

# Monthly GK Digest

December 2022



## Monthly Digest December-2022

Dear readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in the month of '**December-2022**'. This file is important for, **Bank, SSC, and Railway** exams.

### Banking & Financial Awareness

1. India's insurtech platform, TurtleFin has collaborated with **YES BANK** to develop a complete technological platform, 'EasyNsure'.  
**Note:** Turtlefin's innovative API will enable the platform to provide a slew of holistic insurance solutions at the push of a button. EasyNsure: It is a first-of-its-kind proposition for YES BANK, that will bring multiple insurance partners onto a single platform.
2. According to the World Bank's Migration and Development brief, by **12** percent the remittance flows to India will be increased to \$100 billion in 2022.  
**Note:** While Mexico is placed second, followed by China, and the Philippines. Remittances to India were enhanced by wage hikes and a strong labor market in the United States and other OECD countries. Remittances to low and middle-income countries increased by about 5 percent to over \$626 billion in 2022.
3. **Fino Payments Bank** has tied up with Protean eGov Technologies (formerly NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure Limited) to expand PAN card issuance services in India (especially in rural areas).  
**Note:** With this, Fino become the first payments bank to act as PAN Service Agency (PSA) of Protean and facilitate paperless PAN issuance services. At Fino Bank, people can apply for PAN card through Aadhaar based authentication, without the need to submit or upload any documents.
4. RBI has announced a four-tiered regulatory framework for categorisation of **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)**.  
**Note:** It is based on size of deposits of the UCBs and came into force with immediate effect.
  - The extant regulatory framework classifies UCBs into two tiers -- Tier I and Tier II.
  - Tier 1: Deposits up to Rs 100 cr
  - Tier 2: More than Rs 100 cr and up to Rs 1,000 cr
  - Tier 3: More than Rs 1,000 cr and up to Rs 10,000 cr
  - Tier 4: More than Rs 10,000 cr
5. NSE Indices, Subsidiary of National Stock Exchange has launched new Index under **Nifty Bharat Bond Index**.  
**Note:** The Bharat Bond Index series follows a target maturity date structure wherein each index in the series measures the performance of a portfolio of 'AAA' rated bonds issued by government owned entities maturing in a specific year. Nifty Bharat Bond Index — April 2033 - has been launched within the Nifty Bharat Bond Index series.
6. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has extended the deadline for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) players to limit to a market cap of 30% till **December 31, 2024**.  
**Note:** The deadline given by NPCI was of December 31, 2022. In November 2022, the NPCI had proposed a 30% volume cap for third-party app providers (TPAP). Currently, there is no cap on volume of transactions and about 80% share of market hold by the private players.
7. **USD 250 million** has been approved by the World Bank to Bangladesh to strengthen the environment management and promote private sector participation in green investment.  
**Note:** Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation (BEST) Project will help the country tackle key pollution issues. The project will help to construct four vehicle inspection centres using private-public partnership modality to inspect about 46,000 vehicles annually.
8. SEBI has cleared Bandhan-led consortium's proposed acquisition of **IDFC Asset Management Company**.  
**Note:** Earlier, a consortium of Bandhan Financial Holdings, GIC, and ChrysCapital have signed an agreement to buy IDFC AMC and IDFC AMC Trustee Company from parent IDFC (Deal: Rs 4,500 crore). After the transaction, BFHL will own about 60% and

GIC and ChrysCapital will hold 20% each in IDFC AMC. Consequently, each scheme of IDFC MF will be renamed to replace the word 'IDFC' with the word 'Bandhan'.

9. Nifty 50 Tax Saver Index Fund (IN50) has been launched by financial service company, **IIFL Mutual Fund**.

**Note:** A passive scheme allows investors to simply think of their investment as a split between FDs, PPFs, insurance, and 'equity' - without having to worry about deep analysis. Being an index fund, the scheme will try to mirror the Nifty 50 and generate returns in line with the movement in the index.

10. India's first Gold ATM and world's first real-time Gold ATM has been launched at **Begumpet, Hyderabad**.

**Note:** The ATM was set up by the Goldsikka in collaboration with Opencube Technologies (Technology support). In this ATM, people can insert their debit or credit cards into the Goldsikka and buy gold coins. The ATM has a capacity of storing 5kgs of gold. There are 8 available options for the quantity of gold starting from 0.5 grams to 100 grams.

11. In December 2022, **ICICI Lombard General Insurance** has signed an agreement with the AU Small Finance Bank for bancassurance.

**Note:** Aim: To diverse bank's customers access to the Non-life insurer's portfolio and enhance penetration across India. With this partnership, the general insurance's suite of ICICI Lombard products will be offered across over 980 banking touchpoints of bank. AU Small Finance Bank has been expanding its distribution footprints across India.

12. As per the report, released by the Wordline India, **More than 23 billion** digital payment transactions (worth Rs 38.32 lakh crore) were carried out in July-September 2022.

**Note:** UPI based transactions dominated the segment both in terms of value and volume. UPI has clocked over 19.65 billion transactions (worth Rs 32.5 lakh crore). The average ticket size of transactions done through credit cards was highest at Rs 4,833 and the lowest in the case of mobile wallets at Rs 382.

13. World Bank has upgraded the GDP growth forecast for India to 6.9% for 2022-23 from 6.5% earlier.

**Note:** The Bank has trimmed its expectation for next fiscal year to 6.6% from 7% earlier. It also expects the inflation at 7.1 per cent in current fiscal year. It has also said that the government is expected to meet the fiscal deficit target of 6.4% of the GDP in 2022-23. In India Development Update, World Bank said India is affected by spillovers from the US, Euro area and China.

14. In December 2022, RBI has increased the repo rate by 35 basis points (the fifth increase since May 2022) to **6.25** percent.

**Note:** Aim: To bring down the inflation to a tolerable limit. While, RBI has lowered the GDP growth projection of India for the current fiscal at 6.8% from 7%.

- CPI inflation forecast for FY23 retained at 6.7%.
- Size of forex reserves has increased to 561.2 billion as on Dec 2.
- FDI inflows rose to \$22.7 billion in Apr to Oct 2022
- SDF : 6.00%, MSF : 6.50%, Bank Rate : 6.50%

15. **State Bank of India (SBI)** has surpassed the Rs 5 lakh crore mark in the personal banking advances as on November 30, 2022.

**Note:** The lender has marked the first Rs 1 lakh crore mark in January 2015, followed by Rs 2 lakh crore (January 2018), Rs 3 lakh crore (August 2020), and the Rs 4 lakh mark (November 2021). Personal banking advances mainly comprise personal loan, pension loan, auto loan, education loans, personal-gold loan, and other personal loan products.

16. Spice Money has partnered with **Axis Bank** to facilitate opening of instant, zero balance savings or current accounts for rural citizens through its Adhikari network.

**Note:** Aim: To bridge the rural-urban divide and bring financial inclusivity by providing access to banking products to the last mile at their doorstep. A regulated entity under RBI, the fintech firm delivers various financial services such as cash deposit and withdrawal, and insurance premium to the rural masses.

17. The RBI has extended the trading hours of all/notice/term money market to 5pm (Present) for various markets regulated by it. The new timings will come into effect from **December 12, 2022**.

**Note:** The central bank changed the timings in April 2020 in view of the operational dislocations and elevated levels of health risks posed by COVID-19. The call/notice/term money market will close at 5 pm. The market for Commercial paper and Certificates of Deposit will close at 5 pm.

18. **Amount ₹5,000 crore (Approx)** has been invested by the government of India in the SWAMIH Investment Fund I and marking its final close at ₹15,530 crore.

**Note:** SWAMIH I refers to Special Window for Completion of Construction of Affordable and Mid-Income Housing Projects. This project aims to provide priority debt financing for the completion of stressed, brownfield and RERA registered



residential projects. It is sponsored by the finance ministry, and managed by SBICap Ventures Ltd.

- 19.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has signed a Currency Swap Agreement of 200 million dollars with **Maldives Monetary Authority** under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework.

**Note:** This agreement has enabled the Maldives authority to make drawals in multiple tranches up to a maximum of 200 million dollars from the RBI. The agreement will provide swap support as a backstop line of funding for short-term foreign exchange liquidity requirements.

- 20.** **\$780 million** of loan has been provided by the ADB to build new lines for Chennai's metro rail.

**Note:** Focus: Improve the network's connectivity with bus and feeder services. The project will construct an elevated section between Sholinganallur to SIPC, underground section between Lighthouse and Meenakshi College and system component (between Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus to Okkiyam Thoraipakkam). The ADB was established in 1966.

- 21.** According to the data, released by the Finance Ministry, **5.88%** is the retail inflation of India for the November 2022.

**Note:** It is first time in this FY, when the inflation rate came within the tolerance band of RBI i.e. 2-6%. While, the food inflation has been eased at 4.67% in November 2022 from 7.01% in October 2022. Retail inflation is measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). To Control the inflation, the RBI has raised the repo rate by 2.25 percentage points in this year (2022).

- 22.** On 12th December 2022, the Reserve Bank of India has imposed penalties on **13** cooperative banks for contravention of various regulatory norms.

**Note:** The penalties range between Rs 50,000 and Rs 4 lakh. The maximum penalty of Rs 4 lakh has been imposed on Shri Kanyaka Nagari Sahakari Bank, Chandrapur due to non-compliance with the directions issued by the RBI to Urban Co-operative Banks on KYC. While, the bank has imposed Rs 2.50 lakh fine on Vaidyanath Urban Co-operative Bank, Beed.

- 23.** **Jaypee Group** has signed a binding agreement to sell its cement business to Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd for Rs 5,666 crore.

**Note:** It was signed by Jaiprakash Associates and Jaiprakash Power Ventures. The divestment includes cement plants (9.4 million tonne capacity), clinker assets (capacity of 6.7 million tonne), and Thermal power plant (280 MW capacity) The cement and clinker capacities currently being sold to the Dalmia are situated in MP, UP, and Chhattisgarh

- 24.** **Bank of Baroda** has approved the divestment of its majority shareholding in Nainital Bank Limited (NBL).

**Note:** Presently, the bank holds 98.57% of the total equity share capital Nainital Bank Limited. The Bank of Baroda had taken over Nainital Bank in 1973 on the directions of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Nainital Bank has about 150 branches across Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana and Rajasthan.

- 25.** **Canara HSBC Life Insurance** has launched new 'Guaranteed Fortune Plan', a non-linked, non-participating individual savings scheme.

**Note:** It offers life cover and a lump sum amount on outliving the policy term. The product was launched in two variants: (1) Guaranteed Savings Option, and (2) Guaranteed Cash Back Option. The first option provides a lump sum on outliving the policy term. The second option offers customers guaranteed cashback at the end of every fifth policy year.

- 26.** According to the recent data, **5.85%** is the Wholesale price inflation (WPI) for November 2022 has been recorded.

**Note:** It is a 21-month low WPI. On a yearly basis, WPI inflation went down from 14.87% in November 2021 to 5.85 per cent in November 2022. Reason: To fall in prices of food items, basic metals, textiles, chemicals and chemical products, and paper and paper products compared to the same period last year.

- 27.** According to the Asian Development Bank revised forecast, **7%** would be the growth of India for the fiscal 2022-23.

**Note:** India will grow at 7.2% for FY 2023-24. Reason: Sustained by positive effects from structural reform and from public investment catalysing private investment. Inflation in India is still expected to rise to 6.7 % in 2022-23 before falling back to 5.8%. As per the bank, Asia will expand at 4.2% this year and accelerate to 4.6% in 2023.

- 28.** Fintech firms **Razorpay and Cashfree** have been asked by RBI to pause onboarding of new online payment merchants.

**Note:** Reason: As the central bank requires to make certain changes and provide more information before it is granted the final payment aggregator (PA) licence. Another fintech firm, Cashfree has also been asked to temporarily stop onboarding new customers. It is one among several fintech companies to receive in-principle approval from the RBI for a PA licence.

- 29.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has introduced performance benchmarking and categorisation for the PMS industry. The full form of PMS is **Portfolio Management Services**.

**Note:** The move will help investors assess and compare the performance of service providers. This move will come into effect from April 1, 2023. The SEBI has directed portfolio managers to adopt an additional layer of broadly defined investment strategies categorised as equity, debt, hybrid, and multi-asset.

**30. AU Small Finance Bank** has joined hands with the HDFC Life for bancassurance business model.

**Note:** This partnership would enable diverse customers of AU Small Finance Bank to access the entire range of life insurance products offered by HDFC Life. According to the Swiss Re report (2019), India has the highest protection gap of 83% in comparison to other insurance markets. HDFC Life MD & CEO: Vibha Padalkar

**31. Financial service provider HDFC Securities** has launched a dedicated platform providing comprehensive investor education and market analysis named Roots.

**Note:** It offers multiple forms of valuable information, including articles, bite-sized tips, podcasts by experts, video tutorials and explainers, and live social media feed on the Indian financial markets. This platform produces content which are being searched on Google by current or prospective investors and traders.

**32. IDFC FIRST Bank** has announced the ZERO Fee Banking on savings accounts and waived fees on multiple banking services, including Passbook charges, NEFT charges.

**Note:** As per the bank, the customers maintaining as low as ₹10,000 Average Monthly Balance, and the ₹25,000 AMB savings account variant will get these benefits. IDFC Bank has celebrated its Foundation Day on 18 December. This is a customer friendly initiative from IDFC FIRST Bank.

**33. Indian Bank** has launched a new special retail term deposit dubbed as “Ind Shakti 555 days”, effective from December 19, 2022.

**Note:** This product is offering higher rate of interest for investment starting from Rs. 5000 to less than 2 Crore for 555 days in the form of FD/MMD with callable options. An interest rate of 7% for the general public and 7.15% for senior citizens. It is offering an interest rate of 3.00% on deposits that mature in the next 30 to 45 days.

**34. RBI** has imposed a penalty of Rs 2.66 crore on operations of **Bank of Bahrain & Kuwait BSC** for non-compliance with directions on cyber security framework.

**Note:** The bank has failed to implement systems to detect unusual and unauthorised, internal or external activities in its database. RBI has also imposed penalty on 20 co-operative banks, including 17 from Gujarat for contravention of

various norms. The penalty on 17 co-operative banks range between Rs 50,000 - Rs 7 lakh

**35. Bandhan Bank** has signed an MoU with the Controller General of Defence Accounts, Ministry of Defence for extending the banking services to the Defence Pensioners and their families.

**Note:** The Bank will provide services to Defence Pensioners and their families through 557 branches. The Bank is aligned with the vision of govt in being a one-stop solution to all pension-related activities of Defence pensioners under the Outreach Programme for Defence Pensioners on SPARSH.

**36. Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman** has informed that NiC has witnessed an annual growth of 7.98% to Rs 31.92 lakh crore as of December 2, 2022. **Note in Circulation** is the full form of NiC.

**Note:** The demand for currency depends upon several macroeconomic factors, including economic growth and level of interest rates. The quantum of cash or banknotes in the economy depends on the requirement for meeting the demand for banknotes due to GDP growth, inflation, and replacement of soiled banknotes.

**37. UT Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to provide banking facilities to the UT employees.

**Note:** Under the MoU, J&K Bank would give the most favoured client status to the UT Administration as well as the active permanent employees who have their salary accounts in J&K Bank. Aim: To increase awareness about banking facilities. J&K Bank will also organize various financial literacy camps at its centres for UT employees.

**38. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has announced that it will introduce a regulatory framework for EOP for direct plans of mutual fund schemes. The full form of EOP is **Execution Only Platforms**.

**Note:** The new rules will make it convenient for investors to make investment via Execution Only Platforms (EOPs) as well as appropriate investor protection mechanisms. It will have investor protection mechanism, cyber security requirements, pricing of services and grievance redressal.

**39. Paytm** has partnered with **HDFC ERGO** to launch a group insurance plan called ‘Paytm Payment Protect’.

**Note:** Aim: To insure transactions made through UPI across all apps and wallets. With the new insurance offering users would be able to secure themselves against mobile fraudulent transactions up to Rs 10,000. To avail this insurance, users need to pay Rs 30 per annum. Higher cover options for

cover up to Rs 1 lakh per annum will soon be added to the product.

**40. International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** authority has signed an MoU with the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) for mutual assistance and cooperation in the area of sustainable finance.

**Note:** India recently launched Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for the Environment) as an India-led global movement to protect and preserve the environment. CEEW research has estimated that India's net zero by 2070 target would require USD 10 trillion in investments.

**41. Digital payments services platform Worldline ePayments India** has received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India to act as a payment aggregator (PA).

**Note:** The authorisation by the RBI was under the provisions of the Guidelines on Regulation of Payment dated March 17, 2020. Payment Aggregator: It is a service provider that integrates various options of online payments together and brings them into one place for merchants.

**42. In December 2022, the total valuation of Indian Premier League (IPL) has been surpassed to \$10 billion.**

**Note:** According to the D and P Advisory report titled "Beyond 22 Yards" stated that the league is currently worth \$10.9 billion. According to the reports, the IPL attained the significant milestone after selling its media rights for the years 2023 to 2027. In less than 15 years since its beginning, the IPL has reached the milestone.

**43. In December 2022, National Stock Exchange of India** has received in-principle approval from SEBI to set up a Social Stock Exchange (SSE) as a separate segment.

**Note:** The creation of the SSE was proposed by FM Sitharaman in her Union Budget speech for 2019-20. The SSE will work for listing social enterprises and voluntary organisations working for the realisation of a social welfare objective. The SSE will help these organisations to raise capital as equity, debt or as units like a mutual fund.

**44. TransUnion CIBIL** has collaborated with Online PSB Loans and MSME lender SIDBI to launch FIT Rank – a comprehensive ranking model for MSMEs.

