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AUGUST 2022

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has planned to retire all the four **MiG-21 fighter squadrons** by **2025**. At present, the IAF has around 70-MiG-21 aircraft and 50-MiG-29 variants. The IAF has also planned to phase out the 3 squadrons of MiG-29 fighter jets in the next 5 years.
 - MiG was designed by the Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau (OKB) of the erstwhile Soviet Union.
 - The first fleet of the MiG variant was inducted into the IAF in 1963 and India procured more than 700 MiG variants in the following years.
2. The Ministry of Steel has recently constituted an **Advisory Committee** for **Secondary Steel Sector**. The committee will be headed by **Jyotiraditya Scindia**, Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel. The aim is to identify and deliberate on the issues pertaining to the steel sector especially the secondary steel industry.
 - The advisory committee will have representation from All India Induction Furnace Association, Sponge Iron Manufacturers' Association, Institute for Stainless Steel development Association, Alloy Steel producers Association, Steel re-rollers Association, Pellet Manufacturers' Association, Indian Ferro alloy Producers association etc.
3. **Udyam Portal** of Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises has achieved the landmark of **1 crore MSME registrations**. In a span of 25 months, as many as 1 crore MSMEs have registered on the Udyam portal on a voluntary basis and declared that they employ 7.6 crore people, of which 1.7 crore are women.
 - During this occasion, the **Ministry of MSME** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Ministry of Tourism** and **National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)** for sharing of Udyam data.
 - The Digi Locker facility for Udyam Registration has also been launched on the occasion.

Udyam Registration Portal:

It was launched on **1st July, 2020**. It is linked to the databases of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and Goods & Services Tax Network (GSTN). It is fully online, does not require any documentation, and is a step towards Ease of Doing Business for MSMEs.

4. The **Union Ministry of Culture** has organized a '**Tiranga bike rally**' from the Red Fort to Parliament (Vijay Chowk) for the Members of Parliament (MPs) of all parties. It has been organized on the occasion of the **146th** birth anniversary (2nd August) of **Pingali Venkayya**, the designer of India's National Flag.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also released a special commemorative **postage stamp** to mark his birth anniversary.

Pingali Venkayya:

He was born in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. He was a freedom fighter and a Gandhian who went on to become synonymous with the spirit of free and independent India. He designed the new flag for the National Congress Meeting in **1921**. It was officially adopted by the Indian National Congress (INC) in **1931**.

- Recently, the central government has launched the '**Har Ghar Tiranga**' campaign. It is a campaign under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the Tiranga home and to hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence. The campaign aims to have citizens hoisting the National Flag in their homes between August 13 and 15.

5. Andaman & Nicobar Command (ANC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Airport Authority of India (AAI)** in Port Blair to boost inter-island connectivity under Udaan Scheme.

- As per the MoU, naval airfields at Shibpur (in Diglipur) in North Andaman and in Campbell Bay will be utilized for civil operations. Passenger flights will be connecting Port Blair directly to Diglipur and Campbell Bay.
- Under the Udaan Scheme, a low-cost 20-passenger flight to be operated between these islands.

6. Point 5140 at **Drass** in Kargil sector has been christened as '**Gun Hill**' to commemorate the victory of the Indian Armed Forces (IAF) and pay tribute to the sacrifice of the war heroes in Operation Vijay.

Point 5140:

It was the highest enemy occupied post in the Tololing complex. A company of 13 JAK RIF (Jammu & Kashmir Rifles) moved towards Point 5140, a strongly fortified position held in strength by the enemy with a large number of automatic weapons under the command of Lt Colonel Yogesh Kumar Joshi on 17th June 1999. After heavy fighting, Point 5140 was finally captured on 20th June. In this operation Lt Col Y K Joshi, Capt SS Jamwal, Nk Dev Parkash & Rfn Mehar Singh were awarded Vir Chakra.

Note: Kargil Vijay Diwas is observed annually on 26th July to honour the Indian Army's successful mission 'Operation Vijay'.

7. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has participated in the **National Conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security'** held in **Chandigarh**. The Chief Ministers of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, The Administrator of Chandigarh, Officers from the BSF, NIA and NCB as well as ANTF chiefs of the respective States and NCORD members have participated in the conference.

- Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) teams in four different locations across the country have disposed off more than 30,000 kg of drugs via video conferencing during this conference.
- These four places are: Delhi, Chennai, Guwahati and Kolkata.
- NCB started the drug disposal campaign from 1st June 2022, so far about 81,686.6242 kgs of drugs have been disposed by NCB teams in 11 different states.

Note: NCB under the leadership of the Union Home Minister Amit Shah took a pledge to destroy 75,000 kilograms of drugs on 75 years of Independence.

8. The PRS Legislative Research, a think tank based in New Delhi, has published the research on the **operation of State Assemblies** for 2021.

- **Kerala**, which dropped to eighth place in terms of convening Assembly sessions during the initial COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, has regained first place in 2021 with **61 sitting days**.
- Kerala is followed by Karnataka with 40 sitting days, Tamil Nadu with 34, and Odisha with 43.
- The report states that 23 State Assemblies met for an average of 25 days between 2016 and 2021.
- 17 of the 28 State Assemblies and the assembly of one Union Territory have convened for fewer than 20 days.
- Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and Delhi have convened for fewer than ten days.
- Kerala is followed by Andhra Pradesh with 20 regulations and Maharashtra with 15 ordinances.

9. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved India's updated **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)** to be communicated to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**). The updated NDC seeks to enhance India's contributions towards achievement of the strengthening of global response to the threat of climate change, as agreed under the Paris Agreement.

India's Commitment under updated NDC:

- India has committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by **45%** by **2030** from 2005 levels and achieving about **50%** cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by **2030**.

- India's updated NDC will be implemented over the period **2021-2030** through programs and schemes of relevant Ministries /departments and with due support from States and Union Territories.
- The updated framework will be linked to many other government measures, such as tax breaks and incentives like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to promote manufacturing.
- The updated NDC also represents the framework for India's transition to cleaner energy for the period **2021-2030**.

NDC means national plans and pledges made by a nation to meet the target of maintaining global temperature increases to well below **2 degrees Celsius** above pre-industrial levels, while aiming for **1.5 degrees Celsius** to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Note: India last submitted its NDC to UNFCCC in 2015.

- 10.** Union Ports, Shipping & Waterways Ministry along with the Indian Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL), which was formed to participate in Shahid Beheshti Port at Chabahar development project, has organized a conference in Mumbai on the occasion of '**Chabahar Day**'. The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, **Sarbananda Sonowal** and the Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Tourism **Shripad Yesso Naik** have interacted with the high level diplomatic delegation from Central Asian Countries.
- "Chabahar Day" is observed to mark the beginning of the **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** - an Indian vision to economize movement of cargo between India and Central Asia.
 - Chabahar port is located in Gulf of Oman at Sistan-Baluchistan province of **Iran** on Makran Coast. It is jointly developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan. It links the rich Central Asian region with the South Asian markets.

INSTC:

It is a multimodal transportation network that connects Indian Ocean to Caspian Sea via Persian Gulf onwards Russia and Northern Europe. It will reduce carriage costs and time taken for shipments to reach Russia, Europe, and Central Asian Countries.

- 11.** The Government of India (GoI) has constituted a **task force to monitor the monkeypox virus** situation and provide guidance to the government on the expansion of diagnostic facilities and to explore vaccination for the infection in the country.
- The task force will be headed by **Dr VK Paul**, member (Health), NITI Aayog.
 - **Other members:** Secretary, Union Health Ministry, Pharma and Biotech.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), more than 18,000 cases have been reported from 78 countries. So far, India has reported four Monkeypox cases: three cases in Kerala and one in Delhi.

Monkeypox:

It is a zoonotic disease caused by the monkeypox virus, which belongs to the same family of viruses that causes smallpox. The disease is endemic in regions like West and Central Africa.

12. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the First All India **District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs)** Meet at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. It has been organized by National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

- DLSAs are established under *Legal Services Authorities Act (LSA), 1987* to provide free legal aid, organize Lok Adalats, Legal literacy camps etc.
- In India, there are a total of **676 DLSAs**. They are headed by District Judge who acts as Chairman of DLSA.
- DLSAs also contribute towards reducing burden on courts by regulating Lok Adalats conducted by NALSA.

13. Tata Steel has planned to roll out the 'First in India' seating system for **Vande Bharat Express** trains from September 2022. Tata Steel's Composites division has bagged **Rs.145 crore** bulk order for seating systems of the Vande Bharat express that includes the supply of complete seating systems for 22 train sets, with 16 coaches in each train set. These are specially designed seats, which can rotate *180 degrees* and have aircraft-style passenger amenities.

- Tata Group is planning to spend **Rs 3,000 crore** on R&D by FY26.
- It is also targeting to be among the 'Top 5 in technology in steel industry globally by 2030'.

Vande Bharat Express:

Vande Bharat Express, also known as Train 18, is the second fastest train in India, which operates at a speed of 130 km/hr. It is operated by the Indian Railways only on two prominent routes as of March 2022, one from New Delhi to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and the other from New Delhi to Varanasi.

14. Union Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav has launched India's largest online herbarium database, the '**Indian Virtual Herbarium**' web portal.

- The portal has been developed by the **Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Kolkata** under the framework of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and 'Digital India'.

- The portal aims to provide complete information on herbarium specimens about the floral diversity of India and other countries stored in the cabinet of the herbarium building through online access.
- At present, the digital herbarium of the Botanical Survey of India has **four categories**: Cryptogam type specimens, Cryptogams general specimens, Phanerogam type specimens, and Phanerogams general specimens.

15. The Government of India (GoI) has made the Goods & Services Tax (GST) **e-invoicing** mandatory for entities with a turnover of over **Rs.10 crore** with effect from **1st October 2022**. Currently, business with turnover of Rs.20 crore and above are required to generate an electronic invoice for all business-to-business (B2B) transactions. This aims to digitize a higher volume of transactions, increase sales reporting transparency, reduce errors and mismatches, automate data entry work, and improve compliance.

E-invoicing:

The GST Council approved the standard of e-invoice in its 37th meeting held on 20th September 2019. E-invoicing was started in October 2020 and was made mandatory for entities with a turnover of Rs 500 crore and above. This threshold was brought down to Rs 100 crore and later to Rs 50 crore in 2021 for B2B transactions. The threshold was brought down to Rs 20 crore beginning April 1, 2022.

- The e-invoice system is for GST registered persons to upload all B2B invoices to the Invoice Registration Portal (IRP). The IRP generates and returns a unique Invoice Reference Number (IRN), digitally signed e-invoice, and QR code to the user.

16. As per the data released by the Ministry of Finance, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections has surged by **28%** year-on-year to **Rs 1,48,995 crore** during July 2022, the second highest ever since the implementation of GST. The GST revenue was Rs 1,16,393 crore in July 2021.

- Of the total figures, CGST is Rs 25,751 crore, SGST Rs 32,807 crore, IGST Rs 79,518 crore (including Rs 41,420 crore collected on import of goods) and Cess Rs 10,920 crore (including Rs 995 crore collected on import of goods).
- **Maharashtra** has collected the highest number of GST (Rs 22,129 crore), followed by Karnataka, and Gujarat.

Month-wise GST collection in FY23:

- July: Rs 1,48,995 crore
- June: Rs 1,44,616 crore
- May: Rs 1,40,885 crore
- April: Rs 1,67,540 crore

- 17.** Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated and laid foundation stone of **6 National Highway** projects of **119 kms** in **Indore, Madhya Pradesh**. The total cost of the project is **Rs. 2300 crore**. These projects will facilitate progress by improving connectivity in Indore and the state.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the National Highways Authority of India (**NHAI**) and the Government of **Madhya Pradesh** for construction of ropeways at **14** selected places in Madhya Pradesh.
 - The travel times between Tejaji Nagar (Indore) and Burhanpur and Indore and Harda will be shortened, saving fuel.
 - The expansion of the Dhar-Pithampur Industrial Corridor will result in more job opportunities.
- 18. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has launched scheme namely **Senior Able Citizen for Re-employment in Dignity (SACRED)** for the purpose of bringing the employment seeker senior citizens through SACRED portal. It was launched on 1st October 2021.
- So far, 4527 Senior Citizens have been registered on SACRED portal.
 - 63 Senior Citizens have applied through SACRED portal for employment from 16 states/UTs so far.
 - **Uttar Pradesh** has registered the highest number of senior citizens on SACRED portal. It is followed by West Bengal, and Kerala.
- 19. India** will host diplomats of the 15-nation United Nations Security Council (UNSC), including US, China and Russia, for the **Counter-Terrorism Committee's (CTC)** special meeting in **October 2022**. The special meeting will be organized on the theme of increasing threat posed by the misuse of new and emerging technologies.
- India two-year term as an elected non-permanent member of the UNSC will end in December 2022 when the country will also preside as President of the UNSC for the month.
 - India is the Chair of the CTC for 2022. In January 2022, India chaired the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee for 2022.
 - The current members of the UN Security Council are *Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway and the UAE, along with five permanent members China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.*

Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC):

It was established by UNSC resolution 1373 adopted unanimously on **28 September 2001** in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks in the US. It is a subsidiary body of the **United Nations Security Council**.

- 20.** Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**) and **Indian Army** have successfully test-fired laser-guided **Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM)** from **Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun** at KK Ranges in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, with support of Armoured Corps Centre & School (ACC&S).

ATGM:

- The ATGM employs a tandem High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) warhead to defeat Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA) protected armoured vehicles.
- It has been designed & developed with multi-platform launch capability and is presently undergoing technical evaluation trials from the **120 mm** rifled gun of MBT Arjun.

- 21.** The Government of India (GoI) has withdrawn the **Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill, 2019**. The government has decided to come up with a new bill that fits into the comprehensive legal framework with reference to the suggestions made by the Joint Committee of Parliament (JCP) on the Bill.
- The PDP bill was first introduced in Lok Sabha on 11th December 2019. The bill was referred to Joint Parliamentary Committee, which submitted a 542-page report with overall **93 recommendations** and **81 amendments** to the Bill in December 2021. The committee proposed a single law for dealing with both personal and non-personal datasets. The report is also under dispute as it suggested moving towards complete localisation of data.

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- 22.** Union Minister for Commerce & Industry, Piyush Goyal has announced that India has achieved a landmark milestone, with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) recognising more than **75,000 start-ups**, a milestone which coincides with the 75th year of independence.

- More than **80 Start-ups** getting recognized per day, the highest in the world.

- **7.46 lakh jobs** have been created, so far, which has seen a 110% yearly increase over the last 6 years.
- The latest 10 thousand start-ups recognized in 156 days compared to initial 10,000 start-ups in 808 days.
- About **49%** of Indian startups are from Tier II & Tier III.
- Currently, of the total recognized startups, around 12% cater to IT services, 9% to Healthcare and Life Sciences, 7% to education, 5% to professional and commercial services and 5% to agriculture.

23. The **National Health Authority (NHA)** has partnered with the **Quality Council of India (QCI)** for six months to accredit and rate **HMIS** (Health Management Information System)/ **LMIS** (Laboratory Information Management System) solutions that have integrated with Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM). The accreditation exercise will be conducted in a phased manner.

24. The **18th edition** of the India-US joint military exercise "**Yudh Abhyas**" will held in **Auli, Uttarakhand** from 14 to 31 October 2022. The mega military exercise aims to enhance understanding, cooperation, and interoperability between the armies of India and the USA.

- It is the largest running joint military training and defence cooperation endeavor between India and the US.
- The exercise was started in 2004 under the US Army Pacific Partnership Program.
- The exercise is hosted alternately between both countries.
- The last edition was held in Alaska, the United States in October 2021.

25. Union External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** has recently visited **Cambodia** and has attended the **ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AIFMM) 2022** in Phnom Penh. The meeting has been co-chaired by the H.E. Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Foreign Minister of Singapore. The meeting has emphasized the importance of adhering to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in the South-China sea region.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has also visited the 12th-century **Angkor Wat temples**, whose restoration work is being done by the Archaeological Survey of India, and **Ta Prohm Temple** in Cambodia.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

It is a regional grouping that promotes economic, political, and security cooperation. It was founded in **August 1967** with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Its chairmanship rotates annually.

It is a group of **ten** Southeast Asian states: *Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam*. It is India's **4th largest** trading partner with about USD 86.9 billion in trade. ASEAN Secretariat is based in **Indonesia, Jakarta**.

- **Cambodia** is the chair of ASEAN for 2022.
- **ASEAN 2022 chairmanship theme:** 'ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together'

26. The Indian Army has conducted a Pan-India exercise called "**Skylight**" to test and evaluate its entire **satellite-based communication network** to ensure operational readiness in the wake of a future conflict.

- The exercise covered India's eastern, northern, and island territories.
- The types of satellite communication terminals tested during the exercise included static terminals, transportable vehicle-mounted terminals, man-portable and small form factor man-pack terminals,
- The exercise has also been attended by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

27. The Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, Sudhanshu Pandey has launched a '**Common Registration Facility**' (My Ration-My Right) on a pilot basis in **11 States/UTs** i.e. Assam, Goa, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Tripura, and Uttarakhand.

- This Web-based facility will enable these 11 States/UTs to collect data of persons desirous of registering for inclusion under NFSA, including migrants residing in other states.
- The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides maximum coverage for about **81.35 crore** persons. At present, around 79.77 crore persons are given highly subsidized food grains under the Act. As a result, 1.58 crore more beneficiaries can be enrolled.

28. The Review Planning & Monitoring (RPM) meeting with States and State Power Utilities has been held in New Delhi, under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy R. K. Singh in presence of the Minister of State for Power and Heavy Industries Krishan Pal Gurjar.

During the meeting, Union Minister RK Singh has launched the (a) 10th Integrated Rating of Power Distribution Utilities, (b) First Consumer Service Rating of DISCOMs and (c) Bharat eSmart Mobile Application (BeSMA).

10th Integrated Rating of Power Distribution Utilities:

It is being carried out annually since 2012 with the aim of evaluating the performance of utilities on a range of parameters covering financial sustainability, performance excellence, and external environment and their ability to sustain improvements year over year. The rating now lays a higher emphasis on financial performance, while also assessing operational efficiencies and the external ecosystem of DISCOMs.

1st Consumer Service Rating of DISCOMs (CSR):

It has been launched for the FY 2020-21. The report captures the current status of consumer services across various DISCOMs. It delves into key parameters of consumer services such as operational reliability, connection services, metering, billing and collection services, fault rectification and grievance redressal.

Bharat eSmart Mobile Application (BeSMA):

It is a smart prepaid metering mobile app. This mobile App would build up on the data of the Smart meters and would provide essential information to consumers in regard to their usage and balance electricity remaining, both in terms of Units and Monetary terms. This App would be available to all the Distribution Utilities free of charge and is amendable to customization as per specific Utility needs for 10 years which is free for the DISCOMs.

29. Ministry of Communication has recently hosted the **International Telecommunication Union's Regional Standardization Forum (RSF) for Asia and Oceania region** in New Delhi.

- RSF has been inaugurated by **Devusinh Chauhan**, Minister of State for Communications.
- The theme of the Forum is *"Regulatory and Policy aspects of Telecommunications/ICTs"*.
- The forum is a platform for constructive exchange of ideas, discussing standardization topics including inter alia India's experience in various sectors of technology like Sustainable Digital Transformation and the Role of ITU Standards, Harnessing Technologies for Digital and Financial Inclusion in Emerging Markets, evolving Data Value Chain and Digital Health.

30. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched the **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle - Developmental Flight 1 (SSLV-D1)** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

- The rocket is 34-metre tall and weighs 120 tonnes.
- It is carrying **AzaadiSAT & EOS-02 satellites** to be placed into low earth orbits.

- The SSLV can put payloads (mini, micro or nanosatellites) weighing up to 500 kg into the 500 km planar orbit.
- Although the mission named “**SSLV-D1/EOS-02**” has failed to reach the intended orbit after facing loss of data in the termination phase of the flight.

AzaadiSAT:

It is an 8-kg Cubesat named 'AzaadiSAT'. It is built by 750 girl students from 75 government schools across the country to mark the 75th anniversary of India's Independence. The payloads are integrated by the student team of 'Space Kidz India'.

- 31.** The Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya M Scindia, along with Minister of State (MoS) General Vijay Kumar Singh (Retd.) has virtually flagged off the first commercial flight of **Akasa Air** between **Mumbai & Ahmedabad**. It has an initial network in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Kochi.
- In the inaugural phase, Akasa Air, whose airline code is **QP**, will offer 28 weekly flights.
 - After 13th August 2022, the airline will start operating an additional 28 weekly flights between Bengaluru and Kochi; Bengaluru-Mumbai from 19th August; and Chennai-Mumbai from 15th September.
- 32.** The Ministry of Defence has announced that the **12th edition** of the **Defence Expo 2022**, India's flagship exhibition on Land, Nava, and Homeland Security systems, will be held in **Gandhinagar**, Gujarat.
- It will be held between October 18 and 22, 2022.
 - The theme for this edition is '**Path to Pride**'.
 - It will be held in a three-venue format across, Helipad Exhibition Centre; inaugural event and seminars at Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre and Live demo at Sabarmati River Front.
 - This is in line with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to achieve self-reliance in defence and achieve export of **USD 5 billion** by **2025**.
- 33.** The **13th edition** of the **India-United States** Joint Special Forces exercises '**Ex Vajra Prahar 2022**' has been commenced at the Special Forces Training School in **Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh**. This joint annual exercise is hosted alternatively between India and the US.
- **Participants:** The US contingent is represented by personnel from the 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) and Special Tactics Squadron (STS) of the US Special Forces while the Indian Army contingent is formed by drawing Special Forces personnel under the aegis of SFTS.

- **Objective:** To strengthen the traditional bond of friendship between the special forces of both nations as well as improve bilateral defence cooperation between India and the US.

Note: The 12th edition of VAJRA PRAHAR was held in 2021 at Washington DC, USA.

34. Union Home & Cooperation Minister Amit Shah has recently e-launched the **onboarding of cooperatives on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal** in New Delhi. The program has been organized by the Ministry of Cooperation, the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) and GeM.

- A total of 589 cooperatives have been selected as being eligible for onboarding on GeM.

Government e Marketplace (GeM):

- It was launched on **9th August 2016** by the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- It is a one-stop National Public Procurement Portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Central and State Government Departments/Organizations/Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

35. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully carried out the test-firing of the **Low Altitude Escape Motor (LEM)** of Crew Escape System (CES) of the **Gaganyaan** project from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

- The LEM is a distinctive special purpose solid rocket motor with four reverse flow nozzles and generates a maximum sea level thrust of 842 kN (nominal) with a burn time of 5.98 seconds (nominal).
- Gaganyaan, India's first manned space flight, will be launched in 2023.

36. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the signing of an **Audio-Visual Co-production Treaty** between **India and Australia** with the view to promote the co-production of films.

- As per the co-production treaty, the respective contributions of the producers of the two countries may vary from 20% to 80% of the final cost of co-production work.
- Such agreements are umbrella agreements under which private, quasi-government, or governmental agencies enter contracts to produce films together.
- India has, so far, signed 15 audio-visual co-production treaties with foreign countries.
- Australia has emerged as a preferred destination for the shooting of Indian films.

Other cabinet approval:

Cabinet has also approved the ratification of amendments to the Constitution of the **Universal Postal Union (UPU)** as contained in the Eleventh Additional Protocol to the

Constitution signed during the 27th Congress of the Universal Postal Union held at Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) from 9-27 August 2021.

The approval enables the Department of Posts to have the "Instrument of Ratification" signed by the President of India and have the same deposited with the Director General of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union. This will fulfil the obligations arising from **Article 25 and 30** of the UPU Constitution which provides for ratification of the amendments to the Constitution adopted by a Congress as soon as possible by the member countries.

37. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has unveiled the '**SPARK: The Space Tech Park**', **India's first virtual space technology museum**, as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations commemorating India's 75th anniversary of independence.

- SPARK is the first 3D (three-dimension) virtual space tech park ever created by ISRO.
- It includes a museum, a theatre, an observatory, a garden with life-sized rockets, a lakeside cafe area and a children's play area along with several other interactions.
- The platform's beta version offers a virtual tour of SPARK and visitors can virtually board the Space on Wheels bus to take the tour.
- This platform will be upgraded to include more "non-sensitive" digital content for use by various stakeholders.

38. The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, has launched the indigenous vaccine **Lumpi-ProVacInd** to protect livestock from Lumpy Skin disease. The vaccine has been developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-National Equine Research Centre, Hisar (Haryana) in collaboration with the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar (Bareilly, UP).

Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD):

- It is caused by a virus called the **Capri poxvirus** and is an emerging threat to livestock worldwide.
- It is genetically related to the **goatpox and sheeppox** virus family.
- It affects both **cows and buffaloes** mainly through vectors such as blood-feeding insects.
- It is **not** a zoonotic disease, meaning it does not spread from animals to humans, and humans cannot get infected with it.
- It was first discovered in **1929** in Africa, and parts of West Asia.
- It was first reported in Asia and the Pacific region in **2019** in North West China, Bangladesh and India.

- Signs of infection include the appearance of circular, firm nodes on the animal's hide or skin that look similar to lumps.

39. The **Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)** has launched '**Automated Online Data Transfer**' for capturing critical data related to Domestic Value Addition (DVA) from the approved applicants of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for automobile and auto component makers.

Under this system, the critical data will be transferred from the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to PLI auto portal of the ministry.

PLI-Auto:

In September 2021, the Government has approved the PLI scheme for automobile and auto component industry for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities for advanced automotive products (AAT) with a budgetary outlay of Rs.25,938 crore. The scheme has attracted proposed investment of Rs.67,690 crore against the target estimate of investment Rs.42,500 crore for a five-year.

40. The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, the Government of **Japan**, and **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** have launched a new initiative to accelerate climate action in 10 states and Union Territories across India.

- This initiative will support Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) to achieve net-zero emissions and ensure climate-resilient development.
- Japan has extended **USD 5.16 million** in climate grant to UNDP India for the project.
- The project will be rolled out in the states and Union Territories of Bihar, Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh between 2022-23.
- This initiative will be implemented in coordination with the IMD at the Ministry of Earth Sciences and the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE).

41. Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar has recently launched "**SMILE-75 Initiative**" at a Shelter Home (Rain Basera) near Nizammudin Metro Station in New Delhi.

- SMILE stands for '**Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**'.

- **Objective:** To make our cities or town and municipal areas begging-free and make a strategy for comprehensive rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of begging through the coordinated action of various stakeholders.
- Under the SMILE-75 initiative, **75 Municipal Corporations** in collaboration with NGOs and other stakeholders will cover several comprehensive welfare measures for persons who are engaged in the act of begging.
- The total budget of the SMILE scheme for the coming years till **2025-26** is **Rs 100 crore**.
- It also includes the sub-scheme of Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging.
- It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
- Earlier, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched 'SMILE' on **12th February 2022**, which includes two sub-schemes: '*Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons*' and '*Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging*'.

42. Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav has announced that the Central government will establish an elephant reserve at Agasthyamalai landscape in **Tamil Nadu**. The central government has accepted the proposal of the Tamil Nadu forest department to notify **1,197.48 sq km** area of land in **Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli** as the **Agasthyamalai Elephant Reserve**. This will be the **5th** elephant reserve in Tamil Nadu and the **32nd** elephant reserve in India.

Elephant Reserves in India:

Currently, India has 31 elephant reserves. In the last three years, Dandeli Elephant Reserve has been notified by Karnataka, Singphan Elephant Reserve by Nagaland and Lemru Elephant Reserve in Chhattisgarh. These efforts brought a total of 76,508 sq km across 14 states in the country under elephant reserves.

Note: As per the 2017 census, Karnataka has the highest number of elephants (6,049), followed by Assam and Kerala.

43. A bilateral air force exercise "**Udarashakti 2022**" has been held between **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and **Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF)** in Malaysia. The four-day exercise has secured the long-standing bond of friendship and enhanced the line of defence cooperation between both armies.

Participants:

India: Su-30 MKI and C-17 aircraft

Malaysia: Su 30 MKM aircraft

Other Exercises between India and Malaysia:

Exercise Harimau Shakti: It is a bilateral joint military exercise between India and Malaysia.

44. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has partnered with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati** to develop solutions to problems of accessing water, electricity, and internet for the AICTE-affiliated technical institutions in North-East India. Both will work towards capacity-building in these institutions to promote research and development and prioritise in enhancing quality of education in remote regions of North-East India.

45. As per the Ministry of Finance notification, **those who pay income tax will not be allowed** to enroll in the Government's social security scheme **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** from **1st October 2022**.

- In case a subscriber, who joined on or after 1st October 2022, is subsequently found to have been an income tax payer on or before the date of application, the APY account shall be closed and the accumulated pension wealth till date would be given to the subscriber.
- Income tax payer enrolled before 1st October 2022 to continue in the scheme.

Note: Under the income tax law, people having taxable income of up to Rs.2.5 lakh are not required to pay income tax.

46. The south London home of **Dadabhai Naoroji**, a prominent member of the Indian freedom struggle and Britain's first Indian parliamentarian, lived for around 8 years at the end of the 19th century has been honoured with a commemorative **Blue Plaque Scheme**.

- The Blue Plaque scheme, run by the English Heritage charity, honours the historic significance of particular buildings across London.
- Dadabhai Naoroji is reported to have moved to Washington House, 72 Anerley Park, Penge, Bromley in 1897.
- That red-brick home now has a plaque which reads: "Dadabhai Naoroji 1825-1917 Indian Nationalist and MP lived here".
- His key text on drain theory, **'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' (1901)**, was published while he was living over there.

Dadabhai Naoroji:

He is also known as the *Grand Old Man of India* and *Unofficial Ambassador of India* was an Indian scholar, trader and politician. He was born on 4th September 1825 in Navsari, Bombay Presidency (present day Gujarat) to a Gujarati speaking Parsi family with a lineage of Zoroastrian Priests. He was also the *first Asian* to be a British MP. He was also one of the founding members of Indian National Congress (INC). He was also a member of the *Welby Commission*, set up by the British Government to investigate wasteful spending in India.

47. The **23rd edition** of the **India International Seafood Show (IISS)** will be held in **Kolkata** from February 15-17 2023. The seafood event will serve as an interactive platform between Indian exporters and overseas importers of India's marine products.

- Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has collaborated with the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) to organize the show.
- The event will be organized at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan in Kolkata.

During 2021-22, India exported 13,69,264 tonnes of marine products worth USD 7.76 billion, registering an all-time high export by value, while production of shrimp crossed 1 million MT.

48. Union Minister of State (MoS), Ministry of Earth Science (MoES) Dr. Jitendra Singh has launched "**Roshni**", India's first Saline Water Lantern. It has been unveiled during his visit to SAGAR ANVESHKA, a Coastal Research Vessel, operated and used by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai for coastal research.

- The lantern uses seawater as the electrolyte between specially designed electrodes to power the LED (Light Emitting Diode) lamps.
- This lantern will boost and supplement the centre's 'UJALA scheme' which was launched in 2015 for distribution of LED bulbs across the country.

He has also reviewed the progress of NIOT developed **Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD)** technology for conversion of sea water to potable water, which has been successfully demonstrated in Lakshadweep islands.

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49. The Indian Navy Ships (INS) in a first-of-its-kind effort have set sail to **6 continents** as part of the celebration of 75 years of Independence of India.

- **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Satpura** has conducted a **75 Lap "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav Run"** at the **San Diego** US Navy Base on the Independence Day of India. These 75 laps have been dedicated to 75 stalwarts of India's Freedom Struggle as a remembrance of their sacrifices for the nation. The ship has also hoisted the Indian Tricolour flag in the presence of the Indian diaspora and distinguished local dignitaries in the North American Continent. This is the first time an Indian Naval Warship has reached the west coast of North America.
- **Other Naval Warships:** *INS Trikand* in Mombasa in Kenya (Africa), *INS Saryu* in Singapore (Asia), *INS Sumedha* in Perth (Australia), *INS Tarkash* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (South America), and the sailing ship *INS Tarangini* in London (Europe).

