd June** to recognize bicycling as a way to get a sustainable form of traveling that also ensures one's physical well-being.

The day was first observed in 2018.

390. International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression is observed annually on **4th June** to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are victims of physical, mental, and emotional abuse. The day was first observed on 19th August 1982. At that time, the day was focused on victims of the Lebanon War.

391. World Environment Day (WED) is observed annually on **5th June** to create awareness among people about the importance of nature. The day is organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and held annually since 1973. The day was established in 1972, which was the first day of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.

The **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia** hosted the 2024 World Environment Day global celebrations.

Theme 2024: Land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience

Slogan 2024: "Our Land. Our Future. We are #GenerationRestoration"

The year 2024 marks the **30th anniversary** of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

392. International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing is observed annually on **5th June** to draw attention to the threats posed by Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities to the sustainable use of fisheries resources as well as to ongoing efforts to fight these activities. The day was first observed in 2018.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) IUU fishing activities are responsible for the loss of 11–26 million tonnes of fish each year, which is estimated to have an economic value of US\$10–23 billion.

393. The UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on **6th June** to spread awareness about the history, culture, and development of the Russian language. The day also marks the birth anniversary of the Great Russian poet A.S. Pushkin, the father of modern Russian literature.

- It is one of the six official languages used by the United Nations throughout the Organization.
- The day was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010.

Note: The six official languages of the UN are English, Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, Russian and French.

394. World Pest Day is observed annually on **6th June** to spread awareness about the need for pest management and the role of pest management organisations in protecting public health. The day was first observed in 2017.

395. World Food Safety Day is observed annually on **7th June** to draw attention and mobilize action to prevent, detect, and manage foodborne risks and improve human health. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) jointly facilitate the observance of World Food Safety Day, in collaboration with Member States and other relevant organizations. The day was first observed in 2019.

Theme 2024: "Food Safety: Prepare for the Unexpected"

396. World Oceans Day is observed annually on **8th June** to inform the public of the impact of human actions on the ocean, develop a worldwide movement of citizens for the ocean, and mobilize and unite the world's population on a project for the sustainable management of the world's oceans. The concept of World Oceans Day was first proposed by the United Nations in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The day was first observed in 2009.

Theme 2024: "Awaken New Depths"

397. World Brain Tumour Day is observed annually on the **8th of June** to raise awareness and educate people about brain tumours. German Brain Tumour Association (Deutsche Hirntumorhilfe e.V.), a non-profit organization, first marked this day in the year 2000. The Grey awareness ribbon is the official symbol of Brain Tumour Awareness.

398. World Accreditation Day is observed annually on **9th June** to highlight the value of accreditation in the economy. It is a global initiative jointly launched by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The day was first observed in 2008.

The year 2024 marks the **17th anniversary** of World Accreditation Day.

Theme 2024: "Empowering tomorrow and shaping the future"

399. International Day of Play is observed annually on **11th June** to preserve, promote, and prioritize playing so that all people, especially children, can reap the rewards and thrive to their full potential.

The year 2024 marks the observance of the **first** International Day of Play.

Children learn best through play. Play creates powerful learning opportunities across all areas of development – intellectual, social, emotional, and physical.

It is estimated that 160 million children around the world are working instead of playing or learning.

Only 1 in 4 children play out regularly on their street compared to their grandparent's generation where almost three-quarters said they played outside a few times a week.

41% of children had been told to stop playing out by either their parents or other adults such as neighbours.

400. World Day Against Child Labour is observed annually on **12th June** to raise awareness and activism to prevent child labour. The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched this day in 2002 to spread awareness about the harmful mental and physical problems faced by children forced into child labour, all over the world.

Theme 2024: "Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour!"

Africa ranks highest among regions both in the percentage of children in child labour, one-fifth, and the absolute number of children in child labour, 72 million. Asia and the Pacific rank second highest in both these measures, 7% of all children and 62 million in absolute terms are in child labour in this region.

401. International Albinism Awareness Day is observed annually on the **13th of June** to spread awareness about albinism and to highlight the human rights of people with albinism. The day was first observed in 2015.

Theme 2024: "10 years of IAAD: A decade of collective progress."

