

Monthly GK Digest

January 2023



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Dear Readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in the month of '**January-2023**'. This file is important for MBA exams.

Banking & Financial Awareness

- 1. Tripura** state government has signed an agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for a power project worth Rs 2,275 crore.
Note: The state government would spend an amount of Rs 455 crore. The project include the replacement of Rokhia's existing 63 MW (3X21 MW) Open Cycle power project with a 120 MW Combined Cycle power project. The project would also boost the efficiency of the Gumti hydroelectric power plant in Gomati district.
- SBI Cards has partnered with **Punjab & Sind Bank** to launch three variants of co-brand credit cards i.e. ELITE, PRIME, and SimplySAVE for the bank's customer.
Note: PSB SBI Card ELITE and PSB SBI Card PRIME have been designed to offer lifestyle privileges and best in class experience to premium and mass premium customers, respectively. PSB SimplySAVE SBI Card offers rewarding experience to value conscious customers.
- Mutual Funds provider **IDBI MF** has signed an agreement with LIC MF to transfer its schemes to LIC MF to comply with Regulation 7B of SEBI MF Regulations.
Note: MF rules prohibit a single promoter from owning more than 10% stake in multiple asset management companies. Since LIC took over IDBI Bank in 2019, the insurance major ended up holding a majority stake in both LIC MF and IDFC MF. Hence, the life insurer had only two options — either to sell one of MF or merge the two.
- The government of India has collected **Rs 1,49,507 crore** gross GST revenue during December 2022.
Note: Out of which, CGST is Rs 26,711 crore, SGST is Rs 33,357 crore, IGST is Rs 78,434 crore and Cess is Rs 11,005 crore. The revenues for December 2022 are 15% higher than the GST revenues in December 2021. The total revenue of Centre and the States after regular settlements in the month of December 2022 is Rs 63,380 crore for CGST and Rs 64,451 crore for the SGST.
- RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das** has launched Utkarsh 2.0, the second phase of RBI's medium-term strategy for strengthening regulatory and supervisory mechanism.
Note: The Vision in Utkarsh 2.0 that will guide RBI over the period 2023-25 are: Excellence in performance of its functions. Strengthened trust of citizens and Institutions in the RBI. Enhanced relevance and significance in national and global roles. Transparent, accountable and ethics-driven internal governance
- India has signed various loan agreements with **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** to boost the infrastructure sector of Maharashtra, Assam and Chennai (TN).
Note: A loan agreement of 350 million US dollars was signed to improve connectivity in Maharashtra. Govt also signed agreement worth 300 million US dollars to upgrade over 300 Km of State highways and district roads in Assam. A 220 million dollar loan agreement was signed to improve energy security, and resilience of the power sector in Tripura.
- HDFC Bank** has partnered with Microsoft in the next phase of its digital transformation.
Note: Aim: To unlock business value by transforming the application portfolio, modernising the data landscape, and securing the enterprise with Microsoft Cloud. The bank is developing in-house intellectual properties (IP) as well as partnering with several companies. The bank has leveraged Microsoft Azure to consolidate and modernise its enterprise data landscape by Federated Data Lake.
- India Accelerator** has launched a program created to nurture and co-innovate with the startup ecosystem in India named 'i3 Launchpad'.

Note: This has been developed in collaboration with ICICI Bank and Infosys Finacle. Objective: To support a community of entrepreneurs who are on a mission to create brands that can have a global impact. The program is open to startups across all industries and will onboard two cohorts a year, with a target of 12-18 startups in each cohort.

9. Health insurance provider **Niva Bupa Health Insurance Company** has signed a corporate agency agreement with Sundaram Finance Limited to increase the customer portfolio.

Note: Sundaram Finance will use its network across the country to reach out to customers as part of this partnership. Niva Bupa's select range of indemnity plans would be offered to Sundaram Finance's growing customers

10. **Bandhan Bank** has launched its campaign '**Jahaan Bandhan, Wahaan Trust**', featuring cricketer Sourav Ganguly as its brand ambassador.

Note: The campaign was conceptualised by Leo Burnett Orchard. Bandhan was constituted in 2001 as a not-for-profit entity. The RBI had accorded 'universal banking licence', following which the Bank has started operating on August 23, 2015. Objective: To bring in financial inclusion and women empowerment

11. According to the annual report of Ombudsman Schemes, 2021-22, released by the RBI, the complaints received under ombudsman schemes has been increased by **9.39 percent** in 2021-22.

Note: The volume of complaints received under the RB-IOS and consumer education and protection cells stood at 4,18,184 in 2021-22. About 42% complaints were related to the digital modes of payment and transactions. Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) was launched on November 12, 2021.

12. RBI has lifted restrictions on **Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited** for loan recovery via third-party services.

Note: On September 22, 2022, RBI had directed Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services to immediately cease carrying out any recovery or repossession activity through outsourcing arrangements, till further orders. Mahindra Finance could continue recovery or repossession activities through its own employees.

13. **ICICI Bank** has launched 'digital solutions for exporters', a comprehensive set of banking and value-added services on a single platform.

Note: Aim: To simplify the journey of exporters by decongesting the current time-intensive manual procedures. It will digitise the entire export life-cycle from discovery of export markets, foreign exchange services to receipt of export incentives. Key services: Insta EPC, Trade accounts, Paperless exports solutions, and many more

14. **Aegon Life Insurance** has launched iTerm Prime Insurance plan catering to the need of self-employed individuals with a special 10% discount on first-year premium.

Note: It offers a minimum sum assured of ₹25 lakhs, with no upper limit on a consumer's requirement. It also offers a 'Special Exit Value' option that allows the policyholder to get all premiums back when they turn 55 years old. It is designed to encourage emerging India to gain access to life insurance.

15. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the proposal of SBI Funds Management to acquire up to **9.99 percent** of the paid-up equity capital of Equitas Small Finance Bank through the schemes of SBI Mutual Fund (SBI MF).

Note: The banking regulator's approval is subject to compliance with the relevant regulations issued by RBI and SEBI and is valid for one year till 2 January 2024.

16. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a periodic updation of KYC details for customers. **Know Your Customer** is the full form of KYC.

Note: As per the release, a fresh process of KYC can be done by visiting a bank branch, or remotely through a video-based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP). If there is no change in the KYC, a self-declaration from the individual customer is sufficient to complete the re-KYC process. Customers can use registered details (Such as ATMs) to do re-KYC.

17. RBI has selected **Six** entities for the 'Test Phase' under regulatory sandbox for the theme 'Prevention and Mitigation of Financial Frauds'.

Note: The selected entities will commence testing of their products from February 2023. The six entities are Bahwan Cybertek, Credwatch Information Analytics, enStage Software (Wibmo), HSBC in collaboration with Wibmo, napID Cybersec and

Trusting Social. Aim: To promote efficiency and bring benefits to consumers

18. GoldenPi Technologies has issued a debt broker license from **SEBI**.

Note: With the development, GoldenPi became the first online bond platform provider to receive a debt brokerage license from Sebi. In 2022, SEBI has introduced regulations for online debt trading platforms. As per this platform, no company or individual shall act as an online bond platform provider without the certificate of registration as a stock broker under the SEBI Regulations, 2021.

19. **Axis Bank** has partnered with OPEN to provide a fully native digital current account journey for its customers including SMEs, freelancers, homepreneurs, influencers and more.