- 50.** The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India has launched a **“Manthan Platform”** to enable and empower all spheres of science and technology in India.
- The platform promotes collaboration at scale between industry and the scientific research and development ecosystem to help meet India’s scientific missions and goals in alignment with the UN-defined Sustainable Development Goals(SDG) charter.
 - The platform will facilitate knowledge transfers and interactions through information exchange sessions, exhibitions, and events to develop a framework for future science, innovation, and technology-led growth.
 - The platform is powered by the **National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSEIT)** and is led by the office of the Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA).
- 51.** Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State (MoS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, has launched the **Early Childhood Development Conclave, Paalan 1000 National Campaign and Parenting App** in Mumbai.

Paalan 1000 National Campaign and Parenting App:

- The campaign aims to focus on the cognitive developments of children in the first **2 years** of their life.
- The programme is aligned with the mission of the **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)**, emphasizing responsive care and focusing interventions on the first 1000 days.
- The first 1000 days will establish a solid platform for a child’s physical, mental, emotional, cognitive and social health.
- The parenting app will provide caregiver with practical advice on what they can do in their everyday routine and will help resolving the various doubts of parents.
- It focused on the 6 principles on Maximize Love, Talk & Engage, explore through Movement and Play, Read and Discuss Stories, Mother’s Engagement with the Child while Breastfeeding and Managing Stress and Staying Calm.

Note: India has reduced child mortality since 2014 from 45 per 1000 live births to 35 per 1000 live births in 2019.

- 52.** Union Minister of State Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has approved a Start-up loan of **Rs.1.15 crores** to M/s TGP Bioplastics for commercializing compostable plastic which will mitigate the usage of single-use plastics (SUP).
- A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has also been signed between Technology Development Board, a statutory body under the Department of Science & Technology and M/s TGP Bioplastics Private Limited, Satara, Maharashtra to manufacture & commercialise compostable plastic.
 - **Composite Plastic:**

The composite is a unique blend of Thermoplastic-Starch (TPS)-glycerin with some chemical modifications that provide higher strength at a low manufacturing cost. The granules prepared from this composite can be moulded into any shape and used as per the requirement, and it can further break down into natural substances once thrown out.

- 53.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a "**Panch Pran**" target (Five Resolutions) on the occasion of 76th Independence Day to make India a developed nation in the next 25 years, when India will celebrate 100th Independence Day.

Panch Pran (Five Resolutions):

- Build a developed India.
- Be proud of India's heritage and legacy.
- Erase all traces of servitude
- Unity & Solidarity
- Duties of citizens, which include the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers (CMs), as they are also responsible citizens.

He has also given the slogan "**Jai Anusandhan**" to push the innovation.

On this occasion, India has gifted a **Dornier** maritime reconnaissance aircraft to **Sri Lanka** which will enable the island nation to tackle multiple challenges like human and drug trafficking, smuggling and other organised forms of crime in its coastal waters more effectively.

- 54.** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has handed over several indigenous military equipments to the **Indian Army**. These equipment/systems have been jointly developed by the Indian Army in collaboration with Defence Public Sector Undertakings, **Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO)** and the Industry, in line with vision to modernise the Armed Forces, under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'.

Aim: To enhance operational preparedness of the Army.

Indigenous Defence Equipment (IDE):

- **Nipun:**

It is an **Anti-Personnel Mine**. It is developed by Armament Research and Development Establishment, Pune and the Indian industry. It replaces the vintage NMM 14 mines. It is also known as 'soft target blast munition'. It will enhance the protection provided to the troops on the borders by acting as the first line of defence against infiltrators.

- **Landing Craft Assault (LCA):**

It is meant to serve as a replacement for the boats for carrying personnel in battle operations. These lightweight assault carriers can carry up to 35 troops. This model is undergoing trials in the Pangong Tso Lake near LAC with China.

- **F-INSAS:**

It stands for “**Future Infantry Soldier As A System**”. It is an indigenously developed system that will help modernise the Indian Army units. The development of this system is aimed at improving the operational capabilities of the infantry units of the Indian Army. Under this, soldiers are being equipped with three primary sub system: the first system is the AK-203 assault rifle with day and night holographic and reflex sights; protection through a specially designed helmet and a bullet proof jacket; and communication and surveillance system.

Other defence systems are Hand Held Thermal Imager, Solar Photovoltaic Energy Project, Infantry Protected Mobility Vehicle (IPMV), Quick Reaction Fighting Vehicle etc.

55. The first-of-its-kind database named **National Integrated Database on Arrested Narco Offenders (NIDAAN)** has been made operational for use by various central and state prosecution agencies tasked to enforce anti-drugs laws in India.

- The database has been developed by the **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)**.
- It is part of the Narcotics Coordination Mechanism (NCORD) portal that was launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on 30th July 2022 in Chandigarh.
- The NIDAAN platform sources its data from the ICJS (Inter-operable Criminal Justice System) and the e-Prisons (a cloud-based application) repository.
- It is planned to integrate it in the future with the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS).

56. The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the signing of a contract between **India** and **France** to support the **International Transport Forum (ITF)** activities in the Indian Transport Sector.

- The contract was signed on 6th July 2022 between the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, France on behalf of the International Transport Forum and the Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC), India.

Other approvals by Cabinet:

- Cabinet has approved to restore **Interest Subvention** on short term agriculture loans to **1.5%** for all financial institutions. The Interest Subvention will be provided to lending institutions for FY 2022-23 to 2024-25 for lending short term agri-loans upto **Rs 3 lakh** to the farmers.
- Cabinet has approved the “Widening access of the **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)** database to users, besides patent offices”. The TKDL database will be accessible via a paid subscription model, with national and international users being granted access in stages.

57. Switch Mobility Limited, subsidiary of Ashok Leyland, has launched “**Switch EiV 22**”, India’s first **electric double-decker bus** at YB Centre in south Mumbai, Maharashtra. It will be run by the Mumbai civic transport body from September 2022.
- The bus is powered by a 231 kWh capacity battery pack with a dual gun charging system, which allows the bus to have a range of up to 250 kms for intra-city transport.
58. India has planned to purchase the world's deadliest strategic bomber **Tu-160** from **Russia** to double the strength of the Indian Air Force. This bomber has the ability to enter Pakistan and China and strike their vital air bases, warships, and aircraft carriers that are patrolling the seas.

Tu-160 Black Jack Bomber:

It is also known as the 'White Swan'. It made its maiden flight in 1981. It was modernized in 2015. This bomber can transport large missiles. It can reach a peak speed of 2220 kmph. The maximum weight that this aircraft can carry while flying is 110,000 kg. It has a 56-meter wingspan.

59. India's first **Composite Indoor Shooting Range (CISR)** has been launched by Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta at **INS Karna** on the Eastern Seaboard, near Bheemili, Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. INS Karna is the **first** in the navy and perhaps the only military unit in the country to set up CISR.

This facility is a state-of-the-art, self-contained, 25-m, six-lane, live firing range for all primary and secondary weapons in the Indian Navy.

60. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology Jitendra Singh has announced financial aid of **Rs 3.29 crore** to a **Hydrogen startup** from **Maharashtra** for the indigenous development of Hydrogen Sensing & Analysis Technology.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the **Technology Development Board (TDB)** under the Department of Science & Technology (DST) and **Multi Nano Sense Technologies Private Limited**, Maharashtra to support the manufacturing of Hydrogen sensors indigenously.
- This is in line with the National Hydrogen Mission (NHM), launched in 2021.

Note: India has set a target to produce 5 million tonnes of Green hydrogen by 2030.

61. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated a two day **National Security Strategies (NSS) Conference 2022** in New Delhi. The Conference has been attended by 600 officers from across the country, physically and virtually. The conference deliberated on various aspects of national security, including counter-terrorism, radicalisation, issues pertaining to crypto currencies, counter rogue drone technology and challenges posed by Maoist outfits.

- He has also inaugurated the **National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS)**. This system is developed by **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**. The system will help in the quick and easy disposal of cases with the help of a centralized fingerprint database.

62. Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Parshottam Rupala, has chaired the 9th Governing Body meeting of the **National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)** held in New Delhi.

- During the meeting, he has released a book on **“Super Success Stories from Indian Fisheries”** published by NFDB.
- He has also launched an online market place feature **“Aqua Bazar”** app developed by ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) with the funding support of NFDB under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). The app will help the fish farmers and stakeholders to source the inputs such as fish seed, feed, medicines etc. and services required for fish culture as well as farmers can list the table size fish for sale.

63. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Jitendra Singh has inaugurated India's first indigenously developed **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus in Pune, Maharashtra**. It has been developed by the *Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)* and private firm *KPIT Limited* in Pune. This bus has zero emissions compared to a diesel bus plying on long-distance routes which usually emits 100 tonnes of CO₂ annually.

Fuel Cell:

Fuel cell is an electrochemical energy conversion device that generates electricity, heat, and water by using hydrogen and air. Its applications can be classified into 3 broad sectors: Transport, Portable (military applications, Auxiliary Power Units, laptops etc.), Stationary (power to industrial/commercial/residential buildings, etc.). Japan is a leader in the use of fuel cell technology.

64. The **10th National Conference of Women Police** has been held in **Shimla**, Himachal Pradesh. More than 200 women police officers and employees across the country have participated in this two-day National conference.

- The conference has been organized by the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** and the *Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD)* in collaboration with *Himachal Police*.
- Union Minister of State for Home affairs **Nityanand Rai** has inaugurated the conference.
- The main objective of this conference is to enhance the leadership potential of women police officers and discuss their problems and challenges.
- The conference also highlighted and discussed the new roles and responsibilities of women in terms of changing technology and crime.

- 65.** India will start supplying petrol with **20 percent ethanol** at select petrol pumps from **April 2023**. E20 petrol (petrol blended with 20 per cent ethanol) in some quantity will be available from April 2023 and the rest to be covered by 2025.
- **Note:** India is the world's **fifth largest producer** of ethanol after the US, Brazil, EU and China.
- 66.** Union Minister of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Parshottam Rupala, has launched a unique coffee table book titled '**Fish & Seafood -a collection of 75 gourmet recipes**' in New Delhi. The coffee table book and its launch event are a part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The book highlights the diversity of fish available within the domestic water bodies and the fish culinary heritage of the country that signifies the diverse cooking and eating styles across the country.
- 67.** The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has launched a Pan-India Operation under the code name "**Operation Yatri Suraksha**" to improve the security of passengers travelling by Indian Railways.
- Under this, several steps are being taken to provide fool proof security to passengers i.e. Train Escorting, visible presence on stations, Surveillance through CCTV, Surveillance on active criminals, collection of intelligence about the criminals and action thereupon, identifying black spots and crime prone trains/sections and enhancing security thereat among others.
- 68.** The Ministry of Law and Justice has recently appointed **11 advocates** as Additional Judges in **Punjab and Haryana High Court**. The 11 new Additional Judges are Nidhi Gupta, Sanjay Vashisth, Tribhuvan Dahiya, Namit Kumar, Harkesh Manuja, Aman Chaudhary, Naresh Singh, Harsh Bunker, Jagmohan Bansal, Deepak Manchanda and Alok Jain.
- Currently, the Punjab and Haryana High Court is functioning with just 46 judges, against the sanctioned strength of 85. With the appointment of new additional judges, the number of judges will rise to 57.
 - So far, **138 appointments** in various high courts of the country have been made this year compared to earlier record of 126 high court appointments, which were made in 2016.
 - Earlier, 26 High Court Judges in the High Courts of Allahabad, Andhra, Telangana, Gauhati, Orissa, and Himachal Pradesh have been appointed.
- 69.** The Indian Railways has conducted a test run of its latest train '**Super Vasuki**'. The train is operated by the **South East Central Railway (SECR)** zone of the Indian Railways. The train has several unique features.
- The freight train is **3.5 km** long.
 - During the test run, the train had **6 locos, 295 wagons** and of **25,962 tonnes** gross weight, making it the longest and heaviest freight train.

- The train was formed by amalgamating **five rakes** of goods trains as one unit.
- The amount of coal carried by the train is enough to fire **3000 MW** of power plant for one full day. This is three times the capacity of existing railway rakes (90 cars with 100 tonnes in each) which carries about 9,000 tonnes of coal in one journey.
- The train took **11.20 hours** to cover a distance of 267 km.

70. The Government of India (GoI) has signed a Headquarters Agreement (HQA) with the **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** to grant CDRI the status of an 'Independent and International Legal Entity'.

- This will enable the institution to pursue functions internationally with all rights, immunities, and privileges, as per the United Nations (Privileges & Immunities) Act, 1947.
- The agreement has been signed by **Amit Prothi**, Director General, CDRI and Noor Rahman Sheikh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI):

CDRI was launched by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York on 23 September 2019. It is a partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions that aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.

71. The **Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM)** has been successfully flight-tested by the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha. This is the 4th test for VL-SRSAM.

VL-SRSAM:

- It is a surface-to-air missile.
- It has been designed and developed jointly by three facilities of DRDO for deployment of Indian Naval warships.
- The missile has the capability of neutralizing various aerial threats at close ranges including sea-skimming targets.
- The missile has been designed to strike high-speed airborne targets at the range of 40 to 50 km and at an altitude of around 15 km.
- Its design is based on Astra Mark-I missile which is a Beyond Visual Range Air to Air missile.

72. India's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva, has announced that the country has contributed **USD 400,000 (over Rs 3 crore)** to four Voluntary Trust Funds. The

contribution has been made to demonstrate India's support for the United Nations Human Rights and its dedication to the global promotion and preservation of human rights.

The four **Voluntary Trust Funds** to which contribution has been made are:

- Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture
- Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation
- Voluntary Fund for financial and technical assistance for the implementation of Universal Periodic Review
- Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to support the participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs) in the work of the council.

Recently, India contributed USD 800,000 (over Rs.6 crore) to promote use of Hindi language at UN.

73. The **3rd Joint Committee Meeting (JCM)** between the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Ministry of Business, Enterprises and Cooperatives of **Republic of Mauritius** for cooperation in the field of MSMEs has been held in New Delhi.

Participants:

- Indian side has been led by **Narayan Rane**, Union Minister for MSME
- Mauritius side has been led by **Soomilduth Bholah**, Union Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives.

During the meeting, two Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) have been signed on cooperation.

- **First** between SME Mauritius Ltd. and Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) - Ahmedabad in Ahmedabad.
- **Second** between SME Mauritius Ltd. and National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (Ni-msme), an institute under the Ministry of MSME in New Delhi.

74. **India GABON Business Council** has been launched by the Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO) and the **Embassy of Gabon** at the ITC Maurya to accelerate the trade relationship between both India and Gabon.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between **Josephine Patricia Ntyam-EHYA**, the Charge D Affaires of the Gabon Embassy, and **Dr Asif Iqbal**, the President of the IETO and pledged the commitment of support for a robust partnership.
- The business council will put efforts to educate and create a conducive business atmosphere in the Indian Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) Investor sector.

Note: The Bilateral Trade between India & Gabon has reached USD 1.12 billion in 2021-22. India is the 2nd largest destination for Gabonese exports.

75. The 38th meeting of the ministerial-level Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) of India and Bangladesh has been held in New Delhi. This meeting has been held after a gap of 12 years.

Participants:

- **Indian side:** Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of Jal Shakti
- **Bangladesh side:** Zaheed Farooque, State Minister for Water Resources

Key highlights:

Both the nations have finalized the text of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on interim water sharing of the **River Kushiya**.

Both sides also welcomed the finalisation of the design and location of the water intake point on **Feni River** to meet the drinking water needs of Sabroom town in Tripura as per the October 2019 India-Bangladesh MoU.

Note: India and Bangladesh share **54 rivers**, of which seven have been identified earlier for developing the framework of water-sharing agreements on priority.

Kushiya River:

It is a *tributary river* in **Bangladesh** and **Assam**. It forms on the India-Bangladesh border as a branch of the Barak River when the Barak separates into the Kushiya and Surma. The waters of the Kushiya pick up tributaries from Manipur, Mizoram, and Assam. It rejoins with the Surma at Markuli in Ajmiriganj upazila (Bangladesh) and flows south upto Bhairab Bazar (Bangladesh) receiving the name Kalni. The Kalni meets with the Dhanu (Bangladesh), a branch of the Surma and renamed as the Meghna.

Feni River:

It originates in the South Tripura district, passes through Sabroom town on the Indian side, and meets the Bay of Bengal after it flows into Bangladesh. **Maitri Setu**, a 1.9 km Long Bridge Over Feni River is constructed in Tripura to link India-Bangladesh.

Joint Rivers Commission (JRC):

The JRC of India and Bangladesh was constituted in 1972 as a bilateral mechanism to address issues of mutual interest on common / border / Trans Boundary Rivers. It is headed by Water Resources Ministers of both countries.

76. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has recently attended the two-day **Milletts Conclave 2022** on the theme of '*Making Many Millet Magnets - Making Many Millet Entrepreneurs*'. It has been organized jointly by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (**NABARD**) and University of Agricultural Sciences (**UAS**), Raichur, Karnataka.

Key announcements:

Millet Challenge:

- It will be administered by the **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** under NITI Aayog, with University of Agricultural Sciences (**UAS**), Raichur as its field partner.
- It will provide a platform to promote research & innovation, stimulate overall innovation, increase competitiveness of Indian start-ups and SMEs and improve profitability of millet farming.
- It will encourage **startups** to develop products that address problems along the millet value chain.
- The Millet Challenge will award seed grant of - **Rs 1 crore** each to three winners, **Rs 20 lakhs** to 15 selected candidates, and **Rs 10 lakhs** to 15 other selected candidates.

Announced a funding of **Rs 25 crore** by NABARD under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) to **UAS, Raichur**, to complement the efforts of the Government of Karnataka for establishment of Millet Value Chain Park, incubation centre for processing and value-addition and capacity-building for promotion of millet cultivation and nutritional security.

Note: Year 2023 has been announced as the 'International Year of Millets'.

77. Union Minister for Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh has unveiled a dedicated Website to give further boost to the ongoing **"Swachh Sagar Surakshit Sagar/ Clean Coast Safe Sea Campaign 2022"**, a 75-day citizen led campaign to improve ocean health through collaborative action. The target of the campaign is to clean **75 beaches** across India in 75 days.
- He has also launched the Campaign Logo-'**Vasuki**', dedicated to the **youth** of the country, as they are along with the school students taking keen interest and joining the coastal and beach cleaning activities.
 - More than 200 ton of garbage, mainly single use plastic, have been removed from the sea coasts during the first 20 days of the ongoing 75-day Coastal Clean-Up campaign launched on 5th July 2022.
 - The campaign will culminate on *"International Coastal Clean-up Day"* on 17th September 2022.
 - The '**Eco Mitram**' mobile app has been launched to spread awareness about the campaign and to encourage the general public to volunteer for the beach cleaning activities on 17th September 2022.

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78. Ministry of Culture has launched the '**Badhe Chalo**' Campaign, with the aim of connecting with youth of India and infuse a deep sense of patriotism among them. It has been held from 5-10 August 2022, across 10 cities every day. The Grand Finale of the campaign culminated at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi, on 12th August 2022. The movement features Flash Dances across 75 cities, at prime locations all over India. It aims to proliferate the message and spirit of Amrit Mahotsav, through these flash dances.

79. Union Minister of State Science & Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh has announced that India's **Bio economy** will grow from USD 70 Billion to **USD 150 Billion by 2025**. It has been announced during the launch of **75 "Amrit" Grants** for Biotech initiatives involving StartUps, industry, academia and research bodies in integrated collaboration.

The 75 inter-disciplinary, multi-institutional grants would be supported for high-risk, ambitious research ideas, milestones-driven collaborative research in all domain-specific areas of the biotech sector in Public-Private Partnership mode.

80. India has developed the first indigenously-developed **RT-PCR kit** for testing **Monkeypox** disease. The kit is developed by **Transasia Bio-Medicals**. The kit has been unveiled by Principal Scientific Adviser to the Centre Ajay Kumar Sood. The kit will help in early detection and better management of the infection which the WHO declared a public health emergency of international concern.

Monkeypox is a viral zoonosis, a virus transmitted to humans from animals, with symptoms similar to smallpox although clinically less severe.

81. Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has unveiled the **digital version** of the One District-One Product (**ODOP**) gift catalogue during the Export Promotion Councils and Industry Associations meeting at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi. The ODOP gift catalogue includes a wide range of products like Fragrances and Oils, Indian Spirits, Home Decor products, Fabrics, and Silks and Shawls. This will promote a brand image for local products in the international market.

82. India's first Adenoviral Intranasal COVID vaccine **BBV154** has proven to be safe, well-tolerated & immunogenic in subjects in controlled clinical trials by Bharat Biotech for COVID-19. It has completed clinical development for phase III trials.

Note: BA.5 is one of the latest sub variants of the original Omicron lineage.

83. Ministry of Commerce and Industry has released the '**Department of Commerce Restructuring Dossier**'. It aims at preparing India to become a key global player in world trade.

Restructuring is based on 5 major pillars:

- Increasing India's share in global trade
- Assume leadership role in multilateral organisations
- Democratisation of trade
- Creating 100 Indian Brands as Global Champions
- Setting up Economic Zones in India to strengthen manufacturing base and attract greater investments to India.

84. The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** has published the **Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022** to ensure environmentally sound management of waste batteries. These rules will replace Batteries (Management and Handling) Rules, 2001.

Key points:

- The rules cover all types of batteries, viz. Electric Vehicle batteries, portable batteries, automotive batteries and industrial batteries.
- The rules' function based on the concept of **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** where the producers (including importers) of batteries are responsible for collection and recycling/refurbishment of waste batteries and use of recovered materials from wastes into new batteries.
- The rules will enable setting up a mechanism and centralized online portal for exchange of EPR certificates between producers and recyclers to fulfil the obligations of producers.
- This will mandate the minimum percentage of recovery of materials from waste batteries which will bring new technologies and investment in recycling and refurbishment industry.
- Prescribing the use of certain number of recycled materials in making of new batteries will reduce the dependency on new raw materials and save natural resources.
- There will be online registration & reporting, auditing, and committee for monitoring the implementation of rules.
- Under the rules, the consumers will have to discard waste batteries separately from other waste streams.

85. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for amendment of policy of exemption for **Wheat or Meslin Flour** (HS Code 1101) from export restrictions/ ban.

The approval will now allow to put a restriction on the export of Wheat Flour which will ensure a curb on rising prices of wheat flour and ensure food security of the most vulnerable sections of the society.

86. The Department of Consumer Affairs under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution has amended the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) rules 2011 with the **Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) (Third Amendment) Rules, 2022** for ease of doing business and reducing the compliance burden for the garment or hosiery sold in loose or open.

It has exempted the garment or hosiery industry selling in loose or open from 6 declarations. They are:

- Common/ generic name of the commodity
- Net quantity, in terms of standard unit of weight or measure or number of the commodity in the package
- Unit sale price
- Month and year of manufacture or pre-packing or import
- Best before or use by date, month and year in case of commodity becoming unfit for human consumption with time
- Consumer Care name & address

Now, only the following information relevant to consumers is to be given:

- Name and address of the manufacturer/ marketer/ brand owner/ importer with country of origin or manufacture in case of imported products.
- Consumer care email id and phone number.
- Sizes with internationally recognizable size indicators such as S, M, L, XL, XXL and XXXL along with details in metric notation in terms of cm or m.
- Maximum retail price (MRP).

87. The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has drafted a proposal to give specific names to all the **23 All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)**, which include those fully functional, partially operational or under construction, based on regional heroes, freedom fighters, historical events or monuments of the area or their distinct geographical identity.

- Six new AIIMS: Bihar (Patna), Chhattisgarh (Raipur), Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal), Odisha (Bhubaneswar), Rajasthan (Jodhpur), and Uttarakhand (Rishikesh) were approved in Phase 1 of Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) and are fully functional.
- Out of the 16 AIIMS established between 2015 and 2022, MBBS classes and outpatient department services have been started in 10 institutes, while only MBBS classes have

been started in another two. The remaining four institutes are at different stages of development.

- 88.** The Indian Navy has received its first-ever fully Made in India **30mm** ammunition for **AK-630 guns** fitted on warships. It is produced by the M/s Economic Explosives Limited (EEL), Maharashtra, a subsidiary of Solar Industries India Limited.
- 89.** The **8th India International MSME Start-up Expo & Summit 2022** has been unveiled by Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir **Manoj Sinha** in New Delhi. This summit gives SMEs, startups, business, industry, and service providers a much-needed platform to discover new prospects, connect with buyers and sellers, and exchange information about federal, state, and local programmes, among other things.
- 90.** **IIT Guwahati** researchers has developed a fermentation process using ultrasound to produce Xylitol from sugarcane bagasse. Sugarcane bagasse is the byproduct of crushing sugarcane.

Xylitol: It is a natural sugar alcohol found in plants, including many fruits and vegetables. It has anti-obesogenic and anti-diabetic properties with other properties such as mild prebiotic and guarding teeth against caries. It can be used as a safe alternative sweetener as it has less calories and doesn't raise blood sugar levels.

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- 91.** The Chief Minister of **Karnataka** Basavaraj Bommai has announced various welfare programmes on the occasion of his government completing one year in office. He has launched **Swami Vivekananda Yuva Shakti Yojane** that aims at empowering rural youth along with other schemes including, financial assistance and skills training to 10 lakh people for vision towards self-employment and also helps in marketing similar to Stree Shakti Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Other Schemes:

- **Vidyanidhi Programme:** It provides scholarship from 2,500 to 11,000 rupees to the children of farmers studying in 11th standard and beyond has now been extended to children of weavers, taxi drivers and fishermen.
- **Amruth scheme:** Health Infrastructure will be enhanced to include 750 Primary Health Centres.

92. The Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched '**Mission Bhumiputra**', a simplified and digital way **to issue digitalised caste certificates to students**. The mission is implemented by the Departments of Tribal Affairs (Plain) and Department of Social Justice Empowerment, Government of Assam. The mission will help in delivering easy public service to the general public of Assam. He has also inaugurated a Bhumiputra portal.
93. The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has established a first-of-its-kind **Urban Animal Rescue Centre** located inside the **Guindy National Park, Chennai, Tamil Nadu**. The rescue centre has two big enclosures and three smaller ones for injured animals.
- As it is a part of the Guindy National Park, a veterinarian attached to it as well as foresters have been working with the centre.

Guindy National Park:

It is India's **8th-smallest national park**. It is an extension of the grounds surrounding Raj Bhavan, formerly known as the 'Guindy Lodge', the official residence of the governor of Tamil Nadu. It was established in 1977 and covers an area of 2.7057 km². The park also has a lake known as the 'Tangal Eri'. It is home to blackbuck, chital or spotted deer, jackal, small Indian civet, common palm civet, bonnet macaque, hyena, pangolin, hedgehog, common mongoose and three-striped palm squirrel.

94. The Government of **Arunachal Pradesh** has named the under-construction Greenfield airport in the state capital as "**Donyi Polo Airport**". The airport which has been built under the Centre's Capital Connectivity Scheme at a cost of Rs.645 crores, will start operations from 15th August 2022.
- Notably, the Donyi Polo Airport in Itanagar will be Arunachal Pradesh's third airport after the Pasighat and Tezu airports.
 - It will be the 16th airport in Northeast India.
95. **Goa Police** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with blockchain network **Sire** to implement a smart policing solution to improve transparency and efficiency in policing. The MoU also seeks to help in the digitisation and digitalisation of offline systems.
96. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects of **Sabar Dairy** at Gadhoda Chowki, Sabarkantha in Gujarat. These projects cost worth more than **Rs 1,000 crores**.

Projects launched at Sabar Dairy:

- PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated the **Powder Plant** that has a daily capacity of 120 metric tonnes per day (MTPD).
- He has also inaugurated the **Aseptic Milk Packaging Plant** at Sabar Dairy. It is a state-of-the-art plant with having capacity of 3 lakh litre per day.
- He has laid the foundation stone of the **Sabar Cheese and Whey Drying Plant Project**. The plant will manufacture Cheddar Cheese (20 MTPD), Mozzarella Cheese (10 MTPD) and Processed Cheese (16 MTPD).
- Sabar Dairy is a part of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which makes and markets a whole range of milk and milk products under the Amul brand.

97. Arunachal Pradesh has inked a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **NITI Aayog** and **Reach to Teach** organization for a large-scale transformation in school education.

- The MoU is a three-year partnership (2022-25) agreement.
- It will focus on the enhancement of the learning outcome of students across 3,000 plus government schools in the state.
- The agreement has been signed on the second anniversary of the *New Education Policy (NEP) 2020*.
- **Note:** NEP was launched by the Government of India on 29th July 2020.

98. The world's largest floating Solar Power Plant will be constructed in **Madhya Pradesh**. It will be built on Narmada River, near **Omkareshwar Dam** in Khandwa. It will generate **600-Megawatt** power by 2022-23. This project is estimated to be worth Rs. 3000 crores.

- With the new floating solar plant, **Khandwa** will become the only district in Madhya Pradesh to have thermal power station, hydel and solar power.
- **Note:** As of now, **Ramagundam Floating Solar PV project** in **Telangana** is the largest floating solar power project in India. It has the capacity to generate 100 MW of energy. The commercial operation for project was started on 1st July 2022. This project was commissioned by NTPC.

99. Karnataka animal husbandry minister Prabhu B Chavan has adopted 31 cows in the government and private goshalas, one in each district under **"Punyakoti Dattu Yojana"** (cow adoption) portal.

- **Karnataka** is the first state in the country to implement the Punyakoti Adoption Scheme.
- It has been implemented in the budget for 2022-23.
- The aim of the scheme is to make cowsheds financially sound with the cooperation of the public.

In August 2022, **United Way Bengaluru (UWBe)**, an NGO focused on social issues, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Women and Child Development (WCD)**, Department of the Government of Karnataka for strengthening Anganwadi centres in the state. The aim is to ensure quality childhood care and development among children up to six years and enhance the quality of Anganwadi centres across the state.

- 100.** The state government of Kerala has launched '**Poshaka Balayam**' scheme to improve nutrition among children in the age group of **3-6 years**.
- Under this scheme, each child will be given 125 ml of milk two days a week for 44 weeks (10 months) and an egg twice a week. **Kerala** is the first state to implement such a program in the country to counter under nutrition among children.
- 101.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various projects of the Shrimad Rajchandra Mission, Dharampur, in **Valsad** district, **Gujarat**.

Projects of Shrimad Rajchandra Mission:

- **Shrimad Rajchandra Centre of Excellence for Women:** It will be built at a cost of Rs.40 crore. It will have facilities for recreation, classrooms for self-development sessions, and rest areas. It will employ over 700 tribal women and subsequently provide a livelihood to thousands of others.
 - **Shrimad Rajchandra Animal Hospital:** It will be built at a cost of Rs.70 crore. It will have top-notch facilities, a committed team of veterinarians, and ancillary staff.
 - **Shrimad Rajchandra Hospital:** It is a 250-bed multispecialty hospital with cutting-edge medical infrastructure that will provide world-class tertiary medical facilities, especially to the people of the Southern Gujarat region. It is estimated to cost around Rs.200 crore.
- 102.** The state government of **Andhra Pradesh** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **National Institute for Smart Government (NISG)**. Under the agreement, NISG will assist the government in preparation and development of an integrated land management system with advanced technology in fixing the boundaries.
- 103. Uttar Pradesh** Government will launch the '**Panchamrut Yojana**' to achieve the goal of doubling farmers' income through the introduction of cost-effective technical measures and promotion of co-cropping method. The scheme will allow farmers to grow oilseeds, pulses and vegetables along with sugarcane as per market demand for additional income.
- The scheme has the combined objective of reducing costs through saving water and maximum use of stubble and the leaves of sugarcane, saving use of fertilisers and pesticides, promoting the cultivation of more than one crop for greater productivity and

enhancing the income of farmers as well as controlling pollution as there will be no need to burn leaves in the fields.

- The Government will also honour farmers who implement the Panchamrut scheme and are able to enhance the productivity of the land as well as their income with '**Uttam Sugarcane Farmer**' awards.

104. The **Assam** government has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **HCL, Walmart and Flipkart** for various purposes, including skilling the youths, exporting local products and creating talent for e-commerce supply chain.

First MoU: Signed between the Directorate of Employment and Craftsmen Training (DECT) and the IT firm **HCL Technologies** to provide training to the Class 12 passed students, aiming to reduce regional imbalance in terms of skilled people.

Second MoU: Signed between Assam Skill University (ASU) and **HCL-TSS** to help aspirants to join HCL-TSS skilling and employment programmes and provide mutual support for counseling and conducting assessment of eligible candidates in university campus or any other campus provided by ASU.