**Note:** FIT Rank will leverage the details available with Goods and Services Tax (GST) filings, Bank Statements, and Income Tax returns (ITR) information to provide a ranking model for MSME lending. This is the first-ever credit default predictor model developed by CIBIL in collaboration with OPL.

**45. As per the International Monetary Fund (IMF), 6.8 per cent** would be the India's GDP growth rate for the current fiscal year (2022-23).

**Note:** IMF has also estimated the India's growth rate of 6.1 per cent in the next fiscal years (2023-24). In its report, IMF has stated that the growth of India is expected to moderate as it is navigating a "very difficult" external environment. IMF has also highlighted that Indian economy has rebounded from the deep pandemic-related downturn.

**46. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated banks in the country to renew their locker agreements with existing locker customers by 1st January, 2023.**

**Note:** All the existing locker depositors are required to furnish proof of eligibility for a renewed locker arrangement. RBI has advised the banks to install CCTV camera at entry and exit points of the strong room and the common areas of operation. It mandates to preserve its recording for a period of not less than 180 days.

**47. International Finance Corporation (IFC) has provided a loan of USD 400 million to Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Limited** to boost the green affordable housing finance in India.

**Note:** The loan will support India's shift towards a more sustainable growth path, creating jobs and ensuring long-term business growth. It focuses on its green affordable housing portfolio, with 75 per cent (USD 300 million) of the proceeds earmarked for this sector.

**48. According to the British consultancy, Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) report, India will become third largest economy by the year 2035** from the current fifth spot.

**Note:** Report title: World Economic League Table. India's annual rate of GDP growth is expected to average 6.4% after which growth is expected to average 6.5% in the subsequent nine years. The world gross domestic product will be doubled by 2037 as developing economies will catch up with the richer ones.

**49. RBI has issued an order to migrate the payments fraud reporting module to DAKSH portal on January 1, 2023.**

**Note:** Aim: To streamline reporting, enhance efficiency and automate the payments fraud management process. Earlier, it was facilitated through Electronic Data Submission Portal (EDSP). As per the RBI, all authorised Payment System Operators (PSOs) and payment system participants in India are required to report all payment frauds.

**50. Infibeam Avenues Ltd** has received Perpetual Licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for its bill payments business, BillAvenue.

**Note:** The licence will allow BillAvenue to function as a Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU) under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS). BillAvenue can operate as both biller and customer operating unit onboarding billers and agent institutions to service customers. It will help the company offer safe, secure and uninterrupted services.

51. India has signed a \$125 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to develop climate-resilient sewage collection and treatment, and drainage and water supply systems in **Tamil Nadu**.

**Note:** The tranche 3 loan for Tamil Nadu Urban Flagship Investment Program signed between Rajat Kumar Mishra (Additional Secretary, DEA) and Hoe Yun Jeong (Officer-in-Charge of ADB's India Resident Mission). This loan will cover Coimbatore, Madurai, and Thoothukudi.

52. **Indian Bank** has launched its flagship business mentoring program for MSME entrepreneurs named 'MSME Prerana' in Rajasthan.

**Note:** Aim: To empower MSME Entrepreneurs through skill development and capacity building training in their local languages. This program will also assist them in acquiring necessary financial and managerial skills, capacity to handle crisis in business. The training program will be provided in collaboration with M/s Poornatha & Co.

53. Along with State Bank of India (SBI), and ICICI Bank, **Axis Bank** will start issuing RuPay credit cards over the UPI by March 2023.

**Note:** Presently, the RuPay credit card segment on the UPI platform is live with Union Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Indian Bank and HDFC Bank. The RBI has authorised the connection of credit cards to UPI in June 2022. Users will benefit from more convenience as a result of the change, which will also expand the adoption of digital payments.

54. Recently SEBI has expanded the High Powered Steering Committee on Cyber Security (HPSC-CS) members to eight members. The head of this committee is **Navin Kumar Singh (DG at NCIIPC)**.

**Note:** SEBI has expanded two of its committees- (1) High Powered Steering Committee on Cyber Security (HPSC-CS) and (2) Information Systems Security Committee (ISSC). SEBI has also expanded its panel on Information Systems Security Committee (ISSC) to seven members, chaired by Prof Krishnamurthy.

55. According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) annual report on trend and progress of banking in India, the health of Indian banks continued to improve in 2021-2022 with their balance sheet rising at double digits after a gap of **Seven years**.

**Note:** PSBs account for 62% of the deposits of scheduled commercial banks, while on loans, they corner 58% market share. Credit growth of banks was at a 10-year high at the end September 2022.

## Obituaries

1. Jiang Zemin, who passed away at 96 due to leukaemia and multiple organ failure, was a former leader of **China**.

**Note:** He was the Communist Party general secretary for 13 years. As the general secretary, he has guided China's rise to global economic power as he welcomed capitalists into the Communist Party. He had also helped pulling in foreign investment after China joined the WTO.

2. Julia Reichert, who passed away, was a veteran **Documentarian**.

**Note:** She who won an Oscar in 2020 for her feature 'American Factory'. She has received four Academy Award nominations and one win, two Primetime Emmys, a Director's Guild Award and two Peabody Awards nods. Her documentaries including: Union Maids, Seeing Red: Stories of American Communists, and The Last Truck: Closing of a GM Plant.

3. Jharana Das, who passed away at the age of 77 due to old age-related ailment, was veteran actress of **Odia** regional cinema.

**Note:** She was awarded the state government's prestigious Jaydev Puraskar for her lifetime contribution to Odia film industry. Her films - Shree Jagannath, Nari, Adinamegha, Hisabnikas, Pujafula, and Heera Nella. She had also worked as a child artist with AIR, Cuttack. She was also honoured with Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award for lifetime achievement in 2016.

4. Dominique Lapierre, the author of best-selling books like "Freedom at Midnight" and "City of Joy", has passed away. He was associated with **France**.

**Note:** His notable work: Is Paris Burning?, O Jerusalem!, Five Past Midnight in Bhopal, Freedom at Midnight. In 2008, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan (India's third highest civilian award). He had donated the bulk of his royalties from "City of Joy" to support humanitarian projects in India.

5. Kumble Sundar Rao, who passed away at the age of 88, was a famous artist of **Yakshagana** dance form.

**Note:** He was an exponent of Thenkuthittu style of Yakshagana. He had performed as a member of Surathkal, Dharmasthala and Ira Yakshagana Melas.



He served as an MLA of Surathkal (present Mangalore City North) constituency from 1994 to 1999. Sundar Rao had served as president of Karnataka State Yakshagana Academy.

6. Yoginder K Alagh, who passed away, was an eminent **Economist**.

**Note:** He taught economics at prestigious Indian and foreign universities, including IIM-Calcutta. He was an associate professor at Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmedabad. He has also worked as the vice-chancellor of JNU, Delhi. From 1996-98, he also served as minister of power, planning, and programme and served as a member of Planning Commission.

7. Manohar Devadoss, who passed away, was a veteran **Artist and writer**.

**Note:** In his 30s, he was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa (a progressive, incurable degenerative eye disease) which leads to total blindness. In 2020, he was honored with the Padma Shri award for his contributions to art. He authored many books such as - A poem to courage, Multiple facets of my Madurai, Mahe and Mano: Challenges, Green Well Years, etc.

8. Sulochana Chavan, who passed away, was a veteran **Lavani singer**.

**Note:** She was known as 'Lavani Samradnyi' (Queen of Lavani) for her singing contribution to the art genre. She was awarded the Padma Shri in March 2022. In 2012, she was also awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. She was honoured with the Lata Mangeshkar Award for the year 2010 instituted by Government of Maharashtra.

9. Pravrajika Bhaktiprana, who passed away, was a President of **Sri Sarada Math**.

**Note:** She was born in Calcutta in 1920 as Kalyani Banerjee. In 1950, she has joined Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Matri Bhavan, Tollygunge, as a nurse. She accepted sannyas in 1959. In 1998, she was made the vice-president of Sri Sarada Math and Ramkrishna Sarada Mission and became the fourth president of the order in 2009.

10. Mirosław Hermaszewski, who passed away, was a first and only astronaut of **Poland**.

**Note:** He was a part of manned space flight for the USSR on June 27, 1978. Along with Mirosław Hermaszewski, Pyotr Klimuk (Soviet cosmonaut) circled the Earth in the Soyuz 30 spaceship that docked at the Salyut 6 orbital space station. They went around the globe 126 times. He was the 89th human to reach outer space.

11. A BSF veteran, Bhairon Singh Rathore, who has been passed away, had fought **1971 India-Pakistan War**.

**Note:** He served in the 14th BSF unit during the war and retired from service in 1987. The BSF veteran's

bravery at Rajasthan's Longewala post during the war was portrayed by actor Suniel Shetty in the Bollywood movie 'Border'. He was awarded the Sena Medal in 1972 for his bravery.

12. Abigail Kinoiki Kekaulike Kawānanakoa, who has been passed away, was a princess of **Hawai**.

**Note:** She was born on 23rd April 1926 in Honolulu, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii.

13. H R Keshava Murthy, who has been passed away, was a great exponent of music form **Gamaka**.

**Note:** He training in music from his father and later from Venkateshaiah. He was honoured with Shantala Natya Sri Award by the Government of Karnataka in 1998 and Padma Shri in 2022 by the Government of India in the field of arts. Gamaka: It is a form of storytelling by singing that originated in Karnataka, India.

14. Veteran actor, Kaikala Satyanarayana, who passed away, was an actor of **Telugu** regional cinema.

**Note:** He was honoured with the several awards including Raghupati Venkaiah Award (2011), Filmfare Awards for lifetime achievement award for Telugu cinema (2017) and the Andhra Pradesh government's Nandi film awards. He was also elected to the 11th Lok Sabha from Machilipatnam on Telugu Desam Party (TDP) but withdrew from politics after 1998.

15. Legend PM Sinha, who popularly known as Suman passed away, was associated with **PepsiCo** organisation between 1992 and 2002.

**Note:** He started his career from Hindustan Lever Ltd (HLL, later HUL). He served as the chairman of PepsiCo India between 1992 and 2002. He was also credited with launching bottled water brand Aquafina in India. He helped acquire Duke's in Mumbai and snack food company, Uncle Chipps.

16. Kathy Whitworth, who has been passed away, was associated with **Golf**.

**Note:** She is considered one of the greatest golfers of all time. She had 88 wins on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour which include six LPGA major championships. Her 88 wins are six more than Sam Snead and Tiger Woods, who hold the record for the men's game.

17. Veteran scholar, Sribhashyam Vijayasarathi, who passed away, was a scholar in **Sanskrit**.

**Note:** In 2020, he was honoured with the Padma Shri for his excellent work in the field of Literature and Education. He was also the founder of Sri Yagna Varaha Swamy Kshetram (temple complex). He has written 100 books in Sanskrit and Telugu.

18. Legend Edson Arantes do Nascimento, who was popularly known as Pele has been passed away, was associated with **Football**.

**Note:** He is the only player to win the World Cup three times (1958, 1962 and 1970). He was named



Fifa's Player of the Century in 2000. During his 21-year career, he has scored the most career goals of

1,283 in 1,363 games including 77 goals in 92 matches for his country

## Important Days

1. **Nagaland** has observed its 60th Statehood day on 1st December 2022.  
**Note:** It became the 16th State of the Union of India on 1st December 1963. On the occasion, the Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio has launched 'SAHYOG project' of Nagaland Police and also flagged off Nagaland Police Special Operation Group Vehicles. Nagaland has also hosted the 23rd Hornbill Festival 2022 at Naga Heritage Village Kisama from 1st-10th December 2022. Chief guest of this festival(2022): VP Jagdeep Dhankhar
2. World AIDS Day is observed annually on **December 1** to raise awareness and encourages progress in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care.  
**Note:** Theme 2022: 'Equalize'. Focus of theme: To highlight the particular inequalities faced by HIV patients and to press for the actions needed to address them. WHO has founded this day on December 1 in 1988. In August 1988, James W. Bunn and Thomas Netter have conveyed the idea of AIDS day to the Director of AIDS Global Program.
3. World Soil Day is observed annually on **December 5** to highlight the value of healthy soil and to promote the sustainable management of soil resources.  
**Note:** 2022 theme: Soils: Where food begins. In 2002, the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) has proposed to celebrate Soil Day. In June 2013, the FAO Conference endorsed the day and requested UN to adopt the day. This day was officially adopted by UNGA and December 5, 2014 celebrated as the first World Soil Day.
4. International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development is observed ever year on **December 5**.  
**Note:** International Volunteer Day (IVD) 2022 celebrates the theme of solidarity through volunteering. The international observance was mandated by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1985. The day commemorates 80 countries in the world.
5. Navy Day in India is observed annually on **December 4** to recognise the contributions and accomplishments of Indian Naval forces.  
**Note:** In 2022, Navy Day was celebrated outside Delhi. The Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam hosts numerous activities and events.
6. **December 3rd** is celebrated as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, worldwide.  
**Note:** The day is observed to highlight issues that affect people with disabilities and to champion their well-being, their dignity and fundamental rights. The theme of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, this year, is "Transformative solutions for inclusive development: the role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world".
7. International Civil Aviation Day is observed every year on **December 7** to promote the importance of international civil aviation.  
**Note:** 2022 theme: Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development. The theme will remain the same until the year 2023. In 1996, the UN General Assembly has formally recognised December 7 as International Civil Aviation Day. Safety standards in international aviation are maintained by the ICAO (an autonomous UN body).
8. International Anti-Corruption Day is observed annually on **December 9** to raise public awareness on malpractice of corruption and its effects.  
**Note:** 2022 Theme: Uniting the world against corruption. The UN General Assembly has adopted the UN Convention against Corruption on October 31, 2003 and designated Dec 9 as International Anti-Corruption Day. According to the UNDP, the approximately US\$13 trillion that governments spend on public spending, up to 25% is lost to corruption.
9. Human Rights Day is observed every year on **10th December** marking the day when United Nations General Assembly adopted Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948.  
**Note:** Theme 2022: Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All. UDHR: It is a milestone document, which proclaims the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.
10. Nobel Prize Day is observed every year on **10th December** to honor the achievements of Alfred Bernhard Nobel, a Swedish engineer, chemist, entrepreneur, and philanthropist.  
**Note:** Five Nobel Prize in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace are awarded annually on 10th December since 1901.

Every year, a ceremony is held in Stockholm, Sweden on 10 December on the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death

- 11.** International Mountain Day is celebrated annually on **December 11** to raise the awareness of the value of mountains to both life and climate.

**Note:** The theme of this year's International Mountain Day (IMD) is 'Women Move Mountains.' The UN Conference on Environment and Development has accepted Chapter 13 of Agenda 21: Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development in 1992. This day was celebrated in 2003.

- 12.** International Universal Health Coverage Day is celebrated annually on **12th December** to promote the importance of building robust healthcare systems globally.

**Note:** 2022 Theme: Build the world we want: A healthy future for all The UNGA has passed a resolution on December 12, 2012, to encourage nations worldwide to put efforts into the advancements of Universal Healthcare. In 2017, the UN has declared 12th December to observe International Universal Health Coverage day.

- 13.** **14th Dec, 2022** has been observed as the National Energy Conservation Day by the Ministry of Power.

**Note:** The ministry has organised an event to celebrate this day in New Delhi. Aim: To showcase the achievements of the nation in energy efficiency and conservation. President Droupadi Murmu is the Chief Guest of the event and has felicitated the winners of the National Energy Conservation and National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards. During the event, she has also launched EV Yatra Portal and Mobile application.

- 14.** National Minorities Rights Day is commemorated on **December 18** every year in India.

**Note:** Its aim is to safeguard the individual rights of the religious, ethnic, racial, or linguistic minorities in the country. This day is a reminder about the rights of minorities and to raise awareness about it.

- 15.** International Migrants Day is observed annually on **December 18** to bring attention to the social and economic realities of migrants around the world.

**Note:** This day is observed to guarantee that the rights of migrants are equally respected and not violated. The mobility of people is still influenced by a range of factors despite the world's rapid growth and change.

- 16.** Goa has observed its Liberation day every year on December 19 in India to mark the victory of Indian armed forces to free from 450 years of the Portuguese rule.

**Note:** Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia led the Goa liberation movement on June 18, 1946, with the aim of liberating Goa by gathering young Goans. The Union of India was completed with Goa's liberation on December 19, 1961. Goa continued to be a UT till 1987 and then was given statehood by becoming the 25th state of India.

- 17.** International Human Solidarity Day (IHS) is observed annually on **December 20** across the globe to celebrate the ideal of unity in diversity.

**Note:** IHS highlights the goal of the United Nations and its member states to create awareness about poverty and the need to reduce poverty in independent nations. The annual celebration reminds world citizens of the issues faced by poor people and nations affected by poverty.

- 18.** National Mathematics Day is celebrated on **December 22** across the nation every year.

**Note:** The National Mathematics Day is marked to recognise and celebrate the works of Srinivasa Ramanujan. Srinivasa Ramanujan, the Indian mathematical genius, was born on this day in 1887. This year nation celebrates his 135th birth anniversary of Ramanujan.

- 19.** **December 23** is observed as Farmers' Day or Kisan Diwas across India.

**Note:** Farmers are the backbone of our economy and to honour their hardship, this day was coined by the government of India in 2001. This day also marks the birth anniversary of the 'Champion of Indian Peasants' and the fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh.

- 20.** Every year on **December 24** India observed the National Consumer Day or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas.

**Note:** This day is used to make all consumers aware of their powers and rights. This day was made under the Consumer Protection Act, which came to power in 1986 to create awareness and save consumers from market exploitation like defective products or expensive pricing.