Note: This agreement offers the larger business community access to the holistic banking experience of Axis Bank with OPEN's end-to-end financial automation tools for business management. This is Axis Bank's first-ever partnership with a fintech player to launch a fully digital current account.

20. The Reserve Bank of India has announced that first Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) would be issued of amount **Rs 16,000 crore** in two tranches.

Note: The proceeds will be utilised for funding public sector projects seeking to reduce carbon emissions. The first auction would be done on January 25, 2023 while the second on February 9, 2023. SGrBs will be issued through uniform price auction and 5% of the notified amount of sale will be reserved for retail investors

21. Neeru Yadav, who is fondly known as 'Hockey Wali Sarpanch' has signed an agreement with **NABARD** to start the Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO) with the assistance of SIIRD (Society of Indian Institute of Rural Development).

Note: This initiative will strengthen farmers of Lambi Ahir Village, Rajasthan. FPO: It is a legal entity formed by primary producers. Producers such as farmers, milk producers, fishermen, etc, can form a company basis equity share.

22. **Kerala** state government declared itself as the first state in the country to go fully digital in its banking service.

Note: It was possible due to social interventions through local self-government institutions along

with infrastructure development and technological advances in the banking sector. He has also announced that the ambitious Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON) project of the state government will reduce the digital divide.

23. RBI has imposed a monetary penalty on **Five** cooperative banks for non-compliance with varied central bank directions.

Note: The monetary penalties slapped on these entities range between Rs 50,000 to Rs 3 lakh. Banks: Shree Mahayogi Lakshamma Co-operative Bank (Andhra Pradesh); The Attur Town Co-operative Bank (TN); Gondia District Central Co-operative Bank (Maharashtra); Shirpur Peoples' Co-operative Bank (Maharashtra); and Tirupati Urban Co-operative Bank (Maharashtra)

24. As per the guidelines issued by SEBI, the trading hours in case of an outage at a stock exchange along with standard operating procedures for stock exchanges for handling such an outage will be extended, **5pm** will be the new time at the time of outage.

Note: An outage would mean stoppage of continuous trading, either suo motu by the exchange or by reasons beyond their control. If there is a failure to start pre-opening by 2:15 pm, then trading hours will be extended till 5 pm for the day.

25. **South Indian Bank** has launched a MSME online portal providing instant online 'In Principle' approval of up to ₹1 crore.

Note: Aim: To provide quick loans to micro and small businesses. MSME enterprises are the most important pillars of the economy and the government is working towards making the sector stronger. This development is at the backdrop of central government considering to make India a \$5 trillion economy.

26. **Axis Bank** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru to establish a Centre for Mathematics and Computing at the Institute.

Note: The centre will have labs and programmes benefitting faculty and students. Besides, it will also host the new IISc BTech programme in Mathematics and Computing and the ongoing Interdisciplinary PhD programme in Mathematical Sciences.

27. The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the incentive scheme for the promotion of **RuPay** Debit Cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions.
Note: The scheme has a financial outlay of 2,600 crore rupees. Aim: To help in building a robust digital payment system. Besides, the Cabinet has also given its approval to rename the National Centre for Drinking Water, Sanitation, and Quality at Joka, Kolkata as Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institution of Water and Sanitation.
28. **Axis Bank** has entered into a revised agreement with Max Financial to acquire the remaining 7% stake in the latter.
Note: The parties agreed that the valuation for the right to acquire the remaining 7% stake of Max Life will be through fair market value using discounted cash flow. Axis Entities have earlier acquired 12.99% stake in Max Life at Rs 35 per share with the right to purchase an additional 7% stake in the company.
29. **EnKash, Hitachi and BharatPe** platforms have received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an online payment aggregator.
Note: Payment aggregators: They facilitate e-commerce sites and merchants to accept payment instruments from customers. They help to connect merchants with acquirers. BharatPe and Hitachi Payment Services have also received in-principle authorization to operate as payment aggregators.
30. The World Bank has projected that India's economy would grow at **6.9%** percent in FY23, which is much lower than the 8.7% growth achieved by the country in the previous financial year (FY2021/22).
Note: Report title: Global Economic Prospects Report. The World Bank has also predicted that global growth in 2023 would slow to 1.7% from the 3%. Reason: Elevated inflation, higher interest rates, reduced investment, and disruptions caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine
31. The Securities and Exchange Board of India has allowed exchanges to introduce **future contracts** type of derivatives on Corporate Bond Indices.
Note: The index should be composed of corporate debt securities, constituents of the index should have adequate liquidity and diversification at the issuer level and the constituents of the index should be periodically reviewed. The single issuer should not have more than 15% weight in the index.
32. **SBI** has associated with National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL) to launch e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility.
Note: It will bring a revolutionary change in the banking ecosystem, where bank guarantee is frequently used in large volumes. Presently, the bank issues these guarantees with physical stamping and wet signatures. It will replace this function with e-stamping and e-signature. This initiative will enhance transparency and reduce turnaround time from days to minutes.
33. **NPCI** has allowed non-resident holders - NRE/ NRO accounts to get onboarded and transact through UPI.
Note: The UPI ecosystem members must comply with NPCI's directions by April 30, 2023. Allowed countries (10 countries): Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, USA, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. This is subject to the fact that the member banks must ensure that such accounts are only allowed as per extant FEMA regulations.
34. The RBI imposed a monetary penalty of amount **₹30 lakh** on Delhi-based Bahadur Chand Investments.
Note: The penalty has been levied for non-compliance with certain provisions of the 'Core Investment Companies (Reserve Bank) Directions, 2016' and directions on 'Information Technology Framework for the NBFC Sector'. This penalty has been imposed in the exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
35. **Alibaba Group** has sold a 3.1% stake in Paytm worth \$125 million through a block deal.
Note: Alibaba retained a 6.26 % stake in Paytm as of end-September 2022. Paytm was listed in 2021 after a mega \$2.5 billion initial public offer (IPO). Block deal: Single transaction between two institutional players of a minimum quantity of 5 lakh shares or at least Rs. 5 Crores in value. It happens at the start of trading hours for about 35 minutes through a separate trading window.
36. According to **SBI Research's latest Ecowrap report**, the retail inflation rate of India would be at 5% by March 2023.

Note: Reason: Latest figures showed a marginal decline and further moderation in retail inflation as compared with the last month. The retail inflation for December 2022 was at 5.72%. For Jan-Mar 2023, the average retail inflation is seen at 4.7%.

37. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry data, the WPI for December 2022 was at **4.95%**.

Note: Reason: Due to falling in prices of food articles, especially vegetables, and oilseeds. The WPI inflation was 5.85% in November 2022 and 14.27% in December 2021. In a reported period, food articles segment slipped to 0.65 %. The Fuel and power increased marginally from 17.35% in November to 18.09% in December 2022.

38. **Paytm Payments Bank** has received final approval from RBI to operate as a Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU).

Note: Under Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), a BBPOU is allowed to facilitate bill payment services for electricity, phone, gas insurance, loan repayments, credit card bill, and municipal taxes. BBPS is owned by the National Payments Corporation of India. So far, Paytm Payments Bank was undertaking this activity under in-principle authorization from RBI.

39. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a framework for the adoption of an **expected loss** for provisioning by banks, instead of an 'incurred loss' approach.

Note: Presently, banks are required to make loan loss provisions based on an 'incurred loss' approach. Aim: To enhance the resilience of the banking system. Adopting the forward-looking expected credit loss approach to estimating loss provisions is likely to result in excess provisions as compared to a shortfall in provisions.