Third MoU: Signed between **Walmart Vridhhi** with the Industries, Commerce and Public Enterprises Department and Skill Employment Entrepreneurship Department of Assam for the development of MSMEs.

Fourth MoU: Signed between **Flipkart** and Assam Skill Development Mission to provide opportunities to youth of the state in the Flipkart Supply Chain Operations Academy by training, certifying and creating a pool of e-commerce supply chain talent.

105. The **Andhra Pradesh** cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has approved the renaming of Konaseema as **Dr B R Ambedkar Konaseema** district that was carved out of the East Godavari district in April 2022.

- Konaseema district is spread over 2,081 sq km with a population of nearly 17 lakh.
- It has two revenue divisions (Amalapuram and Ramachandrapuram) and 22 mandals.
- The district has three municipalities Ramachandrapuram, Amalapuram and Mandapet.

106. The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, has laid the foundation stone of the **Indo-Israel Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Vegetables** in

Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh via video conferencing. This centre will be crucial to the growth of the Chandauli district and the Purvanchal region.

- The technology for the Centre is provided by Israeli experts under the **India-Israel Action Plan (IIAP)** with funds for building infrastructure for demonstration purposes from the *Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)*.
- The CoEs are being set up in the States based on Israeli technologies.
- These CoE act as demonstration and training centres for the latest technologies in the field of Horticulture. They also serve as a source of planting material for fruits and vegetables in protected cultivation.

107. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the **2nd generation (2G) Ethanol Plant** in Panipat Refinery, **Panipat, Haryana**. The plant has been developed by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (**IOCL**), at an estimated cost of over **Rs.900 crore** to boost the production and usage of biofuels in the country.

- This project will utilise about 2 lakh tonnes of rice straw (parali) annually to generate around 3 crore litres of Ethanol annually.
- The project will have zero liquid discharge.
- The project will contribute to a reduction of Greenhouse Gases equivalent to about 3 lakh tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent emissions per annum, which can be understood as equivalent to replacing nearly 63,000 cars annually.

108. Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha** has inaugurated "**UMEED Market Place**" under AVSAR Scheme of Airport Authority of India at Srinagar International airport.

- A similar Marketplace has also been opened at Jammu Airport and both the outlets will exhibit products of all 20 districts.
- He has also unveiled a 20X20 ft LED Video wall at Srinagar Airport.

"AVSAR" (Airport as Venue for Skilled Artisans of the Region):

It is an initiative of Airport Authority of India (AAI), to allocate space to Self Help Groups (SHGs) at its airports for selling/showcasing the self-made products of their region. It was conceptualized in 2022.

109. The **Kerala** government has decided to launch its own e-taxi service named '**Kerala Savari**'. This online taxi hiring service is being rolled out by the state Labour Department linking the existing auto-taxi networks in the state with an aim to ensure safe and dispute-free travel for the public at affordable rates prevailing in the state.

- Kerala Savari will charge only **8 percent** service charge apart from the fixed rate.

- It will be implemented by the Motor Workers Welfare Board with the cooperation of Planning Board, Legal Metrology, Transport, IT and Police Departments.

110. Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena has launched the **“One Road, One Week”** initiative of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NMDC) from Tilak Marg and Bhagwan Das road. Under this initiative, the NMDC will undertake repair and maintenance work along footpaths, pavements, and central verges.

111. Meghalaya will host the **2nd edition** of the **North East Olympic Games** from 30th October to 6th November 2022 in Shillong. This aims to bridge the gap for aspiring sportsperson in the region to improve themselves.

- This edition of the Games will be special as Meghalaya is celebrating the 50th year of its Statehood.
- Around 4,000 participants from eight North Eastern States will be competing in 18 disciplines at 13 venues spread across Shillong.

The first edition of Games was held in Manipur in 2018, with 12 disciplines.

112. The Government of **Rajasthan** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN)** for the development of **10,000 MW** renewable energy projects. This project require an investment of around Rs 50,000 crore. Under this MoU, SJVN will establish the renewable projects on the land banks to be allocated by Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Limited (RECL).

113. The **Golden Joint** connecting two ends of the overarch deck of the world’s highest railway bridge over **River Chenab** has been inaugurated in **Reasi** district of **Jammu & Kashmir**. It has been constructed at a cost of Rs.1,250 crore. The 1.3-km-long bridge is located 359 metres above the Chenab riverbed and it is 35 metres higher than Eiffel Tower in Paris.

- For the first time ever since independence, Srinagar will be linked to the rest of India.
- Afcons is building 16 additional railway bridges for Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) in the dangerous terrain of Jammu and Kashmir in addition to the Chenab Bridge.
- All the bridges are part of the Udhampur Srinagar Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project.

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- 114.** Bengaluru-based **Central Power Research Institute (CPRI)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Chhattisgarh** government to set up a Regional Testing Laboratory in Raipur.
- The testing unit will be set up on an area of 10 acres which will have test facilities for transformers, energy meters, transformer oil, switch fuse unit and other electricity-related equipment.
- 115.** The Government of India (GoI) has planned to join hands with the **Arunachal Pradesh** government to develop a **“District Good Governance Portal”** for monitoring the performance of each district of the state on a monthly basis and help in benchmarking performance.
- The portal will be developed by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** under the Ministry of Personnel in collaboration with the Arunachal Pradesh government.
 - The plan is to help the state in upgrading the e-office version 5.6 to e-office version 7.0 in a phased manner.
 - The plan has been announced during the two-day Regional Conference on “Bringing Citizens and Government Closer through Administrative Reforms” at Itanagar.
- 116.** **Arunachal Pradesh** has successfully launched its first drone service, **'Medicine from the sky'** from Seppa to Chayang Tajo in East Kameng district. The government of Arunachal Pradesh has decided to conduct a pilot project of using drones in healthcare, agriculture, and disaster management in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (**WEF**).
- The pilot project has been funded by the United States Agency for International Development (**USAID**) and executed by Bengaluru-based startup Redwing Labs.
- 117.** The state government of **Sikkim** has launched the **‘Aama Yojana’** and **‘Vatsalya Yojana’** for the welfare of women in the state. Under Aama Yojana all unemployed mothers in the state will receive **Rs. 20,000** annually which will be deposited in their bank accounts. Under the Vatsalya Yojana an aid of **Rs. 3 lakh** will be provided to childless women for in vitro fertilization treatment.
- The government has also announced year-long maternity leave for women employees of the state in place of the six-month leave. The mobile village clinic programme has also been launched to provide accessible medical facilities to people in remote areas in all six districts.
- 118.** The Border Road Organization (BRO) has planned to construct a first-of-its-kind pilot road stretch in the **Arunachal Pradesh** border area using steel slag. The project will resolve connectivity issues due to adverse terrain in Arunachal Pradesh.

- The project has been initiated after the success of using **100%** steel slag on a port connectivity road in Gujarat.
- The 1.2 km Hazira port connectivity stretch was a Research & Development (R&D) project carried out by CSIR-CRRI (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Central Road Research Institute) in collaboration with a major steel manufacturer and the Ministry of Steel.

119. Asia's largest **Compressed Biogas (CBG) plant** has commenced its commercial production at **Bhuttal Kalan** village near **Sangrur** district of **Punjab** to generate clean and green energy. The plant has now started commercial production of CBG, which is being supplied to Indian Oil Corporation Limited (**IOCL**) outlet. The plant has a total capacity of **33.23 tonne** CBG per day.

- PEDA (Punjab Energy Development Agency) has also allocated 42 additional CBG projects of total capacity 492.58 tonnes per day (TPD) based on paddy straw and other agro-residue.

120. The state government of **Kerala** has launched "**Lucky Bill App**" with an aim **to curb Goods and Service Tax (GST) evasion**. It is the first-of-its-kind initiative to be introduced in India.

- It has been developed by the State GST Department of Kerala in collaboration with the Digital University of Kerala.
- It will help in boosting tax collection and also enable the government to examine the status of tax return filings with the help of bills uploaded by people.
- It encourages the citizen to ask for a bill every-time they make a purchase. To reward them in doing so, the app offers cash prizes up to Rs.25 lakh.

121. **Mandla**, a district in **Madhya Pradesh**, which is a tribal-dominated region has become *India's first fully 'functionally literate' district*. The district administration launched a campaign in 2020 to make the residents fully literate. For this purpose, the administration employed the education, and women and child development departments along with social workers to educate the people.

- The literacy rate in the district was 68 percent as per a survey in 2011, while another report in 2020 pointed out that over 2.25 lakh people were not literate in the district and most of them were tribals living in the forest areas.

122. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has unveiled the statue of "**Veer Durgadas Rathore**", a symbol of courage, valour and devotion to self, at Salwa Kalan near Jodhpur, **Rajasthan**. The statue has been unveiled on the **385th birth anniversary** of Veer Durgadas Rathore.

Veer Durgadas Rathore:

He was the Rathore Rajput General of the Kingdom of Marwar. He single-handedly preserved the rule of the Rathore dynasty over Marwar (Jodhpur) after the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh in the 17th century. He commanded the Rathore forces during the Rajput War (1679–1707) and played a major role in the Rajput Rebellion (1708–1710) which became one of the main reasons for the decline of the Mughal Empire. He was elected as the leader of the revolt along with Raja Jai Singh II of Jaipur.

123. The Union Cabinet has recently approved a proposal to increase the limit of the **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)** by **Rs. 50,000 crore** to **Rs. 5 lakh crore**. This additional guarantee cover will support **hospitality and related sectors** till the validity of the scheme which is 31st March 2023.

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in the Union Budget speech 2022-23, had announced extension of the ECLGS till March 2023, and expansion of the guarantee cover by Rs. 50,000.

ECLGS:

It was launched by the Government of India in 2020 as a special scheme in view of COVID-19 crisis. The scheme provides 100% guarantee coverage to Banks and NBFCs to enable them to extend emergency credit facilities to Business Enterprises/MSMEs in view of COVID-19 to meet their additional term loan/additional working capital requirements.

124. Goa and **Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (D&NH and D&D)** have become the first '**Har Ghar Jal**' certified State and UT in the country respectively, where people from all the villages have declared their village as 'Har Ghar Jal' through a resolution passed by Gram Sabha, certifying that all households in the villages have access to safe drinking water through taps.

- All 2.63 lakh rural households of Goa & 85,156 of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu have access to potable water through tap connection.
- Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) or Paani Samiti has been constituted in all the 378 villages of Goa and 96 villages of D&NH and D&D.

Jal Jeevan Mission:

It is a flagship programme of Government of India which was announced from the ramparts of Red Fort by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **15th August 2019**. The mission aims to make provision of potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on regular & long-term basis to every rural household of the country by **2024**. The program is being implemented by the Government of India in partnership with States/UTs.

125. The Directorate of Agriculture, **Jharkhand**, and global blockchain technology company, **SettleMint**, India have jointly implemented the distribution of seed to farmers using a

blockchain-based platform. With this, Jharkhand has become the first Indian state to implement blockchain technology which is being used to track seed distribution.

- The platform enables traceability, real-time monitoring, and efficient management of the schemes in a transparent manner. Over 3 lakh farmers from Jharkhand have already registered on the platform and are being distributed seeds at a subsidised rate.

126. The Chief Minister of **Maharashtra** Eknath Shinde has announced that the popular entertainment event of “**Dahi Handi**” will now be recognised as an official sport of the state. He has also introduced the discipline “*Pro Dahi Handi*” and “*Govindas*” who participated in the tournament would get jobs under the sport Maharashtra's quota.

- If Govinda dies, an insurance cover of **Rs 10 lakh** will be given, and if he becomes partially disabled then an insurance cover of **Rs 5 lakh** will be given by the Maharashtra government.
- **Dahi Handi:**
“Dahi Handi”, meaning “curd in an earthen pot”, is a popular event in the state associated with Lord Krishna's birthday, Janmashtami. It is a ritual in which devotees of Lord Krishna recreate the ‘Maakhan Chori’ or butter stealing act. It is one of the mischievous stories of Krishna's childhood. It is also known as ‘Gopalakala’ and it is observed on the next day of Janmashtami.

127. **Indore, Madhya Pradesh** will host the **17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** in January 2023. For this, Secretary, Consular, Passport and Visa Division, Ausaf Sayeed, and Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Iqbal Singh Bains have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for hosting the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:

The day is observed annually on 9th January to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. It also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9th January 1915. The day was formally established in 2003.

Note: The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas was held in New Delhi with theme “Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat”.

128. The Chief Minister of **Assam** Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched the ‘**Vidya Rath -School on Wheels**’ project at the premises of Guwahati High Court in Assam. This project aims at providing economically challenged underprivileged children to access elementary education

for a period of 10 months. Children will be provided with uniforms and textbooks and free-mid day meals under the project.

129. Uttar Pradesh will establish *India's first Education Township*. It will be developed on the idea of '**Single Entry, Multiple Exit**'. The aim is to provide high-quality education to the youth and equip them with a variety of professional skills in one place.

Education Township of Uttar Pradesh:

- Prestigious government and private universities of the country and the world will be able to open their campuses in the township.
- There will be primary and secondary schools like Atal Residential Schools in the same place.
- Universities and colleges will be established for undergraduate and postgraduate studies wherein studies and research works related to management, technology, law, and medicine will be carried out.
- The education township will also feature skill development universities where training will be imparted to the youth in different types of skills.
- Accommodations will be provided to both teachers and students at the education township.

130. Digantara, a space sector start-up of India, will set-up India's first commercial **Space Situational Awareness (SSA)** observatory in the **Garhwal region of Uttarakhand**. The aim is to track objects as small as 10 cm in size orbiting the earth.

The observatory will assist in tracking any activity in space including that of space debris and military satellites hovering over the region.

Note: At present, the United States is a dominant player in monitoring space debris.

131. The Chief Minister of **Tamil Nadu** M.K. Stalin has introduced the **Footwear and Leather Products Policy 2022** to develop existing clusters in leather manufacturing for domestic as well as the export market.

- Tamil Nadu is a dominant player in the footwear industry at both the national and global levels, accounting for 26% of national manufacturing output and 48% of national exports.
- The goal of the policy is to attract Rs.20,000 crore investments in footwear and leather products manufacturing and employ more than 200,000 people.

- The policy also introduces a subsidy skilling programme where women, transgender persons, people with disabilities, and those from the SC/ST community can avail Rs.6,000 each monthly for six months.

Tamil Nadu government has also signed an MoU with five companies for Rs.2,250 crore for manufacturing leather and non-leather footwear and other items.

132. The **Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL)** has launched the beta version of the **DigiYatra** app for the Android platform. It is among the first few airports to introduce this system in the country. DIAL had installed the required facility at Terminal 3 of Delhi Airport and conducted its trials.

The new version will make the boarding process significantly faster and more seamless. Their face would act as their documents, like ID proof, Vaccine proof and also act as boarding pass.

'DigiYatra':

It is a Biometric Enabled Seamless Travel experience (BEST) based on Facial Recognition Technology. It aims to provide paperless and seamless travel experience to the passengers. It is a unique initiative of the Government of India, coordinated by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

133. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in **Mohali, Punjab**. It is built on an around 50 acres area at Mullanpur in Punjab.

The hospital has been built at a cost of **Rs. 684 crore** by Tata Memorial Centre, an aided institute under Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India. It is a tertiary care hospital of 300-bed capacity and is equipped with modern facilities to treat all types of cancers using every available treatment modality.

134. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Amrita Hospital in **Faridabad** district of **Haryana**. It has been built at a cost of **Rs. 6000 crores**.

The hospital, founded by Mata Amritanandamayi 'Amma', is the largest and state-of-the-art hospital in the region. It is managed by Mata Amritanandamayi Math. The super-speciality hospital will be equipped with 2,600 beds. It will provide state-of-the-art healthcare facilities to the people of Faridabad and the entire NCR region.

135. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has approved the proposal of the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department to start *India's first night safari* in Lucknow. **Kukrail Forest Area** in **Lucknow** will develop the night safari on the lines of *Singapore's* night safari.

The night safari will be developed on 350 acres in the Kukrail forest area spread over an area of 2027.46 hectares and a zoological park will be built in 150 acres. The interpretation centre, Butterfly Interpretation Centre will also be built here. The night safari will also include train rides and jeep rides with local guides.

136. RailTel, a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) of the Ministry of Railways, has collaborated with **CloudExtel**, a known Full Stack Network as a Service (NaaS) Provider, to launch India's first Shared **Radio Access Network (RAN)** solution for congested locations with the objective of enhancing telecom users' experience.

- The Pilot project of this RAN solution had successful results with the partnership of Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, Nokia, and the Telecom Infra Project (TIP)'s NaaS Solutions Group, with support from the Railways, at **Mumbai Central railway station**.
- The outcomes of the pilot project have been impressive with 5 times increase in average user speed of mobile data from 3 Mbps to 15 Mbps for the mobile phone networks of both Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, while the data consumption increased by 20 percent.

137. The Union Territory of **Jammu and Kashmir** has become the first amongst States/UTs to establish an **Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL)** in partnership with the government think tank NITI Aayog.

- To foster entrepreneurship and innovation, Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog has established over 10000 ATLs across the country so far enabling over 3 million students between Grade VI to Grade XII acquire a problem solving, tinkering and innovative mindset.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** & **J&K** with 50:50 cost sharing basis to establish **500 ATL** within two years. Under this MoU, both will provide Rs.10 lakh each to establish ATLs in UT. One ATL cost Rs 20 lakh provided by AIM.
- NITI Aayog will replicate the J&K model of Atal Tinkering Lab to rest of the country on 50:50 cost sharing basis.

Note: ATL was started with an aim to build 10,000 labs and target was achieved in July 2022.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

It is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country. It was setup in 2016 under NITI Aayog.

The initiatives of the AIM are: *Atal Tinkering Labs, Atal Incubation Centres, Mentor India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE, Vernacular Innovation Program, Atal New India Challenge, and Atal Community Innovation Centre.*

Chintan Vaishnav is the Mission Director.

138. The **Temple of Vedic Planetarium**, the world's largest religious monument, will be setup in **Mayapur** in Nadia district of **West Bengal**. The project worth USD 100 million is expected to open in 2024.

- This monument will serve as the headquarters of the **International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)**.
- The temple is the vision of **Srila Prabhupada**, founder of ISKCON.
- This temple with the world's biggest dome will offer guests a tour of the various parts of the cosmic creation.
- It will replace Cambodia's 400-acre-large **Angkor Wat** temple complex.
- The monument is bigger than the **Taj Mahal** in Agra and **St Paul's Cathedral** in the Vatican City.
- It will also be among the tallest Hindu temples in the world.
- The design is inspired by the Capitol building in the United States.

Note: Mayapur is the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, 15th-century Indian Vaishnava saint considered to be the combined avatar of Radha and Krishna.

139. The Chief Minister of **Delhi** Arvind Kejriwal has launched '**Make India No.1 Mission**', and he has also urged all citizens and political parties to join it. The mission aims to make India the number one country in the world. He has also unveiled his 5 point vision: Providing free Education and healthcare to citizens, employment to youths, equal rights and dignity to women, and fair price to farmers for their produce.

140. The 20th edition of **BioAsia 2023**, the marquee life sciences and health tech event, will be hosted by the Government of **Telangana** in the city of Hyderabad. It will be held from **24-26 February 2023**. The theme of BioAsia 2023 is "*Advancing for ONE: Shaping the next generation of humanised healthcare*".

141. The state government of **Rajasthan** has launched '**Mahila Nidhi**', a loan scheme for the social and economic development of women. It has been launched on the occasion of *Women's Equality Day (26th August)*. With this, Rajasthan has become the second Indian state after Telangana, where Mahila Nidhi was set up.

142. Rajasthan and Maharashtra has become the first states to use end-to-end digital platforms during the third National Lok Adalat of 2022. Over **75 lakh cases** including 16.45 lakh pending and 58.33 lakh pre-litigation cases settled across the country by 'Digital Lok Adalat' for the first time in India.

The Digital Lok Adalat was launched by Justice UU Lalit on 17th July 2022 during the '18th All India Legal Services Authorities Meet'.

143. The Taurus Sainik Aramgrah has been inaugurated by **Lt Gen Nav K Khanduri**, AVSM, VSM, GOC-in-C, Western Command at Delhi Cantt. The facility is first of its kind as it is constructed by Indian Army in collaboration with Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) as an Equal Value Infrastructure Project. This 148 bed state of the art facility has an aesthetically designed waiting lounge, in-house dining, a green area and ample parking.

144. Nagaland has recently got its second Railway station on the **Dhansari-Shokhuvi railway line** after a gap of more than 100 years. Dimapur station was opened in 1903. Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has officially flagged off the first passenger train service- the Donyi Polo Express from Shokhuvi Railway station in Choumukedima District.

Shokhuvi Railway station is part of the Dimapur-Zubza Railway project. This railway station is an alternative train route for Nagaland and Manipur passengers to Guwahati

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

145. The 3rd edition of the "**Ex VINBAX 2022**" has been conducted between India and Vietnam. It is a bilateral army exercise held in **Chandimandir, Haryana** from 1st to 20th August 2022. It has been held under the theme: "*Employment and deployment of an Engineer Company and a Medical Team under United Nations Contingent for Peacekeeping Operations*". The exercise helps in strengthening mutual confidence and interoperability.

146. The 4th edition of India Oman Joint Military Exercise '**AL NAJAH-IV**' has been conducted between contingents of **Indian Army** and the **Royal Army of Oman** at the Foreign Training Node of Mahajan Field Firing Range in **Bikaner, Rajasthan** from 1st to 13th August 2022. The exercise aims to enhance the level of defence co-operation between both the countries and will further manifest in enhancing the bilateral relations between the two nations. The Indian Army is represented by troops from the **18 MECHANISED INFANTRY Battalion**.

Note: The previous edition of Ex AL NAJAH IV was organised at Muscat from 12 to 25 March 2019.

147. The President of Maldives **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** has recently visited India on the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is his third visit to India.

Key highlights:

- India has announced a Line of Credit (LoC) of **USD 100 million** for Maldives for the completion of development projects in a time-bound manner.
- Both the nations have participated in the virtual 'Pouring of First Concrete' of the **Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)**. This project is funded by a **USD 400 million** LoC from Indian Exim Bank and a USD 100 million grant from the Indian government. The project was awarded to the Indian-based Afcons Infrastructure Limited. The project includes the construction of a bridge named 'Thilamale Bridge', viaducts, and on-grade roads.
- During his visit, India and Maldives have signed **six new agreements** in the field of cyber security, disaster management, capacity building and training.

148. China has successfully launched a '**Terrestrial Ecosystem Carbon Monitoring Satellite**' as well as two other satellites from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in Shanxi Province, North China.

- All the satellites have been successfully launched by a **Long March-4B** carrier rocket into their intended orbit.
- This launch has represented the 430th mission for the Long March series of carrier rockets.

149. SpaceX has launched '**Danuri**', the first moon mission of **South Korea**. It has been launched through a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral in Florida to observe the Moon and it aims to reach the Moon by mid-December.

- Danuri has been jointly developed by **NASA** and the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI).
- This is a **USD 180 million** mission in lunar exploration which features a boxy, solar-powered satellite designed to move 100 km above the lunar surface.
- Danuri meant "*enjoy the Moon*".
- It will develop a wireless Internet environment to link satellites or exploration spacecraft.

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PRACTICE MOCK

150. A Parliamentary Delegation from **Mozambique** led by **Esperanca Laurinda Francisco Nhiuane Bias**, Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic of Mozambique, has visited India to call on the President of India, **Droupadi Murmu**, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

- A **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)** has been signed between Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Speaker of Mozambique to boost ties between Parliaments of India and Mozambique. The MoC shall last for a period of 5 years.
- Indian companies have invested around **USD10 billion** in Mozambique's natural gas and mining sectors.
- The Government of India has also provided Line of Credit for different projects in Mozambique.

151. Indian Air Force (IAF) will be part of the mega air combat exercise **"Pitch Black 2022"** among **17-nations**, to be held in the **Northern Territory of Australia**. The three-week-long military exercise is scheduled to take place from **August 19 to September 6, 2022**. Over 100 aircraft and 2,500 military personnel from 17 nations will be part of the drill. The exercise is being conducted after a gap of four-years due to Covid-19. The last edition was held in 2018.

- The participating countries include the *US, India, Australia, Japan, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Netherlands, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, the UAE and the UK.*

Exercise Pitch Black:

It is a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise. It is conducted by **Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)**. The aim of this exercise is to practice Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Defensive Counter Air (DCA) combat. The exercise takes place in a simulated war environment. The first Pitch Black exercise was held in 1981 between the RAAF units.

152. Russia will withdraw from the International Space Station (ISS) after **2024** and focus on building its own orbiting outpost amid high tensions between Moscow and the West over the fighting in Ukraine. NASA and other international partners will keep the space station running until **2030**.

International Space Station (ISS):

It is a space station, or a habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit. Its first component launched into orbit in 1998. It is a joint project between five participating space agencies **NASA** (United States), **Roscosmos** (Russia), **JAXA** (Japan), **ESA** (Europe), and **CSA** (Canada). It is operated by more than 15 partner countries.

153. American Express has introduced a cross-border payments platform called **"Global Pay"** for small to medium-sized businesses. This will act as a digital solution that will let U.S.

businesses make secure domestic and international B2B payments. It is now open to eligible American Express Small Business Card Members in the U.S.

- 154. Russia** has launched Soyuz-2.1b rocket carrying **Iran's** high resolution, remote sensing **Khayyam satellite** from the Russia-controlled Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The satellite is named after Omar Khayyam, a Persian scientist who lived in the 11th and 12th centuries. The satellite is fitted with a high-resolution camera that will be used for environmental monitoring and will remain fully under control.
- 155. Gustavo Petro** has been sworn in as the first leftist president of **Colombia**. He is a former member of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla group as well as a former senator and mayor of Bogota. He has succeeded Ivan Duque.
- 156. James Marape**, leader of the Pangu party, has been sworn in as the Prime Minister of **Papua New Guinea** for a second term. He is serving as the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea since May 2019.
- 157.** The **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** in partnership with the **Republic of Cuba** has recently floated a tender for setting up a **1150 MW** solar project in Cuba.
- NTPC is the project management consultant for ISA for setting up the project.
 - The project is part of Cuba's plan to implement 2100 MW of solar projects, reducing the reliance on expensive and polluting diesel generators and increasing its green energy portfolio.
 - It also includes building of 150 MW/150 MWh of storage to support grid reliability.
- 158. Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Ríos** of **Argentina** has been appointed as the Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer for the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (**UNMOGIP**). He has succeeded Major General José Eladio Alcaín of Uruguay.
- UNMOGIP:**
- It was established in January 1949 in India and Pakistan at Islamabad and Srinagar to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 159. China** has launched **16 new satellites** into space from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in Shanxi province, China for commercial remote sensing and atmospheric imaging.
- These satellites include: **Jilin 1 Gaofen 03D09** satellite and **Yunhao 1 04-08** and have been launched by a Long March 6 carrier rocket.
 - The launch is marked as the 432nd mission for the Long March series carrier rockets.

- 160.** Kenyan Deputy President, **William Ruto** has been elected as the next **President of Kenya**. He has received 50.49% of the vote in the recent elections against his contender Raila Odinga. He will succeed Uhuru Kenyatta.
- 161.** The **United Kingdom (UK)** has become the first country to approve **Moderna's "bivalent"** COVID-19 vaccine that targets both the original virus strain from 2020 and the Omicron BA.1 variant. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has approved the Moderna vaccine which meet its standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.
- 162.** UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed **Simon Stiell** (Grenada) as the new Executive Secretary of the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**. The appointment has been endorsed by the Bureau of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- UNFCCC has near universal membership (197 Parties) and is the parent treaty of the 2015 Paris Agreement. The main aim of the Paris Agreement is to keep the global average temperature rise this century as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The original secretariat was in Geneva. Since 1996, the secretariat has been located in **Bonn, Germany**.
- 163.** Scientists at the Weizmann Institute in **Israel** have developed the **world's first synthetic embryo** outside the womb using stem cells cultured in a petri dish. The cells of the synthetic embryo were cultured without the use of fertilized eggs, bypassing the need for sperm. The team grew the embryo from mouse stem cells. The study was published in the journal Cell.
- 164.** **Scotland** has become the first country to legally protect the right to access free period products by passing a law, the **Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021** that came into force on 15th August 2022. Under the new law, schools, colleges, and universities including local government bodies must make a range of period products available for free in their bathrooms.
- 165.** The **9th Meeting of India-Thailand Joint Commission (JCM) 2022** has been held in Bangkok, Thailand. Union External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** co-chaired the meeting along with **Don Pramudwinai**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand.
- It is noteworthy that both countries are celebrating **75 years** of establishment of diplomatic relations.

Two Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) have been signed during the meeting:

- An MoU was signed on Health and Medical Research Cooperation between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India, and the Department of Medical Sciences (DMS), Thailand
- An MoU was signed for Cooperation & Collaboration on Broadcasting between Prasar Bharti, India, and Thai Public Broadcasting Service of Thailand.

Note: The 8th India-Thailand Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held on 10 October 2019, in New Delhi.

166. Germany has introduced the first fleet of **hydrogen-powered passenger trains** named '**Coradia iLint**' in the world. This has replaced 15 diesel trains that were previously operated on non-electrified tracks in Lower Saxony, Germany.

Key features of 'Coradia iLint':

- Coradia iLint trains have a range of up to **1,000 kilometers** and a maximum speed of **140 kmph** (87 mph).
- By using hydrogen produced with renewable energy the trains will save **1.6 million litres** (more than 422,000 gallons) of diesel fuel a year
- The train emits only steam and condensed water.
- The hydrogen fuel cells installed on the roof of the train combine with oxygen atoms present in the air to generate electricity.

167. Egypt has released a postage stamp to commemorate the **75th anniversary** of diplomatic relations with **India**. The diplomatic relations between both the nations was established on 18th August 1947, three days after India's independence. The two countries became even closer in the 1950s, which resulted in a historic Friendship Treaty in 1955.

168. Belgian-British pilot **Mack Rutherford** has become the **youngest person to fly solo** in a small aircraft around the world in five months. The 17-year-old landed on an airport runway west of Sofia, Bulgaria. He started his journey on 23rd March 2022, and covered 52 nations and five continents. He set the record for the youngest person to do it and secure two Guinness World Records. He is also the **youngest person to circumnavigate the globe** in a microlight plane.

In 2021, Travis Ludlow of Britain, who was 18, completed a solo flight around the world.

169. Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga has been appointed as the interim Prime Minister of **Mali**. He has replaced the veteran civilian politician Choguel Kokalla Maiga, who was named premier after the military took power in August 2020 and carried out a second coup in May 2021.

REPORTS & INDICES

170. As per the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index, **Savitri Jindal (India)** has become the richest woman in Asia with a net worth of **USD 11.3 billion** by surpassing **Yang Huiyan (China)** due to the property crisis in China.

- Yang Huiyan, who held the title of Asia's richest woman, slipped to third with a net worth of USD 11 billion.
- Savitri Jindal has a USD 11.3 billion fortune in the Jindal Group. She is India's richest woman and the 10th-richest person in India of about USD 1.4 billion.

171. According to the latest data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), India's fiscal deficit for April-June 2022 stood at **Rs.3,51,871 crore**, accounting for 21.2% of the full-year target. The fiscal deficit for April-May FY23 is 12.3% of the full-year fiscal deficit target of Rs.16.6 lakh crore.

The total expenditure incurred by the government is **Rs.9,47,911 crore**, 24.0% of the corresponding estimate of FY23.

- The Indian economy is expected to grow around **7.2%** year-on-year in the fiscal year in FY23, down from earlier estimates of over 8%, and 8.7% in the previous year.
- The government is targeting a fiscal deficit of **Rs.16.61 lakh crore** for FY23, or **6.4%** of GDP.

172. Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has topped among the Indian firms in the latest Global 500 ranking of top 500 companies published by Fortune for the year 2022. This is the first outing of LIC on the list, which ranks listed companies by sales. LIC, with revenue of **USD 97.26 billion** and a profit of **USD 553.8 million**, has been ranked **98th** in the list.

- Reliance, with revenue of USD 93.98 billion and a net profit of USD 8.15 billion in the latest year, has jumped 51 places to 104 on the 2022 list.
- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has jumped 28 places to 142nd rank while Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has jumped 16 places to 190.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has jumped 17 places to rank 236th and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd has jumped 19 places to rank 295th.
- The list has nine Indian companies: five of them state-owned, and four from the private sector.