Albinism disease:

Albinism is a rare and genetically inherited health condition present at birth, which results in a lack of pigmentation (melanin) in the hair, skin, and eyes, causing vulnerability to the sun and bright light but is also non-contagious. As a result, almost all people with albinism are visually impaired and are prone to developing skin cancer. There is no cure for the absence of melanin that is central to albinism.

402. World Blood Donor Day is observed annually on **14th June** to spread awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood. The day also marks the birth anniversary of Karl Landsteiner. This day was first initiated and established on 14 June 2004 by the World Health Organization (WHO). In May 2005, WHO with its 192 member states established Blood Donor Day at the 58th World Health Assembly.

Theme 2024: "20 years of celebrating giving: thank you blood donors!"

403. Global Wind Day is observed annually on **15th June** to acknowledge the potential of wind power. The day was first observed in 2007 by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA) and the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC).

404. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is observed annually on **15th June** to spread awareness about abuse and neglect of older persons and raise awareness of the cultural, social, economic, and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect.

Theme 2024: "Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies"

The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) initiated and designated the 15th June as WEAAD in June 2006. The day was first observed in 2012.

405. International Day of Family Remittances is observed annually on **16th June** to recognize the importance of over 200 million migrant workers who send money home to over 800 million family members. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution on 12th June 2018 and proclaimed the 16th June of every year as the International Day of Family Remittances.

Theme 2024: "Digital remittances towards financial inclusion and cost reduction"

406. World Sea Turtle Day is observed annually on **17th June** to spread awareness about sea turtles and their conservation. The day also marks the birth anniversary of **Dr. Archie Carr** who is widely known as "*the father of sea turtle biology.*" The day highlights the impacts of climate change on sea turtles and how sea turtles hear and the importance of their hearing.

407. World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed annually on **17th June** to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification. The day was first observed in 1995.

Theme 2024: "United for Land. Our Legacy. Our Future"

408. International Day for Countering Hate Speech is observed annually on **18th June** to promote inter-religious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech. The year 2024 marks the celebration of the 3rd International Day for Countering Hate Speech.

409. Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed annually on **18th June** to recognize the practices associated with sustainable food consumption, especially with the art of collecting and preparing the food we eat. The day was recognised on 21 December 2016 after the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/71/246, and declared 18 June as Sustainable Gastronomy Day.

Gastronomy refers to local food and cuisine.

410. International Picnic Day is observed annually on **18th June**. On this day, people spend time with their loved ones and go for picnics to get a break from their monotonous everyday routine. The word "picnic" gets its origins from the French language, specifically from the word "pique-nique".

411. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar attended the **World Sickle Cell Day Program 2024** organized at Government Chandravijay Mahavidyalaya, **Dindori in Madhya Pradesh**.

Governor Mangubhai Patel, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav, and ministers of the state government were also present in the program.

The government is committed to eliminating the disease before India celebrates its Amrit Kaal in 2047.

World Sickle Cell Day:

It is observed annually on **19th June** to spread awareness of sickle cell disease and the challenges experienced by people with sickle cell disease. A sickle cell is a red blood cell that has contorted into a sickle shape.

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412. National Reading Day is observed annually on **19 June** to encourage the habit and culture of reading and to promote literacy. The day also marks the death anniversary of **Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker**, who is considered as the Father of Kerala's Library and Literacy Movement.

- The year 2024 marks the observance of the **29th National Reading Day**.
- National Reading or Digital Reading Month has been observed across India from **19th June to 18th July 2024**.

PN Panicker:

He was born in a Nair family on 1st March 1909 at Neelampeeror, Kerala. He started the '**Granthashala Sangam**' in 1945 to promote literacy movement and libraries in the state. He was famous for the message of - "Vayichu Valaruka" which means "Read and Grow". He made the literacy movement into a popular socio-cultural movement. He founded the Kerala Association for Non-Formal Education and Development (KANFED) in 1977. Granthasala Sangam won the 'Krupsakaya Award' from UNESCO in 1975.

413. International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is observed annually on **19th June** to spread awareness about conflict-related sexual violence.

The year 2024 marks the observance of the **10th International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict**.