40. According to the RBI report, the GFD of states is budgeted narrow to 3.4 % of GDP in 2022-23 from 4.1% in 2020-21. In this context of this, GFD refers to **Gross Fiscal Deficit**.

Note: While states' debt is budgeted to ease to 29.5% of GDP in 2022-23 as against 31.1% in 2020-21. But, it is higher than the 20% recommended by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Review Committee in 2018. The RBI has also advised governments to set up a fund for long-term expenditure when revenue collection is strong.

41. **South Indian Bank** and Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) signed an agreement to provide financial assistance to the dealers of SAIL across the country.

Note: With the vast network of the bank, they will be able to serve the MSME and corporate customers of SAIL located in different geographies. SAIL has a vast network of dealers who ensure availability of quality steel in virtually all districts of the country.

42. **Protean eGov Technologies** has received approval from RBI for its wholly-owned subsidiary to operate as an account aggregator.

Note: Account aggregators: They help individuals securely and digitally access and share information from one financial institution (they have an account with) to another regulated financial entity. It has also collaborated with the govt to create digital public infrastructure and develop innovative citizen-centric e-governance solutions.

43. As per the directions on "**Acquisition and Holding of Shares or Voting Rights in Banking Companies**", issued by the RBI, allowed promoters to hold **26%** of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the bank after the completion of 15 years from the commencement of its business.

Note: The promoters of banking companies may be allowed to hold a higher percentage of shareholding as part of the licensing conditions.

44. **Mastercard** has launched the new phase of its flagship programme 'Girls4Tech' in India.

Note: This programme is supported by the Mastercard Impact Fund and American India Foundation. Aim: To reach female students across the country by 2024 to encourage them to take up STEM education. STEM refers to Science, Technology, engineering and mathematics. STEM courses will be offered to girls aged 8 to 14.

45. **LIC** has launched Jeevan Azad to offer an attractive combination of protection and savings.

Note: Aim: To offer Individual savings and life insurance. It is a limited-period payment endowment plan. It provides financial support for the family in case of unfortunate death of the life assured during the policy term. The minimum age of entry is 90 days completed and the maximum age at entry is 50 years.

46. **PNB** becomes the first public sector bank to launch credit cards against fixed deposits digitally.

Note: Aim: To offer for those account holders, who don't meet the eligibility criteria for regular credit cards. The bank offers RuPay or VISA credit cards digitally against single or multiple FDs with 80% credit limit. PNB has raised the Interest rates on term deposits below ₹2 crore between one year and three years by 50 basis points to 6.75%.

47. SBI General Insurance has partnered with Doers NGO to assist Himachal Pradesh police in reducing the number of traffic accidents under the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative.

Note: Under this, SBI General has donated a well-equipped ambulance which would provide timely medical care to the road accident victims in Mandi district within the 'Golden hour'. MD & CEO of SBI General Insurance: Kishore Kumar Poludasu.

48. Canara Bank would sell its stake in the Russian joint venture 'Commercial Indo Bank LLC (CIBL)' to the other venture partner State Bank of India (SBI) for Rs 114 crore (approx).

Note: CIBL was incorporated in 2003, a joint venture in Russia between SBI (60%) and Canara Bank (40%). Canara Bank has entered into a share sale agreement in relation to the sale of equity shares held by it in CIBL with SBI. The Canara Bank entered into the agreement for sale on November 11, 2022.

49. The total merchandise exports made by India between April 2022 and November 2022 is **298 billion USD**.

Note: Earlier it was 276 billion USD. The import bill is now estimated to be \$493.5 billion, about \$1.7 billion higher than initial numbers. The trade deficit was 10 billion USD lower than the estimates made previously.

50. SEBI has launched an information database on municipal bonds in a programme on municipal bonds and municipal finance, organized in New Delhi.

Note: The event was participated by representatives from various stakeholders, including MoHUA. Municipal Bonds: It is also known as 'muni bonds'. It is a debt instrument that municipal corporations and other associated bodies in India issue them. Whenever the local government body wants to raise funds, they issue these bonds.

51. India Grid Trust will acquire a 100% equity stake in Khargone Transmission at an enterprise value of around ₹1,497.5 crores.

Note: IndiGrid signed a share purchase agreement on January 21, 2023. Khargone Transmission was incorporated on November 28, 2015. The transmission project was awarded by the ministry of power for a 35-year period from the scheduled commercial operation date on a build, own, operate, and maintain (BOOM) basis.

52. Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd (AHFL) has entered into a co-lending agreement with **PNB** to offer home loans at competitive interest rates.

Note: Aim: To reach out to a large section of society for providing easy, and efficient home finance solutions. The co-lending framework of the RBI provides a tool for the Banks and NBFCs/HFCs to collaborate, and leverage their respective strengths to provide an affordable solution to the unserved and underserved sections of society.

53. SBM Bank (India) has received an order from RBI to stop all transactions under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) with immediate effect till further orders.

Note: Reason: Certain material supervisory concerns were observed in the bank. Under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme, Indian residents (including minors) are allowed to freely remit up to USD 2,50,000 per financial year (April - March) for any permissible current or capital account transaction or a combination of both

54. AU Small Finance Bank has launched SwipeUp platform that will allow other bank credit cardholders to upgrade their card to one of the credit cards.

Note: The bank has provided a platform to compare existing credit cards of customers within seconds. They can upgrade credit limits, cashback, and reward points with a quick end-to-end digital process. They can continue according to their lifestyle at the time of submitting the credit card application.

55. According to the United Nations, India's growth for the 2023 calendar year would be at **5.8 percent**.

Note: Reason: Higher interest rates and recession risks in the developed world weighing on investment and exports. The report has projected that global trade will contract 0.4 percent and the

world economy will grow at 1.9 percent in 2023. For the fiscal year 2023-24, the agency kept its growth forecast unchanged for India at 6 percent.

56. NPA, written-off assets, and restructured loans are components of Stressed Assets.

Note: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a discussion paper on the securitization of stressed assets. Aim: To provide an alternative mechanism for the sale of bad loans, in addition to the existing asset reconstruction route. In September 2022, RBI announced that it will introduce a framework for the securitization of stressed assets. The discussion paper broadly covers nine relevant areas of the framework

57. As per the Reserve Bank of India release, India's foreign exchange reserves in the week ended January 20, 2023 was **\$573.727 billion**.

Note: It was increased by \$1.727 billion. As on January 13, 2023, the forex reserves of India stood at \$561.583 billion. The Foreign Currency Assets (FCA) stood at \$503.65 billion. FCA includes the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound, and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

58. Star Health and Allied Insurance has renewed its strategic corporate agency tie-up for bancassurance with Punjab National Bank (PNB) for a long-term period.

Note: PNB will continue to distribute Star Health's insurance products across all their branches pan India. It is a testament to Star Health's customer service, and track record. Bancassurance: Contract

between bank and insurance company to allow the insurance company to sell its products to the bank's client base.

59. Network People Services Technologies Ltd (NPST) has unveiled "Timepay Evok" as a UPI API engine to articulate its mission and relationship with digital merchants.