Globally, the list has been topped by the US retailer **Walmart**, followed by Amazon, Chinese energy giants State Grid, China National Petroleum, and Sinopec.

173. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has adopted a resolution titled **"The human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment"** and has declared access to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a **universal human right**.

- The resolution was adopted with 161 votes in favour, and 8 abstentions.
- India voted for the resolution and pointed out that the resolutions do not create binding obligations.

174. India has added **10** more wetlands designated as **Ramsar sites** to make total **64 sites** covering an area of **12,50,361 hectare** in the country. The 10 new sites include: Six sites in Tamil Nadu and One each in Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.

India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. India signed it on 1st February 1982.

10 wetlands designated as Ramsar sites:

- 1. Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary:** It is situated in Nanguneri Taluk of Tirunelveli district of **Tamil Nadu**. It is a significant man-made wetland which covers an area of 72.04 ha.
- 2. Satkosia Gorge:** Satkosia spreads along the magnificent gorge over the mighty River Mahanadi in **Odisha**. It was established in 1976 as a wildlife sanctuary. Satkosia is the meeting point of two biogeographic regions of India; the Deccan Peninsula and the Eastern Ghats.
- 3. Nanda Lake:** It is situated in **Goa**.
- 4. Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve:** It is located in **Tamil Nadu**.
- 5. Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary:** It is located in Mandya district, **Karnataka**.
- 6. Vembannur Wetland Complex:** It is a human-made inland tank. It is located in **Tamil Nadu**.
- 7. Vellode Bird Sanctuary:** It is located in the Vadamugam Vellode Village of the Perundurai Taluk, located in the Erode district, **Tamil Nadu**.
- 8. Sirpur Wetland:** It is situated in Indore, **Madhya Pradesh**.
- 9. Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary:** It is located in Maduranthagam Taluk of Chengalpattu district of **Tamil Nadu**.
- 10. Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary:** It is located in the Tiruthuraipoondi Taluk of Tiruvarur district of **Tamil Nadu**.

175. The National Statistical Office (NSO) in its '**Working Paper on Compilation of Labour Indicators of the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators**' has stated that the proportion of employed persons working part-time in the 46-59 years age group at all India level was more than 10% between 2017-20 while in the age group of above 60 years, the proportion of employed persons working part-time was more than 15%.

- As per the paper, the Employment Rate of Employed Worker living in a household with no child under age three years, rose to **61.2%** in FY20 from 58.37% in FY18 in the 26-49 years age group.
- The proportion of employed persons who are employer in the above 15 age group, has been estimated at 1.91%, 2.17% and 2.02%, respectively for 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

The NSO developed **three labour indicators** based on the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data available in “Person level data of first visit schedule”:

- “Proportion of Employed working Part-time, by sex”,
- “Proportion of Employed who are Employer, by sex” and
- “Employment Rate of persons age 25-49 living in a household with at least one child under age 3 years and with no children under age 3 years living in the household, by sex”.

These three indicators are managed by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

176. Worldline has published the report titled ‘**India Digital Payments Report’ Q1 2022**. As per the report, India has witnessed 9.36 billion transactions amounting to Rs.10.25 trillion in Q1 2022.

Key Highlights:

- India’s domestic United Payments Interface (UPI) has remained the most preferred mode of payment in Q1 of 2022. UPI’s payment to merchant (P2M) transactions has accounted for 64 percent in volume and 50 percent in terms of value.
- **Top 5 remitter banks:** State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank and Paytm Payments Bank.
- **Top 5 beneficiary banks:** Paytm Payments Bank, State Bank of India, Yes Bank, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank.
- **Top 5 UPI Apps in terms of volume:** *PhonePe, Google Pay, Paytm Payments Bank App, Amazon Pay, Axis banks App*. Among the top UPI Apps, Phone Pe, Google Pay and Paytm accounted for 94.8 percent of UPI transactions volume and 93 percent of UPI transactions value as of March 2022.
- **Top 5 Payment Service Provider (PSP) UPI Players:** Yes Bank, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and Paytm Payments Bank.
- **Top 10 states:** Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and West Bengal.
- **Top-10 cities:** Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Kolkata, Coimbatore, Ahmedabad, and Vadodara.

177. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has estimated that **7.3 percent** of the Indian population owned digital currency in 2021, ranking **seventh** in the list of top 20 global economies for digital currency ownership as share of population.

- **Ukraine** has topped the list with 12.7 percent, followed by Russia (11.9 percent), Venezuela (10.3 percent), Singapore (9.4 per cent), Kenya (8.5 percent) and the US (8.3 percent).
- Global use of crypto currencies has increased exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic, including in developing countries.

178. The **University of Hyderabad (UoH)** has been ranked **first** among Indian Universities and **16th** among all institutions in the academic sector in the **Nature Index 2022**. The UoH has received a count of 72 and a share of 19.46 under the academic sector, which includes subject's chemistry, life sciences, earth & environment sciences and physical sciences.

Top 3 among the list are: Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Homi Bhabha National Institute (HBNI), and IIT Bombay.

The Nature Index is an indicator of high quality research in natural and physical sciences (includes chemistry, life sciences, earth & environmental sciences, and physical sciences). The rankings are based on the Nature Index data from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

179. According to economists at **Morgan Stanley**, a global leader in financial services, *India is likely to be the fastest-growing Asian economy in 2022-23*. It expect India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth to average 7 percent during this period and to contribute 28 percent and 22 percent to Asian and global growth, respectively.

180. According to the latest data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's retail inflation based on the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** has eased to **6.71%** in July 2022 compared with 7.01% in June 2022. Inflation eased mainly due to easing prices in the food & beverages section. Food inflation in July 2022 moderated to 6.75 percent as against 7.75 percent in June 2022.

As per the government data, India's factory output, measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), has eased to **12.3%** in June 2022, compared with 19.6% reported in May 2022. The manufacturing sector's output has increased to **12.5%** in June 2022. The mining output has increased **7.5%**, and power generation has increased **16.4%** in June 2022.

181. As per the latest survey conducted by Ipsos India, **Defence Forces** have been ranked the most trusted institution in India with at least 2 in 3 (65 percent of respondents) reposing faith in them. It is followed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) with 1 in 2 (50 percent), and Prime Minister of India as an institution with 49 percent.

- The Supreme Court of India has been ranked fourth, followed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- The Parliament (33 percent) has been ranked 7th, Media (32 percent) ranked 8th and the Election Commission of India (31 percent) ranked 9th.
- The institutions at the bottom are Politicians (16 percent), Political parties (17 percent), Community Leaders (19 percent), and Religious Leaders (21 percent).

The survey has been conducted by Ipsos India via a quantitative survey using a structured questionnaire and interviewed 2,950 adults including females. Respondents from four metros, tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 towns are included in the survey with a margin of error of +/-5%.

182. As per the latest Mercom India Research Report, India has added **7.2 GW** of solar capacity in the First Half (1H) of 2022, a 59% increase compared to 4.5 GW installed during the same period last year. India's cumulative installed solar capacity now stands at **57 GW**.

- In the first half of 2022, **Rajasthan and Gujarat** are the top states for large-scale solar, accounting for 53 percent and 14 percent of installations, respectively, followed by **Maharashtra** with 9 percent.
- Cumulative large-scale solar PV installations in Rajasthan reached almost **13 GW** as of June 2022, and the state accounted for almost 27 percent of the total installations in the country.

183. The Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) has released a report titled '**Landscape of Green Finance in India**'. As per the report, the tracked green finance in 2019-2020 was **Rs.309,000 crore** (nearly USD 44 billion) per annum, which is less than a fourth of India's needs.

- The report states that India requires approximately Rs.162.5 lakh crore (\$2.5 trillion) from 2015 to 2030 or roughly **Rs.11 lakh crore** (\$170 billion) per year to achieve its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris agreement.
- The report shows increased flows to renewable energy sectors.
- In the two years since the initial report in 2020, green finance flows increased by 150% from FY17-FY18 to FY19-FY20.
- In the overall increase, public sector flows increased 179% and private sector flows by 130%.

184. **Forbes Asia** has published its 2022 edition of the best 200 mid-sized companies in the Asia-Pacific region. These are publicly listed companies with annual revenue of below one billion dollars. This year, **24 Indian firms** made the list titled "**Best Under A Billion**", down from 26 in 2021.

- With this, India has been ranked **fourth** among Asian countries, one position ahead of China which has 22 companies on the list.

- **Taiwan** has the greatest number of companies listed at 30, followed by Japan with 29 and South Korea with 27.

185. India has recently added 11 more wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites to make total **75 Ramsar sites** covering an area of **13, 26,677 ha** in the country in the 75th year of Independence. The 11 new sites include: *Four sites in Tamil Nadu, Three in Odisha, Two in Jammu & Kashmir and One each in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.* The designation of these sites will help in conservation and management of wetlands and wise use of their resources.

New Ramsar Sites:

- **Odisha:** *Tampara Lake, Hiraikud Reservoir, and Ansupa Lake*
- **Madhya Pradesh:** *Yashwant Sagar*
- **Tamil Nadu:** *Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary, Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex, Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary, and Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary*
- **Maharashtra:** *Thane Creek*
- **Jammu and Kashmir:** *Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve and Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve*

India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. India signed it on 1st February 1982. During **1982 to 2013**, a total of **26 sites** were added to the list of Ramsar sites, however, during **2014 to 2022**, the country has added **49** new wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites.

During this year (2022) a total of **28 sites** have been declared as Ramsar sites. **Tamil Nadu** has maximum number of Ramsar sites (14), followed by Uttar Pradesh which has 10 Ramsar sites.

186. According to the latest data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India's inflation based on the **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** has declined to **13.93 percent** in July 2022 as compared to 15.18 percent in June 2022. It was 11.57 percent in July 2021.

187. The fall in WPI inflation in July is driven by lower food prices, with food inflation dropping to 9.41 percent, down 300 basis points from June. Overall, the food index, which makes up 24 percent of the WPI basket, decreased by 2.2 percent in July over the previous month.

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188. The Union Government of India has set the target to eliminate **Kala-azar** from country by **2023**. According to the data released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, out of 633 Kala-azar endemic blocks, 625 blocks have successfully eliminated the kala-azar in 2021.

Note: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has set a target to eliminate Kala-azar by 2030.

Kala-azar:

It is also known as **Visceral leishmaniasis**. It is characterized by irregular bouts of fever, substantial weight loss, swelling of the spleen and liver, and anaemia. It is a **Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)** affecting almost 100 countries including India. It is caused by a parasite called **Leishmania**, which is transmitted through the **bite of sand flies**.

There are three types of Leishmaniasis:

- Visceral leishmaniasis, which affects multiple organs and is the most serious form of the disease.
- Cutaneous leishmaniasis, which causes skin sores and is the most common form.
- Mucocutaneous leishmaniasis, causes skin and mucosal lesions.

189. As per the latest State Bank of India (SBI) Ecowrap report, **India's GDP growth in Q1 (April-June) FY2023** is expected at **15.7%**. It is released by SBI's Economic Research Department (ERD).

- Out of the 41 high frequency leading indicators, 89 percent are showing acceleration IN Q1FY23, compared to 75 percent acceleration in Q1FY22.
- The private final consumption expenditure in real terms had declined significantly by Rs 4.77 lakh crore in Q1FY21 owing to Covid-19 pandemic, recovered by 46 percent in Q1FY22.

Other projections of India's GDP growth in Q1FY2023:

ICRA Limited has projected India's GDP growth to increase a four-quarter high **13 percent** in Q1 (April-June) FY23 due to low base of COVID 2.0 and robust recovery in contact-intensive services.

190. The **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers** has implemented '**One Nation One Fertiliser**' scheme by introducing a "*Single Brand for Fertilisers and Logo*" under the fertiliser subsidy scheme named "Pradhanmantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojna" (**PMBJP**).

- Under this scheme, companies are allowed to display their name, brand, logo and other relevant product information only on **one-third** space of their bags. On the remaining **two-thirds** space, the "**Bharat**" brand and PMBJP logo will have to be shown.

- With this, the single brand name for UREA, DAP (Di-ammonium Phosphate), MOP (Muriate of Potash) and NPK (nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K)) etc. would be *BHARAT UREA*, *BHARAT DAP*, *BHARAT MOP* and *BHARAT NPK* etc. respectively for all Fertiliser Companies, State Trading Entities (STEs) and Fertiliser Marketing Entities (FMEs).

191. Practus, earlier known as MyCFO, and Hurun India have released the first edition of the **Practus Hurun India PE (Private Equity) Performers 2022**, a report that ranks India's best performing PE backed companies.

- **Honasa Consumer Private Limited (HCPL)**, the parent company of **Mamaearth**, has topped the list of companies that attracted private equity investments in India in 2020-21 with an average revenue growth of 491%.
- *Encube Ethicals*, an integrated pharmaceutical company, has been ranked second with an average growth of 343%. *Ecom Express*, a technology enabled logistics solutions provider, has been ranked third with a growth of 283%.
- **Sequoia Capital India**, led by Ravishankar GV, is the top investor in the Practus Hurun India PE Performers 2022. *Norwest Venture Partners*, led by Niren Shah and *Tiger Global Management*, led by Alex Cook take the second spot with investments in 3 companies each.

192. As per the latest report tracking the performance of the industry by Benori Knowledge, a new-age provider of specialized research and analytics, the life insurance penetration rate in India has grown to **3.2%** in **December 2021** from 2.8% in December 2019.

- India is now the **10th largest** Life Insurance market in the world almost at par with the global average of **3.3%** and is ahead of China (2.4%) and the United Kingdom (3%).
- The life insurance sector has grown at a CAGR of 11% from 2017-2022 and is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 9% in the next 5 years.
- Insurance agencies' share in the distribution mix has been declining, falling from 30% in 2017 to 23% in 2022.
- HDFC Life is the leader in the online distribution space, with 11% of its sales coming from direct-to-consumer (D2C) channels.
- Companies will invest in Data Science and Analytics to better understand the customer personas and needs.
- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has relaxed its regulations for product approval and distribution, which is projected to result in increased penetration.

193. The report titled 'Tech Cities: The Global Intersection of Talent and Real Estate', studied as many as 115 different 'tech cities' across the globe, has been released by Cushman and Wakefield.

As per the report, **Bengaluru** has been ranked **second** after Beijing (China) on the list of top technology hubs in the Asia-Pacific region.

The list has three other Indian cities, **Chennai, Delhi and Hyderabad. Mumbai and Pune** has also made it to the top-10 list with eighth and ninth position in a list of 14 cities from the APAC.

194. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, a daily ranking of the world's richest people, as on 30th August 2022, Adani Group's Chairman **Gautam Adani** has become the **world's third-richest person** with a total net-worth of USD 137 billion, after overtaking Louis Vuitton chief Bernard Arnault (France).

Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX & Tesla, has topped the list with a net worth of USD 251 billion, followed by Jeff Bezos (Amazon) with a net worth of USD 153 billion.

Mukesh Ambani, CMD of Reliance Industries, has been ranked 11th with a total net-worth of USD 91.9 billion.

195. The report, titled "**Renewing wind growth to power the energy transition: India Wind Energy Market Outlook 2026**", has been released by Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) and MEC Intelligence (MEC+). As per the report, India can add another **23.7 GW** of capacity within the next five years provided necessary enabling policies, facilitative instruments, and the right institutional interventions are put in place.

As of March 2022, Wind power constituted the majority of the renewable energy mix in India, with 37.7% of cumulative installed capacity.

196. A latest report by Bank of America Securities India has stated that India will have **1.8 lakh km** highways and **1.2 lakh km** rail lines by **2025**.

Key Points of the report:

- Between 1950 and 2015, India built only 4,000 km of national highways, taking the total length to 77,000 km in 2015.
- In 1950, the railway network in India was only 10,000 km of rail lines and by 2015 there were 63,000 km of railway lines.
- The port capacity which was only 777 MTPA (Million Tonnes per Annum) in 1995 rose to **1,911 MTPA** in 2015 and now the government aims to increase it up to **3000 MTPA** by **2025**.

- India will be spending **USD 385 billion** over 2015-30 to meet its 2030 de-carbonisation goals, which will accelerate materially over time and help it transition to the net-zero goal by 2070.
- The bank account penetration has reached **80%** now from 35% in 2011.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

197. The **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)** has recently completed five years. The scheme is a social security programme for the elderly that aims to provide them with a guaranteed minimum pension based on a guaranteed return on the purchase price or subscription fee.

- PMVVY was launched in **2017**.
- It is managed by **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)**.
- The policy duration for the scheme is **10 years**.
- The scheme is exempted from Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- The minimum investment required to participate in this scheme has been increased to Rs.1, 56, 658 for a pension of 12,000 per year and to Rs.1, 62, 162 for a pension of at least Rs.1,000 per month.
- The programme, which was in place through 2020, has now been extended for an additional three years, through 31st March 2023.

198. The **State University Research Excellence (SERB-SURE)** scheme has been launched recently to establish a powerful R&D ecosystem in the state as well as private universities and colleges.

- SERB-SURE is a new innovative scheme of the **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**, which will encourage collaboration for high-end research across state & private universities and colleges.
- It will help in bringing the university system into mainstream research, and enable young faculty to participate in cutting-edge research.
- It will also extend support to data-driven social science research.
- The faculties of state universities (45% in rural areas), will get opportunities for research, as a part of this scheme.

199. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)** during a programme marking the culmination of 'Ujjwal Bharat Ujjwal Bhavishya – Power @2047'.

RDSS:

It is a flagship scheme of the **Ministry of Power**. It aims to improve the operational efficiencies and financial sustainability of power distribution companies (DISCOMs/departments). It also aims to reduce the AT&C (aggregate technical and commercial) losses to pan-India levels of 12-15% and ACS-ARR (average cost of supply-average revenue realised) gap to zero by 2024-25. The scheme has an outlay of over **Rs.3 trillion** over a period of five years (**FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26**). Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) have been nominated as nodal agencies.

The scheme has the following components:

- **Part A:** Financial support for Prepaid Smart Metering & System Metering and up-gradation of the Distribution Infrastructure (including segregation of feeders for agriculture purpose).
- **Part B:** Training & Capacity Building and other Enabling & Supporting Activities.

Note: The Government of India (GoI) has set an ambitious target of installing 250 million smart meters by 2025.

PM Narendra Modi has also launched the national portal for **Rooftop solar** to enable online tracking of the process of installation of rooftop solar plants.

200. The Government of India (GoI) has formulated a scheme “**National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)**” for cleaning sewers and septic tanks. The NAMASTE project, is a joint initiative of the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** and the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.

The NAMASTE project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Zero fatalities in sanitation work in India.
- All sanitation work to be performed by skilled workers.
- No sanitation workers should come in direct contact with human faecal matter.
- Sanitation workers are to be collectivized into SHGs and are empowered to run sanitation enterprises.
- All Sewer and Septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) have access to alternative livelihoods.
- Strengthened supervisory and monitoring systems at national, state and ULB levels to ensure enforcement and monitoring of safe sanitation work.
- Increased awareness amongst sanitation services seekers (individuals and institutions) to seek services from registered and skilled sanitation workers.

This scheme has replaced the ***Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers*** which was introduced in 2007.

The scheme will be implemented from **2022 to 2026** across **500 cities** and townships already notified under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) which aims to equip cities with basic quality of life services.

Manual scavenging:

It is the practice of removing human excreta by hand from sewers or septic tanks. India banned the practice under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMSR).

201. Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah has recently launched various initiatives to commemorate the second anniversary of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** in New Delhi. The NEP was launched by the government on **29th July 2020** with an aim to transform India's education system.

Key highlights of Initiatives launched:

- Introduction of **75 "Bharatiya games"** in schools.
- '**Kalashala initiative**' has been launched in **750 schools** to help students discover India's rich cultural heritage.
- A public consultation survey in **23 languages** has been announced to seek inputs and suggestions for the development of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) on the basis of which the content of school books will be decided.
- To establish **IKS-MIC program** to promote development of products, processes inspired and developed from the Indian's traditional knowledge systems. It is a joint program of the IKS (Indian Knowledge System) Division and the Ministry of Education Innovation Cell. IKS is an innovative cell under the Ministry of Education at All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- **750 virtual labs** in science and mathematics, and 75 skilling e-labs for simulated learning environment, will be set-up in **2022-23** to promote crucial critical thinking skills, and to give space for creativity.
- **Vidya Amrit Portal** has been launched to scale up the micro-improvements taking place in the school education in different parts of the country.
- **NDEAR (National Digital Education Architecture) Compliant Vidya Sameeksha Kendra (VSK)** has been launched to enhance data-driven decision-making to drive action by key stakeholders for program success organizational pathway.
- **National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)** has been launched to prepare an initial cadre of high quality ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) Teachers in Anganwadis.
- **Skill India** has partnered with **Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)** for a 3-years degree programme and help students to attain more livelihood opportunities.

- **School Innovation Policy** to promote creativity, innovation, problem-solving and entrepreneurship skills of students.

202. Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw, has inaugurated **"8 years of MyGov"** event in New Delhi. The event has observed the journey of the world's largest platform for participatory governance which has nearly 2.5 crore registered citizens.

'Responsible AI for Youth 2022':

- During the event, Union Minister has also launched 'Responsible AI for Youth 2022' initiative. It is an initiative of the National E-Governance Division (**NeGD**), Ministry of Electronics & IT in collaboration with **Intel India**.
- It is supported by the **Ministry of Education**.
- It aims to develop AI centric skills among **school children**.
- The program will be open to all school students studying in **classes 8-12** across India.

MyGov:

It is the Government of India's citizen engagement platform. It was launched on **26th July 2014**. It has been built on the three pillars of 'Do', 'Discuss' and 'Disseminate'. It is a part of Digital India Corporation.

203. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** has released operational guidelines to implement '**Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0**' scheme. It is an Integrated Nutrition Support Programme, which has been approved for implementation during 15th Finance Commission period **2021-22 to 2025-26**.

Components of scheme:

- Nutrition Support for **POSHAN** through Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) for children aged 6 months-6 years, pregnant women & lactating mothers and Adolescent Girls aged 14-18 years across Aspirational districts and NER.
- Early Childhood Care and Education for children aged **3-6 years** and early stimulation for children aged 0-3 years.
- Anganwadi Infrastructure, comprising of modern, upgraded Saksham Anganwadi, and Poshan Abhiyaan.

Key guidelines introduced:

- Anganwadi services under Poshan 2 is open to all eligible beneficiaries.
- A child's Aadhaar card is **not** mandatory for availing benefits.

- Under Scheme for adolescent girls, targeted beneficiaries have been revised to adolescent girls in the age group of **14 to 18 years** in aspirational districts of states including Assam and NER instead of out-of-school girls in the age group of 11-14 years earlier.
- Guidelines focus on providing supplementary nutrition to beneficiaries and emphasised locally grown food being served.
- **Millets** should be mandatorily supplied at least once a week.
- The scheme also integrates **AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) system.
- District magistrate will be the nodal point in the district for monitoring nutritional and quantity standards.

POSHAN (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) Abhiyan:

- It was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the International Women's Day on **8th March, 2018** from **Jhunjhunu** in Rajasthan.
- It is the Government of India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, adolescents, pregnant women and lactating mothers by leveraging technology, a targeted approach and convergence. POSHAN Abhiyaan targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by **2%, 2%, 3% and 2%** per annum respectively.

204. Google has launched an online project named "**India Ki Udaan**", featuring the milestones India has achieved in its journey of 75 years since Independence. The project has been launched at an event held at the Sunder Nursery in Delhi in the presence of Union Culture and Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy.

- The project is executed by **Google Arts & Culture**.
- It is themed on the unwavering and undying spirit of India over these past 75 years.

Google has also collaborated with the **Ministry of Culture** focussing on reaching informative online content that showcases the contributions of Indians and the evolution of India since 1947 to support the Government's year-long 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' programme.

205. The Government of **Jammu & Kashmir** has launched an innovative Market Linkage scheme '**PARVAZ**' to create market linkage support for the shipment of Agriculture and Horticulture perishables being harvested in Jammu and Kashmir through Air Cargo.

- Under the scheme, **25 percent** subsidy on freight charges is given for carrying perishable fruits through Air Cargo. The subsidy is provided to farmers through DBT mode.

- Jammu & Kashmir Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (**JKHPMC**) is the implementing agency of the scheme.

206. The **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)** scheme has successfully completed three years on 9th August 2022. It was initiated as a pilot project on **9th August 2019** in four states.

- This scheme is being implemented by the Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013**.
- It allows all NFSA beneficiaries, particularly migrant beneficiaries, to claim either full or part food grains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country through an existing ration card with biometric/Aadhaar authentication in a seamless manner.
- The scheme has now been successfully implemented in all **36 states and Union Territories** with Assam being the latest state to join the initiative in June 2022.
- Since inception, about 77.88 crore portable transactions have taken place under the ONORC.
- Around 3 crore portability transactions per month are being recorded under the scheme.

Under the NFSA, the Central government is providing **5 kilograms** of food grains per person every month to nearly 80 crore eligible beneficiaries at a highly subsidized rate of **Rs 2-3 per kilogram**.

207. The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) for continuation of **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U)** up to **31st December 2024** wherein financial assistance is to be provided for the completion of already sanctioned 122.69 lakh houses till 31st March 2022.

PMAY-U: Housing for All:

- It is one of the major flagship programmes being implemented by Government of India to provide all weather pucca houses to all eligible beneficiaries in the urban areas of the country through States/UTs/Central Nodal Agencies.
- It was launched in **2015** with an aim to achieve **Housing for All** by **2022**.
- The scheme is being implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.
- The scheme covers the entire urban area of the country, i.e., all statutory towns as per Census 2011 and towns notified subsequently, including Notified Planning/ Development Areas.

- The scheme is being implemented through four verticals: Beneficiary Led Construction/ Enhancement (BLC), Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), In-situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) and Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS).
- The Govt. of India provides financial assistance, State Govt. /UTs implement the scheme including selection of beneficiaries.

208. The state government of **Haryana** has recently introduced the “**Chief Minister Equal Education Relief, Assistance and Grant (Cheerag)**” scheme to provide free education to Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students of government schools in private schools. Under the scheme, government school students whose parent's annual income is less than Rs 1.8 lakh can enrol in private schools from Class II to XII.

The government will provide monthly support of Rs 700 per student from Classes II to V; Rs 900 per student from Classes VI to VIII, and Rs 1,100 per student from Classes IX to XII.

209. Atal Pension Yojana (APY):

- It is a government pension program launched on **9th May 2015**.
- It came into force on **1st June 2015**.
- The aim is to provide social security to workers mainly in the unorganised sector.
- Subscribers of the scheme get a minimum guaranteed pension of **Rs.1,000 to Rs.5,000 per month** after attaining 60 years of age depending on their contributions.
- It is administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (**PFRDA**) through the National Pension System (NPS).
- All Indian citizens between the age group of **18-40 years** can join APY through bank or post office branches where one has a savings bank account.

More than 99 lakh APY accounts were opened during the last fiscal, taking the total number of subscribers to 4.01 crore at the end of March 2022.

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210. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), along with the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation and the Ministry of Jal Shakti, has hosted an event ‘**Yamuna Par Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**’ at the water sports club in New Delhi.

New initiatives launched during the event under the Arth Ganga concept are:

- **Jalaj initiative :**

It has been launched by the Minister for Jal Shakti at **26 locations** along River Ganga, Yamuna, Gomati, Hooghly, and Chambal in six states including Uttar Pradesh (11), West Bengal (6), Bihar

(5), Uttarakhand (2), Jharkhand (1), and Madhya Pradesh (1). It is being implemented in association with **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)**. It aims to increase the 'Jalaj' sites from 26 to 75.

- **ImAvatar:**

It is a tourism related platform to promote livelihood opportunities along the Ganga basin by promoting Arth Ganga initiative through tourism.

- A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has also been signed between the NMCG and the **Sahakar Bharati** to achieve the vision of sustainable and viable economic development through public participation, creation and strengthening of local cooperatives directing their cooperation towards realizing the mandate of Arth Ganga.

Arth-Ganga:

It is a concept given by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 1st National Ganga Council meeting in **2019** in Kanpur. It is being developed into an economic model for sustainable river rejuvenation. The central idea of "Arth Ganga" is linking people and Ganga through the bridge of economics in line with the slogan of *"Banking on River Ganga"*.

211. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has announced financial support of **Rs. 3.29 crores** to *M/s Kritsnam Technologies*, a Start-up Company, incubated at **IIT Kanpur** to develop smart water management technologies, which will benefit Atal Bhujal Yojana.

- A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has been signed in the presence of Dr Jitendra Singh between the Technology Development Board (**TDB**) under Department of Science and Technology and *M/s Kritsnam Technologies Private Limited*, Ranchi, Jharkhand for production & commercialization of Dhaara Smart Flow Meter.

'Dhaara Smart Flowmeter':

It is an integrated system for online monitoring using two beam ultrasonic flowmeters that is designed to track the water distribution in real-time for applications such as drinking water supply, ground water extraction, industrial water usage and precision irrigation. This unique solution is a combination of hardware & software for flow measurement and water management respectively.

Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL):

It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's 95th birth anniversary on *25th December 2019*. It is a *Central Sector Scheme* of Ministry of Jal Shakti for facilitating sustainable groundwater management. The scheme is being implemented in 80 water stressed districts and 8,565 Gram Panchayats of *seven States* viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh from 1st April 2020 for a period of five years. The total outlay of the scheme is Rs.6000 crore.

212. The **Technology Development Board (TDB)**, a statutory body under the Ministry of Science and Technology, has decided to fund its first ever '**Aquaculture**' project using **Israeli technology** for the production of **Tilapia Fish**. This project is inspired by the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), and will help support Blue Revolution in India. Under the project, Tilapia will be grown from the imported parent broodstock '**Hermon**' from Israel.

Tilapia Fish:

It is also called "*aquatic chicken*" due to its quick growth and low maintenance. It is one of the most productive and internationally traded food fish in the world. It belongs to the family Cichlidae, native to Africa and the Middle East. It has omnivorous food habits.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana:

It is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of Rs.20,050 crore for its implementation during 2020-21 to 2024-25 as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat package.

Note: India is the second largest fish-producing country in the world accounting for 7.56% of global production.

213. The **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)**, in partnership with **Seva Bharti** and **Yuva Vikas Society**, has launched **Phase-II of the Grameen Udyami Project** in **Ranchi**, Jharkhand to promote skill development and entrepreneurship amongst the tribal youth.

In Phase-II, the training under the project will be conducted in the following Job roles which are relevant to the local economy.

- Electrician & Solar PV Installation Technician
- Plumbing & Masonry
- 2-Wheeler Repair & Maintenance
- IT/ITES with e-Governance
- Farm Mechanization

Grameen Udyami Project:

It is a unique multiskilling project. It is funded by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). It aims to train 450 tribal students in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand.

The project is being implemented in six states: Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Gujarat.

Objectives:

- Increase in Rural/Local Economy
- Enhance employment opportunities

- Reduce forced migration due to lack of local opportunities
- Conservation of natural resources

The project is implemented under Sansadiya Parisankul Yojana.

214. The Union Ministry of Steel has extended the last date for receipt of applications under the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel** again. The deadline to fill application through the online application window is now **15 September, 2022** from 31st July 2022.

PLI Scheme for Specialty Steel:

In July 2021, the Union Cabinet approved the PLI Scheme for Specialty Steel in India to be implemented over FY 2023-24 to FY 2029-30 with a budgetary outlay of Rs.6,322 crore. The aim is to help India's Specialty Steel production reach 42 Million Tonnes (MT) by 2026-27 from 18 MT in 2020-21. The scheme will give employment to about 5,25,000 people of which 68,000 will be direct employment. The five categories of specialty steel that have been chosen in the PLI Scheme are:

- **Coated/Plated Steel Products**
- **High Strength/Wear-resistant Steel**
- **Specialty Rails**
- **Alloy Steel Products and Steel wires**
- **Electrical Steel**

Specialty Steel: It is value-added steel, which is made by processing normal finished steel. It is done by converting normal finished steel into high value-added steel by way of coating, plating and heat treatment. It can be used in various strategic applications such as defence, space, power etc.

215. The Government of **Jammu & Kashmir** has launched the '**Village Defence Guards Scheme (VDGS) 2022**' to prevent the incidents of terrorist acts inspired and supported from across the border and to boost the security grid in the Union Territory.