- 21.** India observed "Good Governance Day" on **25th December** to mark the birth anniversary of former Indian Prime Minister, Atal Vihari Vajpayee.

**Note:** In 2014, PM Narendra Modi has announced to observe "Good Governance Day" every year on December 25 in memory of the former PM. Purpose of this day: To increase public access to various government programmes and services via good governance. It was established with the slogan "Good Governance through e-Governance."

- 22.** India has observed first 'Veer Bal Diwas' on **December 26** to honor the 'Sahibzadas', the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

**Note:** This day is observed to pay honor and tribute to the sacrifices made by Sahibzada Zorawar Singh (6) and Sahibzada Fateh Singh (9), who were laid down their lives while defending

their faith in Sirhind, Punjab. Veer Bal Diwas has been celebrated at an event hosted by PM Narendra Modi at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, Delhi.

## New Appointments

1. Wearables technology company, NOISE has roped in **Virat Kohli** as its new brand ambassador for its smartwatch range.  
**Note:** Kohli was earlier the brand ambassador of Bolt Games Pvt. Ltd owned Fire-Boltt. The former Indian cricket captain saw his brand value drop by 21% to \$185.7 million in 2021. However, he still topped the rankings in a survey of most valuable Indian celebrities by consultant Kroll Inc.
2. **Rajeeva Laxman Karandikar** has been appointed as part-time chairperson of National Statistical Commission of India (NSCI) for three years.  
**Note:** He has joined CMI as a visiting professor in 2010. He served as director CMI from Jan 2011 to April 2021. It is an autonomous body, was formed in June 2005 after the recommendation by Dr C Rangarajan Commission. The chairperson of the Commission enjoys the status of a MoS.
3. **Hansraj Gangaram Ahir** has assumed charge as Chairperson of the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).  
**Note:** He is an Agriculturist by profession. He had been elected four times Member of Parliament from Parliamentary Constituency Chandrapur, Maharashtra and also he was Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council.
4. **Vijender Sharma** has been elected as the president of Institute of Cost Accountants of India.  
**Note:** While, Rakesh Bhalla as vice-president for 2022-23. The institute, which is a statutory body set up under an Act of Parliament, comes under the administrative control of Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
5. **Sanjay Kumar** has assumed charge as Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education in Shashtri Bhawan in New Delhi.  
**Note:** He is a 1990-batch Bihar cadre IAS officer, was a former Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. He replaced Anita Karwal IAS upon her superannuation.
6. **K.V. Suresh Kumar** has assumed charge as Chairman and Managing Director of Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI) at Kalpakkam for three years.  
**Note:** He completed his graduation in Chemical Engineering and joined Department of Atomic Energy at BARC Training School in Mumbai (29th batch) in 1985. He joined in the operations of Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) in 1986.
7. **Justice Tashi Rabstan** has been appointed by the Government of India as the Acting Chief justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.  
**Note:** He has replaced incumbent Chief Justice Ali Mohd Magrey, who retired on 7th December 2022. Justice Rabstan had enrolled as an Advocate on 6th March 1990 in Bar Council of J&K. He remained as Standing Counsel for Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh from 1997 till 2005.
8. **Dina Boluarte** has been assumed the charge as the first female and sixth president of Peru.  
**Note:** Her term has been extended to July 2026. Her oath came, when her predecessor being detained by police and impeached by lawmakers. The ceremony took place hours after a majority of 101 members in the 130-person legislative body voted to impeach Pedro Castillo (former president of Peru).
9. **Arun Kumar Singh** has been appointed as the chairman and managing director of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) for a three-year tenure with effect from the date of his assumption of charge of the post.  
**Note:** He is a mechanical engineer from National Institute of Technology, Patna. He was Director (Marketing) of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) from October 2018 to September 2021, then he was elevated as chairman and managing director of the company.
10. Indian-origin **Sushmita Shukla** has been appointed as the First Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York with effect from March 2023.  
**Note:** Her appointment was approved by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. It is one of 12 regional Reserve Banks which, together with the Board of Governors in Washington, DC, make up the Federal Reserve System. It is the largest Reserve Bank in terms of assets and volume of activity.
11. **Deepika Padukone** has been appointed as the brand ambassador of American furniture retailer, Pottery Barn to promote the company's international expansion.

**Note:** She will also work with the company's in-house design team in San Francisco to co-create a capsule collection, that will be launched in 'Fall 2023'. In July 2022, Pottery Barn launched its online retail website for India, in partnership with Reliance Brands. It has launched its first retail store in Ambience Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.

**12. Tata Sons Chairman, N Chandrasekaran** has been appointed as the Chair of Business 20 (B20) India by the government.

**Note:** He will lead the business agenda during India's G-20 presidency. The B20 is the official G-20 dialogue forum with the global business community. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has been appointed as the B20 India Secretariat by the Indian government to lead the B20 India process. CII has assumed charge of B20 India Secretariat on 1 December 2022.

**13. K V Shaji** has been named Chairman of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

**Note:** He had served as NABARD's Deputy MD till May 21, 2020. Prior to joining NABARD, he worked with Canara Bank, National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Kerala Gramin Bank (country's largest regional rural bank). From 2013 until 2017, he served as the Chairman of Kerala Grameen Bank. He is an agricultural graduate with a PGDM in Public Policy from IIM Ahmedabad.

**14. Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu** has been unanimously elected as the new Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and took the oath on 11th December 2022, succeeding Jai Ram Thakur.

**Note:** He served as the president of the Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee from 2013 to 2019. Apart from this, Mukesh Agnihotri (leader of the opposition in the outgoing Assembly) has been appointed as the deputy chief minister of Himachal Pradesh.

**15. Meghna Ahlawat** has been elected as the President of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) with former stalwart Kamlesh Mehta, who has been elected as secretary general.

**Note:** She is the first women president and succeeded Dushyant Chautala. Apart from this, Patel Nagender Reddy was elected as treasurer. TTFI is the governing body for table tennis in India and was established in 1926. It includes 32 state units and 37 institutions

**16. P T Usha** has been officially elected as the first woman president of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

**Note:** She is a multiple Asian Games gold medallists and a fourth-place finisher in the 1984 Olympics 400m hurdles final. Apart from her, Ajay

H Patel has been elected as senior Vice President, Rajlaxmi Singh Deo and Gagan Narang as Vice Presidents of Indian Olympic Association. Headquarters of IOA: New Delhi.

**17. Indian origin person, Nihar Malaviya** has been named interim CEO of international publishing group, Penguin Random House and will assume the role from January 1, 2023.

**Note:** He has succeeded current CEO, Markus Dohle, who has stepped down from the role. Earlier, Nihar Malaviya served as the President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the publisher's American division Penguin Random House US. He will report to Bertelsmann CEO Thomas Rabe

**18. Bhupendra Patel** has been unanimously elected as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for the second consecutive term and took oath on 12th December 2022.

**Note:** He has administered oath as 18th Chief Minister of the state by Governor Acharya Devvrat in Gandhinagar. The BJP has created history in Gujarat with a landslide victory in the 2022 election and its 7th consecutive win. The BJP has bagged 156 seats in the 182-member Assembly, its highest-ever poll tally in the state.

**19. Dipankar Datta** has sworn-in as Supreme Court judge by CJI, D.Y. Chandrachud on 12th December, 2022. He was a Former Chief Justice of **Bombay High Court**.

**Note:** With his appointment, the strength of the SC judges increased to 28, out of a total sanctioned strength of 34 judges for the court. He will have a nearly eight-year tenure in the court until his retirement in February 2030 at the age of 65. His name was recommended by SC Collegium led by Justice U.U. Lalit on September 26.

**20. Dr PC Rath** has been formally elected as the president of the Cardiological Society of India (CSI) for one year (2023-24), in an annual meeting held in Chennai.

**Note:** He is currently working as a senior consultant cardiologist and head of department of Cardiology at Apollo Hospitals, Jubilee Hills. CSI is a national body of cardiologists within India and those settled abroad. It was formed in 1948 under the supervision of Bharat Ratna Dr Vidhan Shankar Roy.

**21. Jeremy Farrar** has been appointed as a new chief scientist of the World Health Organization (WHO) and will join WHO in the second quarter of 2023.

**Note:** He has replaced Soumya Swaminathan, who had served as chief scientist from 2019 to 2022. Role: To ensure that WHO, its member states and our partners benefit from cutting-edge, life-saving science and innovations. Presently, he is serving as



the Director of the Wellcome Trust. WHO DG: Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

**22. Kamaldeep Singh** has been appointed as the president of retail business of DealShare (Social e-commerce company).

**Note:** Prior to this role, he served as the Chief Executive Officer of Big Bazaar, where he was responsible for retail operations, organizational transformation, and business strategy execution. Recently, the DealShare startup owned and operated by Merabo Labs Pvt Ltd has raised an additional \$45 million from Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA).

**23. Cindy Hook** has been appointed as the inaugural CEO of the organising committee for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brisbane.

**Note:** She had stepped away from her role as CEO of Deloitte Asia Pacific earlier this year. She had worked for the international professional services network in the U.S. and in Australia. The International Olympic Committee awarded the 2032 Games to Brisbane in July of last year.

**24. Dr Claudine Gay** has been appointed as the first black president of the Harvard University.

**Note:** Dr Gay, who is a dean at Harvard, has been appointed as 30th president the university. She will replace Lawrence Bacow, who will retire on July 2023. She will also be the second woman to head the elite college in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Notably, she is the daughter of Haitian immigrants and received her bachelor's degree from Stanford University in 1992.

**25. Rajeev Kumar Vishnoi** has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of NHPC Ltd, with effect from December 13, 2022.

**Note:** He is also the CMD of Rishikesh-based THDC India Limited. Earlier, Yamuna Kumar Chaubey, Director of NHPC (Technical) was holding the additional charge of CMD of the company. NHPC Ltd is a Mini-Ratna Category-I Enterprise of the Government of India. NHPC HQ: Faridabad, Haryana; Founded: 1975

**26. Leo Varadkar** has been re-elected as the Prime Minister of Ireland in line with a coalition deal struck in 2020.

**Note:** He has replaced Micheal Martin as Taoiseach (premier) in a rotation deal between his Fine Gael (party) and Martin's Fianna Fail (party). He was born in Dublin to an Irish mother who worked as a nurse and an Indian immigrant father, who was a qualified doctor. In 2007, he secured election for Fine Gael in Dublin West.

**27. Dinesh Kumar Shukla** has been appointed as the chairperson of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) for a period of three years.

**Note:** He has succeeded G. Nageswara Rao to the top post. Prior to this role, he has been the executive director of the AERB. He was a graduate in mechanical engineering from the Jabalpur University, Shukla joined the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in 1981.

**28. Justice, Hemant Gupta** has been appointed as the new chairperson of New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC).

**Note:** The govt has also appointed Anant Vijay Palli as the part-time members of NIDAC. Justice Gupta was served as Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court. Purpose of NDIAC: To create an independent and autonomous regime for institutionalised arbitration.

**29. Alope Singh** has been appointed as the new chief executive officer of Air India's Low Cost Carrier (LCC) business from January 1, 2023.

**Note:** The LCC business will comprise AirAsia India and Air India Express. The current AirAsia India CEO, Sunil Bhaskaran will assume the leadership of a new initiative -- an aviation training academy. AirAsia India was launched in 2014 while Air India Express started operations back in 2005.

**30. Shamsheer Singh** has been appointed as the MD & CEO of SBI Funds Management Limited (SBIFML).

**Note:** Prior to this role, he served as the Deputy MD of State Bank of India. He had joined SBI as probationary officer in June 1990. He has more than 32 years of rich experience working with SBI in various verticals, including investment banking, treasury, corporate banking and branch banking.

**31. Dr. Suhel Ajaz Khan** has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**Note:** He will replace Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, a 1989 batch IFS officer. Presently, he is serving as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of Lebanon. He has also served as a United Nations Pension Board member in 2016 and 2017.

**32. P.N. Vasudevan** has been reappointed as the managing director and chief executive officer of Equitas Small Finance Bank.

**Note:** His current term as MD, CEO will expire on July 22, 2023. The board of Bank has decided to renew his term for a further period of 3 years with effect from July 23, 2023, subject to approval from RBI. He is the founder of Equitas and has been associated with its journey as a microfinance institution since 2007.

**33. Sitiveni Rabuka** has become the 12th prime minister of Fiji after a coalition of parties voted to elect him.

**Note:** His appointment has ended 10 days of uncertainty after an election delivered a hung

parliament. Social Democratic Liberal party held the balance of power and voted to form a coalition with Rabuka's People's Alliance and the National Federation party.

- 34. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'** has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Nepal for the third time.

**Note:** He will head the new government until 2025 as part of a deal reached with another party. He has replaced Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress party. Prachanda's Maoist Centre party has won 32 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives.

- 35. Anil Kumar Lahoti** has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Railway Board with effect from January 1, 2023.

**Note:** He will replace Vinay Kumar Tripathi. Lahoti belongs to the 1984 batch of Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE). Lahoti was appointed as the general manager of Central Railway in July 2021.

- 36.** The Reserve Bank of India has approved the re-appointment of **Baskar Babu Ramachandran** as MD & CEO of Suryoday Small Finance Bank for three years, with effect from 23 January 2023.

**Note:** He has several years of experience in the banking and finance sector. Prior to co-founding the Suryoday Micro Finance Private Limited, he had worked with various companies including GE Capital Transportation Financial Services and HDFC Bank.

- 37. Santosh Kumar Yadav** has been appointed as chairman of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

**Note:** He is currently serving as an additional secretary in the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education. Subhasish Panda has been appointed as vice chairman of Delhi Development Authority. Ganji Kamala V Rao has been named CEO of FSSAI, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- 38. Praveen Kumar Srivastava** has been appointed as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).

**Note:** He has replaced Suresh N Patel, who completed his term as the chief of CVC on December 24, 2022. Srivastava is a 1988-batch IAS officer of Assam-Meghalaya cadre. He was retired as Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat on January 31, 2022

- 39. Benjamin Netanyahu** has been sworn-in as the new prime minister of Israel for a sixth time, after Israel's parliament (Knesset) has passed a vote of confidence in new government.

**Note:** Out of 120 members, 63 lawmakers have voted in favour of new government. He is the longest-serving Prime Minister of Israel. He served as premier of country from 1996 to 1999 and a record 12-year tenure from 2009 to 2021.

- 40.** UN Secretary-General, António Guterres has appointed **Abdullah Abdul Samad Dashti of Kuwait** as UN Coordinator for the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

**Note:** He has replaced Amir Mahmoud Abdulla of Sudan. The Initiative was launched by Ukraine, Türkiye, Russian Federation and UN on 22 July 2022.

### Important News – India

- 1.** According to the Special Bulletin released by the Registrar General of India, Maternal Mortality Ratio(MMR) of India has been declined from 130 in 2014-16 to **97 per lakh live births** per lakh live births in 2018-20.

**Note:** MMR: The number of maternal deaths during a given time period per one lakh live births. With this, the country has accomplished the National Health Policy target for MMR of less than 100 per lakh live births. Target: SDG target of MMR of less than 70 per lakh live births by 2030

- 2.** A first of its kind, Tribal Winter Festival was organised in **Bandipora district** of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Note:** This festival was organised by the district administration in collaboration with various departments at Ketson. Aim: To attract tourists and boost employment opportunities. People from

Gujjars and Bakerwals (Kashmiri community) have danced together to the beats of dhol (drum).

- 3.** Amara Raja Batteries Ltd will be setting up a state-of-the-art research and manufacturing facility for lithium-ion batteries in **Mahbubnagar** district of Telangana.

**Note:** It intends to invest over ₹9,500 crore over the next 10 years in the lithium cell giga factory. The facility will be set up with an ultimate capacity up to 16 GWh and a battery pack assembly unit up to 5 GWh. The upcoming facilities are expected to provide employment opportunities to about 4,000 people.

- 4. Dr. Virendra Kumar (Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment)** has inaugurated the Divya Kala Mela in Kartavya Path at India Gate, Delhi.

**Note:** The Divya Kala Mela was started on 2nd and will continue till 7th December. Aim: To provide a

great platform for the products and craftsmanship of Divyang artisans, craftsmen and artisans from across the country. The four finance corporations under this ministry, NHFDC, NBCFDC, NSFDC and NSKDFC will provide financial assistance.

5. The govt of India has organised the 'Millets-Smart Nutritive Food' Conclave in **New Delhi** on December 5, 2022.

**Note:** This conclave is a pre-launch event of the International Year of Millets - 2023. This event was organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). The government has also released e-catalogue on 30 potential importing countries and 21 millet producing states of India.

6. India's first Dark Night Sky Reserve will soon establish in **Hanle** village of Changthang region, Ladakh.

**Note:** In about eighteen locations in Hanley, powerful telescopes will be installed for stargazing. Hanle is home for the 2nd highest optical telescope in the world, was established in 2001 by Indian Institute of Astrophysics. After an MoU between UT Administration, Leh Hill council and Indian Institute of Astrophysics, necessary approvals were received from Department of S&T.

7. **Coca-Cola India** beverage company has partnered with Adani Digital Labs (subsidiary of Adani Group) for product sampling and develop deep consumer insights.

**Note:** Under this, new products 'Fanta Apple Delite' and 'Charged by Thums Up' will be made available for sampling at some of India's top airports. Adani Digital Labs allows brands to interact with large numbers of travellers and target customers with high spending and purchasing power.

8. During the Make in Odisha Conclave 2022, Government of Odisha has signed an MoU with BSE and **NSE** to enable local MSMEs to access the capital markets.

**Note:** As per the agreement, BSE and NSE shall provide handholding to MSME to impart training and education required for listing and improving financial credibility. During the session, a few initiatives were announced including, the launch of electronic Bank guarantees in collaboration with National EGovernance Services Ltd.