Note: With unique API services, UPI as a payment gateway can be integrated for both websites and App driven solutions for large-scale merchants. UPI has been identified as a revolutionary product in the payment ecosystem. It was launched in 2016. Co-founder, NPST: Deepak Chand Thakur

60. RenewBuy has launched its first line of customized health insurance products 'Health Wellness plan'.

Note: Focus: On the large uninsured segment beyond the tier 1 markets It is available in three variants: Gold Plan, Silver Plan, and Wellness Plan. The product has new-age health insurance benefits, ranging from coverage of ₹2-5 lakhs. Up to 70% lower premiums are offered for senior citizens, and up to 50% lower premiums for people till 59 years.

61. According to the Futures Industry Association (FIA), the **National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** emerged as the world's largest derivatives exchange in 2022, in terms of the number of contracts traded.

Note: This is the fourth consecutive year when the exchange earned the top spot. In addition, the exchange was ranked third in the equity segment by the number of trades (electronic order book) in 2022.

Obituaries

1. Arata Isozaki, who passed away at the age of 91, was a veteran **Architect**.

Note: He was also known as a post-modern giant, who blended culture and history of the East and the West in his designs. He was awarded the awarded the RIBA Gold Medal in 1986 and the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2019. He started his architectural career under the apprenticeship of Japanese legend Kenzo Tangem who won Pritzker prize in 1987.

2. Dr Manjula Subramaniam, who passed away at the age of 74 due to health complications, was a first woman chief secretary of **Gujarat**.

Note: She was appointed as the first woman chief secretary of Gujarat in 2007. PM Narendra Modi was the Chief Minister of Gujarat then. After retirement, she was appointed as chief vigilance commissioner of Gujarat.

3. Veteran R Krishnakumar, who passed away at the age of 84, was associated with **Tata group**.

Note: He started working for Tata Administrative Services in 1963 and joined Tata Global Beverages (erstwhile Tata Finlay) in 1965. He had also worked through Tata Global Beverages' transformation into Tata Tea and became VP of South India Plantations in 1982. He was honoured with the India's fourth

highest civilian honour, Padma Shri in 2009 for contributions to the country's trade and business.

4. Siddeshwara Swamiji, who passed away at the age of 82, was one of the prominent Lingayat seers in **Karnataka**.

Note: He was born and brought up in Bijjaragi, Vijayapura in Karnataka. He was often referred to as the 'Walking God of North Karnataka'. He was ordained as a math seer by his guru, Vedanta Kesari Sri Mallikarjuna Mahashivayogi.

5. Sumitra Sen, who passed away at the age of 89, was as noted exponent of **Rabindra Sangeet** music form.

Note: Her rendition of songs include Jokhon Porbe Na Mor, Sokhi Vabona Kahare Bole and Mone Ki Dwidha. In 2012, she was honoured with the Sangeet Mahasamman award by West Bengal government. Rabindra Sangeet also known as Tagore Songs, are songs from the Indian subcontinent written and composed by the Bengali polymath Rabindranath Tagore.

6. Walter Cunningham, who passed away at the age of 90, was the last surviving astronaut from **NASA's Apollo programme** space mission of NASA.

Note: He was one of the three astronauts of Apollo 7 mission, that was launched in 1968 and lasted for 11 days. Before joining NASA, he was enlisted in the US Navy and began training as a pilot in 1952.

7. Keshari Nath Tripathi, who passed away recently, was a veteran **Politician**.

Note: He was the governor of West Bengal from July 2014 to July 2019. He had also served as the governor of Bihar, Meghalaya and Mizoram, and speaker of UP legislative assembly. He had also worked as a senior advocate at the Allahabad High Court. He authored several books such as "The Age of Wings", "Sanchayita:Kesharinath Tripathi", "Destination Jesus".

8. Prof Rehman Rahi, who passed away recently, was a veteran **Writer**.

Note: He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his collection of poems 'Nawroz-i-Saba' in 1961. He was honoured with the country's highest literary award, the Jnanpith, for his work "Siyah Rood-e-Jaerenn Manz" in 2007. He has also awarded Padma Shri in 2000 by the govt of India.

9. Sharad Yadav, who passed away recently, was a veteran **Politician**.

Note: He had started his political career during the anti-emergency movement of the mid-1970s. He was first elected to the Lok Sabha at the age of 27 in 1974. He was elected from Uttar Pradesh's Badaun parliamentary seat in 1989. He was also elected from Bihar's Madhepura Lok Sabha constituency in 1991, 1996, 1999, and 2009.

10. Santokh Singh Chaudhary, who passed away at 76, was associated with the **Congress party**.

Note: He was a Cabinet Minister of Punjab and a member of parliament from Jalandhar (Lok Sabha constituency)He won the 2014 Indian general election and the Indian general election in 2019. He was a cabinet minister from Phillaur in 1992, 1997, and 2002.He lost two assembly elections in 2007 and 2012.

11. Mukarram Jah Bahadur who passed away recently was descendant of **Nizam of Hyderabad**.

Note: He was the successor and grandson of the last Nizam of Hyderabad Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur. He was born to Prince Azam Jah and Princess Durru Shehvar, the imperial princess of the Ottoman Empire, on October 6, 1933, in France. He was coronated as Asaf Jah the Eighth on April 6, 1967, after the passing away of Mir Osman Ali Khan in February 1967.

12. David Crosby, who passed away recently, was a veteran **rock singer**.

Note: He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with two different groups.He was a founding member of Byrds, and Crosby, Stills & Nash. He was known for his intricate vocal harmonies, unorthodox open tunings on the guitar, and incisive songwriting. He was awarded the Grammy for Best New Artist of 1969 for his debut album "I See You".

13. Lakshmi Vishwanathan, who passed away, was a renowned **Bharatanatyam dancer**.

Note: She was awarded many awards such as Kalaimamani from the Tamil Nadu government, and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. She was a gold medallist in English literature from Madras University. She authored four books Kunjamma-Ode to a Nightingale (a biography of M.S. Subbulakshmi); Women of Pride-the Devadasi Heritage; Kapaliswara Temple; and Bharatanatyam: The Tamil Heritage.

14. Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, who passed away, was a veteran **architect**.

Note: He was honoured with the Padma Bhushan (2020), Pritzker Architecture Prize (2018), Padma Shri (1976), and many more awards. He was credited with designing some of the most iconic structures in the country such as IIM Bangalore, NIFT Delhi, and CEPT University in Ahmedabad. He also worked under Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn.

15. Jamuna, who passed away, was a veteran **film actress**.

Note: She was born in 1936 in Hampi in Karnataka and started her career as a stage artist, debuting with Puttillu on Silver Screen. She acted in about 200 Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Hindi films. She

was identified with her role in 'Satyabhama' and became a household name for the mythological character. She was a former Lok Sabha MP from Rajahmundry in 1989 from the Congress.

16. KV Tirumalesh, who passed away, was a well-known **writer**.

Note: In 2016, he was honoured with the Sahitya Akademi award for his collection of poems - Akshaya Kavya - along with several other literary awards. His critical works include an essay on Da Ra Bendre's poems and existentialism in Kannada. He was also a retired professor, who taught at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.

Important Days

1. World Braille Day has observed on **January 4** to spread the significance of Braille as a form of communication for the partially sighted and blind.

Note: The United Nations has been commemorating the day since 2019. World Braille Day also commemorates the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, who was born on January 4, 1809.

2. The World Day of War Orphans is observed on **January 6** every year.

Note: Aim: To raise awareness about children orphaned in wars. These children are subjected to hardships that are more than just physical neglect after losing their caregivers.