414. World Refugee Day is observed annually on **20th June** to commemorate the obstacles faced by refugees all over the world. The day was first observed in 2001 by the United Nations on the 50th anniversary of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention regarding the status of refugees.

The day was previously known as 'Africa Refugee Day', but in 2000, UN officially designated the day as 'World Refugee Day'.

Theme 2024: 'Solidarity with Refugees'

415. The International Yoga Day (IDY) is observed annually on **21st June** to spread awareness about the benefits of practicing Yoga, an ancient physical, mental, and spiritual practice that originated in India. The day was first observed in **2015**.

The year 2024 marks the observance of the **10th International Yoga Day (IDY)**.

Theme 2024: 'Yoga for Self and Society'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the celebrations of International Yoga Day 2024 at Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in **Srinagar, Jammu Kashmir**.

Note: 101-year-old Charlotte Chopin, a yoga practitioner from France, was awarded the Padma Shri in 2024.

416. International Olympic Day is observed annually on **23rd June** to promote sports and health. The day commemorates the foundation of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894 at the Sorbonne, Paris, where the Olympic Games were revived by Baron Pierre de Coubertin.

Theme 2024: 'Let's Move and Celebrate'

417. United Nations Public Service Day is observed annually on **23rd June** to highlight the contribution and role of public service in the development of all sectors around the world. The day was first observed in 2003.

Theme 2024: 'Fostering Innovation amid Global Challenges: a Public Sector Perspective'

418. International Widows' Day is observed annually on **23rd June** to gather support for widows and to spread awareness about their situation. The day was established by The Loomba Foundation. The day was formally adopted as International Widows' Day by the United Nations on 21 December 2010. The day was first observed in 2011.

419. Day of the Seafarer (DotS) is observed annually on **25th June** to honor the vital contribution that seafarers make to global trade and the economy, frequently at a considerable personal sacrifice to themselves and their families. The day was first observed in 2011. The day is organized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The year 2024 marks the observance of the 14th Day of the Seafarer.

420. World Vitiligo Day is observed annually on **25th June** to spread awareness about vitiligo, a long-term skin condition caused due to lack of melanin. The day was first observed in 2011 in memory of American singer and songwriter Michael Jackson “the King of Pop” and his struggle with vitiligo.

Theme 2024: “United by the skin”.

Purple is the official colour representing Vitiligo.

421. The International Day of Women in Diplomacy is observed annually on **24th June** to recognize the crucial role of women in shaping international relations and promoting peace.

In 2022, the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared, by consensus, 24th June of each year as the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.

In 2024, the UN General Assembly President Dennis Francis paid tribute to Indian reformer and educator **Hansa Mehta** as he honored women diplomats' invaluable contributions on the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.

Hansa Mehta:

She served as the Indian delegate to the UN Commission on Human Rights from 1947 to 1948 and is widely known for ensuring a more gender-sensitive language in the landmark Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

She is widely credited with significantly changing the language of Article 1 of the UDHR, by replacing the phrase "All men are born free and equal" with "All human beings are born free and equal." She died in Mumbai at the age of 97 in 1995.

422. International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, also known as World Drug Day, is observed annually on **26th June** to highlight the physical and psychological impact of substance abuse, drug overdose deaths, and drug-related humanitarian crises with an aim to eliminate the menace from society. The day was first set by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1987.

Theme 2024: “The evidence is clear: invest in prevention”

423. International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is observed annually on **26th June** to create awareness about torture and help victims receive the support they need. The day was first observed in 1998.

424. World Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day is observed annually on **27th June** to spread awareness of the tremendous contributions of micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year, the International Trade Centre (ITC) marks the 7th anniversary of MSME Day. The day was first observed in 2017.

Theme 2024: "Leveraging Power and Resilience of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to Accelerate Sustainable Development and Eradicate Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises"

It is noteworthy that MSMEs account for 90% of businesses, 60 to 70% of employment, and 50% of GDP worldwide.

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425. National Insurance Awareness Day is observed annually on **28th June** to raise awareness about Insurance which offers security in several situations and to make people aware of the benefits of investing in insurance plans.

The day also serves as a reminder to people to check if all their insurance payments (or renewals) are up to date.