9. **Ministry of Civil Aviation** has notified the operational guidelines for the PLI scheme for drones and drone components in India.

**Note:** This will fulfill India's aim of becoming a prominent drone manufacturing hub by 2030. The govt has approved the PLI scheme with an outlay of Rs 120 crore and the scheme which will be in force till March 31 2025. Under the PLI scheme, the total

incentive per manufacturer is capped at Rs 30 crore.

10. The researchers of **IIT Madras** have developed and deployed a system that could generate electricity using energy from sea waves.

**Note:** The system named Sindhuja-I, which was deployed by the researchers about six kilometres from the coast of Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu, where the sea has a depth of about 20 metres. Currently, Sindhuja-I can produce 100 watts of energy. It will be scaled up to produce one megawatt of energy in the next three years.

11. India has inked an agreement on a Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership with **Germany** to help the citizens of both the nations to study, do research and work in each other's country.

**Note:** The agreement was signed between S Jaishankar (External Affairs Minister) and his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock in New Delhi. This agreement also facilitates the mobility and employment opportunities for fostering the exchange of skills and talents.

12. India will provide technical support to **Sri Lanka** to enhance its dairy industry and milk output with an aim to reduce the dependence on imported milk products.

**Note:** NDDB and the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation have taken steps to provide necessary technical support for the production of milk in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan President, Ranil Wickremesinghe has also appointed a panel to prepare a short, medium and long-term plan to increase local milk production.

13. **Bharti Airtel** has signed an agreement with the Facebook parent Meta to develop undersea cable infrastructure.

**Note:** Aim: To support high-speed internet in the country and boost data-carrying capacities between geographies. The two companies (Airtel and Meta), along with Saudi Telecommunication Company, will bring the world's longest subsea cable system 2Africa Pearls to India, at Airtel's landing station in Mumbai.

14. India's premier show on Technical Textiles, 'Technotex 2023' will be held in **Mumbai** from 22nd to 24th February 2023.

**Note:** Focus: To provide access and networking opportunities to meet top CEOs, manufacturers, industry peers, purchase managers and suppliers from India and around the globe. The event will be organized by the Ministry of Textiles in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce Industry, under National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM).

15. The National Small Industries Corporation Limited has signed an MoU with **Walmart Global Sourcing**

**India Private Limited** on 6th December, 2022 to extend the NSIC schemes and other services to MSMEs.

**Note:** The MoU was signed by Gaurang Dixit (Chairman, NSIC) and Prameela Mallaiiah (Director and Hub Leader, Walmart) in the presence of Union Minister of MSME, Narayan Rane. Through this MoU, NSIC will extend the NSIC schemes and other services to MSMEs who would participate in various Vriddhi program.

**16. Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL)** has commissioned a 450 MW wind-solar hybrid power plant in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

**Note:** With the new hybrid plant, AGEL has become the largest operational hybrid power generation capacity of 1,440 MW. AGEL has a total operational generation capacity of 7.17 GW, making it the largest wind-solar hybrid power farm developer. According to the company, the plant has Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) with SECI at Rs 2.67/kwh for 25 years.

**17. 27th** edition of International Film Festival of Kerala has been started at Nishagandhi auditorium in Thiruvananthapuram on 9th December, 2022.

**Note:** The event was inaugurated by Kerala CM, Pinarayi Vijayan and presided by Minister, VN Vasavan. Iranian director Mahnaz Mohammadi, who fights for women's freedom in Iran has bagged the Spirit of Cinema Award 2022. It is one of the distinguished film festivals of India, which is hosted by the Kerala Chalachitra Academy.

**18.** The Central Government has permitted Work From Home till **31st of December, 2023** to 100% of employees of the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) units.

**Note:** This decision was made after duly noting the genuine needs of the industry and the scope of benefits to economies of Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Government has also issued a Standard Operating Procedure to streamline the implementation of amended rules across SEZs.

**19. University Grants Commission (UGC)** has announced Four-Year Under-Graduate Programme (FYUP), that will be adopted in higher education institutions from 2023-24 academic session.

**Note:** FYUP will split 4-year UG degree into parts and provide different entry and exit options to students. This will enable student to study one or more specialized areas of interest at a deep level and also develop capabilities in different disciplines.

**20.** CM of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan has dedicated the charter gateway for private chartered flights to the nation at **Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL)** on 10th December.

**Note:** This facility would be the country's largest business jet terminal, helping the growth of tourism

in the State and will be comparatively cheap. After this, CIAL will also become one of the five airports in the country serving private jets.

**21.** Cyclone **Cyclone Mandous** hit the southern peninsula in December 2022.

**Note:** Chennai and several other parts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have witnessed heavy rain and strong winds as cyclonic storm Mandous crossed the states after landfall, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The name Mandous has been suggested by the United Arab Emirates.

**22.** The three himalayan medicinal plant species **Meizotropis pellita, Fritilloria cirrhosa, and Dactylorhiza hatagirea** have been listed in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, after a recent assessment.

**Note:** Reason: The biodiversity hotspot shows deforestation, habitat loss, forest fires, illegal trade and climate change. Meizotropis pellita has been assessed as 'critically endangered', Fritilloria cirrhosa as 'vulnerable', and Dactylorhiza hatagirea as 'endangered'.

**23.** PM Modi has inaugurated Mopa International Airport **Goa**, that has been named after former CM of Goa, Manohar Parrikar.

**Note:** This international airport was built at a cost of 2,870 crore rupees. It is about 35 km from capital city Panaji and can handle 44 lakh passengers annually. It is also capable of handling large aircraft such as the Airbus A380. The capacity of this airport can be raised to over 3 crore passengers per year, after expansion plans in the future.

**24. Seven** Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) have been set up by the Ministry of Culture to protect the art and culture.

**Note:** Headquarters: Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Prayagraj, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur. Reason: To conserve and develop art, culture and crafts across the nation. The government has provided regular annual grant-in-aid for conducting various activities and programmes to ZCCs. The ministry has also announced that ZCCs organize a minimum 42 Regional Festivals for promotion of art and culture every year.

**25. 9th** edition of the World Ayurveda Congress was inaugurated at Panaji, Goa on 8th Dec 2022.

**Note:** The event was attended by the Minister of State for Tourism and Shipping, Ports and Waterways, Shripad Naik. Aim: To showcase the efficacy and strength of the AYUSH systems of medicine at the Global level. The third edition of the 'Ayushman' comic book series was also released at the event. The market size of AYUSH in the country has grown from \$3 billion in 2014 to over \$18 billion now.



26. The 4-day meeting of G20 Development Working Group (DWG) has started in **Mumbai** on 13th December, 2022, under the India's Presidency.  
**Note:** Agenda: To discuss developmental issues in Developing Countries, Least Developed Countries and Island Countries. In the meeting, sessions on Data For Development, Role of G-20 in Advancing the 2030 Agenda, Infusing New LiFE into Green Development and Accelerating Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals are organised.
27. The Department of Tourism, Goa has signed an MoU with **Airbnb** vacation rental company to promote Goa Tourism.  
**Note:** This partnership aimed at encouraging travel to unique destinations that are lesser-known and enabling economically regenerative community-led tourism in the state. Both joined hands to scale homestay capacity across the state and provide support to Goan homestay Hosts in delivering quality tourism experiences to guests, both domestic and international.
28. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has participated in the inaugural function of Pramukh Swami Maharaj Shatabdi Mahotsav, that is organised in **Ahmedabad** on 14th December, 2022.  
**Note:** It will be a month-long celebration which will take place from 15th December 2022 to 15th January 2023 in Ahmedabad. The festival was hosted by BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir, Shahibaug. BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha was established in 1907 by Shastriji Maharaj.
29. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has formed a special committee to look into the demands of a separate state for the member tribes of the Eastern Nagaland People's Organization (ENPO). This committee is headed by **A K Mishra (Advisor of the Ministry of Home Affairs)**.  
**Note:** The committee also includes Mr Mandeep Singh Tull (Joint Director of the Intelligence Bureau) and A K Dhyani (Director of the North East Division of MHA).
30. India has signed a joint declaration of Intent with **Finland** on migration and mobility between the two countries.  
**Note:** It was signed by V. Muraleedharan (Minister of External Affairs) and Tuula Haatainen (Minister of Employment of Finland). Aim: To facilitate the mobility of researchers, and professionals and to combat irregular migration. The declaration underlines the resolve of both countries to work jointly towards developing a common framework of arrangement and cooperation.
31. **France** has hosted an International conference "Standing with the Ukrainian People" on 13th December 2022.  
**Note:** Aim: To coordinate international support for civilian resilience in Ukraine and address the Ukrainian people's urgent humanitarian needs. The conference was organised at the initiative of French President Emmanuel Macron and co-organised with Ukraine. The conference was virtually attended by Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.
32. Parliament has passed the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (Amendment) Bill, 2022 with Rajya Sabha to rename the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre as **India International Arbitration Centre**.  
**Note:** The bill was already passed in Lok Sabha. The Bill allows the govt to provide for removing any difficulties in implementing the Act up to five years from the date of commencement of the Act.
33. In December 2022, Gamocha has been received the GI tags, is associated with **Assam**.  
**Note:** The govt of India has granted the GIs tags to nine new items on 14th December 2022 including Gamocha (Assam), Tandur red gram (Telangana), Raktsey Karpo apricot (Ladakh), Alibag white onion (Maharashtra). Kerala has been awarded five GI tags for its agricultural produce. With this, the total number of GI tags in India comes to 432. Top five states holding the maximum number of GIs are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala.
34. A group of nine (G7, Norway and Denmark) rich industrialized nations have approved a deal to provide 15.5 billion US dollars to **Vietnam**.  
**Note:** Reason: To help the Southeast Asian nation move faster from coal power to renewable energy, cutting its climate-damaging pollution. This grant will help Vietnam to reduce its emissions to "net zero" by 2050. It is a goal which experts say needs to be met globally to cap global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius.
35. Nitin Gadkari (Minister of Road Transport and Highways) has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of **15** National Highway development projects worth 45, 536 crore rupees in Kerala.  
**Note:** The event was organised at the Travancore International Convention Centre at Karyavattom Sports Hub, Thiruvananthapuram. The event was presided by Kerala CM, Pinarayi Vijayan. It will also enhance tourism possibilities in Bekal, Kannur, Kozhikode, Fort Kochi, Alappuzha, Varkala and Kovalam
36. The eighth edition of the India International Science Festival (IISF) will be held in **Bhopal** in January 2023.  
**Note:** Agenda: To celebrate the country's achievements in the field of science, technology and innovation. IISF is the initiative of the Ministry of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences in

association with Vijnana Bharati. 14 events will be organised during the four-day event beginning January 21 at the Maulana Azad Institute of Technology, Bhopal.

**37. Indian Energy Exchange (IEX)** has become first carbon-neutral power exchange of India, using market based tradable instruments to offset its carbon emissions.

**Note:** To reduce carbon footprint, IEX has voluntarily cancelled CERs (certified emissions reductions) from clean projects registered under the Clean Development Mechanism, UNFCCC. As per the UNEP 2022 report, global greenhouse gas emissions must be cut 45% by 2030 to get on track to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

**38. 5<sup>th</sup> edition of Youth Co:Lab** was jointly launched by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and UNDP India \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** Youth Co:Lab is an initiative launched in 2019 by UNDP India in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog. Aim: To establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

**39. PM Modi** has launched the "Grih Pravesh" programme in **Agartala, Tripura**, under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban and Rural schemes.

**Note:** PM Modi has visited Tripura and Meghalaya to inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of projects worth over Rs 6,800 crore. He has also inaugurated connectivity projects for the widening of the Agartala bypass (Khayerpur – Amtali) NH-08. He has inaugurated spawn laboratory at the Mushroom Development Centre in Meghalaya.

**40. The campaign Prashasan Gaon ki Ore** was launched by Union Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh, under the Good Governance Week 2022 in New Delhi.

**Note:** He has also launched the Good Governance Week portal, [www.pgportal.gov.in](http://www.pgportal.gov.in). In the 5 days campaign, over 300 New Services identified by District Collectors across the country will be added for Online Service Delivery.

**41. Google** has granted a fund of \$1 million to IIT Madras to build India's first Responsible AI center.

**Note:** In addition, Google has also planned to collaborate with Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for project Vaani. Furthermore, under the partnership, Google aims to build an artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) model to collect language samples from 773 districts across India. Project Vaani aims to ensure the collected and produced data will be open-source.

**42. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways** has launched one of India's first-ever Surety Bond Insurance products from Bajaj Allianz.

**Note:** Surety Bond Insurance: It is a risk transfer tool for the principal and shields them from the losses that may arise in case the contractor fails to perform their contractual obligation. It will act as a security arrangement for infrastructure projects. It will insulate the contractor as well as the principal.

**43. MoS Civil Aviation, V. K. Singh** has informed that the Rajya Sabha, that govt has accorded in-principle approval for setting up **21 Greenfield Airports** across the country.

**Note:** So far nine Greenfield airports have already been operationalized and the tenth Greenfield airport at Mopa, Goa. Development of a Greenfield airport is governed under the Greenfield Airports (GFA) Policy, 2008. For setting up of GFA, State Government need to send a proposal to MoCA for 2-stage approval.

**44. Google** has announced a partnership with the DigiLocker to bring the govt issued ID to the local storage of Android devices.

**Note:** DigiLocker is a govt authorised identification storage system, This partnership is a part of Google's AI offerings that include on-device processing of text and images to identify important documents, and organise them. The Android operating system of Google will also tap into the DigiLocker API.

**45. The India's first Green Steel Brand KALYANI FERRESTA** was launched by Jyotiraditya Scindia in New Delhi on 20th December 2022.

**Note:** This first-of-its-kind steel was manufactured by a Pune-based Steel company, Kalyani group. It was manufactured by using renewable energy resources, leaving zero carbon footprints in the environment. The plant where green steel is being produced has the capacity to manufacture 250,000 tonnes of steel.

**46. According to the 2022 Social Progress Index, Puducherry state/UT** has been emerged as the best-performing States, followed by Lakshadweep, and Goa.

**Note:** Top three performing districts: Shimla, Solan, and Aizawl. The index assesses states and districts based on 12 components across three critical dimensions - Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity. The report was prepared by Institute for Competitiveness and the Social Progress Imperative and mandated by EAC-PM.

**47. Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs** has launched a programme to create Impact Leaders in the areas of Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG).

**Note:** IICA is an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Leena Nandan (Environment Secretary) was the Chief Guest at the launch of the programme. IICA has also formed a National Association of Impact Leaders which is a membership-based association only for ESG professionals.

**48.** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Startup Hub has joined hands with Google to train **100** startups under the Appscale Academy program of 2023 and help scale their app businesses.

**Note:** They will also launch a multi-city roadshow, aiming to engage over 1,000 startups in cities such as Surat, Indore, Coimbatore, Gangtok, and Jaipur. The startups will be trained on several aspects such as UX design, business model and monetization strategies and many more.

**49.** **Microsoft** tech giant company has partnered with Viasat (global communications company) to deliver satellite internet access to 10 million people across the world by 2025.

**Note:** Viasat is the first satellite partner to work with Airband Initiative of Microsoft. Both will provide pilot technologies including, satellites and fixed wireless. As per the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), around one-third of the world's population have still never used the internet.

**50.** **36 (All)** Rafale aircraft has been received by India from France till 15th December 2022.

**Note:** The aircraft has arrived after a quick en-route mid-air refuelling from a UAE Air Force tanker aircraft. India and France had signed the inter-government agreement in 2016 to provide 36 Rafale fighter jets at a cost of around 60,000 crore rupees to India. The first batch of five Rafale jets had arrived on 29th July, 2020.

**51.** **Maharashtra** state government has signed an MoU with Hinduja group for an investment worth Rs 35,000 crore in 11 sectors.

**Note:** Hinduja group has identified 11 sectors for investment in the state, which includes renewable energy, media and entertainment, cyber security, healthcare, infrastructure, education, manufacturing and new age technologies. It also focuses on the economic development of the rural sector for creating opportunities and employment for the people of Maharashtra.

**52.** **TPG** private Equity Company has agreed to acquire the Poonawalla Housing Finance (PHFL) at ₹3,900 crore valuation.

**Note:** TPG will infuse an additional equity of up to ₹1,000 crore in Poonawalla Housing Finance in the near term. The existing management team led by Manish Jaiswal will continue to carry out the

operations. PHFL currently has over 153 branches spread across 20 states. The group had planned for value unlocking for the housing finance business with an IPO planned in 2025.

**53.** **ReNew Power** renewable energy company has signed a renewable energy agreement of 150 MW with Microsoft India.

**Note:** As part of the arrangement, ReNew will produce 150 MW of clean energy from a recently commissioned solar site near Bikaner, Rajasthan. This partnership will pave the way for innovative models that will accelerate the energy transition. This deal also signifies that corporates globally are increasingly integrating renewable energy into their operations in every form.

**54.** **Indian Oil Corp. Ltd.** fuel delivery service provider, FuelBuddy has announced a partnership with which petroleum refinery company for supply of its automotive and industrial lubricant, 'SERVO', to customers across the country.

**Note:** All customers (new and existing) of FuelBuddy will soon be able to easily place orders of lubricants as per their requirement on the FuelBuddy app. The physical delivery of the lubricants will be done at their doorstep at the time of their convenience.

**55.** **Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) Scheme** is the new name of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK).

**Note:** The integrated scheme converges five erstwhile schemes of the Ministry viz. Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil. The scheme has been approved by the Cabinet for the period of 15th Finance Commission.