3. Global Family Day is celebrated on **January 1** each year.

Note: Aim: To create a sense of unity, community and brotherhood across nations and cultures through the idea of families. This day is celebrated to discourage unwarranted negative attitudes towards other cultures, nations, which may breed hatred, encourage social aloofness and lead to violence.

4. **India** has sponsored the proposal to designate the year 2023 as International Year of Millets (IYM).

Note: It was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The declaration has been instrumental for the Government of India to be at the forefront in celebrating the IYM. PM Narendra Modi has also shared his vision to make IYM 2023 a

'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.

5. Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh has released the theme of National Science Day 2023. **Global Science for Global Wellbeing** is the theme of National Science Day 2023.

Note: The theme has been selected for the purpose of raising public appreciation of scientific issues in a global context which is having a bearing on global Well-being. National Science Day is celebrated every year on the 28th February to celebrate the discovery of the Raman Effect by Indian Physicist Sir C V Raman.

6. World Hindi Day is observed on **January 10** every year to promote awareness about the language across the world.

Note: Theme 2023: "Hindi – Traditional Knowledge to Artificial Intelligence". On this day, Hindi (India's national language) was spoken for the first time in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The 12th World Hindi Conference will be organised in Fiji by the Foreign Ministry in collaboration with the Fiji government from February 15 to 17, 2023.

7. **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** observed the Road Safety Week from 11 - 17 January, 2023 across the country.

Note: Aim: To propagate the cause of safer roads for all under the Swachhata Pakhwada. Various activities such as awareness campaigns related to

causes of road accidents and measures to prevent them, will be organised throughout the Country. Activities like Nukkad Nataks and Sensitization Campaigns will be conducted at various locations in New Delhi.

8. Armed Forces Veterans Day is celebrated on 14th January to mark formally retirement of the first Indian Commander in Chief of Indian Army- Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who led Indian Forces to Victory in the 1947 war, from the Services.

Note: The First Armed Forces Veterans Day was celebrated on January, 14, 2016. This year 7th Armed Forces Veterans Day celebrates on 2023.

9. National Youth Day is celebrated every year on **January 12**.

Note: Reason: To mark the 160th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda The government organised National Youth Festival in collaboration with one state willing to host from January 12 to January 16. This year Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurate the festival on January 12 in Huballi, Karnataka. The theme for the four-day programme is “Viksit Yuva – Viksit Bharat (Developed Youth – Developed India).

10. The National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is observed every year in the United States on **11th January**.

Note: Aim: To raise awareness about human trafficking. Even though the entire month of January has been recognised as the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, January 11 specifically aims towards the prevention of illegal practices.

11. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry has organised **Startup India Innovation Week** from 10th January 2023 to 16th January 2023.

Note: Aim: To celebrate the Indian Startup Ecosystem as well as National Startup Day (16th January 2023)

12. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is formally observed on **9 January** to celebrate the day when Gandhi Ji returned from South Africa to India.

Note: This year, it was conducted in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, from 8–10 January, 2023. This is the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, or NRI Day. The official theme of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2023 is

“Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India’s Progress in Amrit Kaal.”

13. India has observed the 75th India Army Day on **January 15**.

Note: This day was observed to mark Field Marshal, K M Cariappa, who took over as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, replacing his British predecessor in 1949. The 75th Army Day Parade was held at the MEG and Centre in Bengaluru. The event featured a fly-past by the Army Aviation Dhruv and Rudra helicopters and Indian Air Force’s Sukhoi-30Mki

14. UNESCO has decided to dedicate the International Day of Education on **24th January**.

Note: According to UNESCO, currently, around 80% of school-aged Afghan girls and young women are out of school under Taliban rule, as they are denied access to secondary schools and universities. UNESCO will also publish a global report, the 2023 SDG4 Scorecard

15. India observed **January 16** as National Startup Day.

Note: The inaugural National Startup Day 2023 Summit and Bharat Startup Awards were hosted in Bangalore. In 2022, PM Modi designated this day as National Startup Day.

16. India observed Parakram Diwas on **January 23** to mark the birth of Indian freedom fighter, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Note: In 2022, the nation celebrates the 126th birth anniversary of Netaji SC Bose. He was born on January 23, 1897, in Cuttack, Odisha. He acquired a degree in philosophy and was later selected for the Indian Civil Services. Netaji joined the Indian National Congress in 1921.

17. India celebrates National Girl Child Day on **24 January** every year to highlight the prejudice and injustice that girl children face.

Note: This day was established in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Aim: To encourage awareness about women's rights in our country. The government has not officially announced a theme for National Girl Child Day 2023. Government initiatives to raise the status of girl children: Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana, and BBBP.

18. The Election Commission of India (ECI) celebrated National Voters’ Day on **25th January**.

Note: Theme 2023: Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure. It was first observed in 2011 to mark the

foundation day of the Election Commission of India (25th January 1950). Aim: To create electoral awareness amongst citizens and encourage them to participate in the electoral process

19. India observed its **74th** Republic Day on 26th January 2023.

Note: Theme: Jan Bhagidari. Chief Guest: Abdel Fattah El-Sisi (Egyptian President). For the first time, 21-gun salute was given with 105-mm Indian Field Guns, replacing the vintage 25-pounder gun. Female BSF camel riders participated in the parade showcasing women's empowerment. The Naval contingent of 144 young sailors was led by women officer Lieutenant Commander Disha Amrith.

20. International Customs Day (ICD) is observed every year on **January 26** globally to commemorate the maiden session of the World Customs Organization (WCO) held in 1953.

Note: Theme 2023: Nurturing the next generation: Promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs. The WCO was previously known as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC). It was formed in 1952 in Brussels. Aim of WCO: To boost the efficiency of customs authorities.

21. **United Nations** designated January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Note: Reason: In honor of six million Jews killed in the Holocaust and millions of other Nazism victims under the Hitler regime between 1933 and 1945. Theme 2023: Home and Belonging. The day

commemorates the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in January 1945 from Nazi control

22. Data Privacy Day (DPD) is observed across the world on **January 28** annually to sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles.

Note: It encourages everyone to own their privacy responsibilities to create a culture of privacy. The theme for this year (2023) is 'Think Privacy First'. On April 26, 2006, the Council of Europe decided to coin a Data Protection Day and announced that it will be observed each year on January 28.

23. World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day is annually observed across the world on **30th January** to create awareness about Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD).

Note: 2023 Theme: Act Now. Act Together. Invest in Neglected Tropical Diseases. Focus: On strengthening the interventions to promote equitable health services for all. The first World NTD Day was observed on 30 January 2020. Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a group of 20 diseases caused by a variety of pathogens.

24. World Leprosy Day (WLD) is celebrated on the **Last Sunday** of January.

Note: In 2023, World Leprosy Day is observed on 29 January. Aim: To raise awareness of the disease and call for an end to leprosy-related stigma and discrimination. This day was observed and elected by French humanitarian, Raoul Follereau as a tribute to the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Theme 2023: Act Now. End Leprosy.

New Appointments

1. IDBI Bank's Board of Directors has approved the re-appointment of **Suresh Kishinchand Khatanhar** as Deputy Managing Director (DMD) for a period of one year with effect from January 15, 2023.

Note: This re-appointment is as per approval of the Reserve Bank of India received in this regard. Khatanhar has joined IDBI Bank in 1997 from Dena Bank. He was appointed as DMD by IDBI Bank's Board on January 15, 2020 for a period of three years.

2. USA Vice President, Kamala Harris has named Indian American, **Rajeev Badyal** to a key national space advisory group.