426. National Statistics Day is observed annually on **29th June** to raise awareness about the use of statistics in everyday life and policy-making. The day marks the celebration of the birth anniversary of the Late Professor **Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis**, known as the "Father of Indian Statistics". The day was first observed in **2007**.

Theme 2024: "Use of data for decision making"

The main event of Statistics Day 2024 was organized at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt., New Delhi. The Chief Guest, **Dr. Arvind Panagariya**, Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission addressed the gathering.

Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis:

He was born in Kolkata on 29th June 1893. He died on 28th June 1972. He is famous across the world for "Mahalanobis Distance." He is one of the members of the first Planning Commission. He established the Indian Statistical Institute in 1931. He was honoured with the **Padma Vibhushan** in **1968** for literature and education.

Important Day/Week	Date/Month	Theme for 2024	Remark
World Milk Day	1 st June		
Global Day of Parents	1 st June	The Promise of Playful Parenting	
International Sex Workers Day	2 nd June		
World Bicycle Day	3 rd June		

International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression	4 th June		
World Environment Day	5 th June		
International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing	5 th June		
World Day Against Speciesism	5 th June		
UN Russian Language Day	6 th June		
World Pest Day	6 th June		
World Food Safety Day	7 th June	Food Safety: prepare for the unexpected	
World Oceans Day	8 th June	Awaken New Depths	
World Brain Tumour Day	8 th June		
World Accreditation Day	9 th June	Empowering tomorrow and shaping the future	
International Archives Day	9 th June		The day was first observed in 2008.
International Day of Play	11 th June		
World Day Against Child Labour	12 th June	Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour	The day was first observed in 2002.
International Albinism Awareness Day	13 th June	10 years of IAAD: A decade of collective progress	
World Blood Donor Day	14 th June	20 years of celebrating giving: thank you blood donors!	
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	15 th June	Spotlight on Older Persons in Emergencies	
Global Wind Day	15 th June		
ASEAN Dengue Day	15 th June		The day was first observed in 2011.
International Day of Family Remittances	16 th June	Digital remittances towards financial inclusion and cost reduction	
World Sea Turtle Day	16 th June		The day marks the birth anniversary of Dr. Archie Carr who is widely known as

			"the father of sea turtle biology."
World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	17 th June	United for Land. Our Legacy. Our Future	
World Crocodile Day	17 th June		
Sustainable Gastronomy Day	18 th June		The day was first observed in 2017.
International Picnic Day	18 th June		
Autistic Pride Day	18 th June		
International Day for Countering Hate Speech	18 th June		The day was first observed in 2022.
National Reading Day	19 th June		The day marks the death anniversary of Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker, who is considered as the Father of Kerala's Library and Literacy Movement.
World Sickle Cell Day	19 th June		
International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict	19 th June		
World Refugee Day	20 th June	Solidarity with Refugees	
International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice	21 st June		
World Music Day	21 st June		
World Hydrography Day	21 st June		
International Yoga Day	21 st June	Yoga for Self and Society	
International Olympic Day	23 rd June	Let's Move and Celebrate	
United Nations Public Service Day	23 rd June	Fostering Innovation amid Global Challenges: a Public Sector Perspective'	
International Widows' Day	23 rd June		The day was first observed in 2011.
International Day of Women in Diplomacy	24 th June		
Day of the Seafarer (DotS)	25 th June		
World Vitiligo Day	25 th June	United by the skin	Purple is the official colour representing

			the Vitiligo, a skin disease.
International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	26 th June		
World Drug Day	26 th June	The evidence is clear: invest in prevention	
World Refrigeration Day	26 th June		
World Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day	27 th June	Leveraging Power and Resilience of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to Accelerate Sustainable Development and Eradicate Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises	
National Insurance Awareness Day	28 th June		
World Allergy Awareness Week	23 rd -29 th June		The week was first observed in 2011.
National Statistics Day	29 th June	Use of data for decision making	
International Day of the Tropics	29 th June		The day was first observed in 2017.
International Asteroid Day	30 th June		The day was first observed in 2017.
International Day of Parliamentarism	30 th June	Parliamentary diplomacy: Building bridges for peace and understanding	