**56.** **7th** edition of the India Water Impact Summit (IWIS 2022) has been inaugurated by the Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi on 15th December 2022.

**Note:** 2022 Theme: Restoration and Conservation of Small Rivers in a Large Basin. Focus: On the select aspects of 'Mapping and Convergence of 5Ps' - People, Policy, Plan, Programme and Project. Aim: To give an insight into the potential causes for divergence and formulate a strategy to achieve.

**57.** **13th** edition of the World Trade Organization ministerial conference will be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in February 2024.

**Note:** The WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) took place in June 2022 in Geneva. For the UAE, hosting the meeting is part of its own push to position itself as a global hub for business amid growing competition in the Middle East. WTO was founded in 1995. The WTO is the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

- 58. Ministry of Culture** has organised Delhi International Arts Festival in collaboration with Prasiddha Foundation at Kartavya Path, New Delhi.  
**Note:** The festival is being organised from 16th December to 30th December. Tagline of festival: Where Bharat Meets India In the opening ceremony of the event, Kuchipudi dance was performed, which was choreographed by Jayarama Rao. On the occasion, Prism Theatre society performed Hindi theatre 'Veer Abhimanyu.'
- 59. TATA Projects Limited** has inked an MoU with the CSIR – Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR – IIP) to collaborate and work together towards ensuring clean energy solutions.  
**Note:** As part of this agreement, clean energy solutions such as room temperature bio-diesel produced from CSIR-IIP shall be used across some of Tata Projects' ongoing sites. This partnership will also explore utilization of by-product Green Diesel from the existing DILSAAF™.
- 60. Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry** has organised one of its kind musical event, Dance to Decarbonise at the National Stadium in New Delhi on 23rd Dec 2022.  
**Note:** As per the ministry, the renewable energy generated through dance will be used to charge electric vehicles. Aim: To showcase the India's target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 weighing against the country's growing economy, and rising energy requirements over transformational energy systems for the future
- 61. Jitendra Singh** is set to launch revamped probity portal and e-HRMS 2.0 portal for central government employees.  
**Note:** At the revamped e-HRMS 2.0 portal, employees could avail of limited services and it was not connected with other human resource applications. The revamped portal is the first digital system in the government of India to provide end-to-end HR services. The revamped e-HRMS 2.0 will save several thousand man-hours and tons of printing paper.
- 62. Union Minister of information and Broadcasting, Anurag Thakur** has informed that the Union Cabinet approved the revision of the pension for family pensioners of armed forces under One Rank One Pension (OROP) from **July 1, 2019**.  
**Note:** The revision will entail an estimated annual expenditure of Rs 8450 crore. The arrears will be with effect from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022. The decision to implement OROP was taken by the Narendra Modi government on November 7, 2015.
- 63. Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur** has inaugurated the Sports Science Centre in **Udupi, Karnataka**.  
**Note:** The government has increased the sports budget from 854 crores before 2014 to 3,100 crore rupees (2022) and spent 2700 crore rupees to enhance sporting infrastructure as against 630 crore rupees earlier. For Khelo India Games, the government has spent 3,136 crore rupees for a period of five years.
- 64. Consumer Affairs Minister, Piyush Goyal** has introduced various initiatives, including a right to repair portal and an NTH mobile app and opened new premises of the National Consumer Helpline centre.  
**Note:** On this portal, manufacturers would share the manual of product details with customers so that they could either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers. Initially, mobile phones, automobiles and farming equipment will be covered.
- 65. President Droupadi Murmu** has inaugurated the project "Development of Srisailam Temple" at Srisailam Temple Complex. This temple is located in **Andhra Pradesh**.  
**Note:** The project has been sanctioned and executed under PRASHAD scheme, under Ministry of Tourism. The project has been completed with a cost of Rs 43.08 crores. The project is 100% funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India. Srisailam Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and his consort Goddess Parvati.
- 66. IIT Kanpur** has developed an artificial heart that would be of great help to people with acute cardiac problems.  
**Note:** IIT Kanpur and cardiologists from across the country have developed this artificial heart. As per the IIT Kanpur Director, Abhay Karandikar, the trial on animals would begin next year, after success in the trial, transplantation can be done in humans in the next two years. Most of the implants and stents for heart patients are being imported.
- 67. The govt of India** has designated **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, as the nodal ministry to oversee the online gaming industry in India.  
**Note:** The ministry will soon release rules for online gaming intermediaries and start public consultation on these rules. In May 2022, the govt set up a seven-member inter-ministerial task force, chaired by Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MoS, IT. Aim: To work on online gaming regulations and identify a nodal ministry.
- 68. Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru** has been named the Secretariat for Science 20 (S20), the G20 summit's science working group.  
**Note:** S20 2023 theme is 'Disruptive Science for Innovative and Sustainable Development.' S20 has been set up as part of efforts by G20 to address



global challenges including climate change mitigation and sustainable development. G20 is an intergovernmental forum comprising 19 countries and the European Union.

**69. IndianOil** has signed an MoU with the Central TB Division (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare), Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh to undertake intensified TB elimination project.

**Note:** Aim: To end TB in India by 2025, five years ahead of SDG. It also aims to provide sustainable and equitable access to free TB treatment, and support services to the citizens of UP and Chhattisgarh. IndianOil will also introduce Mobile Medical Vans equipped with modern diagnostic technology.

**70.** Union Minister of Power, RK Singh has inaugurated the National Championship "Tehri Water Sports Cup" at Tehri Lake. Tehri Lake is located in **Uttarakhand**.

**Note:** During the event, he has also announced that world-class Kayaking-Canoeing Academy will be set up at Tehri in Uttarakhand. This is the first time that the national-level sports competition is being organized at Tehri Lake. CM, Pushkar Singh Dhama has also informed that the new sports policy has been implemented in the State.

**71. Ashwini Vaishnaw (Minister of Meity)** has launched the "Stay Safe Online" campaign and "G20 Digital Innovation Alliance" (G20-DIA).

**Note:** Aim of 'Stay Safe Online': To raise awareness about the online world due to the widespread use of social media and rapid adoption of digital payments. Aim of G20-DIA: To identify, recognize, and enable the adoption of innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by startups. Nodal Ministry for G20 Digital Economy Working Group: MeitY

**72.** According to the report, released by the Road Transport and Highways Ministry, the road accidents in India have been decreased by **8.1** percent in 2021 as compared to 2019.

**Note:** Report title: Road accidents in India – 2021 The injuries due to road accidents have also decreased by 14.8%. But the fatalities on account of road accidents have increased by 1.9% in 2021. The MoRTH has also implemented a scheme Grant of Financial Assistance for Administering Road Safely Advocacy and Awards

**73.** The Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has accorded drone service provider **Marut Drones** with the DGCA Type Certification and Approval for its AG 365 AgriCopter.

**Note:** Marut Drones product, 'AG 365 AgriCopter' is India's first Multi-utility Agriculture Medium Category Drone to receive the prestigious certificate. It is extensively tested in Agriculture in collaboration with agriculture universities and

research institutes. It is designed and developed for Indian conditions and can be used for multiple purposes.

**74.** PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated railway projects worth over Rs 5,800 crore in **West Bengal** through video-conferencing.

**Note:** The projects include Joka-Taratala stretch of the Joka-Esplanade Metro Project (Purple Line) and Howrah-New Jalpaiguri Vande Bharat Express. Joka-Taratala project is 6.5-km stretch having six stations has been constructed at a cost of more than Rs 2,475 crore. He has also laid the foundation stone for redevelopment of New Jalpaiguri Railway Station.

**75.** Nitin Gadkari (Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways) has inaugurated the phase 1 of Zuari bridge in **Goa**.

**Note:** It will connect North and South Goa. It is located on the Zuari river at Cortalim village on Margao-Panaji National Highway. Under this phase, the 4 Lane Right Hand Side Corridor of the 8 Lane Stayed Cable bridge has been inaugurated. This new bridge approaches from Bambolim to Verna and has a total project length of 13.20 KM.

**76.** HM Amit Shah has launched the Mobile App and Manual of Border Security Force in New Delhi. **Prahari** is the name of the mobile application.

**Note:** This app will provide personal information and information related to accommodation, Ayushman CAPF and leaves on their mobiles to jawans. It will also connect jawans with the portal of the Ministry of Home Affairs. He has also launched revised version of manuals which will increase the understanding of operations, administration and training.

**77. Ministry of Science and Technology** has notified the National Geospatial Policy, 2022 to promote country's geospatial data industry and develop a national framework to use such data for improving citizen services, and more.

**Note:** Aim: To develop high resolution topographical survey and mapping, and high-accuracy digital elevation model by 2030. The government will also look to improve availability and access of "better location data" for companies by 2025.

**78. MoHUA** has launched two key initiative - City Finance Rankings and City Beauty Competition.

**Note:** City Finance Rankings: To evaluate, recognize and reward Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) on the basis of three financial parameters - resource mobilization, expenditure performance and fiscal governance systems. City Beauty Competition: To recognize the transformational efforts made by cities in India to create beautiful, innovative and inclusive public spaces.

- 79. Union Minister of State Science & Technology, Jitendra Singh** has inaugurated Incubation Centre at National Research Development Corporation (NRDC), Delhi to provide multi-prong support to StartUps.
- Note:** NRDC has created incubating start-ups facility and is also promoting beneficial schemes to provide support in terms of funding, mentoring, IP assistance and other allied services to the Start-ups. NRDC was established in 1953 with headquarters in Delhi.
- 80.** Centre will roll out new integrated Food Security Scheme from **1st January 2023** to provide free food grains to over 81 crore beneficiaries under National Food Security Act, NFSA in 2023.
- Note:** It will also ensure effective and uniform implementation of the Act and free foodgrains will concurrently ensure uniform implementation of portability under One Nation One Ration Card across the country. Under this scheme, Centre will provide free foodgrains to all NFSA beneficiaries.
- 81.** iDEX, flagship initiative of Department of Defence Production, has signed its 150th contract in New Delhi. **Innovations for Defence Excellence** is the full form of iDEX.
- Note:** The contract was related to an Indian Navy project of the Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC 7) SPRINT edition. The challenge was titled 'Expendable Mobile Anti-Submarine Warfare Training Target (EMATT) capable of simulating the sound and movement of a submarine'. The iDEX framework was launched by the Prime Minister in 2018.
- 82.** Atal Incubation Centre (AIC) at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has signed an agreements with **MSMEs** for incubation of newer technologies into commercial products.
- Note:** The agreements were signed to commemorate the launch of the AIC at the BARC to hasten conversion of products from research labs to the market. The incubation agreements are signed specifically for technologies aligned with India's global commitments of achieving Net Zero (carbon neutrality).
- 83.** **NTPC** has signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tecnimont Private Limited (Indian Subsidiary of Maire Tecnimont Group, Italy) to evaluate and explore the possibility to develop commercial scale Green Methanol Production facility at NTPC project in India.
- Note:** This project involves capturing carbon from NTPC power plants and converting it into a green fuel. It is also considered as a substitute fuel for maritime fuel applications.
- 84. Ministry of Power** has signed an MoU with DRDO for the implementation of Early Warning System (EWS) for Vulnerable Hydro Projects/Power Stations.
- Note:** The MoU was signed by Alok Kumar (Secretary, Ministry of Power) and Dr. Samir V Kamat (Chairman, DRDO). Both will work towards developing suitable mitigation measures against avalanches, landslides, and other geo-hazards. Ministry of Power has already signed MoUs with CSIR-NGRI, IMD, WIHG and NRSC-ISRO for implementation of EWS
- 85.** The government of India and Manipur government have signed a peace agreement with **Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF)** of Manipur for providing the rehabilitation and re-settlement of the armed cadres.
- Note:** The tripartite agreement was signed by the central and Manipur governments and ZUF. The ZUF represents Zeliangrong people of the Naga tribes. The ZUF is listed as one of the 13 active insurgent group in Manipur by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP).
- 86.** Along with IIT Guwahati, **IIT Bombay** has joined hands with European universities to develop a technology to check the quality of potable and other water in India.
- Note:** The LOTUS Indo-European project is an initiative of the Dept of Science and Technology and the European Commission. Aim: To provide solutions for issues related to the quality of water supplied across Indian households. The LOTUS project is built around a novel water quality sensor developed at Ecole Polytechnique in Paris
- 87.** India and **Cyprus** have signed agreements in various areas including on Defence and Military Cooperation.
- Note:** Both countries have also signed a Letter of Intent on Migration and Mobility Partnership to provide a common framework of arrangement and cooperation to facilitate the mobility of students, business people and professionals. It will also help in combating irregular migration. The agreements were signed between EAM Dr. S Jaishankar and Foreign Minister of Cyprus.
- 88.** Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying **Parshottam Rupala** has informed that Department of Fisheries, under PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) has provided an insurance coverage to fishers.
- Note:** The insurance coverage provided under the PMMSY includes: Rs.5,00,000/- against accidental death or permanent total disability. Rs.2,50,000/- for permanent partial disability. Hospitalization expenses in the event of accident for a sum of Rs. 25,000/-

**89. Amrit Bharat Station scheme** has been launched by the Ministry of Railways for the modernisation of railway stations across the country.

**Note:** Aim: Infrastructural development of more than 1,000 stations on a continuous basis with a

long-term vision. High level platforms (760 to 840 mm) will be provided at all categories of the railway stations. The plan has provision to provide free WiFi access to its users. The amenities for Divyangjan will be provided at railway stations.

### Important News – State

**1. Uttarakhand** state government has named Praseon Joshi (CEO and CCO of McCann Worldgroup India) as the state's brand ambassador.

**Note:** He is a native of Uttarakhand. He is a prominent and highly awarded member of the Indian advertising and media fraternity. He was appointed as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBIC) on 11 August 2017.

**2. Haryana** state government has Nirogi project across the state.

**Note:** Initial phase: The project has begun in the District Hospital, Sector 6, Panchkula. The project was inaugurated by Gian Chand Gupta (Haryana Speaker) and Kulbhushan Goyal (Panchkula Mayor). Under this project, the urban enlisted Antyodaya population would be covered under this scheme. The enlisted beneficiaries will receive 'amantran patra' to visit their health facilities on the date as informed.

**3. Uttar Pradesh** state government has launched One District One Sport (ODOS) on the lines of One District One Product (ODOP) scheme of the state government.

**Note:** Objectives: (1) Promoting sports culture and keeping the younger generation healthy, and (2) Providing a platform for sportspersons to nurture talents and skills. Under this scheme, one sport will be identified in each of the 75 districts of UP. State govt will take necessary steps to find district-wise sport-specific talents.

**4. Odisha** state government has announced to transform the SHGs into Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and turn them into vibrant financial hubs.

**Note:** It is to be noted that six lakh SHGs are working in Odisha. The government's decision to provide interest-free loans of up to Rs 5 lakh to the women under Mission Shakti will benefit lakhs of women. Mission Shakti initiative started in 2001 has now become a huge force of 70 lakh empowered women in Odisha.

**5. Assam** state cabinet has approved a bill to set up a Safai Karamchari Commission.

**Note:** The cabinet has also renamed the Dergaon Police Academy as Lachit Barphukan Police Academy. In addition to this, cabinet has also approved decisions related to providing maternity

benefits, monitoring drug prices, protecting Safai Karmacharis' rights and filling up vacancies in the Forest Department.

**6. Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry** has organized a two days conclave on Universal Coverage Day 2022 at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 10th December 2022.

**Note:** The conclave will be inaugurated by the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Anandiben Patel. Universal Health Coverage aims to provide promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative access of health services. It also ensures that people do not suffer financial hardship while paying for these services.

**7. Jammu and Kashmir** has been awarded with first position in the category for Ayushman Bharat health account ID generation and 2nd prize in the category for Teleconsultation conducted during Universal Health Coverage Day 2022 (10th and 11th December) at International Cooperation and Convention Centre, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

**Note:** Universal Health Coverage Day is celebrated every year to ensure quality healthcare closer to the people without any financial hardships.

**8. Tamil Nadu** state government has launched Sanitation Workers' Development Programme across the state and distributed safety equipment to a few workers.

**Note:** Aim: Improve the living standard of sanitation workers and economy. A survey will be carried out to identify sanitation workers and details will be uploaded on a mobile application. Initially, the first phase of this scheme will be implemented in five urban local bodies. He has also unveiled the statue of Dr BR Ambedkar at Perangudi.

**9. Kerala CM, Pinarayi Vijayan** has declared a seed farm as the first carbon neutral farm in the country. This seed farm is located in **Aluva** town of Kerala.

**Note:** The total amount of carbon emission from the seed farm in the last one year was 43 tons but its overall procurement was 213 ton. Compared to the emission rate, as many as 170 tons of more carbon have been procured at the farm, which helped it to be declared as the first carbon neutral seed farm in the country.