Note: He will be responsible to maintain a robust and responsible US space enterprise and preserve space for current and future generations. Presently, he is serving as the vice-president of Project Kuiper of Amazon. Prior to this role, he was the vice president of satellites at SpaceX.

3. **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** has been sworn in as the 39th president of Brazil.

Note: He has defeated Jair Bolsonaro in October 2022 to win an unprecedented third presidential term. In election, he has secured 50.83% of the votes, whereas his opponent, Bolsonaro got 49.17% votes. He was served as the president of Brazil for

two terms from 2003 to 2006 and then 2007 to 2011.

4. **Ajay Kumar Srivastava** has been appointed as MD and CEO of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) with effect from January 1, 2023.

Note: Presently, he is serving as the executive director of IOB. He started his banking career as a probationary officer in 1991 with Allahabad Bank. After the successful completion of about 27 years in Allahabad Bank he was elevated as Executive Director of IOB in October 2017.

5. The Union government has given an additional charge as Border Security Force (BSF) DG to **CRPF Director General (DG), Sujoy Lal Thaosan**.

Note: He replaced Pankaj Kumar Singh, who retired on December 31, 2022.

6. **Jason Moo** has been appointed as the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Bank of Singapore, with effect from March 6, 2023.

Note: He will replace Vincent Choo, who assumed the role of interim CEO on January 1, 2023 after the retirement of former CEO Bahren Shaari on December 31, 2023. He has more than 25 years of experience in private banking, wealth management and capital markets.

7. BharatPe has appointed **Nalin Negi** as the interim chief executive officer (CEO).

Note: He has replaced Suhail Sameer, who stepped down from the position. He will take on the role of strategic advisor, effective January 7, 2023. Negi has previously worked at GE Capital and SBI Card. He was the CFO of SBI Card for over ten years.

8. **Paytm Payments Bank** has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India for the appointment of Surinder Chawla as its new chief executive.

Note: He is currently serving as head of branch banking at RBL Bank. He had also worked with HDFC Bank as head of retail liabilities product group and senior executive VP. Paytm Payments Bank CEO, Satish Kumar Gupta was retired in October 2022.

9. The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) has elected **Saiyam Mehra** as Chairman and Rajesh Rokde as Vice Chairman of the industry body for a period of two years (2023-24).

Note: GJC represents over 6,00,000 industry players comprising manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, laboratories, gemologists, designers

and allied services providers. Aim: To promote and progress its growth, while protecting the industry's interests.

10. The government of India has extended the term of the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Michael Debabrata Patra, by **One year** year with effect from January 15, 2023.

Note: His three-year tenure was coming to an end on January 14, 2023. He looks after the monetary policy department as the deputy governor of the RBI. He is also as a member of the Monetary Policy Committee. The three other deputy governors of RBI are M K Jain, M Rajeshwar Rao and T Rabi Sankar.

11. **Vikas Purohit** has been appointed as the Director of Facebook-parent Meta's Global Business Group in India.

Note: He will lead the strategy and delivery units under the advertising wing. He has served as the chief executive at Tata CLiQ till October 2022. He will report to Arun Srinivas, Director and Head of Ads Business for Meta in India. He has also worked in companies such as Amazon, Reliance Brands, Aditya Birla Group and Tommy Hilfiger.

12. President of Gabon, Ali Bongo appointed **Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda** as the country's new vice-president.

Note: She was appointed as the country's PM in July 2020. She was also named budget minister in 2012 before being elected mayor of Libreville (Capital) in 2014. While, former minister, Alain-Claude Bilie By Nze will replace PM Ossouka Raponda to form a new government.

13. **Chetan Sharma** has been re-appointed as the chairman of the five-member BCCI's senior selection committee.

Note: He was the head of the board's selection committee from December 2020. His name was recommended by the Cricket Advisory Committee. The committee also named Shiv Sundar Das (Central Zone), Subroto Banerjee (East Zone), Salil Ankola (West Zone) and Sridharan Sharath (South Zone).

14. The Central government has appointed **Justice Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh** as the acting Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, effective from January 12.

Note: He replaced Chief Justice, Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya, who superannuated on 11 January 2023. In May 2022, he was appointed as the Acting Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court. While Supreme Court judges retire at the age of 65 years, high court judges retire at 62.

15. AC Charania has been appointed as the new chief technologist of NASA.

Note: He will serve as principal advisor to Administrator Bill Nelson on technology policy and programmes. He joined the space agency in his new role on January 3, 2023. He has replaced Indian-American scientist, Bhavya Lal, who served as acting chief technologist prior to the former's appointment. He has also served as vice president of product strategy at Reliable Robotics.

16. Ravi Kumar has been appointed as the new chief executive officer of Cognizant with immediate effect.

Note: He has succeeded CEO Brian Humphries, who will be departing from the company on March 15, 2023. The IT Giant Cognizant had previously announced the appointment of Ravi as President of Cognizant Americas, which will be given to Cognizant veteran Surya Gummadi. He has 20 years of experience in Infosys, where he held various leadership roles.

17. Sultan al-Jaber (President of the UAE's national oil company) was named as president of this year's COP28 climate talks.

Note: The chief executive of the ADNOC will be the first CEO to take the role at the UN summit. Jaber is also the Gulf state's special envoy for climate change and has taken part in more than 10 COP meetings. The Conference of Parties or COP is the world's biggest climate conference.

18. Debadatta Chand has been recommended for the position of MD & CEO at the Bank of Baroda by the FSIB.

Note: While Rajneesh Karnatak was selected for MD & CEO at the Bank of India. The final decision on the FSIB recommendation would be taken by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by PM Modi.

19. Clare Lombardelli (UK Treasury Adviser) selected as the next Chief Economist of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with effect from 2 May 2023.

Note: She has 20 years of experience in economic analysis and policy-making in the United Kingdom. She started her career as an economist at the Bank of England. She has also worked at 10 Downing Street, and as a technical advisor for the International Monetary Fund.

20. Pankaj Kumar Singh was appointed as the Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) in National Security Council Secretariat for two years.

Note: He is a 1988-batch IPS officer of the Rajasthan cadre. He retired as the BSF chief on December 31, 2022. Earlier, he served as Inspector General of the CRPF in Chhattisgarh and IG (Operations) at CRPF, Delhi. He has also served in the Rajasthan Police and CBI.

21. Nick Walker has been selected as the new chief executive officer (CEO) Cairn Oil & Gas vertical of Vedanta Limited.

Note: Prior to this post, he served as the president and CEO at Lundin Energy. He has also worked in various companies like BP, Talisman Energy, and Africa Oil. He has over 30 years of diverse international experience in technical, commercial, and executive leadership roles.

22. Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri has been appointed as the administrator of Shooting World Cup 2023 by Delhi High Court.

Note: He has been appointed to oversee the utilization of funds for the upcoming International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup, which is scheduled to be held in India in March. ISSF is the governing body of Olympic shooting events in rifle, pistol, and shotgun disciplines, and of several non-Olympic shooting sport events.

23. Chris Hipkins replaced Jacinda Ardern as the new Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Note: New Zealand's police and education minister Chris Hipkins (44 years) will replace Jacinda Ardern as Prime Minister after emerging as the only candidate nominated to lead the ruling Labour Party. He was first elected to parliament for the Labour Party in 2008 and was later being appointed minister for COVID-19 in November 2020. New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean and is the sixth-largest island country by area.