- The scheme has come into operation with effect from 15th August 2022.
- The scheme organizes a small group of volunteer armed civilians in identified villages along the borders and in-depth areas of the Jammu division to instill a sense of self-protection, ensure the safety and security of such villages, and infrastructure installations in and around them, and check trans-border movement.
- The members of the Village Defence Group shall be designated as **Village Defence Guard (VDG)** in more vulnerable areas which will be headed by retired officers of the Army.

- VDGs will be divided into two categories: (1) Those who have a valid arms license and to whom weapons have been provided by the J&K Police and (2) Those who have a valid license and weapons or are willing to purchase weapons on their own.
- The VDG will be responsible for defending communal installations and infrastructure inside their village, and they would undertake routine night and day patrols.

Earlier, this scheme was known as **Village Defence Committee** in which volunteers from villages were trained by Indian Army and Police.

216. 'Samajik Adhikari Shivar' has been organized by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment in association with Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), and District Administration Nagpur.

It has been organized for the distribution of aid and assisting devices to Senior Citizens under '*Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana*' (RVY Scheme) and 'Divyangjan' under the *Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase / Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)* scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Chief Guests: Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways **Nitin Gadkari** and Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment **Dr. Virendra Kumar**.

Divyang Park:

It has been announced that Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has provided all possible support to establish the first "Divyang Park" of **Maharashtra** in **Nagpur**. It will have different kind of facilities for Divyangjans like sensory garden, textile Pathway touch and smell garden, skill training facility, rehabilitation facility, Sports & infotainment etc.

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY):

- It is a Central Sector Scheme.
- It is being implemented by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (**ALIMCO**) which is a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Under this scheme, aids and assistive living devices are provided to **senior citizens** belonging to **BPL category** or those senior citizens who earn less than 15000/- per month.
- The aids and assistive devices are walking sticks, elbow crutches, walkers/crutches, tripods/quadpods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries, free of cost.

217. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), the National Mission for Financial Inclusion, has completed eight years of successful implementation on 28th August 2022. It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **28th August 2014**.

Achievements under PMJDY:

As on 10th August 2022, the total number of PMJDY Accounts are **46.25 crore**; 55.59% (25.71 crore) Jan-Dhan account holders are women and 66.79% (30.89 crore) Jan Dhan accounts are in rural and semi-urban areas.

- In August 2022, out of total 46.25 crore PMJDY accounts, **37.57 crore** (81.2%) are operative
- Only 8.2% PMJDY accounts are zero balance accounts.
- Total deposit balances under PMJDY Accounts stand at **Rs. 1,73,954 crore**.
- Total RuPay cards issued to PMJDY accountholders: **31.94 crore**.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):

It is the National Mission for Financial Inclusion to ensure access to financial services, namely, Banking/ Savings & Deposit Accounts, Remittance, Credit, Insurance, Pension in an affordable manner.

Objectives:

- To ensure access of financial products & services at an affordable cost
- Use of technology to lower cost & widen reach

Basic tenets of the scheme: *Banking the unbanked, Securing the unsecured, and Funding the unfunded.*

Initial Features:

- Universal access to banking services.
- Basic savings bank accounts with overdraft facility of **Rs. 10,000/-** to every eligible adult
- Financial Literacy Programme to promoting savings, use of ATMs, getting ready for credit, availing insurance and pensions, using basic mobile phones for banking.
- Creation of Credit Guarantee Fund to provide banks some guarantee against defaults\
- Accident insurance cover up to Rs.1 lakh and life insurance cover of Rs. 30,000 on account opened between 15 Aug 2014 to 31 January 2015.
- Pension scheme for unorganized sector.

Key changes introduced from 2018:

- Focus shift from 'Every Household' to '**Every Unbanked Adult**'
- RuPay Card Insurance: Free accidental insurance cover on RuPay cards increased from Rs. 1 lakh to **Rs. 2 lakh** for PMJDY accounts opened after 28.8.2018.
- Enhancement in overdraft (OD) facilities: OD limit doubled from Rs 5,000/- to **Rs 10,000/-**; OD upto Rs 2,000/- (without conditions), and increase in upper age limit for OD from 60 to **65 years**.

218. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited Gujarat to address '**Khadi Utsav**' at Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The event has witnessed 7500 women khadi artisans from various districts of Gujarat spinning Charkha live at the same time and at the same place.

The event has featured an exhibition showcasing the 'Evolution of Charkhas' by displaying 22 Charkhas from different generations used since 1920s including "**Yerwada Charkha**" which symbolises the charkhas used during the freedom struggle.

Key inaugurations:

Atal Bridge:

- PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated the iconic 'Atal Bridge' over the **Sabarmati River** in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat.
- It is a foot over/ Pedestrians-and-Cyclists-only bridge.
- It is equipped with attractive design and LED lights.
- This bridge is about **300 meters long** and 14 meters wide.
- 2,600 metric tons of steel pipe has been used in the construction of this bridge and the railing is made of glass and steel.
- The total cost of construction of this bridge is Rs 74.29 lakh crore.

Smriti Van Memorial:

- It is India's first earthquake memorial.
- It is located in the **Bhuj** district of Gujarat.
- This Memorial is associated with the tragic **Earthquake of 2001** in which several people lost their lives.
- It has been built on 470-acre area and carries the names of around 13,000 people who had lost their lives during the earthquake.
- It has been segregated into seven blocks based on seven themes: *Rebirth, Rediscover, Restore, Rebuild, Rethink, Relive and Renew.*

Veer Balak Samarak:

- It is dedicated to 2001 Earthquake Victims in Bhuj.
- It is built near Anjar town as a tribute to 185 school children and 20 teachers who were killed during a Republic Day Parade on 26th January 2001, when an earthquake hit.

Kachchh Branch Canal of Sardar Sarovar Project:

- It has been built at the cost of Rs 6493 crore.
- It is 357.18-kilometer-long.
- The project began around 2008 and passes over Dudhai village which was the epicentre of the 2001 earthquake.

- It will help in providing irrigation facilities in Kachchh and drinking water in all 948 villages, and 10 towns of the Kachchh district.

Maruti Suzuki's new plant:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually laid the foundation stone of Maruti Suzuki's new vehicle manufacturing plant at Kharkhoda in Sonapat district of **Haryana**. It will be set up with an investment of around Rs.11,000 crores.
- He has also laid the foundation stone of Suzuki Motor Gujarat Electric Vehicle Battery Manufacturing Facility at Hansalpur, **Gujarat**. It will be set with an investment of around Rs.7300 crores.

Maruti Suzuki has completed **40 years** in India.

- 219.** The Chief Minister of **Uttarakhand** Pushkar Singh Dhami has launched the **"Mukhyamantri Udyaman Khiladi Unnayan Yojana"** on the occasion of National Sports Day (29th August). Under the scheme, a sports scholarship of **Rs 1500** per month will be given to budding sportspersons between the age group of eight to 14 years. Every year a total of 3900 budding sportspersons will be given scholarships, which will include 1950 boys and 1950 girls.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

- 220.** **Reliance** New Energy Limited, **Ola** Electric Mobility Private Limited, and **Rajesh** Exports Limited have signed the Program Agreement under Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to build a total of **50 Gigawatt hours (Gwh)** for **Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage**.

- The three companies will receive incentives under India's **Rs. 18,100** crore program.
- Under the PLI program, private players are expected to create battery manufacturing capacity to the tune of around 95 GWh.
- It will be implemented by the **Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises**.

- 221.** Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha (**IPICOL**) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (**FICCI**) for the upcoming **Make in Odisha (MIO) Conclave 2022**.

- The Make in Odisha (MIO) Conclave 2022 will be the third edition.
- FICCI will work as a national industry partner in the conclave.
- The conclave will be held from 30th November to 4th December 2022.

- 222. Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of **Gujarat** to establish IT and IT-enabled Services (ITeS) Park in Vadodara. L&T will invest **Rs 7,000 crore** over a period of five years to develop this Information Technology (IT)/ITeS Park in the district.
- 223.** Scientific and Production Corporation **Radio Technical Systems (RTS) of Russia** has signed a large-scale contract with the **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** for the supply of radio equipment. Under this contract, the company will manufacture 34 sets of **Instrument Landing System (ILS) 734** for the modernisation of 24 airports in India. The first part of landing systems ILS-734 must be shipped before November 2022.
- 224. Indian Railways** has collaborated with **Amazon India** to boost its delivery services in India by transporting packages in more than 110 inter-city routes, ensuring one to 2-day delivery for its customers.
- Amazon delivers **100% serviceable PIN codes**, with more than 97% of PIN codes now being able to receive their deliveries within two days of placing an order.
 - Amazon India's subsidiary **Amazon Data Services India Pvt Ltd** has leased 5.5 acre of industrial land from Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T), in suburban Mumbai's Powai area to set up a data centre.
- 225. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** has signed a contract worth **Rs.250 crore** with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the supply of **nine** integrated **Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)** complex (IAC) MOD 'C' Systems.
- IAC MOD 'C':**
- It is an integrated anti-submarine warfare (ASW) system for all surface ships of the Indian Navy. It has been indigenously developed by BEL in association with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). It facilitates counter-measure capability for incoming torpedoes through the decoy launching system.
- 226. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Roads & Highways Department of **Bangladesh** for the emergency supply of petroleum goods via Bangladesh territory to India. This is an interim set up to facilitate urgent supply of petroleum products due to damage caused by the flood in Assam 2022.
- The petroleum tankers will enter from Meghalaya and will go to Tripura crossing through the Bangladesh territory.

- The IOCL will bear all the administrative fees, charges and local taxes including road usage fee for use of the Bangladeshi territory.

227. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (**NTCA**) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** for the trans-continental relocation of 'Cheetahs' from Africa to India.

- This is in continuation with the MoU signed on 20th July 2022 between Government of India and Government of the Republic of Namibia on wildlife conservation and sustainable biodiversity utilization.
- Indian Oil will be contributing **Rs.50.22 crore** in **4 years** for the project components viz. Cheetah Introduction, its Habitat Management & Protection, Eco Development, Staff Training and Veterinary Healthcare.
- Indian Oil is the **first corporate** which has come forward to support the "Project Cheetah" under CSR.
- Under this project, a source population of 8-10 Cheetahs will be flown in from Namibia and South Africa and will be introduced at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
- It is a national project involving NTCA, Govt. of India and the State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.

'Project Cheetah':

It is one-of-a-kind projects in which a species is being restored in the country by bringing it from out of the country (from South Africa / Namibia). It is noteworthy that the subspecies of Cheetah which got extinct in India was Asiatic Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*) and the subspecies being introduced back in the country is **African Cheetah** (*Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*). Research has shown that genes of these two subspecies are the same. The Cheetah introduction project in Kuno National Park involves creating a 500-hectare predator proof enclosure for a 'soft release' of the feline.

228. The National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (**NIESBUD**) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)** to develop entrepreneurial skills and create sustainable livelihood opportunities.

- Under this collaboration, NIESBUD and HUL will collaborate to organise training programmes, develop curriculum, and undertake cluster development activities.

229. The National Payments Corporation of India (**NPCI**) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur** for sharing knowledge on innovative ideas and to collaborate on the development of indigenous digital payments solutions.

- This collaboration will help in the augmentation of cyber security controls for NPCI and its subsidiaries' products and services.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA) for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.

230. Infosys Finacle, part of EdgeVerve Systems, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Infosys has been inducted into International Financial Services Centres Authority's (IFSCA) Regulatory Sandbox framework to pilot its blockchain-based trade finance solution.

- In the initial phase, **six leading banks**: Federal Bank, HDFC Bank, HSBC, ICICI Bank, RBL Bank, and State Bank of India are collaborating with Infosys Finacle in the regulatory sandbox.
- This partnership will lead to comprehensive testing of the blockchain-based Buyers Credit solution, for short-term credit in foreign currency for import payments and trade finance transactions.

231. LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC)** and the **ICT Academy of Kerala (ICTAK)** as part of the Connect Career to Campus (CCC) campaign under the Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission (KKEM) initiative.

This agreement aims to boost the employability skill among the youth of Kerala and aggravate relevant jobs for them using LinkedIn talent insights and learning tools.

232. Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) has signed an agreement with the business incubator of **IIM, Kozhikode (IIM-K)**, Laboratory for Innovation Venturing and Entrepreneurship (LIVE), in order to boost start-ups in the maritime sector.

- **Objective:** To develop an ecosystem in India for start-ups in the maritime sector from the technical, regulatory, financial and marketing points of view.
- Under this, start-ups can get up to Rs.50 lakh as seed grant, and Rs.1 crore as prototyping grant and equity funding at the scale-up stage.

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233. The Investment Board Nepal has approved India's state-owned **NHPC Limited** to study and develop two hydropower projects totaling 1,200 MW in western **Nepal**.

- The projects include **750MW West Seti Hydropower Project** and **450MW Seti River (SR-6)**, a joint storage project.
- The new project sites are located at elevations ranging from 550 to 920 metres and are spread across six districts.
- The estimated cost of the project is **USD 2.4 billion**.
- The proposed dam site is located 82 kilometres upstream of the confluence of the Seti and Karnali rivers, forming part of the Ganges basin.

234. Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd (**APDCL**) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Tamil Nadu-based Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited (**NLCIL**) to set up **1000 MW** of solar power projects in **Assam**. It will be a joint venture project on 49:51 ratio between APDCL and NLCIL to support the increasing power requirement of the state.

235. The Governments of **Assam and Mizoram** have signed a joint statement after a ministerial-level discussion held in Aizawal, Mizoram to resolve the boundary dispute between both the states. As per the statement, both states have agreed to promote and maintain peace to prevent any untoward incident along the borders. Also, the Deputy Commissioners of the bordering districts of both states shall meet at least once in two months.

The next meeting between High-Level delegations of two states will take place at Guwahati in October 2022 where issues and claims will be deliberated in detail.

Note: Assam shares a **164.6 km** long boundary with Mizoram.

Additional Information: In March 2022, Assam and Meghalaya governments had signed a historic agreement in Delhi to resolve their border disputes in six of the 12 "areas of difference" along the 884-km boundary. According to the proposed recommendations for the 36.79 square km of land, Assam will keep 18.51 square km and give the remaining 18.28 square km to Meghalaya.

236. Microsoft has become the first big tech company to partner with the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)**, a pioneering initiative to democratize India's e-commerce ecosystem, with the intention of introducing social e-commerce to the Indian market. Microsoft will also launch a shopping app in India that would be accessible via the ONDC network.

237. Microsoft has joined hands with the **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**, and the **Capacity Building Commission (CBC)** to enhance the functional computer literacy of nearly 2.5 million civil servants of the Government of India.

- The objective is to help civil servants in helping the underprivileged and to develop citizen-friendly, and business-friendly policies.
- Under the project, the training will include job roles such as section officers, assistant section officers, clerks, upper division clerks, lower division clerks, under-secretaries, deputy secretaries, and equivalent officers at senior, junior and supporting levels in the central government entities.

238. Flipkart, India's home-grown e-commerce marketplace, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **District Administration of Varanasi**, Government of Uttar Pradesh, under the Samarth program to enable national market access for artisans, weavers, people with disabilities.

Under this partnership, iconic goods such as Banaras Sarees, Handmade Carpets, Zardoji Craft, Metal Crafts, and Handmade Dari from the state will now be available to 400 million customers on the Flipkart platform.

Samarth: Flipkart Samarth was launched in 2019. It is a nationwide initiative that aims to introduce lakhs of MSMEs, artisans and underserved communities from across the country to growth opportunities through e-commerce. The programme's primary objective is to provide underserved domestic communities and companies with a sustainable and inclusive platform and better livelihood chances.

239. NBCC Limited has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** for the redevelopment of the MEA Housing Complex (Old) at Kasturba Gandhi Marg in New Delhi for **Rs.175 crore**.

Other MoUs signed:

- NBCC has signed an MoU with Aligarh Smart City Ltd for providing PMC (Project Management and Consultancy) services for the project 'Development & Modernisation of Infrastructure at **Naurangilal College**, SH: Sports facilities'. The estimated cost is around Rs 50 crore.
- NBCC has also signed an MoU with the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) for 'Demolition and construction of **NCCE Hostel building** at NCUI complex'. The estimated cost for this project is Rs 33 crore.

240. The **Drone Federation of India (DFI)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Army Design Bureau (ADB)** to develop high-impact drones for Indian soldiers.

- Under this collaboration, DFI and ADB will be launching an event titled '**Indian Army's Him-Drone-a-thon**', under which proposals will be invited for the development of

drone-based solutions for supporting Indian Army operations in the harsh Himalayan terrains.

- Both the entities will collaborate on roadmap planning, research, testing, manufacturing and adoption of drones, counter-drone and associated technologies that are to be utilised by the Indian Army in its operations.

241. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has also been signed between Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), the **University of Calicut** and the **Dr. Gafoor Memorial MES Mampad College** to exchange scientific and academic knowledge with students and researchers for the promotion of zoological researches through advanced pedagogical techniques.

242. Satellite operator **Eutelsat Communications** and London-based **OneWeb** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the objective of creating a leading global player in connectivity through the combination of both companies in an all-share transaction.

- Under this MoU, Eutelsat will combine its 36-strong fleet of GEO satellites with OneWeb's constellation of 648 low Earth orbit satellites, of which 428 are currently in orbit.
- Post-closing of the deal, Bharti Group will become the single largest shareholder of Eutelsat.

243. The **Indian Army** in collaboration with the **Drone Federation of India** has launched the '**Him Drone-a-thon**' programme. This initiative is in line with Atma-nirbharta in defence manufacturing. It is aimed to catalyse and provide focused opportunities to the Indian drone ecosystem to develop path-breaking drone capabilities for meeting requirements of frontline troops.

244. The Government of **Odisha** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)** for protection of its coasts. Under this MoU, NIOT will provide technical guidance, design, and drawing of climate resilient coastal protection measures. The inhabitants of six coastal districts of the state such as Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, and Ganjam will be benefitted.

245. **Airtel Africa** has signed a credit bond with **Citi** for **USD 125 million** revolving facility. The facility involves borrowing both in local currencies and US dollars. The facility has a tenor up to **September 2024** and will be used to support Airtel Africa's operations and investments in four of its subsidiaries.

246. **RazorPay**, India's leading full-stack Payments and Banking Platform for Businesses, has become the first Indian company to be listed on 'Forbes Cloud 100 List 2022' of the top-100

private cloud companies in the world. The entity has entered the Forbes list for the 2nd time and it has been listed at 49th position for being a Financial Solutions Software.

- This Forbes list has been published for the 6th time in collaboration with Bessemer Venture Partners and Salesforce Ventures.

247. Paytm, a digital finance company, has collaborated with **Samsung** stores to facilitate smart payments as well as its loan service through deployment of point of sale (PoS) devices across India. This collaboration will enable consumers purchasing Samsung devices from any authorised store in the country to pay through Paytm payment instruments, including UPI, wallet, buy now pay later scheme, debit cards and credit cards.

248. Vistara, a joint venture of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, has become the second largest domestic airline by market share in July 2022. Vistara market share was **10.4 percent** in July 2022 when it flew 1.01 million passengers. As per the data from the aviation regulator, Vistara controlled 7.5 percent of the market in January 2022 and was around 9 percent in the subsequent months.

- **IndiGo** is the market leader, which owned a **58.8 percent** market share
- Tata-owned Air India owned 8.4 percent market share, up from 7.5 percent in June; Go First was at 8.2 percent and SpiceJet at 8 percent.

249. The **Border Security Force (BSF)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** to ensure the safety and security of booking data under its Air e-ticket service for the troops of BSF. This service will provide a dedicated online portal with a credit facility of 60 days.

250. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has delivered two pieces of space equipment to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for its Gaganyaan mission. This is the second **crew module fairing (CMF)** that ISRO has taken from HAL for the mission. This system will keep the astronauts safe during the mission. The motor will also help transfer the engine power to the crew escape module, in case of failure of a mission.

- In June 2022, ISRO received a CMF structure that was built by Alpha Design Technology Limited, a Bengaluru-based company.

251. ReNew Power has recently raised **USD 1 billion** project loan through External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) in partnership with 12 international banks for its upcoming Hybrid Round-the-cock (RTC) battery-enabled project.

- This is the single largest renewable energy project with **1, 300 MW** capacity

- ReNew Power has signed a power purchase agreement with the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) for the battery project at Rs 2.90 per unit with 3 percent escalation annually for 15 years.
- It will set up wind and solar projects in Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra under RTC.

252. The **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)** has signed a Heads of Agreement (HoA) with global petroleum giant **ExxonMobil Corporation** for deepwater exploration of oil & gas in India's East and West coasts. This association will focus on the *Krishna Godavari* and *Cauvery Basins* in the eastern offshore and the *Kutch-Mumbai* region in the western offshore.

- **Note:** India is the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer.

253. The **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish its first international marketing and sales office in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.

- This will enhance HAL's ability to secure the deal while also enabling them to fulfil other requirements of the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) like the up gradation and servicing of the Russian Su-30s and British Hawk trainer aircraft.
- The office in Malaysia will be the first one to be entirely focused on marketing and commercial development.

254. Former Tata Group chairman **Ratan Tata** has unveiled the new start-up '**Goodfellows**' which provides companionship to senior citizens staying alone through young, educated graduates. The start-up is founded by Shanthanu Naidu, the General Manager at the Office of Ratan Naval Tata (RNT). It will be soon available in Mumbai with Pune, Chennai, and Bengaluru as next target.

255. The **Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)** will invest **Rs. 665 crore** in **Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co. (ABHI)** for a **99.9%** stake value. This transaction has been approved by the Boards of Directors of Aditya Birla Capital (ABCL), the holding company for financial services of the aluminium to telecom conglomerate.

256. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of stake in **IIFL Home** indirectly by **Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)**. The proposed transaction relates to the acquisition of up to 20 percent stake in IIFL Home Finance by Platinum Owl C 2018 RSC Ltd, a trustee acting for Platinum Jasmine Trust.

Other approvals by CCI:

- CCI has also approved acquisition of majority shareholding in **Optimus Drugs Private Limited (ODPL)** by Sekhmet Pharmaventures as well as Optimus Drug's purchase of stakes in Optimus Pharma and Optimus Life Science.
- CCI has approved the acquisition of the stake in **Holderind Investments**, Ambuja Cements and ACC Limited by Endeavour Trade and Investment, an Adani Group Company. The proposed combination involves acquisition of 100 percent stake in Holderind Investments Ltd by Endeavour Trade and Investment Ltd.
- CCI has also approved acquisition by **Katsura Investments** in **Varmora Granito Private Limited** and certain other entities, and Varmora Granito Private Limited in some of its Group Companies and other entities.
- CCI has approved the proposal to merge **Creixent Special Steels (CSSL)** and **JSW Ispat** into JSW Steel under Section 31 (1) of the Competition Act 2002. .
- CCI has also approved the acquisition of shareholding in Simpolo Vitriified Private Limited (SVPL/ Target) by India Business Excellence Fund IV (IBEF IV), India SME Investments Fund – I (India SME), Motilal Oswal Finvest Limited (MOFPL), partners of Simpolo Ceramics (SC / Simpolo Ceramics) and the shareholders of Nexion International Private Limited (Nexion), viz., Aghara & Sons (Aghara) and Ceramiche Speranza SPA (Ceramiche SPA).

257. BRDN Investment Management has divested a **5 percent stake** of around Rs. 2,300 crore in **HDFC Asset Management Company (AMC)** through the open market transaction.

258. **Mirae Asset Mutual Fund** has launched two new funds: *Mirae Asset Global Electric & Autonomous Vehicles ETFs Fund of Fund* and *Mirae Asset Global X Artificial Intelligence and Technology ETF Fund of Fund*.

- The vehicle-themed fund will invest in overseas equity exchange traded funds (ETFs) which are based on companies involved in development of electric and autonomous vehicles and related technology, components and materials.
- The AI-themed fund will invest in units of Global X Artificial Intelligence & Technology ETF.

259. Zomato-backed logistics technology platform **Shiprocket** has become India's **106th unicorn** after raising USD 33.5 million (about Rs 270 crore) in a funding round co-led by Temasek and Lightrock India.

- Shiprocket, launched in 2017, was valued at around USD 1.2 billion with the fresh round of funding. It delivers packets to more than 66 million consumers annually and is growing 3 times year on year.

260. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in its monthly oil report states that India's demand for petroleum products like petrol and diesel will grow by **7.73 percent** in **2022**.

- India's demand for oil products is projected to increase from 4.77 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2021 to 5.14 million bpd in 2022.
- The growth in demand is the fastest in the world ahead of 1.23 percent of China, 3.39 percent of the US and 4.62 percent of Europe.
- For 2023, the OPEC has projected a growth of 4.67 percent in India's demand to 5.38 percent.

Note: India is the world's third largest oil importing and consuming nation behind the US and China.

- 261.** The governments of **Punjab & Haryana** have agreed to name the **Chandigarh International Airport** after freedom fighter **Shaheed Bhagat Singh** for its collective contribution of both states. After the implementation, the airport will be known as Shaheed Bhagat Singh Airport.
- The **Rs.485 crore** airport project is a joint venture of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the governments of Punjab & Haryana.
 - Punjab & Haryana have 24.5% share each while the AAI has 51% share.
- 262.** The Government of India (GoI) and the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** have signed a **USD 96.3 million loan** agreement to provide safe drinking water and improve water supply and sanitation services in **Himachal Pradesh**.
- The project aims to construct 48 groundwater wells, 80 surface water intake facilities, 109 water treatment plants, 117 pumping stations, and 3,000 kms of water distribution pipelines.
 - The project will connect 75,800 households to the service, providing uninterrupted water supply to about 3,70,000 residents across 10 districts.
 - A pilot fecal sludge management and sanitation programme will also be implemented in Sirmaur district, benefiting 250,000 residents.
- 263.** **Godrej Agrovet** has signed three Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Assam, Manipur, and Tripura** state governments for the development and promotion of **oil palm** cultivation in the region under the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (**NMEO-OP**) scheme.

Under this MoU, Godrej Agrovet will be allotted land across the three states for promotion and development of sustainable palm oil plantations in the region to support the farmers.

NMEO-OP scheme:

In August 2021, the Government of India had launched the **National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)** with planned outlay of **Rs.11,040 crore**. Under this mission, Government has envisaged to raise area under cultivation of oil palm to 10 Lakh hectares by 2025-26 and 16.7 Lakh hectares by 2029-30 with special focus on the North East region and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- 264. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)** has started its first cow dung-to-compressed biogas project at **Sanchore** in **Rajasthan**. This is HPCL's first project under the waste-to-energy portfolio.
- The plant will utilise 100 tonnes of cow dung per day to produce biogas, which will then be used as automotive fuel.
 - The project is being developed under the **Gobar-Dhan scheme** launched by the government in April 2018.
 - The project is coming at Pathmeda in the Jalore district of Rajasthan.
 - The project will be commissioned in a year.
- 265.** The Government of **Jharkhand** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Foreign Office of Commonwealth and Development (FCDO), **British High Commission** to award the '**Chevening Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Pardeshi Scholarship 2023**'. This is the first MoU signed between FCDO and Indian state.
- 'Chevening Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Pardeshi Scholarship 2023':**
- The scholarship will be provided to the meritorious children of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and Minorities community of Jharkhand.
 - It will start in the UK academic year of 2023-24.
 - The scholarship will be provided to a maximum of five students for every academic year.
 - The entire education expenditure of the five selected youth will be jointly funded by the Government of Jharkhand and FCDO.
- 266.** The **National Health Authority (NHA)** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE)**, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE), to deliver an inclusive and comprehensive health package for **transgender** persons under the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (**AB-PMJAY**).
- Features of MoU:**
- The MoU will extend all healthcare benefits to transgender persons (holding a transgender certificate issued by the National Portal for transgender persons) across India.

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MOSJE) will fund **Rs.5 lakh insurance** cover per transgender beneficiary per annum.
- A comprehensive package is being prepared for transgender category including the existing AB PM-JAY packages and specific packages like Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) and treatment for transgender.
- The scheme is applicable to all transgender people who do not currently get benefits from existing centre/state sponsored schemes.

267. The **Ministry of Ayush** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)** for Ayush Grid Project. Under this MoU, MeitY will provide technical support to the Ministry of Ayush to digitise Ayush Sector, for a period of 3 years. This MoU is continuation of the MoU that was signed in 2019.

Advisory inputs on Ayush Grid project will be provided by a High-Level Advisory Committee (HLAC). This committee will be chaired by Secretary of Ayush and co-chaired by Secretary of MeitY.

Ayush Grid Project:

Ayush Grid Project was launched by the **Ministry of Ayush** in **2018** to create a backbone for IT sector. It was launched under **Digital India Program** that support 'Information and Technology' in transforming operational efficiency, enhancing service quality and improving delivery of service. It will allow integration of all stakeholders and services or functions related to Ayush systems of health care. The project seeks to bring all onboard all the facilities of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy), including laboratories and hospitals besides promoting traditional healthcare systems.

268. **BASIX** Social Enterprise Group has launched an agritech platform **BASIX Farmers' Market (BFM)** in collaboration with **Mastercard** to integrate farmers into the digital economy.

- Under this collaboration, both the companies aim to connect 10 lakh farmers with technology to their benefit, including the new cohort of 200 Farmer Produce Organisations (FPO), being promoted under SMART Project partnering with Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission.
- The agritech platform is an extension of **Mastercard Farm Pass**, a rural and agriculture digitization solution that serves more than 3.5 lakh farmers across five states in India, and one million farmers globally.

269. The National Highways Logistics Management Limited (**NHLML**), Inland Waterways Authority of India (**IWAI**) and Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (**RVNL**) have signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the swift development of modern Multi Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) under **Bharatmala Pariyojana**.

The objective of the agreement is to centralize freight consolidation and reduce logistics costs from 14 percent to less than **10 percent** of GDP at par with International Standards.

Multi Modal Logistics Park (MMLP):

MMLP is an inter-modal freight handling facility with mechanised material handling provisions, warehouses, specialised cold chain facilities etc. Developed under 'Hub and Spoke Model', it integrates multiple freight transport modes for seamless modal shift ensuring economic growth and environmental friendly logistics.

Bharatmala Pariyojana:

It is a centrally-sponsored and funded Road and Highways project of the Government of India. Cabinet had approved the Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I" in 2017. It was approved for an estimated cost of Rs. 6,92,324 crore including other ongoing schemes. It is an umbrella program for highways sector with focus on optimizing the efficiency of freight and passenger movement across the country. It has set the target of developing Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors, Feeder Routes, etc. to bridge critical infrastructure gaps.

270. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (**UNESCO**) has joined hands with **Royal Enfield** to promote and safeguard the '**Intangible Cultural Heritage of India**', beginning with the Himalayas.

Under this unique partnership, a four-day creative exhibit will be displayed at the Bikaner House in Delhi, curated by Dr Monisha Ahmed and Mary Therese Kurkalang.

The programme is curated as an experiential and creative showcase of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) practices in the Western Himalayas and the North Eastern region. This includes an exhibition, panel discussions, film screenings, performances and lecture demonstrations.

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271. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** and **LFV Air Navigation Services of Sweden** to facilitate smart and sustainable aviation technology collaboration.

Key elements of the MoU:

- Exchange of aviation knowledge and technical transfer program
- Promote close and friendly relations between the two agencies
- Aim to expand technical cooperation in airports

- Support the development of a safe, secure, sustainable, and efficient aviation sector
- Positive contributions in promoting bilateral and international trade

Both the agencies will jointly collaborate on the following co-operation areas: *Air Traffic Management, Air Traffic Control, Remote Airport Management and Traffic Control, Airspace Design and Planning, Airport Design and Infrastructure, Digitalized Airport and Aviation, Capability and Training, Sustainable Airports and Aviation, Processes for pilots, and Processes for scale-up.*

A Joint Working Group will be established to prioritize interest areas and drive collaboration between the two countries.

272. The Government of **Andhra Pradesh** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with USA-based '**Parley for the Oceans**' environmental organization for plastic waste management. The aim is save seas from pollution.

- Parley for the Oceans will set up "**Parley Super Hub**", preferably in Visakhapatnam, where recycling and upcycling of plastic wastes will be done.
- A "**Parley Future Institute**", a cutting edge research centre for future new materials, will be also set up in Andhra Pradesh.

Note: Andhra Pradesh govt. has set a target to become plastic free by 2027.