- 10. Tamil Nadu** state has launched the Climate Change Mission to protect the natural resources in the state besides restore them on a long-term basis.  
**Note:** The state has also aimed to achieve carbon neutrality much ahead of 2070 target set by PM Modi. The state is first to launch its own Climate Change Mission to make Tamil Nadu a climate smart state. The state has roped in former director of UNEP, Erik Solheim to advise it on matters relating to climate action.
- 11. 114 Namma clinics** has been inaugurated by the Karnataka Health Minister, Dr K Sudhakar in all the districts of Karnataka on 13th December 2022.  
**Note:** Aim: To provide elderly care, emergency medical services, health check-ups and medicines to urban poor. In the initial phase, 114 clinics has launched simultaneously across the state. The government is working to operationalise all 438 Namma clinics across the state soon and all the remaining ones will be operational by January 2023.
- 12. Manipur** state government has launched the Alternative Farming System for Tribal Jhumias/Poppy Planters in ten districts of state.  
**Note:** Districts: Churachandpur, Pherzawl, Noney, Tamenglong, Senapati, Kangpokpi, Ukhrul, Kamjong, Tengnoupal, and Chandel. The programme was organized by the Eastern Border Areas Development Authority (EBADA), Govt of Manipur, under the funding of the North Eastern Council (NEC), Shilong.
- 13. CM Conrad K Sangma** has inaugurated a football stadium at the P A Sangma Sports Complex, Dakopgre in Tura. He is a CM of **Meghalaya**.  
**Note:** The stadium and the two indoor stadiums are built over a combined area of over 17,000 sqm. The indoor stadiums, along with gymnasium, swimming pool, a table tennis Hall, squash hall and a badminton hall will be ready for inauguration by December 2023. The government has also launched a talent identification programme for athletes.
- 14. Tal Chhapar blackbuck sanctuary** is located in **Rajasthan**.  
**Note:** The famous Tal Chhapar blackbuck sanctuary in Churu district of Rajasthan has received a protective cover against a proposed move of the State government to reduce the size of its eco-sensitive zone. The World Wildlife Fund for Nature has also taken up a major project for the conservation of raptors in the sanctuary, spread in an area measuring 7.19 sq. km. The Rajasthan High Court has intervened through a suo motu public interest litigation to protect the sanctuary.
- 15. Tamil Nadu** state government has launched 'Friends of Library' programme, under which books would be directly given to those who are unable to access state-run libraries.  
**Note:** Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi (School Education minister) has announced that volunteers' services would be employed for this. This project will be helpful to people with disabilities, seniors, kids, and hospital in-patients, among others, who are unable to visit a library.
- 16. Tamil Nadu** state government has made mandatory of Aadhaar number or Aadhaar identification for all those who are eligible for benefits (other than minor children) under various government schemes.  
**Note:** According to the order, the Aadhaar card is mandatory for government employees, government pensioners and beneficiaries of various schemes. The government has also announced remedial mechanisms if Aadhaar identification fails due to poor biometrics or any other reason.
- 17. Jammu & Kashmir** state/UT government has announced three new schemes- (1) Holistic Development of Agriculture & Allied Sectors, (2) Aspirational Towns, and (3) Aspirational Panchayat for state/UT.  
**Note:** Aim: To transform the agriculture economy of the Union Territory putting it on a new trajectory of growth. The projects have an outlay of Rs 5013 crores over the next five years. These schemes have been approved by the administrative council, chaired by the L-G.
- 18. Delhi** UT government has decided to introduce mini snack breaks to battle malnutrition in children.  
**Note:** According to a circular by the Directorate of Education (DoE), schools have been directed to include a 10-minute mini snack break in the school timetable. The mini break should be 2.5 hours before the lunch break. Schools have been asked to prepare a weekly planner of snacks offering three food choices every day which may include food items such as seasonal fruits etc.
- 19. Kerala** state government is being hosting the Bekal International Beach Festival from 24 Dec - 2 Jan 2022 at the Spice Coast, in the far north of Kerala.  
**Note:** Aim: To revitalise the district's development by showcasing its potential. The festival will be staged at the three venues of Chandragiri, Thejaswini, and Payaswini. The event will organised by Bekal Resorts Development Corporation (BRDC) in association with the District Tourism Promotion Council, Kudumbashree, Asmi Holidays.



**20. Assam** state government has approved the proposal for grant of industry status to the tourism sector in the state.

**Note:** Aim: To boost investments and generate employment. The industry status, fresh investments in tourism infrastructure, permanent in nature, will contribute towards rapid employment generation, public-private partnership and development. Tourism is to be one of the main sources of income generation for the people over the years.

**21. Odisha** state government has launched the 'Drink From Tap' project in 19 cities and towns of the state.

**Note:** Aim: To provide safe drinking water provision at every home in the state. Earlier, this facility was unveiled in Puri and Gopalpur. Under the project, drinking water will be supplied round the clock through taps installed in households.

**22. Ladakh** state/UT has celebrated Losar Festival on December 24, to mark the New Year.

**Note:** Ladakhi New Year is the major socio-religious festival of Ladakh celebrated in winter. The Losar festivities continue for nine more days from the new year with the offering of prayers in the name of God and Goddess, dances and songs in honour of Ibex and the pilgrimage of Mount Kailash. During the festival, they perform the traditional role of the three Lama Jogis and Grandparents.

**23. Uttar Pradesh** state government has received the 'no-objection' certificates from the ministry of home affairs to change the names of two places in state ie. Mundera Bazaarmunicipal council and Chauri Chaura.

**Note:** With this consent, 'Mundera Bazaar' municipal council in Gorakhpur district has been

renamed to 'Chauri Chaura' and 'Telia Afghan' village in Deoria district to 'Telia Shukla'. MHA gives a 'no-objection' certificate to change the name of any place after taking consent from ministry of railways, department of posts and Survey of India

**24. Tamil Nadu** state government has launched an initiative for the conservation of the Nilgiri Tahr (State animal) at a cost of ₹25.14 crore.

**Note:** Aim: To develop a better understanding of the Nilgiri Tahr population through surveys and radio telemetry studies; reintroduce the Tahrs to their historical habitat. The project is to be implemented from 2022 to 2027. Nilgiris Tahr (Nilgiritragus hylocrius), endemic to the Western ghats and locally known as 'Varaiaadu'.

**25. Telangana** state government has launched the 10th phase of Rythu Bandhu, the investment support scheme for farmers.

**Note:** Under this phase, 7,676 crores rupees will be deposited in the bank accounts of over 70 lakh 54 thousand farmers towards investment support for the Rabi crop season. It is a cash transfer programme. It provides investment support for agriculture and horticulture crops by way of a grant of Rs 5,000 per acre to farmers each season.

**26. Odisha** state Cabinet has approved the provision of Rs 367.19 crores for five years (2022-23 to 2026-27) for implementation of "empowerment of women in agriculture-promotion of entrepreneurship for women SHG".

**Note:** The cabinet was headed by Odisha CM, Naveen Patnaik. Aim: To double the mushroom production across the State through area expansion involving women beneficiaries and to make the state self-sufficient in the production of button mushroom and loose flowers

### Important News – World

**1.** In December 2022, India has provided financial assistance of 100 million US dollars to **Maldives** in the form of budgetary support to tide over the difficult economic situation.

**Note:** The assistance is in the form of budgetary support to tide over the difficult economic situation in the archipelago nation. The assistance is being extended without any conditions and Maldives is free to use it in its economic recovery as it deems fit. The financial assistance has extended by India to showcase the resilience and reliability of the India-Maldives relationship.

**2.** According to the MEA, India will take chairmanship of the Wassenaar Arrangement for a year on **January 1, 2023**.

**Note:** At the 26th annual plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement held in Vienna from Nov 30- Dec 1, 2022, Eoin O'Leary (Ireland's ambassador) has handed over the chairmanship to Jaideep Mazumdar (India's ambassador). Jaideep Mazumdar is the permanent representative to the UN and international organisations in Vienna. India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in Dec 2017.

**3.** Paris Club creditor nations (group of 22 countries) has proposed 10-year moratorium on debt and another 15 years of debt restructuring as a formula to resolve the debt crisis of **Sri Lanka**.

**Note:** The Paris club aims to find sustainable solutions for challenges faced by debtor countries. Earlier this year, Sri Lanka had defaulted on its 51

billion dollar external debt in the midst of spiralling political and economic crisis. India has provided emergency aid to Sri Lanka.

4. **Three** India-origin women have been selected as Australia's Superstars of STEM 2022.

**Note:** Neelima Kadiyala: She is an IT Program Manager at Challenger Limited and has over 15 years of experience delivering extensive transformation programmes. Dr Ana Baburamani: She is a scientific advisor in the Department of Defence - Science and Technology Group. Dr Indrani Mukherjee: She is a deep-time geologist at the University of Tasmania.

5. As per the Forbes India Rich List 2022, **\$800 billion** is the present combined wealth of India's 100 richest.

**Note:** The top 10 richest Indians are worth a cumulative \$385 billion. Adani Group chairman, Gautam Adani has bagged the top spot on the list with a net worth of \$150 billion. He is also the third richest billionaire globally. After Adani, Mukesh Ambani (\$88 billion) placed second, followed by Radhakishan Damani, Cyrus Poonawalla, and Shiv Nadar

6. **India** country has taken charge as the President of the UN Security Council for December 2022.

**Note:** This is the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the UNSC that India has assumed the Presidency of the Council. Earlier, India had assumed the Presidency of the UNSC in August 2021. The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month (English alphabetical order of member states). Permanent Representative of India to UN: Ruchira Kamboj

7. According to the US think-tank 'Early Warning Project' (EWP) report, **Pakistan** has topped the list of countries at the highest risk of experiencing mass killings.

**Note:** While, Yemen and Myanmar are placed second and third spots respectively in the list. Afghanistan and India were placed in the seventh and eighth spots respectively. Syria and Iraq were placed in the 11th and 12th spots respectively and China was placed 23rd in the list.

8. **48th** is the rank of India in the 2022 global aviation safety ranking, published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

**Note:** In 2018, India was ranked at the 102nd position. In the ranking (2022), Singapore has topped the list, followed by the UAE and South Korea at the second and third positions, respectively.

9. Three Indian billionaires, **Gautam Adani, Shiv Nadar, and Ashok Soota** were listed in the 16th

edition of Forbes Asia's Heroes of Philanthropy list.

**Note:** Gautam Adani (Adani chairman): For having pledged ₹60,000 crores (\$7.7 billion) when he turned 60 in June 2022. Shiv Nadar (HCL co-founder & chairman): For having channelled close to \$1 billion of his wealth to various social causes. Ashok Soota (Happiest Mind chairman): Pledged ₹600 crore to the medical research trust

10. **Goblin mode** has been selected by the Oxford University Press (OUP), publishers of Oxford English Dictionary as the 2022 Oxford word of the year.

**Note:** It refers to a type of behavior which is an unapologetically self-indulgent, lazy, slovenly, or greedy, typically in a way that rejects social norms or expectations. For the first time, a group of lexicographers at OUP gave people a choice of: "Goblin mode," "metaverse," and "#IStandWith".

11. **Volodymyr Zelensky (Ukraine President)** has been named as the 2022 person of the year by Time magazine.

**Note:** Reason: He has put up a feisty resistance against the Russian invasion (2022). Since the invasion of Russia (February 24), Zelenskyy has delivered daily speeches that are followed by Ukrainians, and governments around the globe. Zelenskyy has shared the 2022 title with "the spirit of Ukraine". Time magazine has presented its first Person of the Year award in 1927.

12. **Six** Indian women have been listed in the 2022 Forbes' annual list of The World's 100 Most Powerful Women.

**Note:** FM Nirmala Sitharaman has ranked at 36 for fourth time in a row. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (Biocon Executive Chairperson) ranked 77, Falguni Nayar (Nykaa founder) ranked 89. Roshni Nadar Malhotra (HCL Chairperson) ranked 53, Madhabi Puri Buch (SEBI Chief) ranked 54, and Soma Mondal (SAIL Chief) ranked 67. Top: Ursula von der Leyen (Belgium), European Commission President

13. **Four** Indian women have been listed in the British Broadcasting Corporation list of 100 most influential women in the world 2022.

**Note:** The list has included women from several areas such as politics, science, entertainment and literature. In this list, four Indian women have also included - Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Geetanjali Shree (Author), Sirisha Bandla (engineer and astronaut), and Sneha Jawale (social worker). The list also included European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen.

14. According to the Forbes, Bernard Arnault and Family has replaced Tesla CEO, Elon Musk to

become the world richest person. He is a CEO of **LVMH**.

**Note:** As of December 9, 2022, the personal wealth of Bernard Arnault is \$186.1 billion and net worth of Elon Musk is \$185.0 billion. But as per the Bloomberg's Billionaires Index, the Tesla CEO is still estimated to be the world's wealthiest person with a net worth of \$171 billion (As of 9th Dec 2022).

**15.** According to the 2022 Hurun Global 500 list, released by the Hurun Research Institute, **5th** is the rank of India.

**Note:** Among 20 most valuable firms of India, 11 are based in Mumbai, four in Ahmedabad and one each in Noida, New Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata. Reliance Industries has topped the list of Indian companies with the valuation of \$202-billion, while it ranked 34th in the world. It was followed by TCS (\$139 billion) and HDFC Bank (\$97 billion). The US has topped the list.

**16. New Zealand** has passed a new anti-smoking laws, which banned the future generation (born on or after Jan. 1, 2009) of nation from purchasing tobacco.

**Note:** This law has banned the selling tobacco to anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 2009 and punishable by fines up to NZ\$150,000 (\$95,910). The ban will remain in place for a person's whole life. It will also reduce the amount of nicotine, that allowed in smoked tobacco products. Retailers licensed to sell tobacco will be cut to 600 by the end of 2023 from 6,000.

**17. The US** wildlife officials have declared a Nevada wildflower as endangered species.

**Note:** It is found on a high-desert ridge, where a lithium mine is planned to help meet the growing demand for electric car batteries. The Fish and Wildlife Service has formally listed Tiehm's buckwheat and its accompanying area of 910 acres for the 6-inch-tall flower with yellow blooms. Ioneer (Australian mining company) is planning to dig for lithium where the flower grows.

**18.** Japan's capital Tokyo has passed a new regulation, which stated that all new houses in capital city built by large-scale homebuilders after April 2025 must install solar power panels to cut household carbon emissions.

**Note:** Currently, Japan stands at fifth spot in the world's largest carbon emitters list. This mandate requires about 50 major builders to equip homes of up to 2,000 square metres (21,500 square feet) with renewable energy power sources, mainly solar panels.

**19. India** has launched a 'Group of Friends' to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers.

**Note:** EAM, S Jaishankar has announced that New Delhi will maintain a database that will record all crimes against the Blue Helmets. Along with India, contributing countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, France, Morocco and Nepal were participated as its co-chairs. It represents the "political will" of member states, particularly of the troop and police contributing countries

**20. European Union** has adopted a plan for a global minimum 15 percent tax on multinational businesses, after leaders gave final approval following months of wrangling.

**Note:** The landmark agreement between nearly 140 countries is intended to stop governments racing to cut taxes to lure the world's richest firms to their territory. The plan was drawn up under the guidance of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

**21.** Pokhara Regional International Airport will be officially brought into operation from 1st January 2023. This airport is located in **Nepal**.

**Note:** Inauguration programme of the airport will include different processions, fashion shows at coordination of Pokhara Metropolitan City and Pokhara Tourism Council. This airport is going to be a milestone for the promotion of tourism not only in Pokhara. This is constructed by a Chinese construction company.

**22.** According to a government survey, the Associated Press reported, **Polar bears** in Western Hudson Bay of Canada, an inland sea connected to the Arctic Ocean, are dying at a fast rate.

**Note:** The study has also revealed that females and younger polar bears are the worst affected. When the last survey took place in 2016, there were 842 bears in the area, but now only 618 bears left in Western Hudson Bay. The polar bear is classified as "vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List

**23.** Bangladesh PM, Sheikh Hasina has flagged off the first metro rail in Dhaka for its first journey between **Diabari and Agargaon station**.

**Note:** This is part of the ambitious Bangladesh project of Mass Rapid Transit to be completed by 2030, that will cover a total length of 129 kilometres out of which 61 kilometres will be underground. The rail service was built with financial and technical support from Japan. The event was attended by Kiminori Iwama (Japanese Ambassador).

**24. North Korea** has fired three short-range ballistic missiles towards the sea to the east of the Korean peninsula.

**Note:** South Korea's military has said that these ballistic missiles launch is a grave provocation that undermines peace and stability on Korean Peninsula as well as the international community.

This latest volley comes 5 days after North Korea flew drones into South Korea's airspace for the first time since 2017.

### Honour & Awards

- 1. Manthan** platform of government of India has won NSEIT the Best Tech Initiative of the Year at the Dun & Bradstreet Business Excellence Awards 2022.

**Note:** Reason: For building the technology infrastructure to support Manthan. Manthan is a platform that promotes collaboration at scale between industry and the scientific research and development ecosystem. The development of the platform was conceptualized and implemented by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA), GoI.

- 2. Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)** institute has conferred the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2022.

**Note:** The award was presented by President Draupadi Murmu to Dr Achyuta Samanta (Founder of KIIT and KISS). The award presented to KIIT in recognition of KIIT's sustained focus towards the development of sports since its inception. The University has sponsored the education and training of hundreds of sportspersons (including: Dutee Chand, Olympian CA Bhavani Devi).

- 3. Tree Tag** start-up has won Climathon-2022 prize, under the category Life On Land.

**Note:** This hackathon was organized by the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) in collaboration with EY Global Delivery Services, UNDP, Startup India, Global Shapers Kochi, NASSCOM and TiE Kerala. The winners has received a prize money of Rs 5 lakh. Climathon-2022 has focused on climate change with the theme of securing a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

- 4. Canara Bank** has won the "Banker's Bank of the Year Award 2022" for the Indian segment of the Global Banking Summit.

**Note:** The public sector lender has been adjudged as the Best Bank in India for 2022. The event was held in London where the bank's MD and CEO L V Prabhakar received the award from the organisers. The Bankers' Bank of the year awards are considered to be like Oscar awards for the banking sector.

- 5. SS Rajamouli** has won the Best Director Award for his film, RRR at the New York Film Critics Circle.

**Note:** The group is one of the first critics' groups to weigh in on the awards season. At the New York

Film Critics Circle, Todd Field's Tar has won the Best Picture of the year, also nabbing Best Actress for Cate Blanchett's leading performance. Colin Farrell won Best Actor for two of his performances this year — After Yang and The Banshees of Inisherin.