24. Sanjay Mohan has been appointed as the new chief of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

Note: Apart from him, Rikant Pittie, co-founder of EaseMyTrip, and Yang Li, head-public affairs (APAC), Booking.com, will be the new co-chairs of IAMAI. This committee's membership includes MakeMyTrip, Airbnb India, ConfirmTkt, Zophop Technologies and Booking.com.

25. Reed Hastings, who recently stepped down from the post of CEO, was CEO of **Netflix**.

Note: Netflix Inc co-founder Reed Hastings is stepping down as chief executive officer (CEO), handing the reins of the streaming service to longtime partner and co-CEO Ted Sarandos and the company's chief operating officer, Greg Peters. He had co-founded Netflix as a DVD-by-mail business in 1997, saying the idea came from his frustration at having returned a rental of Apollo 13 to the local Blockbuster, a chain of physical stores in the US from where movies could be rented.

26. Vikram Dev Dutt has been appointed as the next director general in the Directorate of General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) with effect from February 28, 2023.

Note: He is a 1993-batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram, and Union Territory) cadre. He will be succeeding the incumbent DGCA chief, Arun Kumar. He was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India Ltd in 2022.

27. Professor Bharat Bhasker has been appointed as the new director of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) for five years, effective from March 1, 2023.

Note: Presently, he is working as a professor of Information Technology and Systems at IIM Lucknow. The term of the incumbent director, Prof Errol D'Souza, will be ended on January 31. Meanwhile, the Board of Governors has appointed Prof Arindam Banerjee as the Director-In-Charge from 1st -28th February 2023.

28. Siddharth Sharma has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Charitable Foundation Tata Trusts.

Note: Aparna Uppaluri as the Trust's Chief Operating Officer (COO). Their appointment will come into effect from 1 April 2023. Siddharth

Sharma will succeed N Srinath, who stepped down from the CEO's post in 2022. Tata Trusts has created the COO post for the first time. Aparna Uppaluri is currently serving as the programme director at the Ford Foundation.

29. Prabdev Singh has been appointed as the new CEO of JPMorgan Chase & Co (India) for three years.

Note: In November 2022, he replaced Madhav Kalyan as interim CEO, who was named head of payments for Asia Pacific. He was a trained engineer and worked at HSBC Holdings Plc before joining JPMorgan in 2010.

30. Chris Hipkins was sworn in as the 41st prime minister of New Zealand by the governor-general during a ceremony in Wellington.

Note: His appointment came after the resignation of former PM Jacinda Ardern. He will have less than nine months before contesting a tough general election, with opinion polls indicating his Labour Party is trailing its conservative opposition. He served as education and police minister under Ardern.

31. Raja J. Chari has been nominated for the appointment to the grade of Air Force brigadier general by the US president Joe Biden.

Note: His appointment will have to be confirmed by the Senate, which approves all senior civilian and military appointments. Currently, he is working as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut at Johnson Space Center, NASA. He also served as an Expedition 66 flight engineer aboard the station

32. Nikhat Zareen (Boxer) has been appointed as the brand ambassador of National Mineral Development Corporation.

Note: She won a gold medal at Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and the 2022 IBA Women's World Boxing Championships (52 kg category). She became the fifth Indian woman to win a gold medal at the IBA World Boxing Championships.

33. Petr Pavel has become the new president of the Czech Republic.

Note: He succeeded the former President of the Czech Republic, Milos Zeman. In a run-off vote, he defeated billionaire Andrej Babis. He has been a vocal supporter of the European Union and NATO, seeing the Czech Republic's future as inextricably linked to their membership.

34. Arun Kohli has been appointed as the new head of Morgan Stanley (India).

Note: He has replaced Sanjay Shah, who is set to retire. He has been associated with Morgan Stanley for the past 15 years. Currently, he is serving as the chief operating officer (COO) for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region. Earlier, he was the MD for firm strategy and execution for five years, stretching from 2007 to 2012.

35. Harmanpreet Kaur has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Puma India (Sports brand).

Note: She will endorse the footwear, apparel, and accessories throughout the year. With this, Harmanpreet joins PUMA's roster of brand ambassadors which includes Virat Kohli, Neymar Jr, Sunil Chhetri, MC Mary Kom, Harleen Deol, K L Rahul, and Avani Lekhara.

Important News - India

1. According to the data, released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India's unemployment rate in December 2022 has been increased to a 16-month high at **8.30%** from 8% in November 2022.

Note: The urban unemployment rate has been increased to 10.09% in December from 8.96%. While, the rural unemployment rate has been slipped to 7.44% from 7.55%. In December, the unemployment rate rose to 37.4% in Haryana, followed by Rajasthan (28.5) and Delhi (20.8%).

2. **REC Limited** Maharatna Company has organized 'Bijli Utsav' in Anandapur Gaon of Baksa district and adjoining villages in Assam.

Note: The event has highlighted the consumer rights of electricity, benefits and the challenges faced during electrification in remote areas. Various competitions and cultural programs were also organised. It was concluded with distribution of LED bulbs and geometry boxes as prizes to the winners of the competitions.

3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate **108th** edition of Indian Science Congress through video conferencing on 3rd January, 2023.

Note: Theme 2023: Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment. The inaugural ceremony will be hosted by Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University (RTMNU) at its Amravati Road Campus.

4. **Ministry of Rural Development** under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission has launched the Prajwala Challenge with an aim to invite ideas, solutions and actions that can transform rural economy.

Note: The broad contours fall into following categories: Focus on Women and Marginalized

section of community; Localised Models; Sustainability; Cost Effective solutions; Multi sectoral ideas and solutions

5. The government of India has constituted 17 member, High Powered Committee (HPC) under the chairmanship of **Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai**.

Note: Reason: To discuss measures to protect unique culture, language and employment of Ladakh. The committee includes Ladakh LG, RK Mathur; MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal; Chairmans of Leh and Kargil Hill councils, representatives of Apex Body Leh, Kargil Democratic Alliance and nominee officials of Home ministry.

6. The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) and the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) have launched 'SMART' program. **Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research in Teaching Professionals** is the full form of SMART.

Note: Aim: To boost scientific research in priority healthcare research areas through Ayurveda colleges and hospitals. The program was launched by Vaidya Jayant Deopujari (Chairman, NCISM) and Prof. Rabinarayan Acharya (DG, CCRAS).

7. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the 100-metre, Siyom Bridge in Siang district of **Arunachal Pradesh**.

Note: This bridge will open an alternative route to the India-China border. The Siyom Bridge is one of the 28 projects completed by the Border Roads Organisation at a cost of Rs 724 crore to strengthen border infrastructure. He has virtually inaugurated other 27 projects in Ladakh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Punjab and J&K.

8. Along with Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Education (MoE), and all three Services, **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** has signed MoUs to facilitate the continued education of Agniveers while serving in the Armed Forces.

Note: National Institute of Open School and IGNOU will awarded 12th Class certificates and Bachelor's degrees to Agniveers. This will enable Agniveers to complete education in a timely manner and develop additional qualities and skills.

9. The Government has approved the investment for the 382 MW Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project in **Himachal Pradesh** with an estimated cost of over 2,614 crore rupees (Rs 2,246.40 crore (Hard cost amounting), Rs 358.96 crore (Interest During Construction) and 9.15 crore (Financing Charges).

Note: The project will be built on the Sutlej river. It will be constructed by Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam limited in over 5 years.

10. The government has approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission with an initial outlay of **19,744 crore rupees**.