273. Tata Steel has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of **Punjab** to set up a 0.75 million tonne per annum (MnTPA) long products steel plant with a scrap-based electric arc furnace (EAF) at Kadiana Khurd, Hitech Valley in **Ludhiana**.

This MoU is a part of Tata Steel's commitment to investing in a circular economy and transitioning to low-carbon steelmaking through the steel recycling route. It is to achieve the Company's goal of Net Zero carbon emission by 2045.

274. AirAsia India and **Canadian Aviation Electronics Limited (CAE)** have collaborated to integrate the CAE Rise™ Training System into the airline's simulator training program. With this, AirAsia India has become the first airline in India to adopt a data-driven training program using CAE Rise.

275. The **Indian Navy** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) **Space Applications Centre (SAC)** in Ahmedabad on data sharing and cooperation on satellite-based naval applications in oceanology and meteorology.

- 276.** Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs has approved the amalgamation of **Bharat Gas Resources Ltd (BGRL)** with its parent company **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL)**.
- BGRL, set up in 2018, is a wholly owned subsidiary of BPCL for handling the Natural Gas business.
 - The amalgamation is effective from 16th August 2022.
- 277. NHPC Limited** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** to set up a GigaWatt Scale Vertically Integrated solar manufacturing unit. The MoU has been signed by Biswajit Basu, Director (Projects), NHPC and Vinay Kumar Katyal, Director (Bangalore Complex), BEL.
- 278.** The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (**IREDA**) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Mahatma Phule Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Technology Limited (**MAHAPREIT**), Maharashtra to provide loans for **Green Energy** projects. Under this MoU, IREDA will provide Techno-Financial consultancy to MAHAPREIT for renewable energy projects. This collaboration will support India's target to achieve 50% share of energy from non-fossil fuels by 2030.
- 279. Nutrihub**, a technology Business Incubator hosted by ICAR-Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) and the **Akshaya Patra Foundation** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to integrate millets under the **Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) scheme**. The aim is to increase the consumption of millets and thereby help improving children's nutritional status.
- This collaboration is an initiative towards the run-up for 2023 as the International Year of Millets led by the Government of India.
- The test project is set to be launched in some schools in Bengaluru and Hyderabad.
- 280.** The National Workshop on **Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)** in Panchayats through Thematic Approach on 'Village with Self-Sufficient Infrastructure' has been inaugurated by **Kapil Moreshwar Patil**, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj and **Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal**, Minister of Rural Development & Panchayat, Punjab at Mohali, Punjab.
- About 1,300 Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) from across the country have attended the two-day workshop.
 - On the occasion, Kapil Moreshwar Patil has released the **SDG's Anthem** and **Booklet** and launched a **Prime App** and Punjab State Rural Livelihood Mission (**PSRLM**) website.

- 281.** The Norwegian **Climate Investment Fund (CIF)**, managed by Norfund and KLP, has recently signed an agreement to acquire a **49 percent** stake in a 420 MW solar power plant named **Thar Surya 1** in Rajasthan.
- 282.** The Adani Group subsidiary, AMG Media Networks Limited (AMNL), has announced that it will indirectly acquire a 29.18% stake in media and news broadcaster New Delhi Television (NDTV) and launch an open offer to acquire another 26% stake for Rs.493 crore to get a majority stake in NDTV. RRPR is a promoter group company of NDTV and holds 29.18% stake in NDTV.
- 283.** Bharti Airtel promoter **Bharti Telecom** will buy a **3.33 percent** Airtel stake from **Singtel** for 2.25 billion Singapore dollars or about Rs12,895 crore in 90 days. Bharti Telecom at present holds 35.85 percent stake in country's second largest telecom service provider Bharti Airtel.
- 284.** **TVS Motor** Company will acquire **48 percent** stake in **NKars Mobility Millennial Solutions Pvt Ltd (NMMSPL)** for Narain Karthikeyan's pre-owned two-wheeler startup '**DriveX**' for a cash consideration of Rs 85 crore. The acquisition is expected to be completed by 30th November 2022.
- 285.** The **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Nagaland** Government to collaborate and unleash the potential of entrepreneurial talents in Nagaland.
- Under this MoU, CII will establish startup cohorts and conduct capacity-building programmes for Nagaland Government officials, financial institutions & banks in Nagaland, incubators, and academic innovation cells for engaging with startups.
 - The **Indian Navy** will be facilitated to partner with entrepreneurs and startups in Nagaland to provide support for their innovation and indigenization initiatives.
 - A training school will be set up in Nagaland, facilitated by the CII Institute of Logistics, to mobilize candidates from Nagaland for various roles in the logistics sector.
 - A **Model Career Centre (MCC)** will also be set up in Nagaland in partnership with the State Government
- 286.** **Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) Limited** has signed an agreement with **Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited** for construction of 220 KV Direct Current (D/C) single zebra transmission line for 210 MW **Luhri Hydro Electric Project (HEP) Stage-1**. The agreement envisages an expenditure of **Rs.71.18 crore** and includes end to end delivery of commissioned transmission line by August 2024. Luhri Hydro Electric Project (HEP) Stage-1 is

designed to generate 758 Micro Units (MUs) energy per annum, transmitted through the ISTS network line.

287. The Government e-Marketplace (**GeM**) portal has procured over **8200 crore** worth of products and services from around 12165 registered startups across 1.42 lakh orders since its inception in 2016. Under the Startup Runway initiative for unique products with no comparable, startups can register and sell such products.

The registered sellers count in the portal has crossed 50 lakh and the number of orders placed has crossed 1 crore.

Maharashtra has ranked first with 8.83 lakh vendors who are registered with GeM, followed by Uttar Pradesh (4.09 lakh), and Tamil Nadu (4.07 lakh).

288. The **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)**, the nation's top oil firm, has announced that it will invest **Rs 2 lakh crore** to achieve net-zero operational carbon emissions by **2046**. It will use a combination of energy efficiency measures, electrification of processes, and fuel replacement. The target set is in line with India's aim to reach net-zero emissions by 2070.

289. Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs and Education Rajkumar Ranjan Singh has handed over a cheque of **USD 1 million** for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (**BIMSTEC**) Secretariat's operational budget.

Key points:

- BIMSTEC Secretary General **Tenzin Lekphell** was on a visit to India, during which discussions were held on the consolidation and further development of the BIMSTEC institutional architecture under the BIMSTEC Charter adopted at the last Summit on March 30, 2022.
- He has also participated in a public interactive session hosted by Research & Information Systems for Developing Countries (RIS) titled **"Rejuvenating Growth through partnerships-Role of BIMSTEC"**.

290. The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (**NMDFC**), under the Ministry of Minority Affairs, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **ICICI Bank** for the development of financial accounting software and mobile application.

- The MoU provides for the development of financial accounting software for NMDFC and *State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs)*, loan accounting software for receiving and processing of loan applications and accounting of repayments from beneficiaries.
- ICICI Bank will design, develop and deploy the application for NMDFC, provide source code and executable database information among others.

291. Bangladesh and India have signed two contracts for the construction of a new broad-gauge line between **Khulna- Darsana** and conversion of metre gauge line into dual-gauge line between **Parbatipur and Kaunia**. The two projects are being implemented with financing under the Indian Line of Credit (LoC) of **USD 2 billion**.

- The 126 kilometre long Khulna-Darshana broad gauge rail line will have 147 bridges over it including 4 Girder bridges and 143 RCC box culvert bridges. The project cost is Taka 3506 crore out of which Taka 2689 crore will come from the Indian LoC.
- The Parbatipur to Kaunia rail project will cover a distance of 57 kilometres. It has seven railway stations as well as 47 bridges including 14 girder bridges and 33 box culvert bridges.

292. Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. (RVNL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Bharat Heavy Engineering Limited (BHEL)** to make components and equipment manufacturing, infrastructure development, and project execution indigenous.

The MoU aims to identify and explore the execution projects, both in India and abroad, and set up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with equity contribution and through synergy of their respective capabilities.

293. IndiGo Airlines has joined a sustainable initiative led by the World Economic Forum (WEF) to achieve a significant scale of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). The airline has become a signatory to the **Clear Skies for Tomorrow (CST)**, India Coalition campaign.

In February 2022, IndiGo operated its brand new A320 neo plane from Toulouse, France to New Delhi with a 10 percent blend of SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel).

Clean Skies for Tomorrow (CST):

It was launched in January 2019 to provide a crucial mechanism for top executives and public leaders, across and beyond the aviation value chain, to align on a transition to sustainable aviation fuels as part of a meaningful and proactive pathway for the industry to achieve carbon-neutral flying.

BANKING & FINANCE

294. Housing Development Finance Corporation (**HDFC**) has entered into a share purchase agreement (SPA) with State Bank of India (**SBI**) for acquiring of 97,500 equity shares of **HDFC Venture Capital (HVCL)**.

- HDFC will acquire its venture capital subsidiary HVCL by buying out State Bank of India's **19.50 percent** stake in the company.

- Currently, HDFC holds **80.50%** equity share capital of HVCL and the remaining 19.50% shares are held by SBI.
- The acquisition is expected to be completed by 12th August 2022.

295. Max Life Insurance Company Limited has launched “**Max Life Smart Secure Easy Solution**”, a 3-in-1 protection solution offering benefits of life, critical illness and disability and accidental cover.

- This solution is a combination of **Max Life's Smart Secure Plus Plan** that provides financial protection in case of any uncertainties in life with an accidental cover option and **Max Life Critical Illness and Disability Health Rider**, which offers financial protection in case of critical illnesses, total and permanent disability and provides extra coverage against accidental death.

296. Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Limited has recently announced the completion of the **USD 1.1 billion Syndicated Social Loan Facility** for the financing of affordable housing in India. The HDFC loan has been priced competitively at a margin of 90 basis points over the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR).

- HDFC Limited has raised the amount through External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) which is the largest social loan globally and **first ECB loan** deal out of India.

297. Federal Bank has become the first lender in India to list its Payment Gateway platform on the **TIN 2.0 platform** of the Income Tax Department.

- The Tax Information Network (TIN) 2.0 platform was launched on 1st July 2022.
- The "Payment Gateway" has been enabled, providing one more payment option to taxpayers, who can now make their payments with ease, using modes such as Credit/Debit Card, UPI, NEFT/RTGS and Internet Banking.

298. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the divestment of **IDFC Asset Management Company (IDFC AMC)**. In this, a consortium of Bandhan Bank's parent Bandhan Financial Holdings (BFHL), private equity firm ChrysCapital and Singapore's sovereign fund GIC, will acquire IDFC Asset Management Company **for Rs 4,500 crore**.

Other approvals by CCI:

- CCI has approved the Composite Scheme of Arrangement and Amalgamation between **Shriram Group Companies** under Section 31 (1) of the Competition Act 2002.
- CCI has approved the acquisition of a **50.1 percent** stake of Sanmina-SCI India (**SCIPL**) by Reliance Strategic Business Ventures (**RSBVL**).

299. BOB Financial Solutions Limited has launched the mobile application '**bobcard**' to help customers with a one-stop solution to manage their Bank of Baroda credit card services.

- The app has been designed in collaboration with **IBM**.
- It is a smart digital platform that offers a battery-saver dark-themed interface along with secured access with face ID, fingerprint lock & PIN, and a smart eye feature to ensure that card details of the customers remain private.

Additional Information:

BOB Financial Solutions is a Non-Banking Financial Company. It is wholly owned by the Bank of Baroda, an Indian public sector bank. It was established in the year 1994.

- **MD & CEO:** Shailendra Singh

300. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has postponed the implementation of new rules on nomination for mutual fund investors till **1st October 2022** which were supposed to come into force from 1st August 2022. Those buying mutual fund units from 1st October 2022 will need to provide the nomination details or will need to opt out of it.

- SEBI has also released a framework for automated deactivation of trading and demat accounts of investors in case of inadequate Know Your Client (KYC) details. The framework will come into effect from **31st August 2022**.

301. IndusInd Bank has tied up with **Rupyy**, a new age digital lending platform, to offer 100% paperless loan processing for used cars. This association will enable users of 'Rupyy' to avail simplified documentation and instant processing of vehicle loans from IndusInd Bank.

- Rupyy is the fintech arm of the Jaipur-based Girnarsoft Pvt. Ltd. which houses brands like CarDekho, BikeDekho, Zigwheels, Powerdrift, among others.

302. HDFC Bank Parivartan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru** for the construction of **Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital**. The lender will support **Rs 107.76 crore** for the construction of the three wings of the hospital. These wings are cardiology, radiology, and emergency medicine.

- IISc is setting up a multi-speciality, not-for-profit, 832-bed hospital along with a Postgraduate Medical School within its Bengaluru campus.
- The hospital is expected to be fully functional by the end of 2024 while the first batch of MD/PhD students will be admitted in 2025.

303. Union Bank of India (UBI) has launched '**Empower Him**', an industry-first, dedicated, male-centric committee to improve the workplace environment. It has been launched as a part of its flagship HR initiative 'Prerna'. It aims to promote the employees' career trajectory and improve diversity in the bank by picking out and resolving individual as well as common existing challenges.

Union Prerna:

It is the HR Transformation initiative of the Union Bank of India, aimed at improving productivity through digitization of processes, employee-centric interventions, and a learning revolution within the Banking space.

304. The Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI**) has collaborated with the **SVC Co-operative Bank** to facilitate improved flow of credit to the **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**. This is the first such agreement signed by SIDBI with Urban Cooperative Banks (USBs).

305. InsuranceDekho has collaborated with **Future Generali India Insurance** to offer **pet insurance**. InsuranceDekho will offer comprehensive coverage for over 25 breeds of dogs, aged 6 months to 10 years.

- The pet insurance policy as of now has a starting premium of about Rs.324 annually. This will offer financial assistance to pet owners towards hospitalisation (including pre and post hospitalisation), treatment of terminal illness, and surgery, subject to certain terms and conditions.
- **Note:** In India, it is estimated that pet insurance (including cattle) will witness an increase of at least **14%** to achieve **USD 490 million** at the end of the year 2022. Globally, the pet insurance market is anticipated to reach **USD 32.7 billion** by **2030**.

306. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated the **IFSC Banking Unit (IBU)** of **Deutsche Bank AG** at the Gujarat International Finance-Tec City (GIFT City) in Ahmedabad. The IBU will offer financial products across trade finance, fixed income and currencies in the initial phase.

- The GIFT City IBU will give the bank the ability to offer liquidity in INR to foreign investors and foreign corporations with exposure to India on a 24/7 basis.

Deutsche Bank AG is a multinational investment bank and provider of financial services that is dual-listed on the New York Stock Exchange and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

- **Headquarters:** Frankfurt, Germany
- Chief Executive Officer, Deutsche Bank Group, India: **Kaushik Shaparia**
- CEO of Deutsche Bank, Asia Pacific and Member of the Management Board: **Alexander von zur Muehlen**

- 307. Unity Small Finance Bank Limited** has appointed **Inderjit Camotra** as its Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO). His appointment is approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Unity Bank's Board.
- 308. Dhanlaxmi Bank** has signed an agreement with **New Street Technologies** Private Limited to facilitate micro-lending, operations management, and technology services under Priority Sector Lending (PSL). New Street Technologies is the first fintech partner of the bank.
- 309.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has constituted a **15-member** expert group of **Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)** to increase foreign investments and simplify the investment process in the capital markets.
- **Chairman: K. V. Subramanian**, Former Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India
 - **Other members:** Harun R Khan, R. Subramanian, Madhav Kalyan, Hitendra Dave, Martin Graham, Bobby Parikh, Rushabh Maniar, Nigam S. Nuggehalli, Rajesh Gandhi, Shashwat Alok, Ashishkumar Chauhan, Padmaja Chunduru, Nehal Vora, and Vikram Kothari.
 - The committee will review investment avenues available for FPIs and to advice on the feasibility of new investment avenues.
 - It will also suggest measures required to encourage FPI participation in the bond market.
- 310.** The Government of **Telangana** has launched the "**Nethanna Bima**" scheme, which offers insurance coverage to handloom & powerloom weavers in the state. This scheme will provide Rs.5 lakh insurance cover to the weavers' families in case of the unfortunate demise of an eligible beneficiary.
- For this scheme, the Telangana government has partnered with the **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)** of India. The annual premium of the beneficiaries will be paid by the government on their behalf to the LIC.
- 311.** Transform Rural India Foundation (**TRIF**) and **Intellectap** have launched a **national carbon finance platform** that will help Indian smallholder farmers leverage climate/carbon finance for sustainable agro-forestry, climate-smart agriculture, and other activities that can result in carbon sequestration and mitigation.

More than 1 million smallholder farmers will be included in the platform. This platform will enable income generation, livelihood enhancement, and climate-resilient development by leveraging carbon credits through high-quality sequestration projects in India.

312. Indian Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **SRM University** in Andhra Pradesh to lend up to **Rs 50 crore** for start-ups incubated at SRM Hatchlab for their working capital requirements or purchase of machinery and equipment.

Indian Bank has also collaborated with Hatchlab Research Centre, TBI of SRM University to launch 'IND Spring Board', an initiative for financing start-ups and MSMEs.

313. The Union Bank of India (UBI) has launched **"RACE"** as the goal for 2022. This goal is in line with the effort of the UBI bank to be among the top three largest PSB in the next couple of years.

- RACE stands for *"grow RAM (retail, agriculture and MSME) loans, improve Asset quality, increase CASA (current account, savings account deposits) and increase Earnings."*

314. Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to launch **Axis Receivables Suite (ARS)**, an innovative Cash Management proposition that simplifies Receivables reconciliation, accelerates cash flow, enhances the client experience and reduces the cost of doing business.

- ARS is an end-to-end proposition, along with a mobile app to automate the reconciliation of receivables against sales invoices raised by clients.

315. LetsVenture, India's leading early-stage platform for investors and founders, has collaborated with **IDFC First Bank** to explore synergies and support the startup ecosystem by offering curated products and solutions to startups.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work on areas of mutual interest has been signed between both the parties at LetsVenture's flagship event, **'LetsIgnite'**, for startups and founders in Bengaluru.
- Under this collaboration, IDFC First Bank will become a preferred bank for all startups on **LetsVenture's Scalix**, a newly launched platform that supports the startup ecosystem through fundraising solutions, knowledge series, and investor connect.

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PRACTICE MOCK

- 316.** The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has become the first Indian lender to frame a policy to fund makers of **lab-grown (man-made) diamonds** which are replicas of natural diamond stones.
- Recently, factories are being established in Surat, Gujarat to produce lab-grown diamonds and many diamond houses are being relocated from Mumbai, Maharashtra to southern Gujarat.
 - The policy will be largely term loans for machinery import and a part will be disbursed as working capital.
- 317.** **HDFC Bank** has collaborated with **M1xchange** promoted by Mynd Solutions Pvt Ltd to make a debut in the **Trade receivables Discounting System (TReDs)** platform. The aim is to provide more liquidity to small business at competitive interest rates.
- TReDS system is regulated by the Reserve of India (RBI). It enables Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to auction their trade receivables online and borrow funds from the financial institution which offers loan at the lowest rate of interest.
- 318.** In August 2022, **ONDC** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** for coordination of functions of institutions engaged in similar activities. It aims to change the landscape of MSMEs by bringing them into the ONDC network and accelerating their participation in e-commerce. The collaboration between ONDC and SIDBI will establish a programmatic approach for MSMEs.
- 319.** **Paytm** has tied up with **Piramal Capital & Housing Finance** to offer merchant loans to small cities and towns across India. Under this collaboration, Paytm merchant partners will be able to avail credit worth up to **Rs.10 lakh**, with terms ranging from 6-24 months.
- Piramal Capital & Housing Finance is a subsidiary of Piramal Enterprises Limited.
- 320.** **Yes Bank** has collaborated with **IBSFINTech**, a treasury-tech solution provider, to empower the corporate treasury ecosystem with a robust decision-making tool and automated workflows backed by seamless bank connectivity. They will also provide connectivity between a corporate's ERP and a bank's solutions.
- 321.** **Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited** has launched '**Kotak Crème**', a **lifestyle-focussed** corporate salary account that offers an upgraded banking experience to new-age professionals working with eminent corporates.
- Kotak Crème is launched in Bengaluru, Karnataka for it is one of the corporate hubs.
 - The account will offer premium rewards and banking experiences to each employee of the partner corporate that includes MNCs, consulting firms, law firms, non-retail FIs and unicorn companies.

- Each account comes with preferential banking services, including a complimentary Zen Credit Card.

322. The **Navi Mutual Fund** has launched its sixth fund for the year 2022, the **Navi Nifty India Manufacturing Index Fund** which is *India's first open-ended manufacturing index fund*. This fund will seek to replicate the Nifty India Manufacturing Index, which tracks the performance of manufacturers among the top 300 companies in India.

- The fund proposes to have a total expense ratio (TER) of **0.15%** and **1%** for the direct plan and regular plan, respectively.
- The weight of each stock in the index is based on its free float market capitalisation and is reconstituted and rebalanced semi-annually along with Nifty Broad-based indices.
- The index has a minimum weight of **20%** for certain manufacturing sectors.
- The largest sectors in this index currently are automobile & auto components, capital goods, healthcare, and metals & mining.
- The top 10 stocks including Sun Pharma, Reliance Industries, Tata Steel, Maruti Suzuki India, Mahindra & Mahindra and JSW Steel constitute about 37 percent of the index.

323. **HDFC Bank** has raised up to **USD 300 million** in Non-Resident External (**NRE**) deposits, offering up to 50 basis points more than the prevailing rates. The Middle East led the list of new NRI depositors while Asia & Europe have also contributed.

On 6th July 2022, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted banks to garner Foreign Currency Non-Resident Account (FCNR) (B) and NRE deposits from the Indian diaspora without any interest rate cap. These relaxations are available until October 31 and November 4, respectively.

324. The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has decided to discontinue the facility to pay subscriptions/contributions in the **Tier-II** account of the **National Pension System (NPS)** using credit cards as a mode of payment. As a result, all Points of Presence (PoPs) have been directed to discontinue accepting credit cards as a mode of payment for the Tier-II account of NPS with immediate effect.

Note: A Tier-II account acts as a voluntary savings account and only a Tier-I NPS account holder is eligible for opening a Tier-II NPS account.

325. The **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)** has sold **2 percent** of its shareholding in automaker **Mahindra & Mahindra** for about Rs 2,222.49 crore. After the sale, the LIC holding in the

passenger cars and utility vehicles company has decreased from 8.430 percent to 6.421 percent.

326. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has recently decided to manage the **Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC)** in **Bangladesh** for two more years. The IVAC will also be starting a few additional services soon which include facilitation for online form filling and submission of forms, slot booking and launching of a mobile app. A priority lounge has also been inaugurated at the IVAC centre in Dhaka.

- Currently, SBI runs a total of 15 IVACs across Bangladesh.
- The IVAC centre at the Jamuna Future Park in Dhaka was opened in 2018. It is the largest Indian visa application centre.
- The first IVAC was started by SBI in 2005 in Dhaka.

327. **HDFC Bank** has opened its first all-women branch at **Kozhikode** in **North Kerala** region. The branch, located in Cherootty Road, the hub of traders in the district, will have 4 women bankers.

- As on March 2022, women constituted 21.7 percent of the workforce and the target is to increase it to 25 percent by 2025, according to the bank.

328. **Mastercard**, an American multinational financial services corporation, has appointed Indian badminton players **Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, and Chirag Shetty** as brand ambassadors of Mastercard in India. These new ambassadors will partner with the company to spread awareness about safety, security, and convenience of digital payments in India.

329. **Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)** has launched the '**IOB Rupay Select Card**', a special variant of debit cards that can be used for domestic and international payments. It is designed to cater to high net-worth individual (HNI) customers with add-on freebies in various facilities including airport lounges, gyms, spas, and clubs.

330. The **Central Bank of India** has formed a strategic Co-Lending Partnership with **Incred Financial Services (IFSL)** to offer loans to MSME Borrowers at competitive rates, subject to compliance with the applicable law(s) including the applicable guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- Under this partnership, IFSL will originate and process MSME proposals under Priority Sector as per jointly formulated credit parameters and eligibility criteria and Central Bank of India will take into its books 80% of the MSME Priority Sector loans under mutually agreed terms.

Similarly, Central Bank of India has formed a Co-Lending Partnership with **Protium Finance** to offer loans to MSME.

331. Karnataka Bank has launched a new term deposit scheme on the occasion of 75 years of Independence as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The new scheme called “**KBL Amrit Samridhhi**” under Abhyudaya Cash Certificate (ACC) and Fixed Deposit category offers a **6.10%** per annum interest rate with a tenure of **75 weeks** (525 days).

332. Aegon Life Insurance has launched **#PlayForOurHeroes** campaign. It is a digital campaign that uses a game called ‘The Game of Life’ to spread awareness about the importance of life insurance. The campaign has been launched with the tagline ‘The more you play, the more we donate’.

- The company will be donating to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) for every 10 points scored in the game.

333. Amitabh Chaudhry, Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Axis Bank, has been named the highest paid MD and CEO among bankers in fiscal year 2022 (FY22). He has received a total remuneration of Rs 7.63 crore in FY22, including Rs 89 lakh was variable pay.

- Sumant Kathpalia, MD and CEO, Indusind Bank has been named the second-highest paid MD & CEO, with Rs 7.3 crore remuneration in FY22, followed by Sandeep Bakhshi, MD and CEO of ICICI Bank, received a remuneration of Rs 7.08 crore in FY22, and Sashidhar Jagdishan, MD and CEO of HDFC Bank, received a remuneration of Rs 6.51 crore.
- Kaizad Bharucha, executive director of HDFC Bank, has emerged the highest earning banker for 2021-22 (FY22). He received Rs 10.64 crore remuneration in FY22, mainly due to Rs 4.46 crore as performance bonus.

334. BYD India, a manufacturer of new energy vehicles, has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **HDFC Bank** to provide a stock financing solution to its pan India dealer network. The collaboration will provide BYD’s dealers access to inventory finance for electric cars.

335. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (**IRDAI**) has organized its first hackathon “**Bima Manthan 2022**” with the theme ‘**Innovation in Insurance**’.

- The hackathon invites participants to explore and develop ideas that have the potential to make insurance available to every individual in a seamless and quick way.
- The participants will get an opportunity to exhibit their innovative solutions before an eminent jury and win exciting prizes.

- It offers the winner the chance to work with an insurer (or insurers) on the winning project/platform, demo-day in front of insurers/intermediaries and other stakeholders, or direct admittance into the IRDAI Regulatory Sandbox regime.

336. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has introduced a unique term deposit programme called "**Utsav Deposit**" on the occasion of India's 76th year of Independence, celebrated as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. This fixed deposit (FD) scheme has higher interest rates and is only available for a limited time.

Utsav Fixed Deposit Scheme:

- This scheme will offer **6.1 percent** interest rate effective from 15th August 2022 with a tenure of **1000 days**.
- Senior citizens will be eligible to get an additional interest rate of **0.50%** over and above the regular rate.
- This scheme is valid for **75 days** that is till 30th October 2022.

337. The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has launched its first "state-of-the-art" dedicated branch for start-ups in **Koramangala** in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka. The branch will provide services ranging from the stage of formation of start-ups to Initial Public Offerings and Follow-on Public Offerings. The branch will also provide funding and regular banking service to start-ups. It will also support such players through associated services such as investment banking, treasury operations, advisory and other ancillary financial services through its subsidiaries.

- Two more branches will be opened in Gurugram, Haryana and Hyderabad, Telangana.

338. **Edelweiss Mutual Fund**, an Asset Management Company (AMC), has launched "**Edelweiss Gold and Silver Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) Fund of Fund (FoF)**", India's first scheme that offers exposure to gold and silver via a single fund. It will open from 24th August 2022 to 7th September 2022.

- **Note:** India's first gold fund, Nippon India ETF Gold BeES, was launched in March 2007, while ICICI Prudential Silver ETF was the first silver-based fund in India, launched in January 2022.

339. The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) regional office has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **J&K Grameen Bank** to finance **700 Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)** in J&K and Ladakh. Under this MoU, NABARD will also provide promotional grant support of **Rs.4000 per JLG** to J&K Grameen Bank.

- Recently, the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) has recommended **Mohammad Mustafa**, a 1995 batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, as the Chairman of NABARD.

340. Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** to provide "Ultima Salary Package", a best-in-class salary account with exclusive benefits & features to all its employees. Under this MoU, the lender will offer holistic banking services to the employees of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

341. The Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched "**Baroda Tiranga Deposit**", a special term deposit scheme offering higher interest rates, to mark 75th years of India's Independence.

- The scheme are available in two tenor buckets-offering interest rates of 5.75% p.a. for 444 days and 6.00% p.a. for 555 days.
- The scheme opens on 16th August up till 31st December, 2022 and is applicable on retail deposits below Rs.2 crore.
- Under this scheme, senior citizens will earn an additional interest rate of 0.50% p.a., while Non-Callable Deposits will get 0.15% p.a. extra.

342. Yes Bank has tied up with **SellerApp**, a seller-centric intelligence platform, to facilitate the adoption of Open Network Digital Commerce (**ONDC**) amongst the seller segment and help them expand their digital commerce footprint.

- ONDC is an Indian government initiative aimed to democratise the entire digital commerce space. The network is also being built as an alternative to retailers like Walmart-owned Flipkart and Amazon in the Indian ecommerce market.

343. The Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has issued guidelines for overseas investment by **Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) and Venture Capital Funds (VCFs)**, under which overseas investee firms won't need to have an Indian connection.

Key guidelines:

- AIFs can invest in securities of companies incorporated outside India.
- VCFs are allowed to make investments in off-shore venture capital undertaking, subject to certain conditions.
- AIFs or VCFs can invest in an overseas investee company, which is incorporated in a country whose securities market regulator is a signatory to the International Organization of Securities Commission's (IOSCO) Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding or a signatory to the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding with SEBI.

- AIFs or VCFs **cannot** invest in an overseas investee company, which is incorporated in a country identified by Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- AIFs or VCFs will have to file an application before SEBI for allocation of overseas investment limit in the format.

AIF means any fund established or incorporated in India which is a privately pooled investment vehicle which collects funds from sophisticated investors, whether Indian or foreign, for investing.

VCF is a type of AIF which is an investment fund that manages money from different investors seeking to provide capital in startup and small- and medium-size enterprises.

344. NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the payments solutions provider **PayXpert** to introduce UPI payment and RuPay cards in the **UK**.

This collaboration will make the Indian payment solutions available in the UK on all PayXpert's android point-of-sale (POS) devices for in-store payments, starting with UPI-based QR code payments and later integrating the possibility for RuPay card payments.

Note: UPI has achieved a volume of USD 940 billion, which is equal to 31% of GDP in India in 2021. RuPay card scheme is a first-of-its-kind global card payment scheme with over 700 million cards issued from India.

345. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has planned to launch a revamped grievance redressal mechanism to make complaint redressal more efficient with the option of customers filing their complaints in regional languages.

- The **Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGMS)**, launched in 2011, is being upgraded to make it more convenient for customers. It is to be renamed as '**Bima Bharosa**'.
- The aim of this new version is to file complaints with more efficient options of customers that can be filled in up to 13 regional languages.

346. Muthoot Finance has launched '**Milligram Reward Programme**' for its customers. It is a two-year long programme aims to strengthen the relationship between customers and bring back inactive customers.

- Under this programme, all transactions with The Muthoot Group will be rewarded with at least a milligram of gold.
- The reward programme will be applicable for 30 plus services offered by the company.
- It will be effective for all transactions from 1st April 2022.

- Every customer referral transaction with the company will earn **20 mg of gold** and also **Rs 50 crore** worth of gold (100 kg) is expected to be paid off through the programme annually.

With this, Muthoot Finance has become the **first gold loan NBFC** to launch such a new reward programme.

347. HDFC ERGO General Insurance has introduced "**All things EV**", India's first electronic vehicle ecosystem. It is a one-stop-solution portal for electric vehicles (EV).

- The platform aims to facilitate and accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles by addressing the needs of current and future EV owners.
- The platform has a roadmap with features like slot booking at charging stations, roadside assistance, RTO services and creation of an EV community.
- It will also provide the cost ownership and subsidies offered by different State Governments.

348. Castler, a digital escrow platform, has collaborated with **Yes Bank** to provide digital escrow services to the bank's customers. Castler will offer domestic and cross-border escrow solutions.