- 6. Greenhouse-in-a-Box** has won Earthshot Prize 2022 for providing sustainable solution for small farmers.

**Note:** The solution has been devised by Telangana startup Kheyti. The 1 million pounds Earthshot Prize has been founded by Britain's Prince William and dubbed the Eco Oscars'. Kheyti, one of the five winners at a gala green carpet awards ceremony in Boston, won the prize in the Protect and Restore Nature category. Kheyti offers shelter from unpredictable elements and destructive pests.

- 7. NHA** and Maha-Metro have achieved a Guinness world record, to construct the longest double-decker viaduct on the Wardha Road in Nagpur, Maharashtra. **3.14 km** is the length of this double-decker viaduct.

**Note:** The project has already bagged records from Asia Book and India Book.

- 8. Veena Nair** Indian-origin teacher was honoured with the 2022 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in secondary schools in Australia.

**Note:** She is ViewBank College's Head of Technology and STEAM project leader. She was awarded for demonstrating practical application of STEAM to students, and how they can use their skills to make a real impact in the world. She started her teaching career in Mumbai, where she provided computers to low socio-economic schools.

- 9. Former VP, Venkaiah Naidu** has conferred with the 25th Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award (SIES).

**Note:** The awards are given in the fields of public leadership, community leadership, science and technology, and social thinkers. Awardees: Arif Mohammed Khan (Governor of Kerala), Ratan Tata (Industrialist), Dr Marthanda Varma Sankaran Valianathan (Cardiologist), Ajay Sood (Scientific Advisor to the Govt) and Vishakha Hari (Harikatha artiste)



**10. Meghalaya** state government has been awarded for its initiative 'jan andolan' (people's movement) against Tuberculosis at a national workshop on ACSM to end TB in India.

**Note:** The award was presented in the category of Best Practice in Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilisation in Tuberculosis control to representatives of state's health department. PM Modi had put a national target to eliminate the disease by 2025. Meghalaya CM: Conrad Sangma

**11. Jos Buttler (England captain)** has been named ICC Men's Player of the Month award for November 2022.

**Note:** Reason: For his remarkable performance to triumph the T20 World Cup in Australia. While, Pakistan opening batter, Sidra Ameen has become the second successive winner of the women's Player of the Month award from Pakistan. Reason: For posting mammoth scores in the recent successful ODI series against Ireland on home soil.

**12. SpiceJet** airline has been awarded the 'Safety Performer of the Year' award by GMR Delhi Airport Awards 2022 for being the top performer among the self-handling airlines.

**Note:** Recently, SpiceJet was audited by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and its operations, safety processes, and systems were found to be strong and at par with the global best practices and safety standards. ICAO Headquarters: Montreal, Canada; Founded: 7 December 1944

**13. Iga Swiatek (Polish tennis player)** has been selected for the 2022 WTA Player of the Year by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).

**Note:** While, Barbora Krejcikova (Czech Republic) and Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic) have been named the WTA 2022 Doubles Team of the Year.

- Most Improved Player of the Year: Beatriz Haddad Maia (Brazilian)
- Newcomer of the Year: Zheng Qinwen (Chinese)
- Comeback Player of the Year: Tatjana Maria (German).

**14. Utama (Bolivian movie)** movie was awarded Suvarna Chakoram for Best Film at the 27th edition of IFFK which was held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

**Note:**

- Director: Alejandro Loayza Grisi
- The Hungarian filmmaker, Bela Tarr was bestowed with the Lifetime Achievement Award.
- Best Asian Film: Alam (Director: Firas Khoury)

- Rajata Chakoram for Best Director: Tayfun Pirselimoglu for Kerr
- Audience poll award: Nanpakkal Nerathu Mayakkam directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery

**15. Indian personality Sargam Koushal (Mumbai)** has won the title of Mrs World 2022, after 21 years.

**Note:** Mrs World 2021, Shaylyn Ford (U.S.A) has presented the crown to Mrs. Koushal at a ceremony held at Westgate Las Vegas Resort and Casino. Mrs Polynesia was named the first runner-up, followed by Mrs Canada as the second runner-up. India has won this title after 21 years. Dr Aditi Govitrikar had won the Mrs World title in 2001.

**16. Rafael Nadal** has won the Fan' Favorite singles title at the Association of Tennis Professionals, ATP Awards 2022.

**Note:**

- Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) has won the title of Most Improved Player of the Year at the ATP awards 2022.
- Fan's favourite (doubles): Nick Kyrgios and Thanasi Kokkinakis
- Newcomer of the Year: Holger Rune
- Comeback Player of the Year: Borna Coric
- Coach of the Year: Juan Carlos Ferrero
- Arthur Ashe Humanitarian Award: Andy Murray

**17. National Mining company NMDC** has won the coveted IEI (Institution of Engineers, India) Industry Excellence Award 2022 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

**Note:** The largest producer of the iron ore in the country was felicitated at the 37th Indian Engineering Congress for its outstanding performance and high level of business excellence. N R K Prasad, CGM (IE & MS), NMDC has received the award from Dr. K Ponmudy, Minister for Higher Education, Government of Tamil Nadu.

**18. 'Duare Sarkar' (Government at doorstep)** has been selected for the Platinum Award at the Digital India Awards 2022, is a flagship scheme of **West Bengal**.

**Note:** The scheme has been awarded in the 'Public Digital Platforms — Central Ministries, Departments and States' category. President Droupadi Murmu will give the award to the state on January 7, 2023 at a function in Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi. 'Duare Sarkar' scheme was launched in December 2020.

**19. Indian film RRR** has bagged three awards at the 2022 Philadelphia Film Critics Circle Annual Awards.

**Note:** Categorizes: Best Foreign Language Film, Best Cinematography, and Best Score/Soundtrack categories. Earlier, the film has also received

nominations in two categories for 2023 Golden Globes. The film has been nominated in the Best Picture – Non-English Language category and “Naatu Naatu” in the Best Original Song – Motion Picture category.

**20. Sethrichem Sangtam** has been honoured with the first Rohini Nayyar prize for outstanding contribution to rural development.

**Note:** Reason: To triple the incomes of 1,200 marginalised farmers in Eastern Nagaland. He introduced them fruit growing, prompting the farmers to change from shifting farming to permanent farming. He was awarded the prize by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman, Suman Bery. The award was instituted by the family of late Dr. Rohini Nayyar.

**21. Three sites Vадnagar town, Sun Temple at Modhera, and the rock cut sculptures of Unakoti in Tripura** have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in December 2022.

**Note:** The UNESCO tentative list is an “inventory of those properties which each State Party intends to consider for nomination”. With the addition of these three sites, India now has 52 sites on the UNESCO tentative list. India has a total of 40 sites which enjoy the UNESCO World Heritage tag.

**22. Sudeep Sen** was honoured with the prestigious Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2021-22 for **Anthropocene: Climate Change, Contagion, Consolation (Pippa Rann Books & Media, 2021)**.

**Note:** The prestigious Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2021-22 has been jointly won by Sudeep Sen and Shobhana Kumar. While, Shobhana Kumar for her haibun collection A Sky Full of Bucket Lists (Red River, 2021). The winner receives \$10,000 along with a Rabindranath Tagore statuette, while the shortlisted authors each receive \$500.

**23. Sahitya Akademi** has announced its annual Sahitya Akademi Awards in **23** languages on 22nd December 2022.

**Note:** 7 books of poetry, 6 of novel, 2 of short stories, 3 Play/Dramas, 2 Literary Criticism, one each of Autobiographical Essays, Collection of Articles and Literary History have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2022. The awardee will receive an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and Rs.1,00,000 in Cash. It also announced the ‘Sahitya Akademi Translation’ awards for 2022.

**24. Indian professor Pradeep Thalappil** has received the VinFuture Prize 2022 instituted by the VinFuture Prize Council to honour breakthrough research projects.

**Note:** He has been awarded the ‘Special Prize dedicated to Innovators from Developing Countries’ for his development of a low-cost filtration system to remove arsenic and other heavy metals from groundwater. He was also honoured with the Padma Shri (2020), Nikkei Asia Prize (2020).

**25. PV Sindhu** is the only Indian female player, who listed in the top 25 in Forbes' annual list of the highest-paid female athletes in the world.

**Note:** Sindhu, the 2016 Rio Olympics silver medallist, occupies the 12th spot in the list. Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka tops the list. The 27-year-old made 7 million US Dollars of her earnings. For the 3rd straight year, Osaka tops Forbes' annual list of the World's highest-paid female athletes.

**26. English football player, Beth Mead** has been awarded the 2022 BBC Sports Personality of the Year as she was the player of the tournament and top scorer at Euro 2022.

**Note:** Beth Mead has defeated Germany in the finals at Wembley to win England’s first major women’s football trophy. She has competed against Ben Stokes and Ronnie O’Sullivan for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year for 2022 award. While, Sarina Wiegman (England’s manager) has won the Coach of the Year.

**27. Government owned organisation Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** has won Data Security Council of India's (DSCI) award 2022 in Best Security Practices in Government Sector category.

**Note:** The award was given to UIDAI during DSCI's three-day Annual Information Security Summit (AISS) in New Delhi. Reason: For its significant role in securing national critical Aadhaar infrastructure that provides digital identity-based welfare services to residents. UIDAI CEO: Dr. Saurabh Garg

**28. NHPC Limited** owned organisation has been awarded the ‘Best Globally Competitive Power Company of India – Hydropower and Renewable Energy Sector’ award at PRAKASHmay ‘15th Enertia Awards 2022’.

**Note:** Reason: For its leadership in the hydropower sector with a gross asset class renewable energy capacity of more than 7000 MW. The award also recognizes that NHPC has more than 5000 MW of projects under construction and an ambitious 7000 MW plus plan for Solar capacity addition.

**29. Dr Aleida Guevara** has been selected for the first KR Gouri Amma national award 2022. She is associated with which **Cuba**.

**Note:** She is an active member of the Cuban Medical Mission that works to improve the health profile of children in Latin America. The award will be presented by Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan at Olympia Hall at Chandrasekharan Nair Stadium. The award consists of \$3,000, a statute and a citation

**30. IIT Madras** programmes on BS Data Science and NPTEL in collaboration with IISc Bangalore, have won the Wharton-QS Reimagine Education Awards 2022 for the best programmes.

**Note:** The BS in Data Science and Applications programme won Silver in the 'Best Online Program' category. The NPTEL-National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning, has won the Gold in the 'Lifelong Learning' category.

**31. Prabhuchandra Mishra** was honoured with the prestigious Atal Samman Award during the 9th Atal Samman Samaroh, organised in New Delhi.

**Note:** He was awarded for his excellence in field of science & research. He has worked in the area of StemCell & Regenerative Medicine in infertility especially when In vitro fertilization (IVF) failed. Under his work, diseases like premature ovarian failure, and Asherman syndrome have shown satisfactory results with body's own cells.

**32.** The anti-drug & illicit liquor campaign of **Chhattisgarh** state police named 'Nijaat' has been selected for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 2022 award under the 'Leadership in Crime Prevention' in the institutional category.

**Note:** This campaign was launched under the leadership of the IPS officer Santosh Kumar Singh. Under this campaign, strict action taken against illegal drug dealers, intensive public awareness and rehabilitation of the addicts.

### Sports News

**1. Stephanie Frappart** has become the first female referee at the men's 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar.

**Note:** She has taken charge of the group stage game between Costa Rica and Germany, held on December 2, 2022. Neuza Back (Brazil) and Karen Diaz Medina (Mexican) are the other women officials who have been designated for the same fixture. In 2021, she became the first woman to referee a men's World Cup qualifying match (Netherlands against Latvia).

**2. Third** edition of T20 World Cup Cricket Tournament for the Blind organised from December 5 to 17, 2022 in India.

**Note:** The participating nations for World Cup 2022 are Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the host, India. The tournament is being organised to mark the World Disability Day celebrations universally. Former India batter Yuvraj Singh is the brand ambassador of the tournament.

**3. Indian shooter Rudranksh Patil** clinched gold at the ISSF President's Cup held in Cairo, Egypt from 28th Nov to 4th Dec 2022.

**Note:** He has defeated Danilo Sollazzo (Italy) in the 10-metre rifle by 16-8. He had also bagged India's first quota for the 2024 Paris Olympics in October 2022. Olympian, Anjum Moudgil (world No. 4) had secured silver after losing to Anna Janssen (Germany) in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions final.

**4. Saurashtra cricket team** has defeated Maharashtra cricket team by 5 wickets in the final to win the 2022 Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

**Note:**

- Player of the match: Sheldon Jackson (Saurashtra, 133 runs in 135 Balls)
- Player of the tournament: Rituraj Gaikwad (Maharashtra, Games: 5; Runs: 660)
- Most Runs: N Jagadeesan (TN): 830runs, 8 innings
- Highest Score: N Jagadeesan
- Most Fours: N Jagadeesan
- Most Sixes: Rituraj Gaikwad

**5.** Team of Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh won the gold in **10m air pistol** category of mixed team at the 65th National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC), held at the MP Shooting Academy range, Bhopal.

**Note:** Duo of Manu and Sarabjot defeated Karnataka pair, Divya T.S. and Imroz by 16-4 in the gold medal encounter. While, in the junior mixed team pistol, Uttar Pradesh's Anjali and Sagar defeated Uttarakhand's Yashsavi and Abhinav to win the final.

**6.** Indian shuttler, **Anish Thoppani** has clinched a silver medal in the Men's single under-15 category at the Badminton Asia Junior Championships, held in Nonthaburi, Thailand.

**Note:** Anish lost the men's singles final against Chung-Hsiang Yih (Chinese Taipei) by 8-21, 24-22,

- 19-21. While, India's under-17 men's duo Arsh Mohammad and Sanskar Sraswat won silver medal. Unnati Hooda won silver at the U-17 (women's singles category), she lost to Sarunrak Vitidsarn of Thailand.
7. Tokyo Olympic medallist, Mirabai Chanu has secured the silver medal in **49kg** women category, at the ongoing 2022 World Weightlifting Championships, held in Bogotá, Colombia.  
**Note:** She managed to lift a total weight of 200kg (87kg in snatch and 113kg in 'clean and jerk'). She lost to Jiang Huihua from China, who won the gold with a total effort of 206kg (93kg+113kg). While Hou Zhihua settled for bronze medal with the total lift of 198kg (89kg+109kg).
8. Footballer **Cristiano Ronaldo** has signed two-and-a-half year agreement for 200 million euros each season with Saudi Arabian club Al-Nassr Football Club.  
**Note:** Manchester United has terminated his contract after a controversial bombshell interview with broadcaster Piers Morgan. Al Nassr Football Club was formed in 1955. The club plays its home games at the Mrsool Park. Al-Nassr FC Chairman: Musalli Al Muammar
9. **Aditya Mittal** has become the 77th chess Grandmaster of India, during an ongoing Ellobregat Open tournament, Spain.  
**Note:** He had secured three GM norms, crossed live rating of 2,500 ELO points mark during the sixth round of the ongoing tournament. He drew the game against Francisco Vallejo Pons to achieve the feat. He won his maiden GM norm at Serbia Masters 2021. Subsequently, he obtained his second GM norm at Ellobregat Open 2021 and third at Serbia Masters 2022.
10. Eden Hazard has announced his retirement from international football, is associated with **Belgium** team.  
**Note:** He was the captain of Belgium in the 2022 FIFA World Cup. He made his debut against Luxembourg in 2008. He moved to Real Madrid from Chelsea for an estimated £150m in 2019. In 2018 World Cup, he helped Belgium to reach semi-finals, where they lost to eventual champions France
11. Along with Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, **Mondo Duplantis** has been honored with the 2022 World Athletes of the Year at the World Athletics Awards.  
**Note:** McLaughlin-Levrone (USA): She had broken the world women's 400m hurdles record twice. She became the first American to win Athlete of the Year since fellow 400m hurdler Dalilah Muhammad in 2019. Duplantis: He broken the world pole vault record on three occasion and became world champion indoors and outdoors.
12. **Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)** has won his eighth title for men's single BWF World Tour Finals 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand.  
**Note:** In this tournament, he defeated Anthony Ginting from Indonesian. While, Akane Yamaguchi of Japan has defeated Taiwanese, Tai Tzu Ying to win her women's singles title. Men's doubles: Liu Yuchen and Ou Xuanyi (Chinese). Women's doubles: Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (Chinese). Mixed doubles: Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (Chinese)
13. **Ishan Kishan** has scored fastest double century in the history of ODI cricket.  
**Note:** He has scored 210 against Bangladesh in the 3rd game of the series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Bangladesh. He has broken seven-year-old record, created by the West Indies' Chris Gayle. He has achieved the feat in just 126 balls while Gayle took 138 balls to achieve the milestone. He also surpassed Sourav Ganguly's score and became India's highest individual run-scorer opener batter.
14. **Divya T.S.** has secured her first women's 10m air pistol national title at the 65th National Shooting Championship Competitions in Pistol events, held in Bhopal from 20th Nov to 12th Dec 2022.  
**Note:** She defeated Sanskriti Bana from Uttar Pradesh by 16-14 and Rhythm Sangwan from Haryana has settled for bronze. Olympian, Manu Bhaker has won the junior women's air pistol, after defeating Esha Singh (Telangana). Rhythm Sangwan has won the gold in the Youth category.
15. **Joe Root (Former England captain)** has become the third cricketer in history to score 10000 runs and pick up 50 wickets in Test cricket.  
**Note:** He has achieved the milestone during the ongoing second Test against Pakistan in Multan. He has joined the Jacques Kallis (South African) and Steve Waugh (former Australian skipper) in scoring 10000 runs and claiming 50 wickets in the longest format. Presently, Waugh has 10927 runs (92 wickets) and Kallis has 13289 runs (292 wickets).
16. Lionel Messi, who has confirmed his retirement after Qatar FIFA 2022, is associated with **Argentina**.  
**Note:** He is playing at his fifth World Cup (FIFA 2022) and has surpassed Diego Maradona and



Javier Mascherano. With his fifth goal in Qatar FIFA 2022, he has also surpassed Gabriel Batistuta as the top Albiceleste scorer at World Cups, netting 11 times. He led Argentina to the final in the 2014 edition as well.

**17. Tata Steel Limited** has signed an MoU with Hockey India to become an Official Partner of the FIH Hockey Men's World Cup 2023.

**Note:** The 15th edition of the Hockey Men's World Cup will take place in Bhubaneswar-Rourkela from January 13 to January 29, 2023. It will be the fourth time that India will be hosting the prestigious tournament after having played hosts in 1982 in Bombay, 2010 in New Delhi, and 2018 in Odisha. A total of 16 nations will take part in the tournament.

**18.** India has defeated **Bangladesh** by 120 runs to win their third consecutive title of the T20 World Cup 2022 for the Blind at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bangalore.

**Note:** Sunil was declared Man of the Match in the final and also received the Man of the Series in the B3 category. Ajay was adjudged Man of the Series in the B2 category while Bangladesh's Mohammed Mahmud Rashid was the Man of the Series in the B1 category. Earlier, the Indian team has won the title in 2012 and 2017.

**19.** Indian Women's Hockey team has defeated **Spain** by 1-0 in the final to win the FIH Women's Nations Cup 2022, held in Valencia, Spain, from 11 to 17 December 2022.

**Note:** Hockey India has announced Rs 2 Lakh for each player and 1 Lakh rupees for each support staff of the Indian Women's Hockey Team. Indian has also got promoted to the 2023-24 FIH Hockey Women's Pro League. Goalkeeper of the tournament: Savita Punia

**20. Argentina** has defeated France by 4-2 on penalties to win the 2022 FIFA World Cup, held at the Lusail Stadium in Doha, Qatar.

**Note:** This is third-ever World Cup victory of Argentina and first since 1986. Kylian Mbappé (France) has won the 2022 FIFA World Cup Golden Boot award with 8 goals.

- Lionel Messi won Golden Ball (best player award) at the 2022 Fifa World Cup in Qatar.
- Best goalkeeper (golden glove): Emiliano Martínez (Argentina)
- Fair play award: England

**21. Jaipur Pink Panthers** has defeated Puneri Paltan by 33-29 in the summit clash to emerge champions of the 2022 Pro Kabaddi League.

**Note:** The tournament was played across Bengaluru, Pune and Hyderabad while the playoffs were played in Mumbai. V Ajith, Sunil Kumar and Arjun Deshwal emerged as the best players for Jaipur side with six points each.

**22. Viacom18 Media Private Limited (Viacom18)** has secured the exclusive media rights to broadcast the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

**Note:** It has also secured the non-exclusive rights to the Winter Youth Olympic Games Gangwon 2024, in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In 2024, Olympics will be hosted by France in Paris, beginning from July 26 to August 11.

**23.** India's first ever World Table Tennis (WTT) series event will be hosted by **Goa** from February 27 to March 5 2023.

**Note:** The event will be held at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor stadium, located at the Goa University Campus. Stupa Analytics, a homegrown sports analytics firm, will be the tournament host with active support from the Goa government.

**24. England all-rounder Sam Curran** has emerged as the most expensive player in the IPL's history as Punjab Kings bought him for Rs 18.50 crore.

**Note:** The most expensive player in IPL so far was South African all-rounder Chris Morris, who received Rs 16.25 crore at the 2021 auction. Australia all-rounder Cameron Green was the second-highest earner, fetching ₹17.5 crore bid from Mumbai Indians.

**25.** Badminton player, Geto Sora (7) has won title of 2022 Junior International Badminton Championship in the below 9 years category, organised in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She hails from **Arunachal Pradesh**.

**Note:** He has defeated Jaryl Teh from Malaysia in straight sets 21-5, 21-16. In November 2022, he had won the U-9 boys singles title in the Yonex-Singha-BTY Championships 2022, held at the Banthongyord Badminton School in Bangkok, Thailand.

**26.** Lovlina Borgohain has defeated Arundhati Choudhary of Services in the category of **75kg** at Women's National Boxing Championship 2022, organised in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

**Note:** Nikhat Zareen defeated Anamika of Railways in the 50kg category. While, The

Railways team has topped the medals tally with 10 medals – five golds, three silvers and two bronze. MP placed second in medal tally, followed by Haryana.

27. **Australia** has renamed the men's Test Player of the Year award to honour legendary spinner Shane Warne \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** The Shane Warne Men's Test Player of the Year award will be presented annually at the Australian Cricket Awards. Warne himself won the award once, in 2006 after an incredible year that included a record 40 wickets in the famous 2005 Ashes series in England. This Australian Cricket Awards will be announced on January 30, 2023.

28. **GM Magnus Carlsen (Norway)** has secured his fourth title of 2022 World Rapid Championship, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Note:** Vincent Keymer (Germany) has settled for silver and Fabiano Caruana (America) has secured bronze. While, Tan Zhongyi (China) has won gold in 2022 Women's World Rapid Champion. Indian chess player, B Savitha Shri has won bronze medal in women's event and became third Indian after Viswanathan Anand and Humpy to win a medal at the world rapid championship.

29. Portugal Football team captain Cristiano Ronaldo has joined **Saudi Arabian club Al Nassr** on a contract until 2025 with worth over USD 75 million per year.

**Note:** Al Nassr have won the Saudi top-flight titles 9 times, last in 2019. This move inspires their league, nation, and future generations, boys, and girls to be the best version of themselves. Portugal captain was free after leaving Manchester United following a controversial interview in which he had criticized the club.

30. Indian female chess player, **Koneru Humpy** has won India's first-ever silver medal in FIDE World Blitz Chess Championships in Almaty, Kazakhstan after defeating China's Zhongyi Tan.

**Note:** He scored an impressive 12.5 points, just half a point behind the gold medal winner Bibisara Balabayeva of Kazakhstan. He is the second Indian to win a medal at World Blitz, after Viswanathan Anand.

31. **Hockey Haryana** hockey women's team has won Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Women's Under 18 Qualifiers after defeating Madhya Pradesh 2-0 in the final at Bhubaneswar.

**Note:** Pooja and Gurmail Kaur scored a goal each for Haryana to make the team the trophy winner Odisha stepped up to claim 3rd place after beating Hockey Jharkhand 2-1 in the 3rd and 4th place encounter. Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand have qualified for the Khelo India Youth Games to be held in MP in 2023

### Books and Authors

1. A book titled, 'The Chipko Movement: A People's History' has won 2022 Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize. **Shekhar Pathak** is the writer of this book.

**Note:** This book was translated from Hindi by Manisha Chaudhry and published by Permanent Black & Ashoka University. Prize: Rs 15 lakh, a trophy and citation. The fifth edition of this award was instituted by the New India Foundation in 2018 to recognise powerful works of non-fiction about contemporary India.

2. 'Miracles of Face Yoga' book has been released recently, this book is authored by **Mansi Gulati (Founder of Manasvani)**.

**Note:** This book was appreciated by the President of India Droupadi Murmu. Mansi Gulati, an international Yogi, celebrated author, and thought leader, devoted her efforts to learning everything possible about yoga practices and philosophy.

3. **Air Marshal PV Iyer (retd.)** has launched his book 'Fit At Any Age' at India International Centre, New Delhi.

**Note:** He has penned his journey to fitness in the book and shared anecdotes from his life to explain how he became motivated to work out daily. The book, published by Bloomsbury India.

4. A book titled "Forks in the Road: My Days at RBI and Beyond" has been authored by former governor of RBI **C Rangarajan**.

**Note:** It was published by the Penguin Business (Penguin Group). The book is the memoir of Dr C. Rangarajan, an Indian economist, a former Member of Parliament, and the 19th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The book is divided into 3 parts. Part 1- 'RBI and Planning Commission', Part 2-'Governor of RBI' and Part 3-'Beyond RBI'

## Science and Defence

1. **Sudarshan Chakra Corps** of Indian Army has conducted Exercise Sudarshan Prahar in the deserts of Rajasthan on 30th November 2022.  
**Note:** Focus: On the synergised application of combat power through the integration of force multipliers & practising new battle techniques. The exercise was attended by Lt Gen AK Singh, Goc-in-C, Southern Command.
2. **12th** edition of a bilateral exercise between the Singapore & Indian Army, 'Agni Warrior' has been concluded on 30 November 2022.  
**Note:** Location: Field Firing Ranges, Devlali, Maharashtra. During the exercise, both armies have showcased the joint firepower planning, execution and use of New Generation Equipment by the Artillery arm of both armies. Aim: To enhance the mutual understanding of drills & procedures and improving interoperability between the two armies.
3. ISRO has signed an MoU with **Social Alpha** organisation to launch SpaceTech Innovation Network (SpIN).  
**Note:** It is the India's first dedicated platform for innovation curation and venture development for the burgeoning space entrepreneurial ecosystem. It will primarily focus on facilitating space tech entrepreneurs in three categories - Geospatial Technologies and Downstream Applications; Enabling Technologies for Space & Mobility; and Aerospace Materials, Sensors, and Avionics.
4. ISRO has signed an MoU with **Vyom Space Exploration and Services Private Limited** for its human and cargo transportation capsule program.  
**Note:** It was facilitated by India's nodal space authorization body, Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (In-Space). In space mission, 'Capsule' is the module inside which any cargo is placed for being carried to space. In manned missions, the capsule is what hosts the astronauts.
5. Japanese space startup, **ispace** has launched the world's first commercial moon lander, HAKUTO-R on 11th December 2022 after several delays.  
**Note:** This mission was took off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, after two postponements caused by inspections of its SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. HAKUTO refers to the white rabbit that lives on the moon in Japanese folklore. The national space agencies of the United States, Russia and China have already achieved the soft landings on moon.
6. After completing **25 Days**, NASA Orion capsule has returned to the Earth from the moon on December 11, 2022.  
**Note:** NASA has launched the Orion capsule from Kennedy Space Center on November 16, 2022. This capsule was hit the atmosphere at 32 times the speed of sound, and endured reentry temperatures of 5,000°F (2,760°C) before splashing down west of Baja California near Guadalupe Island. The space agency needed a successful splashdown to stay on track for the next Orion flight around the moon.
7. Indian TV actor, **Dev Joshi** has confirmed that he will be joining the "dearMoon CREW" and taking a week-long trip around the moon in a SpaceX rocket in 2023.  
**Note:** He is best known for his role in TV show 'Baal Veer'. The 'dearMoon' project was first announced in 2017 and it is the first civilian mission to the Moon. Japanese billionaire, Yusaku Maezawa, who has purchased all the seats in 2018, has revealed the name of the eight people who will be joining him for this trip.
8. Along with INS Kochi, and Kavaratti, Indian Navy Ship **Sumedha** has participated in the maiden International Fleet Review (IFR), organised at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.  
**Note:** The ships has taken part in a variety of activities that was conducted as a part of BN IFR-22 from 06 to 09 December 2022. In 2022, the IFR-22 was organised by Bangladesh Navy, to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and to celebrate Golden Jubilee of Independence of Bangladesh.
9. **39th** edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy is being conducted from 08 – 19 December 2022.  
**Note:** INS Karmuk, an indigenously built Missile Corvette participated in the pre-deployment briefing at Belawan, Indonesia. Along with India's INS Karmuk, L-58 and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft are participating in the CORPAT. India and Indonesia have been carrying out CORPATs twice a year since 2002.
10. **6th edition** of India-Kazakhstan joint training exercise 'KAZIND-22' has been conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from 15 to 28 December 2022.  
**Note:** The Joint annual training exercise with the Kazakhstan Army was instituted in 2016 as Exercise Prabal Dostyk. In 2018, this exercise was upgraded to a company level exercise and

- renamed as Ex Kazind. This joint exercise enables the two armies to train, plan and execute a series of combined tactical drills for neutralising threats.
11. The 16th edition of Indo-Nepal joint army training exercise, SURYA KIRAN has been started in **Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi, Nepal**.  
**Note:** This exercise will continue till 29 December 2022. Aim: To enhance inter-operability in jungle warfare and counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) under UN mandate. Shree Bhawani Baksh Battalion (Nepal Army) and 5 GR (Indian Army) are participating in the exercise.
  12. The second warship of the P15B class of stealth guided-missile destroyers, **INS Mormugao (D67)** has been commissioned at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai on December 18, 2022.  
**Note:** It was designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organisation Warship Design Bureau. It was constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai. It has 70-km MRSAM system, torpedo and rocket launchers. The event marked the formal induction of the second of the four 'Visakhapatnam' class destroyers.
  13. Sailor boat **INSV Tarini** has set sail for an expedition to Cape Town, South Africa for participating in the 50th edition of Cape to Rio Race 2023.  
**Note:** This ocean sailing race will be flagged off on 2nd January, 2023 from Cape Town and will culminate at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Aim: To train crew onboard, in essential seamanship skills including Navigation, Communication, and Planning. The expedition is being undertaken by an Indian Navy crew of five officers including two women officers
  14. Fifth indigenously-built Scorpène submarine of Project 75 Kalvari Class submarines, **Vagir** has been received by Indian Navy.  
**Note:** These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited Mumbai, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France. The submarine would shortly be commissioned into the Navy and enhance its capability. Project - 75 includes the indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design.
  15. The first ship of ASW SWC Project, that has been launched by the Indian Navy at Kattupalli, Chennai.  
**Note:** This ship built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE). The contract for building eight ASW SWC ships was signed between Defence Ministry and GRSE, Kolkata in April 2019. Arnala class of ships will replace the Abhay class ASW Ships of the Indian Navy and are designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters and Low Intensity Maritime Operations.
  16. The Indian defence forces will induct ballistic missiles **Pralay** that can hit targets from 150 to 500 km.  
**Note:** Pralay is a quasi-ballistic surface-to-surface missile. Pralay is powered with solid propellant rocket motor with the capability to destroy enemy targets within a range of 150 to 500km. The proposal moved by the Indian defence forces is at an advanced stage and is scheduled to be taken up for clearance during a high-level meeting.
  17. India has successfully carried out the night trials of **Agni-V** nuclear-capable ballistic missile from Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha on 15th December, 2022.  
**Note:** The test was conducted to check the new technologies and equipment on the missile which is now lighter than before. The missile has a capacity to hit targets beyond 5,000 kilometres. The Agni series I to IV missiles have ranges from 700 km to 3,500 km.
  18. According to the Ministry for Space, **₹1,100 crore (approx)** has been earned by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the last five years from the launch of foreign satellites.  
**Note:** In the last five years (January 2018 - November 2022) ISRO, via its commercial arms has successfully launched 177 foreign satellites from 19 countries. Under commercial agreement, ISRO launched these satellites on-board PSLV and GSLV-MkIII.
  19. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) chairman, PD Vaghela has announced that India will be the first country to auction spectrum for SatCom, and it should be designed to attract investments in the sector. **Satellite Communication** is the full form of SatCom.  
**Note:** Satellite communication: It refers to any communication link that involves the use of an artificial satellite in its propagation path. They can be found in geostationary, Molniya, elliptical, and low Earth orbits.
  20. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has launched the SWOT satellite from California to survey nearly all bodies of water on Earth, offering key insights on how they influence or are impacted by climate change. The full form of SWOT is **Surface Water and Ocean Topography**.  
**Note:** This satellite project was jointly developed by NASA and CNES (France space agency). It will start collecting scientific data in about six months after undergoing checks and calibrations.
  21. India and Japan will organise their maiden bilateral air combat exercise, Veer Guardian 2023



from January 16 to 26 at Hyakuri air base and Iruma air base.

**Note:** Reason: To promote the mutual understanding and strengthen defence cooperation between the Air Forces and enhance JASDF's tactical skill. India will deploy four Sukhoi-30MKI fighters supported by two C-17 Globemaster-III strategic lift aircraft, one IL-78 mid-air refueler and around 150 IAF personnel.

22. **Russia** will begin supplying India with the third squadron of the S-400 air defence missile system in January or February of next year.

**Note:** India has already put its first two missile system squadrons into service. India and Russia have agreed to a three-year, more than ₹35,000 crore deal for India to buy five squadrons of S-400 air defence missiles, and all deliveries are anticipated to be completed by the end of the following fiscal year.

23. The Indian Air Force has successfully test-fired the extended range version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile against a ship target in Bay of Bengal from **Sukhoi-30MKI**.

**Note:** Achievement: Carry out precision strikes from Sukhoi against land and sea targets over very long ranges. The current weight of missile is 2.65

tonnes, which will come down to 1.33 tonnes with BrahMos-NG (under development). BrahMos is a JV between DRDO and NPO Mashinostroyeniya of Russia

24. **Nasa** has announced that Mars InSight lander has been retired four years after it touched down on the surface of the red planet.

**Note:** It was the first robotic probe, which was specially designed to study the deep interior of a distant world. Mission controllers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) concluded that the mission had ended when two consecutive attempts to re-establish radio contact with the lander failed. InSight landed on Mars in late November 2018.

25. Researchers at **IIT Kanpur** have developed organic solar cells under the DST-RCUK APEX project.

**Note:** Organic solar cell: It is a combination of an organic polymer and PCBM developed on steel substrates can potentially convert a steel roof into an energy-producing device. The devices consist of a blend of organic polymer PTB7 as a donor and PCBM as an acceptor. It is a jointly developed programme of the Department of S&T and the Research Councils United Kingdom (RCUK).

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