Escrow banking:

Escrow banking is a legal arrangement in which the bank temporarily holds money or equivalent transaction asset unless one or both parties have delivered on the contract terms they enter into.

349. Edelweiss General Insurance has collaborated with the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** to create digital health IDs under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission for all in India.

- The **Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA)** is the first step towards creating digital health records which is currently optional.
- ABHA is a **14-digit number** that helps users to share and access their health records digitally with registered healthcare providers.
- This program empowers people to access medical diagnosis, treatment, and financing from verified healthcare providers and payors, from across the country.

350. KreditBee, a fintech platform, has joined hands with **Cashfree Payments**, an API banking solutions company, to offer cardless Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) options for its non-credit card holders. The checkout finance loans range from Rs.2,400 to Rs.2 lakhs with a tenure of 3-18 months.

- 351. Universal Sampo General Insurance** has collaborated with Chennai-based **Repco Home Finance Limited** to offer insurance against home loans. Under this partnership, affordable insurance solutions will also be provided by Universal Sampo General Insurance like Group Credit Protection, Long-Term Fire, and Personal Accident policies to Repco's customers.
- 352.** According to the latest data by PGA Labs, the **State Bank of India (SBI)** has topped the **debit card** chart with **30%** market share. SBI is followed by Bank of Baroda (8 percent), Bank of India, Canara Bank, Union Bank, and Punjab National Bank with 5% market share.
- HDFC Bank** has topped the **credit card** chart with **22%** market share. It is followed by SBI (18%), ICICI Bank (17%), Axis Bank (12%), RBL Bank (5%), and Kotak Mahindra Bank (5%).
- 353. Tata Neu**, the 'super app' of the Tata Group, has tied up with **HDFC Bank** to launch co-branded credit cards. The card will be launched in two variants: Tata Neu Plus HDFC Bank Credit Card and Tata Neu Infinity HDFC Bank Credit Card. Each of the two variants of the card will be available on both RuPay and Visa networks.
- The customers will earn rewards on all spends, both online and in-store in the form of NeuCoins (1 NeuCoin = One Rupee).
 - The customers will earn 2 percent NeuCoins with Tata Neu Plus HDFC Bank Credit Card, and 5 percent NeuCoins with Tata Neu Infinity HDFC Bank Credit Card on all purchases on partner Tata brands.
- 354. BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (BoB), and the **Indian Army** have launched '**Yoddha**', a co-branded RuPay Contactless credit card for the Indian Army personnel, in collaboration with National Payments Corporation of India (**NPCI**). The co-branded credit card will be equipped with contactless features and will be offered on the RuPay platform. The co-branded credit card will be offered Life Time Free (LTF) to all Indian Army personnel.
- 355.** The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (**PFRDA**) has announced that a trail commission of **0.20%** of the National Pension System (NPS) D-Remit (Direct Remittance) contribution amount will be paid to **Points of Presence (POPs)** from **1st September 2022**.
- The trail commission on D-Remit contributions made by NPS subscribers who were on-boarded by the respective PoPs will be similar to eNPS.
 - The PoPs will get a minimum Rs.15 and maximum Rs.10,000, under this.
- PoPs are banks, non-banking financial institutions, pension fund managers, and brokerage firms that provide their services to investors for a small charge. They are the first point of interaction between the subscriber and NPS.

D-Remit:

The PFRDA has introduced the D-Remit (Direct Remittance) facility for the subscribers wherein they could deposit their voluntary contributions with greater ease by creating a static Virtual ID linked to their Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) and remit the amount from their Bank Account. A D-Remit contribution must be at least Rs.500 in value.

356. HDFC Bank has decided to acquire a **9.94 percent** stake in **Go Digit Life Insurance**. The lender has entered into an indicative and non-binding term sheet with Go Digit Life Insurance worth amount between Rs.49.9 crore to Rs.69.9 crore, in two tranches, by subscribing to equity shares of the company.

357. The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has partnered with **TP Renewable Microgrid (TPRMG)**, a subsidiary of Tata Power, to establish **1,000 green energy** enterprises across India.

- **Objective:** To empower rural entrepreneurs and promote sustainable entrepreneurship models throughout India.
- The driving forces behind this partnership are '*Sustainable is Attainable*' program of Tata Power and '*Empowering MSMEs*' campaign of SIDBI.
- The entrepreneurs shortlisted under this initiative will have to complete a capacity-building activity organised by TPRMG to receive an impetus called ***Go Responsive, ENterprise incentive (GREENi)*** from SIDBI.

358. Axis Bank, which partnered with Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) in 2016 to enable cashless commute in the metro, has announced to launch a campaign for **Kochi-1 smart card** holders in connection with Onam.

The lender has partnered with **Amazon Pay** to offer discounts on recharges, utility, and bill payments. The lender has released a special offer, the '*Dinning Delights*' extended to Kochi 1 card which can avail reduction on food and beverages bills.

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PRACTICE MOCK

359. PGIM India Mutual Fund has launched a new investor education and awareness website: '**MoneyAndMe**'. The website contains exhaustive content on various aspects of personal finance including household budgeting, protection, savings and investing.

The company has also launched a consumer awareness campaign '**Aapka HappinessPlanned**' to promote the MoneyAndMe Initiative.

360. The **Bank of Maharashtra (BoM)** has introduced a new Fixed Deposit (FD) scheme namely, '**Maha Dhanvarsha**'. The highest interest rate on this special deposit is 5.50% for non-senior citizens and 6% for senior citizens. The interest rate is only valid for a 400-day term.

Recently, Bank of Maharashtra revised FD interest rates on fixed deposits under Rs 2 crore with effect from August 22, 2022. The bank offers interest rates between 2.75 percent to 5.40 percent (now 5.50) interest on FD tenures between 7 days to 10 years.

Senior citizens will be offered an additional rate of 0.50 percent interest rate only for all maturities slabs of 91 days and above for deposit up to Rs 2 crore only.

361. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned the financial assistance of **Rs.230 crore** to **Mizoram** for critical rural infrastructure development under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) XXVIII.

362. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (**IRDAI**) has recently provided insurers with more flexibility in paying commission by linking limits to the overall portfolio and company management expenses.

Commission Cap:

- IRDAI has proposed a cap on commissions paid by the health and general insurance companies at **20 percent** of gross written premium (GWP).
- For life companies, IRDAI proposed to link commissions with expenses of management (EoM), wherein if the actual EoM in the previous financial year is not over **70%** of the allowable EoM limits, the life insurer can adopt commission limits as approved by its board.
- IRDAI has also proposed a **20%** commission cap on first-year premium (FYP) and 10% renewal premium (RP) compared to 35-40% and 5-7.5%, respectively.

The commission and remuneration of insurers should be based on a board-approved policy which will be reviewed on a yearly basis. No commission is payable to insurance agents or the insurance intermediaries in the direct business, and the insurers must grant discounts on the premium.

363. **ICICI Bank** has partnered with the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** to launch a range of credit cards on RuPay, the indigenous payments network. The ICICI Bank

RuPay Credit Card is available in the *Coral* variant of the Bank's Gemstone series. This will be followed by *Rubyx* and *Saphiro* variants.

364. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has enhanced disclosure rules for **credit rating agencies (CRAs)** and issued a framework for rating withdrawal of perpetual debt securities. The new framework will be applicable to credit ratings of securities that are already listed or proposed to be listed on a stock exchange.

Key norms:

- New methodology for computation of sharp rating action (SRA).
- Frame a detailed policy on Issuers Not Cooperating (INC).
- Withdraw ratings of perpetual debt securities.

Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs):

CRAs evaluate and assess an individual's or a company's creditworthiness. They consider a debtor's income and credit lines to analyse the debtor's ability to repay the debt or if there is any credit risk associated.

In India, CRAs are regulated by SEBI under **SEBI (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations, 1999**.

365. The Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has amended the pricing norms for preferential allotment of units by **Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)** and **Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)**.

Under the new framework, the pricing formula for allotment of units under preferential issue will be the **Volume-Weighted Average Price (VWAP)** of weekly highs and lows for **90 trading days** or **10 trading days**, whichever is higher.

At present, the pricing formula in a preferential allotment is the VWAP of the last two weeks or the last 26 weeks, whichever is higher.

Key guidelines:

- The preferential issue of units to "institutional investors" not exceeding five will have to be made at a price not less than the 10 trading days' VWAP of the related units quoted on a stock exchange preceding the relevant date.
- The preferential issue of units will not be made to any person who has sold or transferred any units of the issuer during the 90 trading days preceding the relevant date. At the present, the limit is six months.
- In case any person belonging to the sponsor has sold or transferred their units of the issuer during the 90 days preceding the relevant date, all sponsors will be ineligible for allotment of units on the preferential basis.

RBI IN NEWS

366. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the Punjab National Bank (**PNB**) to invest **Rs.500 crore** in the proposed Rs.2500 crore rights issue of PNB Housing Finance Limited (**PNBHFL**). The rights issue process is expected to conclude by December 2022 or latest in the March quarter. PNB has a 32.57% stake in PNBHFL.

367. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) **Financial Inclusion (FI) index** has increased to **56.4** in March 2022, showing growth across all parameters. The index stood at 53.9 as of March 2021.

FI-Index:

It was constructed to capture the extent of financial inclusion across the country. It has been constructed without any 'base year', and is published in July every year. It comprises of three broad parameters:

- **Access**, with a weightage of 35 percent;
- **Usage** with 45 percent weightage; and
- **Quality** with 20 percent weightage

368. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has restructured its **Market Data Advisory Committee (MDAC)** that recommends policy measures pertaining to securities market data access and privacy. The scope of the work of the committee includes identifying segment-wise data perimeters, data needs and gaps, recommending data privacy and data access regulations applicable to market data.

- Now, the committee will consists of **20 members**. Earlier, it had 21 members.
- The committee is chaired by **S Sahoo**, Professor at National Law University, Delhi, and former chairperson of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI).
- SEBI has replaced NSE's former MD and CEO Vikram Limaye from the list with the NSE's newly appointed CEO Ashish Kumar Chauhan.
- **Other members:** Nithin Kamath, Ranjit Pawar, Sreekanth Nadella, Suhas Tuljapurkar, Raman Uberoi, Kiran Shetty, Mahesh Vyas, Prithvi Haldea, Dharendra Kumar, Anuj Kumar, Subrata Sarkar, CKG Nair, Padmaja Chunduru, Nehal Vora, Amarjeet Singh, PS Reddy, Prabhas Kumar Rath, and Arun Raste.

369. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed **Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)** to pay bills on behalf of their families in India through **Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS)**. With this, NRIs will be able to make direct payments of various utilities such as water bills, electricity bills or telecom for their respective families in India via the BBPS platform.

BBPS:

It is a one-stop financial framework for payment of bills that is interoperable and accessible at any point in time and from anywhere. It is a payments system conceptualized by RBI and run by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

370. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has prescribed guidelines for **small finance banks (SFBs)** to become **Authorized Dealer (AD) Category-I** in forex business.

Key guidelines:

- As per the new guidelines, SFBs which have completed **two years** of operations in **AD Category II** and have a minimum net worth of **Rs.500 crore** can deal in foreign exchange.
- As a Category-I authorised dealer, the SFBs will have the permission to deal in all other transactions in foreign exchange including bill of exchange, cheques, letters of credit, deposits, etc. On the other hand, as a Category-II Authorised dealer, the bank will be allowed to offer only money-changing facilities.
- The capital-to-risk weighted assets ratio (**CRAR**) should not be less than **15 percent**.
- The net non-performing assets (**NPA**s) of the bank should not exceed **6%**, during previous four quarters.
- It should not have defaulted in maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) / Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) during previous two years.
- It should have sound internal control systems.

371. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has prohibited the use of **Letters of Comfort (LoC)**, which may impact loans worth **Rs 35,000 crore**. Around 60% of these belong to power, healthcare, engineering & construction, and road sectors.

Letters of Comfort (LoC):

LoC is a letter issued by a **parent company** which tells a bank that they know the loan is availed by one of their subsidiaries. The letter states that the parent company supports the subsidiary in the process, and they will lend their hand wherever required. It is generally issued by foreign companies that have their branches and subsidiaries in India.

372. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a regulatory framework to make **digital lending** safe for members of the public; curb malpractices; and to mitigate the concerns arising from credit delivery through digital lending methods. This framework is focused on the digital lending ecosystem of RBI's Regulated Entities (REs) and the Lending Service Providers (LSPs) engaged by them to extend various permissible credit facilitation services.

The central bank has divided the digital lenders into three categories:

- **First Category:** Entities regulated by the RBI and permitted to carry out lending business;
- **Second Category:** Entities authorised to carry out lending according to other statutory/ regulatory provisions but not regulated by the RBI,
- **Third Category:** Entities lending outside the purview of any statutory/ regulatory provision.

*These guidelines are for the **first category**, or entities regulated by the RBI.*

Key guidelines:

- All loan disbursements and repayments are required to be executed only between the bank account of the borrower and the RE, without any pass-through/ pool account of the LSP or any third party.
- Fees for LSPs are paid directly by REs and are not charged by LSP to the borrower.
- The all-inclusive cost of digital loans in the form of annual percentage rate (APR) is required to be disclosed to the borrower by REs.
- Automatic increase in credit limit without explicit consent of borrower is prohibited.
- Data collected by digital lending apps should be need-based.
- Any lending sourced through digital lending apps has to be reported to Credit Information Companies (CICs).
- Restrictions on first loss default guarantee under examination.

373. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of **Rs.2.33 crore** on Hyderabad-based **Spandana Spahoorty Financial Ltd** for its failure to adhere to pricing of credit guidelines for Non-Banking Financial Company - Micro Finance Institutions (NBFC-MFIs). The penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in it under the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

374. The RBI has also imposed a monetary penalty of **Rs.32 lakh** on **Indian Bank**, for non-compliance with certain provisions of Reserve Bank of India (Fraud classification and reporting by commercial banks and select FIs) Directions 2016.

375. The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the licence of **Rupee Cooperative Bank, Pune** thereby prohibiting the bank from conducting the business of 'banking' which includes, among other things, acceptance of deposits and repayment of deposits as defined in Section 5(b) read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 with effect from **22nd September 2022**.

- 376.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently cancelled the licence of **Deccan Urban Co-operative Bank**, Vijayapur, Karnataka due to inadequate capital and no earning prospects.
- 377.** The **Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has recently joined the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) **Account Aggregator (AA) network**. This will allow customers to share information about their mutual fund and stock holdings with financial service providers.
- Under the framework, Financial Information Providers (FIPs) in the securities market, like depositories and asset management companies (AMCs) through their Registrar and Transfer Agents (RTAs) will provide financial information pertaining to securities markets to the customers and consented Financial Information Users (FIUs) through any of the account aggregators registered with the RBI.
 - This move will make the entire trading system, depository system, as well as mutual fund system, online.
 - It is noteworthy that all the **12 public sector banks (PSBs)** have joined the AA framework.

AA System:

In 2021, the central government unveiled the Account Aggregator network, a financial data-sharing system that could revolutionize investing and credit, giving millions of consumer's greater access and control over their financial records.

An Account Aggregator (AA) is a type of RBI regulated entity (with an NBFC-AA license) that helps an individual securely and digitally access and share information from one financial institution they have an account with to any other regulated financial institution in the AA network. Data cannot be shared without the consent of the individual.

- 378.** As per the latest Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) data, the remittance by Indians under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) increased **64.75 percent** to over **USD 6.04 billion** in **Q1FY23** from USD 3.67 billion in Q1FY22.
- The amount remitted in Q1FY23 is even higher than that in Q4FY22, where outward remittance under LRS reached USD 5.8 billion.
 - In April 2022, about USD 2.02 billion was remitted, followed by USD 2.03 billion in May 2022, and USD 1.98 billion in June 2022.
 - International travel contributed USD 2.92 billion of the USD 6.04 billion remitted under LRS in Q1FY23, thus constituting almost 48 percent of the money remitted under the LRS scheme.
 - Maintenance of close relatives formed the second largest segment after international travel, with Indian's remitting just over USD 1 billion in Q1FY23.
 - Money remitted under the category "gift" constituted the third largest segment, with India's remitting around USD 770.66 million in Q1, as against USD 489.15 million in the year-ago period.

- Overseas education constituted the fourth largest segment, with USD 738.42 million remitted in the April – June quarter, against USD 1.16 billion in the year-ago period.

Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS):

The scheme was introduced on **4th February 2004**, with a limit of USD 25,000. Now, all resident individuals, including minors, are allowed to freely remit up to **USD 250,000** per financial year for any permissible current or capital account transaction or a combination of both.

379. In line with the amendment in the Foreign Exchange Management Act 2015, Outward Investments Rules, officially called, **Foreign Exchange Management (Overseas Investment) Regulations, 2022** have been framed by the Government of India in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). These rules are applicable with effect from 22nd August 2022.

Currently, the overseas investment by a person resident in India is governed by the *Foreign Exchange Management (Transfer or Issue of Any Foreign Security) Regulations, 2004* and the *Foreign Exchange Management (Acquisition and Transfer of Immovable Property Outside India) Regulations, 2015*.

Key amendments:

- Under the new amendment, the net worth of a registered partnership firm or LLP (Limited Liability Partnership) will be the sum of the capital contribution of partners and undistributed profits of the partners after deducting therefrom the aggregate value of the accumulated losses, deferred expenditure, and miscellaneous expenditure not written off, as per the last audited balance sheet.
- The amendment guides where investment by a person resident in India in the equity capital of a foreign entity is classified as ODI (Overseas Direct Investment), such investment will continue to be treated as ODI even if the investment falls to a level below 10% of the paid-up equity capital or such person loses control in the foreign entity.
- Any Indian resident who has acquired and continues to hold equity capital of any foreign entity can invest in the equity capital issued by such entity as a rights issue; or may be granted bonus shares subject to the terms and conditions under these rules.
- Any Indian resident whose account is classified as non-performing assets, or as a wilful defaulter by any bank, or is under investigation by a financial service regulator will have to obtain a 'No Objection Certificate' from the lender bank or regulatory body or investigative agency before making any financial commitment or undertaking disinvestment.
- The pricing will be on an arm's length basis.

- Any Indian resident may transfer equity capital by way of sale to a person resident in India, who is eligible to make such investment under these rules, or to a person resident outside India.
- **No** person resident in India can make a financial commitment to a foreign entity that has invested or invests in India.
- An Indian entity having an overseas office may acquire immovable property outside India for the business and residential purposes of its staff.
- An Indian entity not engaged in financial services activity in India may make ODI in a foreign entity, which is directly or indirectly engaged in financial services activity, except banking or insurance, subject to the condition that such Indian entity has posted net profits during the preceding three financial years.
- An Indian entity **not** engaged in the insurance sector may make ODI in general and health insurance where such insurance business is supporting the core activity undertaken overseas by such an Indian entity.

380. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently imposed certain restrictions on Kerala-based **Thodupuzha Urban Co-operative Bank** for a period of six months. RBI has banned the bank from granting or renewing loans and advances and making any investments. RBI has also suspended withdrawal in the bank's savings and current accounts for depositors.

RBI has also lifted the business restrictions imposed on **American Express Banking Corp** after the latter has demonstrated satisfactory compliance with regard to Storage of Payment System Data.

The RBI had on 23 April 2021 imposed restrictions on American Express from on-boarding new domestic customers onto its card network from 1 May 2021 for non-compliance with RBI's circular dated 6 April 2018 on Storage of Payment System Data.

381. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of **Rs.2.33 crore** on **Spandana Spoority Financial Limited, Hyderabad** for noncompliance with certain provisions, and failed to attach to credit pricing guidelines for Non-Banking Financial Company-Micro Finance Institutions (NBFC-MFIs).

This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 58 G read with clause (aa) of sub-section (5) of section 58 B of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

382. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the '**Quarterly Statistics on Deposits and Credit of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) for June 2022**'. This data is collected from

all Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), which include Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks (SFBs) and Payments Banks (PBs).

- Bank credit growth has accelerated to **14.2 percent** in Q1FY23 (quarter ended June 2022) from 6 percent in Q1FY22.
- In Q4FY22 (quarter ended March 2022), bank credit had expanded by 10.8 percent.
- Credit growth has been broad-based: all the population groups (i.e., rural, semi-urban, urban and metropolitan), all the bank groups (i.e., public/private sector banks, foreign banks, RRBs and SFBs) and all the regions of the country (i.e., central, eastern, north-eastern, northern, southern and western) recorded double-digit annual credit growth in June 2022.
- Aggregate deposit growth (year-on-year) has remained in the range **9.5 - 10.2 percent** during the last five quarters.
- Metropolitan branches continue to account for over half of the bank deposits and their share increased marginally over the last one year.
- The share of current account and savings account (CASA) deposits in total deposits has been increasing over the last three years (42 percent in June 2020, 43.8 percent in June 2021 and 44.5 percent in June 2022).
- In June 2022, the credit-deposit (C-D) ratio stood at **73.5 percent** at all-India level (70.5 percent a year ago) and **86.2 percent** for metropolitan branches of banks (84.3 percent a year ago).

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

383. The **Orang National Park & Tiger Reserve** has received the 2nd Annual **IUCN WCPA International Ranger Award 2022**. The award, presented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), recognizes the remarkable work of rangers in protected areas around the world.

- The Award has been announced in a ceremony at the IUCN African Protected Areas Congress in Kigali, Rwanda.
- In total, seven individual rangers and three ranger teams from ten countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Australasia have been recognized.
- Each winner or winning team receives USD10,000 to support the protected and conserved areas where they work, and a custom uniform patch to signify their achievement.

384. **Jeffrey Armstrong**, a Canadian scholar, has received the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) "**Distinguished Indologist for 2021**" Award for his outstanding contribution in study, teaching and research in any of the fields of Indian Studies. With this, he has become the seventh recipient of this award. He is the founder of the Vedic Academy of Science & Arts and author of "**The Bhagavad Gita comes Alive**".

ICCR Distinguished Indologist award:

It was instituted in 2015 during the First World Indology Conference. The award comprises a citation, a gold-plated medallion, and USD 20,000. The first recipient of the award in 2015 was Professor Heinrich Freiherr Von Stietencron from Germany.

385. The Aurangabad Smart City Development Corporation Limited (ASCDCL) has announced that **Aurangabad** has become the first city in India to publish the **Environmental Insights Explorer (EIE)** data from **Google**. The data will help research organizations in framing sustainable solutions for the city. The EIE dashboard for Aurangabad has been launched by Google during an event in New Delhi.

- The EIE is a feature of Google, which helps cities measure the carbon emission sources, conduct analysis and identify strategies to reduce emissions that help counter air pollution.
- The EIE feature in India is only available for *Aurangabad, Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune*.

386. The **French Government** has honoured Indian publisher **Kannan Sundaram**, publisher of *Kalachuvadu*, with **Chevalier dans l'Ordre du Mérite Agricole**, the Knight of the Order of the Merit, for his contribution to the publishing collaboration between India and France.

387. **Sangeetha Abhayan**, a **Kerala**-based entrepreneur, has won the **World Women Entrepreneurs' Award 2022** instituted by the Junior Chamber International Hong Kong (JCIHK) at a virtual event held at Hong Kong. She has been awarded for her handloom and handicrafts startup's performance in tune with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

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388. Indian men's football team captain **Sunil Chhetri** has been named the 2021-22 All India Football Federation (AIFF) Men's Footballer of the Year Award for the seventh time. In the women's category, **Manisha Kalyan** has been named the AIFF Women's Footballer of the Year Award.

Other AIFF Awards 2021-2022:

- AIFF Women's Emerging Footballer of the Year: Martina Thokchom
- AIFF Men's Emerging Footballer of the Year: Vikram Pratap Singh
- AIFF Best Referee of the Year: Crystal John
- AIFF Best Assistant Referee of the Year: Ujjal Halder

389. Congress Member of Parliament (MP) **Shashi Tharoor** will receive the France's highest civilian award, the **Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur (the Legion of Honor)**, for his writings and speeches. The award will be conferred on him by the French government during the next visit of any minister of the French Government to India.

The National Order of the Legion of Honour, formerly the Royal Order of the Legion of Honour, is the highest **French order of merit**, both military and civil. It was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte.

Books written by Shashi Tharoor:

Bookless in Baghdad (2005); India Shastra: Reflections on the Nation in our Time (2015); An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India (2016); Why I am a Hindu (2018); The Paradoxical Prime Minister (2018); The Hindu Way: An Introduction to Hinduism (2019), etc.

390. Karnataka Chief Minister, Basavaraj Bommai, has announced that Kannada film star **Puneeth Rajkumar**, who died last year, will be conferred with the '**Karnataka Ratna**' award posthumously. The award will be conferred on 1st November, which happens to be Kannada Rajyotsava, the state's formation day. He will be the **10th** recipient of the state's highest civilian honour.

391. The **13th** edition of the **Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2022** commenced on 12th August and will conclude on 30th August 2022. The event, held annually in Australia, celebrates the Indian film industry by screening some of the most prominent and acclaimed films, TV shows, and web series from the country.

The event is hosted by Indian actor **Rithvik Dhanjani**.

S.N o.	Category	Winners
1	Best Film	83
2	Best Director	Shoojit Sircar (Sardar Udham) and Aparna Sen (The Rapist)

3	Best Actor	Ranveer Singh (83)
4	Best Actress	Shefali Shah (Jalsa)
5	Best Series	Mumbai Diaries 26/11
6	Best Actor in a Series	Mohit Raina (Mumbai Diaries 26/11)
7	Best Actress in a Series	Sakshi Tanwar (Mai)
8	Best Indie Film	Jaggi
9	Best Film from the Subcontinent	Joyland
10	Lifetime Achievement Award	Kapil Dev
11	Disruptor in Cinema Award	Vaani Kapoor (Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui)
12	Equality in Cinema Award	Jalsa
13	Leadership in Cinema Award	Abhishek Bachchan

392. The President of India, Droupadi Murmu has approved **107 Gallantry awards** to Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel on the occasion of Independence Day 2022. The awards include 3 Kirti Chakra, 13 Shaurya Chakras, 2 bar to Sena Medals (gallantry), 81 Sena Medals (gallantry), 1 Nao Sena Medal (gallantry), and 7 Vayu Sena Medals (gallantry).

The President has also approved 40 mention-in-despatches to the Indian Army, one to Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel and another to the army dog, '**Axel**' (posthumously), for their significant contributions.

SL. NO.	Name	Service
<u>KIRTI CHAKRA</u>		
1.	Naik Devendra Pratap Singh	ARMY
2.	Sudip Sarkar (Posthumous)	MHA

3.	Paotinsat Guite (Posthumous)	MHA
<u>SHAURYA CHAKRA</u>		
1.	Major Nitin Dhaania	ARMY
2.	Major Amit Dahiya	ARMY
3.	Major Sandeep Kumar	ARMY
4.	Major Abhishek Singh	ARMY
5.	Havildar Ghanshyam	ARMY
6.	Lance Naik Ragh Vendra Singh	ARMY
7.	Sepoy Karn Veer Singh (Posthumous)	ARMY
8.	Gunner Jasbir Singh (Posthumous)	ARMY
9.	Lt Cdr Mritunjay Kumar	NAVY
10.	Amit Kumar	MHA
11.	Somay Vinayak Munde	MHA
12.	Ravindra Kashinath Naitam	MHA
13.	Tikaram Sampatrao Katenge	MHA
<u>BAR TO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)</u>		
1.	Major Archit Sharma	ARMY
2.	Major Narender Singh Waldia	ARMY

A total of **1082 Police personnel** have been awarded Police Medals on the occasion of Independence Day, 2022. Among them, 347 personnel have been awarded Police Medal for Gallantry, 87 with President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and 648 personnel awarded the Police Medal for Meritorious Service. 109 CRPF personnel and 108 Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel have been awarded Police Medal for Gallantry.

Apart from them, 7 personnel have been awarded President's Correctional Service Medal for Distinguished Service and 38 personnel have been given the Correctional Service Medal for Meritorious Service.

393. Renowned **Bangladeshi architect**, researcher and educator **Marina Tabassum** has become the first person from the global south and first south Asian to win the prestigious **Lisbon Triennale Millennium bcp Lifetime Achievement Award**.

- She will receive an original artwork by the Portuguese artist and sculptor Carlos Nogueira as award during the Lisbon Triennale which begins on 29 September 2022 in Lisbon, Portugal.
- **Her major works:** Bait Ur Rouf mosque in Dhaka, Bamboo houses at the Rohingya refugee camps, at Ukhiya near Cox's Bazar, etc.

394. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has announced the winners and honourable mentions of the **National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Awards 2020** which recognises companies that have made positive impact on the society through their innovative & sustainable CSR initiatives. It has been presented to **20 award winners and 17 Honourable Mentions** across the three main categories:

Category 1: Corporate Awards for Excellence in CSR

Sub-category	Winner	Honourable Mention
Companies having eligible CSR Spend equal and above Rs. 100 crores	Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited	Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited
Companies having eligible CSR Spend equal and above Rs. 10 crores and less than Rs. 100 crores	Tata Steel Limited	Tech Mahindra Limited
Companies having eligible CSR Spend equal and above Rs. 1 crore and less than Rs.10 crores	CRISIL Limited	Honeywell Automation India Limited

Companies having eligible CSR Spend below Rs. 1 crore	Wingify Software Private Limited	Tata Motors Finance Limited
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Category 2: CSR Awards for CSR in Aspirational Districts / Difficult Terrains

Sub-category	Winner	Honourable Mention
Northern India	ITC Limited	Indian Oil Corporation Limited
North-East India	North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited	Power Grid Corporation of India Limited
Eastern India	Jindal Steel & Power Limited	National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO)
Western India	Tata Communications Transformation Services Limited	JK Lakshmi Cement Limited
Southern India	Avantel Limited	Ashok Leyland Limited

Category 3: CSR Awards for contribution in National Priority Areas

Sub-category	Winner	Honourable Mention
Education	Tata Steel Limited	BMW India Private Limited
Skill Development & Livelihood	Tech Mahindra Limited	Mahindra & Mahindra Limited
Agriculture & Rural Development	Mahanadi Coalfields Limited	-

Health, Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation	Hero MotoCorp Limited	Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited
Environment, Sustainable Development and Solar Energy	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited	Bajaj Auto Limited
Women and Child Development	Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Limited	Mahanadi Coalfields Limited
Technology Incubation	Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited	-
Promotion of Sports	Central Coalfields Limited	Aditya Birla Insurance Brokers Limited
Slum Area Development	HCL Technologies Limited	-
Heritage, Art and Culture	Elin Appliances Private Limited	Hindustan Zinc Limited
Support to differently-abled	Jindal Steel and Power Limited	ADP Private Limited

Note: First National CSR Awards were conferred on 29 October 2019. There were total 19 winners and 19 Honourable Mentions in different sub-categories of the award in the first cycle.

395. Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs, **Pralhad Joshi**, has addressed the **2nd edition** of the **Coal Minister's Awards** ceremony in New Delhi. He has also presented the Coal Minister's Awards for 2021-22 in different categories.

Coal Minister's Awards 2021-22:

- **Mahanadi Coal Fields Limited (MCL)** has won the first prize in three categories, namely 'Safety', 'Production & Productivity' and 'Quality', out of the five categories of awards.

- **Western Coalfields Limited (WCL)** has won the first prize in the category 'Sustainability', and **Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL)** has won the first prize in 'Implementation of ERP'.
- Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), a Jharkhand based subsidiary of Coal India Limited (CIL), has won the second prize in safety category and third in sustainability category

The awards were introduced in 2021 to acknowledge the best performers among Coal India Limited's (CIL's) coal producing companies. Initially, the awards were given in three categories - **Safety, Production & productivity and Sustainability.**

In 2022, two new additional categories of **Quality** and **ERP implementation** have been added. The General Managers from the best performing sectors are also awarded in four sub-categories.

396. "Mithila Makhana" from **Bihar** has been awarded a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag. This will help the farmers who grow the foxnuts (Makhana) get the maximum price for their premium produce.

- The GI has been registered under the name of Mithilanchal Makhana Utpadak Sangh, facilitated by Bihar Agricultural University.
- Districts of Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Begusarai, Madhubani and Katihar have been defined as the geographic location for the production of Mithila Makhana.

397. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will be conferred with the **2022 Liberty Medal**. He will be honoured at the National Constitution Center (NCC), Philadelphia, USA in October 2022. He will be honoured with the medal and a prize of USD 100,000 to recognize his leadership in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He has planned to donate the prize to the new Ukrainian Veteran Fund.

Earlier, the Ukrainian President received the Ronald Reagan Freedom Award and the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award as well as honours from the governments of the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia.

Liberty Medal:

The Liberty Medal, established in 1988 to mark the U.S. Constitution's bicentennial, is presented to individuals who strive to secure the blessings of liberty for people around the globe.

398. Bangladesh-born **Fahmida Azim** working for the Insider online magazine of United States has been selected for the **2022 Pulitzer Prize** under the category of Illustrated Reporting and Commentary. She is among the four journalists including **Anthony Del Col, Josh Adams and Walt Hickey** of Insider being published from New York, selected for their work on the

Chinese oppression of the Uyghurs. The work *'I escaped a Chinese internment Camp'* has illustrations by Fahmida Azim.

Fahmida Azim:

She was born in Bangladesh and now settled in the US. She is an illustrator and story teller. Her work centres on themes of identity, culture and autonomy. She has illustrated a number of books including her own notable project *'Muslim Women Are Everything'*.

Pulitzer Prize:

It is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine, online journalism, literature, and musical composition within the United States. It was established in 1917.

- 399.** Former German chancellor **Angela Merkel** has won the **UNESCO Peace Prize 2022** for “her efforts to welcome refugees”. She has been awarded for making a courageous decision in 2015 to welcome more than 1.2 million refugees, notably from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea.

UNESCO Peace Prize:

The honour, which is officially called Felix Houphouet-Boigny-UNESCO Peace Prize, is named after the former president of Ivory Coast. It has been awarded each year since 1989 to individuals, organisations or institutions that have made a special effort to promote, research or secure peace. The prize includes a cheque of USD 150,000, a gold medal and a peace diploma.

- 400.** The **Anang Tal Lake** in **South Delhi** has been declared a **Monument of National Importance** through a gazette notification by the Ministry of Culture.

The Monuments of National Importance are designated by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**. The Government of India is authorised to maintain, protect and promote the Monuments of National Importance.

Anang Tal Lake:

It was built by the founder King of Delhi Anang Pal Tomar in 1052 AD. It is situated to the north of Jog Maya temple and approximately 500 metres to the northwest of Qutub Complex. It is believed that Alauddin Khalji, in 1296-1316 AD, utilised the water of this tank when he built (Qutub) minar and extended the Qutub-ul-Islam mosque.

- 401.** **Divita Rai** of **Karnataka** has won the **Miss Diva Universe 2022** title held in Mumbai, Maharashtra. She has been crowned by the outgoing titleholder Harnaaz Sandhu. She will represent India at the 71st Miss Universe 2022 pageant.

Other winners:

Pragnya Ayyagari of Telangana has won the LIVA Miss Diva Supranational 2022 crown.

Ojasvi Sharma has won the Miss Popular Choice 2022.

- 402.** India has recently nominated the dance form '**Garba**' to be inscribed on *UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list*. Garba is a dance form that originated in the **Gujarat** region. It is performed during the nine-day Hindu festival Navaratri.

Note: In 2021, 'Durga Puja' (West Bengal) was included on the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage list.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Book	Author	Remark
The Light We Carry	Michelle Obama	Published by Random House Publishing
Riding the De(Mon)	Murali Raghavan	Published by Leadstart Publishing
Journey of a Nation : 75 years of Indian Economy	Sanjaya Baru	Published by Rupa Publications
Amphibians of the Northern Western Ghats	Satish Pande	Released by Tata Power in collaboration with Ela Foundation. It is the fourth book in a series.
The Dolphin and the Shark: Stories on Entrepreneurship	Namita Thapar	Published by Penguin Portfolio
Dangerous Earth: What we wish we knew about volcanoes, hurricanes, climate change, earthquakes and more	Ellen Prager (Marine Biologist)	
Lockdown Lyrics	Sanjukta Dash	
Lion of the Skies: Hardit Singh Malik, the Royal Air Force and the First World War	Stephan Barker	Published by HarperCollins India
Do Different: The Untold Dhoni	Amit Sinha & Joy Bhattacharjya	Published by India Viking
Through The Rear View Mirror	K.R.A. Narasiah	
Reimagining South Asia: Multilateralism in the Contemporary Times	Nagalaxmi M. Raman	
How China Sees India and the World	Shyam Saran	
Rusty Skies and Golden Winds	Sannidhya Sharma	Published by Blue-rose publishers.

Field Guide, Birds of India	-	Published by Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
Fauna of Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary	-	Published by Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery	Dr Bharat Barai	
Heartfelt-The Legacy of Faith	-	Released by NID Foundation
Bravo Yadav-Journey of Honorary Captain Subedar Yogendra Singh Yadav India's Youngest Param Vir Chakra Recipient	Deepak Singh	
Putin: His Life and Times	Philip Short	It is the biography of the Russian President Vladimir Putin
Bibi: My Story	Benjamin Netanyahu	
Madam Sir: The Story of Bihar's First Lady IPS Officer	Manjari Jaruhar	
Indians at Herod's Gate: A Jerusalem Tale	Navtej Sarna	
Men of Steel-Military Leadership for India	Yash Mor and Ajay Kumar Singh	
NETAJI: Subhas Chandra Bose's Life, Politics and Struggle	Krishna Bose	Translated to English from Bengali by Sumantra Bose
Sing, Dance and Pray: The Inspirational Story of Srila Prabhupada Founder-Acharya of ISKCON	Hindol Sengupta	
Gambling on Development: Why Some Countries Win and Others Lose	Stefan Dercon	Published by C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd
Lies Our Mothers Told Us: The Indian Woman's Burden	Nilanjana Bhowmick	Published by Rupa & Co
A NEW INDIA: Selected Writings 2014-19	Arun Jaitley	Published by Juggernaut
India's Economy from Nehru to Modi: A Brief History	Pulapre Balakrishnan	
In Free Fall: My Experiments With Living	Mallika Sarabhai	Published by Speaking Tiger
The Hero of Tiger Hill: Autobiography of a Param Vir	Yogendra Singh Yadav	

PERSON IN NEWS

Post/Designation	Person	State/Country/Organization	Remark
Principal Director-General (DG)	Satyendra Prakash	Press Information Bureau (PIB)	He has succeeded Jaideep Bhatnagar.
Principal Director-General (DG)	Manish Desai	Central Bureau of Communication	
Country Director for India	Auguste Tano Kouamé	World Bank	He has succeeded Junaid Kamal Ahmad.
Director General	Sujoy Lal Thaosen	Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)	He has succeeded Sanjay Arora.
Police Commissioner	Sanjay Arora	Delhi	He has succeeded Rakesh Asthana.
Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC)	Suresh N. Patel	Government of India	He has succeeded Sanjay Kothari.
Surgeon	Lt Gen Daljit Singh	President of India	
Director	Shweta Singh	Prime Minister's Office (PMO) (India)	
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	Nalin Negi	BharatPe	
Chairman	Ravinder Takkar	Vodafone Idea Limited	
Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)	Ranjit Rath	Oil India Limited (OIL)	
Director-General (DG)	Nallathamby Kalaiselvi	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)	She is the first woman DG of CSIR. She will also hold the charge as secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.
Vice-President	Jagdeep Dhankhar	Government of India	He has become the 14th Vice President of India

President	Arkady Dvorkovich (Russia)	International Chess Federation (FIDE)	He has been re- elected for a second term.
Deputy President	Viswanathan Anand	International Chess Federation (FIDE)	
Cabinet Secretary	Rajiv Gauba	Government of India	He has been given 1-year extension.
Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Inderjit Camotra	Unity Small Finance Bank	
President	Gustavo Petro	Colombia	
Prime Minister	James Marape	Papua New Guinea	
Chief Justice of India (CJI)	Justice Uday Umesh Lalit	Supreme Court of India	He will succeed Justice NV Ramana.
Non-official directors	Satish Kashinath Marathe, Swaminathan Gurumurthy, Revathy Iyer, and Sachin Chaturvedi	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)	
Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer	Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Ríos (Argentina)	United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)	
CEO	Piyush Goyal	NATGRID (National Intelligence Grid)	
CMD	Ashok K K Meena	Food Corporation of India (FCI)	
Director	Archana Varma	National Water Mission	
MD	Gitanjali Gupta	Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation	
President	William Ruto	Kenya	
Executive Secretary	Simon Stiell	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	
MD & CEO	Rajkiran Rai G	National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)	
MD & CEO	Gopal Vittal	Bharti Airtel	
MD & CEO	Vijay Shekhar Sharma	Paytm	

Trustee	Ashish Dhawan and Dr Helene D. Gayle	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	
Secretary	Rajesh Verma	President of India	
Member	Alkesh Sharma, Vint Cerf, and Maria Reesa	Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Leadership Panel	
Executive Director	Meenesh C Shah	National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)	
Director	Debasisa Mohanty	National Institute of Immunology (NII)	
High Commissioner	Vikram K Doraiswami (India)	United Kingdom	
Executive, Vice-President and Head	Sajith Sivanandan	Disney+ Hotstar	
Prime Minister	Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga	Mali	
Non-Executive Directors	Gopal Jain and Dr Sivakumar Gopalan	RBL Bank	
Executive Director for India	K.V. Subramanian	International Monetary Fund (IMF)	He will succeed Surjit S Bhalla.
MD & CEO	Deepak Kumar Lalla	SBICAP Securities	He has succeeded Naresh Yadav.
MD	Mahendra N Shah	IDFC Limited	He will succeed Sunil Kakar.
Chairman	Samir V. Kamat	Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)	He has succeeded G Satheesh Reddy who has been named as Scientific Adviser to Defence Minister.
Secretary	Vipnesh Bharadwaj	All India Chess Federation (AICF)	
President (Interim)	Adille Sumariwalla	Indian Olympic Association	
Whole-Time Member (WTM)	Ananth Narayan Gopalakrishnan	Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)	

Company**Brand Ambassador**

Uttarakhand State	Rishabh Pant (Cricketer)
Mastercard	Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, and Chirag Shetty (Badminton)
Heads up for Tails (HUFT)	Kriti Sanon (Bollywood actress)
DreamSetGo	Sourav Ganguly (Cricketer)

OBITUARIES

Deceased Person	Associated Field	Remark
Bill Russell	Basketball	He won the Olympic gold medal in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.
Nirmala Mishra	Singer (Bengali & Odia)	
Fidel Valdez Ramos	Politician & General	He served as the 12th President of the Philippines.
Nichelle Nichols (USA)	Actress & Singer	
T Mohandas M Pai	Lawyer	Founder of popular Kannada daily 'Udayavani'
Johnny Famechon (Australia)	Boxer	
David McCullough (USA)	Author & Historian	
Rudi Koertzen (South Africa)	Umpire (Cricket)	
PV Kamaraj	Athlete	
Rakesh Jhunjhunwala	Investor & Stock Trader	He is known as India's Warren Buffet. Founder of Akasa Air, India's low-cost airline.
Shimoga Subbanna	Singer (Kannada)	
Uma Pemmaraju	Journalist	

(Indian-American)		
Amitabh Choudhary	Bureaucrat & Cricket Administrator	
Narayan	Novelist	He is considered Kerala's first tribal novelist.
Samar 'Badru' Banerjee	Football	
Syed Sibtey Razi	Politician	
Abdul Gaffar Nadiadwala	Filmmaker	
K. Sadananda Shetty	Banker	He served as the Chairman of Vijaya Bank.
Ralph Eggleston (USA)	Animator	His major works: 'Toy Story', 'Inside Out', 'Finding Nemo', 'The Lion King', etc.
Abhijit Sen	Economist	Former member of the Planning Commission of India. Awarded Padma Bhushan in 2010.
Mikhail Gorbachev (Russia)	Politician	He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1990 for putting an end to the cold war without any bloodshed in the Soviet Union.

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SPORTS

403. Red Bull's **Max Verstappen** (Netherlands) has won the Formula One (F1) 2022 Hungarian Grand Prix. This is his 28th Grand Prix win and the 8th win of the 2022 season. Mercedes's Lewis Hamilton (Britain) has finished second and Mercedes's George Russell (Britain) has finished third in the race.

404. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has appointed four new members to the **Athletes' Commission** to help represent the athlete voice within the Olympic Movement. The appointments have been made in consultation with Emma Terho, Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission.

Four new members:

- **Allyson Felix** (USA): Sprinter
- **Alistair Brownlee** (UK): triathlon
- **Oluseyi Smith** (Canada): Sprinter
- **Masomah Ali Zada** (first refugee athlete on any IOC commission): Cyclist

405. England has won the 2022 UEFA European Women's Football Championship by defeating **Germany** in the final match held at Wembley Stadium in London. The 13th edition of the UEFA Women's Championship has been hosted by England.

406. Johnny Famechon, the renowned Australian boxing legend and former world champion, has recently passed away in Melbourne, Australia. He was born on 28 March 1945 in Paris, France. He was associated with professional **boxing** for more than 20 years and had a record of 56 wins, which includes 20 by knockout, six draws and five losses.

407. India has won the **15 medals** (5 Gold, 6 Silver, and 4 Bronze) and has topped the medal tally at the **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Changwon 2022** Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun held at South Korea. India is followed by South Korea (12 medals), and Czech Republic (6 medals).

408. The 4th edition of the **2022 SAFF U-20 Football Championship** has been held in the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. **India** has won the championship for the second consecutive time by defeating **Bangladesh** in the final match.

Other awards:

- Most Valuable Player of SAFF U-20 Championship 2022: **Gurkirat Singh**
- Best Goalkeeper SAFF U-20 Championship 2022: **Som Kumar**

409. Indian chess legend and five-time world champion, **Viswanathan Anand** has been elected Deputy President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE). While, **Arkady Dvorkovich** (Russia) has been re-elected for a second term as President of FIDE, with 157 votes against 16.

The elections for the posts have been held during the FIDE General Assembly in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

410. Mastercard has replaced Paytm as the title sponsor for all international and domestic cricket matches organised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). This follows Paytm's request to reassign the title sponsorship of BCCI valid till the end of 2023. Mastercard will be assigned the rights till 2023, as per the original terms of the Paytm deal and will continue to pay Rs.3.8 crore per match.

- 411.** The Washington Open or Citi Open 2022 has been held at the William H.G. FitzGerald Tennis Centre in Washington, D.C., USA. It is the 53rd edition for men and 10th edition for women.
- Tennis-player **Nick Kyrgios (Australia)** has won the men's singles title by defeating Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka. He has won his seventh ATP title.
 - **Liudmila Samsonova (Russia)** has won the women's singles title by defeating Kaia Kanepi (Estonia).
- Other winners:**
- **Men's doubles:** Nick Kyrgios (Australia) & Jack Sock (USA)
 - **Women's doubles:** Jessica Pegula (USA) & Erin Routliffe (New Zealand)
- 412.** India's **Jeremy Lalrinnunga** has won the gold medal in men's 67 kg category **weightlifting** at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. He is the first person from Mizoram to win a gold medal at the CWG 2022.
- 413.** American Tennis legend **Serena Williams**, winner of 23 Grand Slam titles, has announced her retirement from professional **tennis**. The US Open 2022 which starts on 29th August will be her last tournament. Her first major title was the 1999 US Open, when she was 17. She won her last Slam title at the 2017 Australian Open.
- She has also 73 WTA titles overall, including all four Slams at least three times, 39 combined major titles in singles, doubles and mixed doubles, 14 major doubles titles with sister Venus, four Olympic gold medals in singles and doubles.
- 414.** Former West Indies all-rounder **Kieron Pollard** has become the first cricketer to play **600 T20** matches. He has achieved this feat during his side's London Spirit's match against Manchester Originals during ongoing The Hundred tournament at Lord's. He represents Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premiere League (IPL).
- Dwayne Bravo (543 matches), Shoaib Malik (472), Chris Gayle (463) and Ravi Bopara (426) are the other cricketers behind him in terms of playing T20 cricket matches.
- 415.** The **44th Chess Olympiad** has been held at the Four Points by Sheraton in Mahabalipuram near **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**. This is the first time the Chess Olympiad is being hosted in India and the first in Asia after 30 years.
- **"Thambi"** (Younger Brother) is the official mascot of the 44th Chess Olympiad.
 - The opening and closing ceremonies have been held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.
 - It consisted of open and women's tournaments.

Winners:

- **Open Section:** The team **Uzbekistan** has won the gold medal in the Open section. Team Armenia has won silver while the India-B team has won the bronze medal.
- **Women's section:** Team **Ukraine** has won the gold medal. Team Georgia has won the silver, while the India-A team has won the bronze medal.
- India A team has won **Nona Gaprindashvili Cup**. It is the best federation at the Olympiad and the award is a combined rank sum of the open & women's section.

Note: The 45th Chess Olympiad 2022 will be held in Budapest, Hungary.

416. Chennai-based Chess prodigy **V Pranav** has become **India's 75th Grandmaster** by winning a tournament in Romania. He has won the Limpedea Open in Baia Mare, Romania to secure his third and final GM norm and attain the Grandmaster title. He is the 27th Grandmaster from Tamil Nadu.

417. The **2022 Commonwealth Games (CWG)** has been held at Alexander Stadium in **Birmingham, England (UK)** from 28 July to 8 August 2022. All 72 Commonwealth Games Associations have participated in the games. It is the first carbon-neutral CWG. The official mascot for the Commonwealth Games 2022 is **Perry**, a bull with multi-coloured hexagons and the motto is '**Games for Everyone**'.

Commonwealth Games 2022 medals tally

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Australia	67	57	54	178
2	England	56	65	53	175
3	Canada	26	32	34	92
4	India	22	16	23	61

Indian medal winners at Commonwealth Games 2022

- (Total 215 member contingent from India have participated in the event)

First in Commonwealth Games 2022:

- **Sanket Sargar** is the first Indian to win a medal in Birmingham, bagging a silver in the men's 55kg weightlifting event.
- **Mirabai Chanu** is the first Indian to win a gold at CWG 2022.
- **Jeremy Lalrinnunga** is the first Indian man to win a gold at CWG 2022.
- **Sudhir** has won the first medal for India, a gold, in para sports at the CWG 2022.

Opening ceremony flag-bearer: Manpreet Singh (Hockey) and PV Sindhu (Badminton)

Closing ceremony flag-bearer: Nikhat Zareen (Boxer) and Achanta Sharath Kamal (Table Tennis)

With this win, India has achieved the landmark of **200 Gold medals** in CWG history, as India's gold medal tally now stands at 203, which is the 4th best in CWG history.

- 418.** The International Chess Federation (FIDE) has announced that **Uzbekistan** will host the **2026 Chess Olympiad**. In 2024, the World Chess Olympiad will be held in Budapest (Hungary).
- 419.** The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced Sri Lankan spin sensation **Prabath Jayasuriya** as the ICC Men's Player of the Month for July 2022 and England batting all-rounder **Emma Lamb** as the ICC Women's Player of the Month for July 2022.
- 420. Tamara Walcott**, a female powerlifter from Maryland in the United States has broken the **powerlifting** Guinness World Record (GWR), according to sources in the investigating agency for the heaviest cumulative lift for bench/squat and press in competition (female) after lifting a total of **737.5 kg** across three compound lifts – the squat, the bench press, and the deadlift. She was honoured at the 2022 World Raw Powerlifting Federation American Pro in Manassas, Virginia in July 2022. GWR compared the weight she lifted with a female adult giraffe that weighs about 680.3 kg.
- 421.** The **4th edition** of the **Tata Steel Chess India tournament** will be held in **Kolkata**, West Bengal from November 29 to December 4, 2022. For the first time, a separate women's section has been added in the tournament, which had only the Open section so far.
- Top Indian female players like Koneru Humpy, D Harika, and R Vaishali will compete in the maiden women's edition.
 - **Note:** The first inaugural Tata Steel Chess India tournament was held in November 2018.
- 422.** The Bureau of the **FIFA Council** has unanimously decided to suspend the **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** with immediate effect due to undue influence from third parties, which constitutes a serious violation of the FIFA Statutes. With this, the **FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022**, scheduled to take place in India on 11-30 October 2022, cannot currently be held in India as planned.
- 423.** India's **paracanoeing** athlete **Pooja Ojha** (Madhya Pradesh) has won India's first medal at the 2022 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships. She has won the silver medal in VL1

Women's 200m final with a timing of 1:34.18. The championship has been organized in Halifax, Canada. Germany's Lillemor Koper has won the Gold medal in the event.

- 424.** Toronto, Canada (women). It is the 132nd edition of the men's tournament, a Masters 1000 event on the 2022 ATP Tour, and the 120th edition of the women's tournament, a WTA 1000 event on the 2022 WTA Tour.

Winners of the tournament:

Event	Winners
Men's Singles	Pablo Carreño Busta (Spain)
Women's Singles	Simona Halep (Romania)
Men's Doubles	Wesley Koolhof (Netherlands) and Neal Skupski (United Kingdom)
Women's Doubles	Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula (USA)

- 425.** Ireland all-rounder **Kevin O'Brien** has recently announced his retirement from international cricket. He made his debut for Ireland in 2006 and was one of their longest serving cricketers. He has played 3 Tests, 153 ODI, and 110 T20I for Ireland. He became the **1st Ireland cricketer** to score a century in red-ball cricket.

- 426.** The **Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2022**, an annual invitational international men's field **hockey** tournament, will be held in **Ipoh, Malaysia** from **16 to 25 November 2022**. All matches will be played at the Azlan Shah Stadium, which is the permanent venue of the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup.

- Commonwealth Games 2022 gold medallists Australia and the silver-winning Indian team, Germany, New Zealand, and Canada are the five teams invited to play along with hosts Malaysia this year.

Sultan Azlan Shah Cup:

It was first played in 1983. It became an annual event in 2003. It is named after Malaysia's former FIH executive board member Sultan Azlan Shah. World No. 1 Australia is the most

successful team at the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup with 10 titles, followed by India with five, Pakistan and South Korea with thrice each.

427. The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) has announced to host the **FIBA U18 Women's Asian Championship** at Sree Kanteerva and Koramangala Indoor stadiums in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka from 5 to 11 September 2022. The event will feature 192 basketball players from 16 different countries, 96 officials, and 100 volunteers.

- The 2022 **FIBA U18 Men's Asian Championship** is being held in **Tehran**, Iran from 21 to 28 August 2022.

428. Indian Football striker **Manisha Kalyan** (Punjab) has become the first Indian footballer to play in the Union of European Football Association (UEFA) Women's Championship League by making her debut for Apollon Ladies FC in the European Club competition in Engomi, Cyprus.

429. **India** has secured the **3rd rank** in the medal tally at the 15th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) held in Kutaisi, Georgia. India has secured the third position jointly with Singapore with students winning **3 gold** and **2 silver** medals.

Iran's official team (5 golds) has topped the medal tally, followed by Iran's guest team (4 golds, 1 silver).

Details of the Individual performance are given below:

Contestant	Place	Medal
Raghav Goyal	Chandigarh	Gold
Md Sahil Akhtar	Kolkata	Gold
Mehul Borad	Hyderabad	Gold
Malay Kedia	Ghaziabad	Silver
Atharva Nilesh Mahajan	Indore	Silver

In all, 28 gold, 38 silver and 55 bronze medals have been awarded at the 15th IOAA.

Raghav Goyal has won a special prize for the best solution to the most challenging theoretical question.

430. India's opener **Shubman Gill** has broken the legendary Sachin Tendulkar's record by scoring his maiden international century against Zimbabwe during the Kajaria cup India Tour of Zimbabwe ODI Series 2022. He has scored **130 runs** off 97 balls, which included 15 fours and a six.

The previous highest score in ODIs against Zimbabwe by an Indian was by Sachin Tendulkar, who scored 127 runs in 1998 in the first ODI of three-match series.

Notably, **Indian cricket team** has won the Kajaria cup India Tour of Zimbabwe ODI Series 2022 by defeating Zimbabwe in the 3rd and final ODI held at Harare Sports Club, Harare, Zimbabwe.

431. Japan men's volleyball team has won the **2022 Asian Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship** after beating Iran in the final match held at Volleyball Federation Hall, Tehran, Iran.

Indian men's volleyball team has won the **bronze medal** by defeating South Korea in the championship.

Other awards in the tournament:

- Most Valuable Player: Hiroki Bito (Japan)
- Best Setter: Emran Kook Jili (Iran)
- Best Outside Hitters: Shunta Ono (Japan), and S.Matin Hosseini (Iran)
- Best Middle Blockers: Taha Behboudnia (Iran), and Kush Singh (India)
- Best Opposite Spiker: Aryan Baliyan (India)
- Best Libero: Sena Kameoka (Japan)

432. DreamSetGo, a sports experiences and travel platform, has appointed former Indian cricketer, and current President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) **Sourav Ganguly** as its first brand ambassador. He has also become the 'Supercaptain' for the company DreamSetGo. The key partnerships of DreamSetGo are with Manchester City, Chelsea FC, ICC Travel and Tours, AO Travel, F1 Experiences etc.

433. UEFA Awards 2022 have been presented, recently.

UEFA Awards 2022		
Category	Winner	Club
Men's Player of the Year	Karim Benzema (France)	Real Madrid
Women's Player of the Year	Alexia Putellas (Spain)	Barcelona
Men's Coach of the Year	Carlo Ancelotti (Italy)	Real Madrid
Women's Coach of the Year	Sarina Wiegman (Netherlands)	England
President Award	Arrigo Sacchi (Italy)	-

434. Indian judoka **Linthoi Chanambam (Manipur)** has scripted history by winning **India's first-ever medal in Judo World Championships** with a gold in the Women's 57kg category

at the World Judo Cadet (U18) Championships 2022. She has defeated Brazilian Bianca Reis, the Pan-American junior champion, in the final match. She is the first Indian to win gold in the world judo championships in any category.

- 435.** The 2022 BWF World Championships, a badminton tournament, has been held at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium in Tokyo, Japan.

Category	Winner
Men's Singles	Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)
Women's Singles	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)
Men's Doubles	Aaron Chia & Soh Wooi Yik (Malaysia)
Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen & Jia Yifan (China)
Mixed Doubles	Zheng Siwei & Huang Yaqiong (China)

India's performance:

Indian badminton players **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy**, and **Chirag Shetty** have won the **first bronze medal** in Men's doubles. With this, they became the first Indian pair to win a medal in the Men's doubles event at the world badminton championships.

- 436.** The 45th edition of the World U20 Wrestling Championships 2022 has been held in Sofia, Bulgaria. In the championship, **Japan** has topped the medal tally with 9 Gold, 1 Silver & 5 Bronze (15 medals), followed by Iran & Azerbaijan.

India has finished **5th** in the championship with **1 Gold, 4 Silver & 11 Bronze** (16 medals). **Antim Panghal (Haryana)** has become the **first Indian woman** to become a world champion in U20 wrestling.

Indian medallists at World U20 Wrestling Championships 2022:

Women's freestyle

- **Gold: Antim Panghal (53kg)**
- **Silver:** Sonam Malik (62 kg), Priyanka (65 kg), and **Priya Malik (76kg)**
- **Bronze:** Priyanshi Prajapat (50 kg), Sito (57 kg), and Reetika (72 kg)

Men's freestyle

- **Silver:** Mahendra Gaikwad (125 kg)
- **Bronze:** Abhishek Dhaka (57 kg), Mohit Kumar (61 kg), Sujeet Kalkal (65 kg), Mulayam Yadav (70 kg), Sagar Jaglan (74 kg), and Neeraj Bhardwaj (97 kg).

Greco-Roman

- **Bronze:** Sumit (60 kg), and **Rohit Dahiya (82 kg)**

- 437.** World No.1 GM **Magnus Carlsen (Norway)** has won the FTX Crypto Cup 2022 despite losing his final match in a tiebreak to GM R. Praggnanandhaa, who thereby secured second place in the tournament. GM Alireza Firouzja has finished in third place. The tournament has been held in Miami, Florida, USA.
- 438.** **Virat Kohli** has become the **first Indian** and overall **second cricketer** to play at least 100 matches in each of the three international formats. He played his 100th T20I during the Asia Cup 2022 against Pakistan. He has played 102 Tests and 262 ODIs. Former New Zealand batter Ross Taylor had become the first cricketer to achieve the feat in February 2020.
- 439.** Indian Grandmaster **Arjun Erigaisi** has won the **28th Abu Dhabi Masters Chess Tournament** after defeating David Anton Guijarro from Spain in the ninth and final round. He has won the tournament with 7.5 points.
- 440.** Red Bull's **Max Verstappen** (Belgian-Dutch) has won the 2022 Belgian Grand Prix and extended his lead in the Formula 1 World Championship followed by Red Bull's Sergio Perez in second position and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz in third position.
- 441.** Olympic champion and javelin thrower **Neeraj Chopra** has finished first at the **Lausanne Diamond League**. With this, he has become the **first Indian** to clinch the top spot in a Diamond League Meet, after registering an **89.08m** throw in his first attempt.
- 442.** Tokyo Olympics silver medalist **Jakub Vadlejch** has finished second with a best throw of 85.88m, followed by **Curtis Thompson** (USA) has finished third with a best effort of 83.72m.
- 443.** The Bureau of the FIFA Council has decided to lift the suspension that was imposed on the All India Football Federation (AIFF) due to undue third-party influence.
- As a result, the **FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022** event to be held on 11-30 October 2022 will be held in India as planned.
 - ATK Mohun Bagan will also be able to participate in the AFC Cup Inter-Zonal semi-finals where they will be facing Kuala Lumpur City FC.
 - The Indian national team were scheduled to play two friendlies in September, against Singapore and Vietnam on the 24th and 27th of September, respectively. They will now be allowed to take part in the same.

444. The **Athletics Federation of India (AFI)** has partnered with **HSBC India** to support women athletes of the country, especially the youngsters.

- Under this partnership, promising girls will be picked from the National Inter District Champion-ships for Under-14 and Under-16 categories and would be nurtured to perform on the global stage.
- Special coaching camps will be set up for the selected athletes and all their needs will be taken care of.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2022	Remark
World Lung Cancer Day	1 st August		
Muslim Women's Rights Day	1 st August		
World Breastfeeding Week	1 st to 7 th August	Step up for breastfeeding: Educate and Support	
Hiroshima Day	6 th August		The year 2022 marks the 77th anniversary of Hiroshima Day.
National Handloom Day	7 th August		The day was first observed in 2015.
National Javelin Day	7 th August		
ASEAN Day	8th August	Stronger Together	
Nagasaki Day	9th August		
International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples	9th August	The Role of Indigenous Women in the Preservation and Transmission of Traditional Knowledge	
World Lion Day	10th August		The day was first observed in 2013.
World Biofuel Day	10th August	Biofuels towards a Carbon Neutral World	The day was first observed in 2015.
World Elephant Day	12th August		
International Youth Day	12th August	Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages	

World Sanskrit Day	12th August (2022)		The day is observed annually on the occasion of Shraavana Poornima.
International Lefthanders Day	13th August		The day was first observed in 1976.
World Organ Donation Day	13th August		
Partition Horrors Remembrance Day	14th August		
Independence Day of India	15th August		
Important Day	Date/Month	Theme for 2022	Remark
World Photography Day	19th August	Pandemic Lockdown Through The Lens	The day was first observed in 2010.
World Humanitarian Day	19th August		
World Mosquito Day	20th August		
Sadbhavna Diwas	20th August		The year 2022 marks the observance of the 78th birth anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi.
Renewable Energy Day	20th August		The day was first observed in 2004.
World Senior Citizen's Day	21st August		
International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism	21st August	Memories	
International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief	22nd August		
Internaut Day	23rd August		The day marks the invention of the World Wide Web (WWW). Tim Berners Lee invented the WWW in 1989.
International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition	23rd August		
World Water Week	23rd August-1st September	Seeing the Unseen: The Value of Water	

World Gujarati Language Day	24th August		The day commemorate the birth anniversary of the great writer of Gujarat 'Veer Narmad'
International Dog Day	26th August		
Women's Equality Day	26th August		The day is observed annually across the USA.
International Day against Nuclear Tests	29th August		The day was first observed in 2010.
National Sports Day	29th August		The day commemorate the birth anniversary of Hockey Wizard Major Dhyan Chand.
National Small Industry Day	30th August		
International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances	30th August		The day was first observed in 2011.
International Whale Shark Day	30th August	The Future of Sharks: Guardians of Our Seas	
International Day for People of African Descent	31st August		The day was first observed in 2021.

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