Note: Aim: To make India a Global Hub for production, utilisation and export of Green Hydrogen. Of the Rs 19,744 crore outlay, 17,490 crore for Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT) programme. The ministry of new and renewable energy (MNRE) will also formulate the scheme guidelines for implementation of the respective components.

11. University Grants Commission's (UGC) Chairman has unveiled the draft norms to allow foreign universities to set up campuses in India. **M Jagadesh Kumar** is the chairman of UGC.

Note: As per the draft norms, foreign universities can set up their campuses in India after receiving the approval from UGC. The initial approval will be for 10 years. Foreign varsities with campuses in the country will only be allowed to offer full-time programmes in physical mode (No online or distance learning).

12. **Ladakh's** tourism department has collaborated with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) to develop Hydro tourism at world's highest hydro power project on the Indus river, near Alchi.

Note: Aquatic sports like Jet Skiing, Motorboating, Ice Skating during winter, and boating during summer season will be rolled out in a phased manner. Similarly, tourism department is also introducing border tourism in cooperation with Fire and Fury Corps of Indian Army.

13. Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar has inaugurated the three-day 'North East Krishi Kumbha-2023' in **Meghalaya**.

Note: He also participated in the 49th Foundation Day celebration of the ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam. The event included live demonstrations and exhibition of recent technologies through 102 stalls, by the host institute and its regional centers along with all the ICAR institutes.

14. The Govt has approved continuation of schemes of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, with an outlay of how much amount for the balance period of the 15th Finance Commission (2022-23 to 2025-26) **12,882 crore rupees**.

Note: Outlay for the North East Special Infrastructure Scheme will be Rs.8139.5 crore. Outlay for 'Schemes of NEC' will be Rs.3202.7 crore including committed liabilities of ongoing projects.

15. According to the Ministry of Culture report titled 'Issues relating to Untraceable Monuments and Protection of Monuments in India' submit to the Parliamentary Standing Committee, India's centrally protected **50** monuments have gone disappear.

Note: The rapid urbanisation has engulfed 14 monuments. As many as 12 monuments have been submerged by the constructions of reservoirs and dams, while 24 have gone missing. Only 248 monuments are protected by security guards.

16. As per the bird survey conducted at the Silent Valley National Park in December 2022, **17** new bird species have been added to the existing list.

Note: So far, 175 species of birds have been spotted in Silent Valley. The survey was held in the last week of December 2022, to mark the 30th anniversary of the first bird survey in Silent Valley. The first survey was held in the last week of December 1990.

17. Leh Sub Area and Looms of Ladakh Co-operative Limited under the aegis of **Fire and Fury Corps** have signed an MoU at Leh, Ladakh with an aim to impart weaving and tailoring training to Veer Naris, widows and dependent ladies of veterans from Ladakh in three cycles of two months each.
Note: Looms of Ladakh will also employ them post-completion of their training. With this agreement, approximately, 200 Veer Naris, widows and dependent ladies of veterans will be benefitted.
18. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Central Sector Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme with an outlay of **2,539.61 crore rupees** up to 2025-26.
Note: Aim: For the infrastructure development of Prasar Bharati i.e. All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD). At present, Doordarshan operates 36 TV channels including 28 regional channels and All India Radio (AIR) operates more than 500 broadcasting centres.
19. The Jal Shakti Ministry has organised the first All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.
Note: Theme: Water Vision @ 2047. Aim: To bring together key policymakers to discuss ways to harness water resources for sustainable development and human progress. The Conference has also deliberated on '5P' mantra (Political will, Public financing, Partnerships, Public Participation and Persuasion for sustainability)
20. The G20 foreign minister meet is scheduled to take place in **Pragati Maidan, New Delhi** in March 2023.
Note: The government has issued an expected guest list that includes Joe Biden (US President), Vladimir Putin (Russia President), Rishi Sunak (UK Prime Minister), Xi Jinping (China President), among others. Special invitee guest countries: Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and UAE.
21. **India** will host a special 'Voice of Global South Summit' virtually on 12th and 13th of January 2023.
Note: Theme of the Summit is Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose. The Summit aimed to bring together countries of the Global South and share their perspectives and priorities on a common platform across a whole range of issues. This initiative is inspired by PM Modi vision of Sabka Saath, Sabha
- Vikas, Sabka Vishwas Aur Sabka Prayas and India's principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.
22. **Zeliangrong community** of Manipur has celebrated the Gaan Ngai festival on 4th January 2023.
Note: This festival also marks the end of the year when the farmers have stored their foodgrain in their granaries. They show their gratitude by offering to the almighty a good harvest and praying for a better life. It is a custom to produce new fire by rubbing dry wood and split bamboo pieces and distributing them. The Zeliangrong community comprises Rongmei, Liangmei, and Zeme tribes.
23. Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal has launched BIS portal for mapping of Industrial Units and Laboratories. **Bureau of Indian Standards** is the full form of BIS.
Note: It is a centralised platform. Aim: To provide information on industrial units and laboratories across the country. It will enable analysis of test facilities in the country and help entrepreneurs in accessing information about testing facilities. He has also launched Standards National Action Plan (SNAP) 2022-27.
24. **PM Modi** has launched the Aspirational Block Programme at the second National Conference of Chief Secretaries in New Delhi, to develop backward districts.
Note: This programme is on the lines of the Aspirational District Programme (launched in 2018). The programme will cover 500 districts across 31 states and Union Territories initially. Over half of these blocks are in 6 states—UP (68 blocks), Bihar (61), MP (42), Jharkhand (34), Odisha (29) and WB (29).
25. Union chemicals and fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya has informed that the Fertilizer projects in Odisha's Talcher will be operational by **October 2024**.
Note: It will be the largest and first coal gasification plant in India. Talcher Fertilizers Ltd has been mandated by the government to revive the erstwhile Talcher plant of FCIL by setting up a new coal gasification-based urea plant with an installed capacity of 12.7 lakh tonne per annum (LMTPA).
26. The India's first-of-its-kind inclusivity, 'Purple Fest: Celebrating Diversity' has been started in **Panjim, Goa** from January 6-8, 2023.

Note: The event was attended by Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar; Goa CM, Dr Pramod Sawant; and Minister for Social Welfare, Goa government Subhash PhalDessai. Aim: To showcase how we can come together to create a welcoming and inclusive world for everyone.

27. The National Health Authority (NHA) has introduced a new system to measure and grade hospital performance under AB PMJAY. **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana** is the full form of AB PMJAY.

Note: Aim: To shift the focus of measuring the performance of hospitals from the volume of services provided to the value of healthcare services. The Health Ministry announced that the new model with the reward system will consequently reduce the effects of the disease in the population in the long term

28. **ReNew Power** has installed India's first 3x platform wind turbine generators (WTGs) in Gadag, Karnataka.

Note: The WTGs have a nameplate capacity of 3.3-3.465 MW and are 128-140m in height. Aim: To improve capacity over models installed in India, which typically have a nameplate capacity of 2-3 MW. This project will produce enough energy to power over 1 million households in India annually.

29. The Indian High Commission has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a Hindi Chair at Sabaragamuwa University. This university is located in **Sri Lanka**.

Note: The MoU was signed between Gopal Baglay (High Commissioner) and Prof. Udaya Rathnayake (Vice Chancellor of Sabaragamuwa University). Aim: To help in familiarizing students with India, its history, and culture as well as pave way for popularising Hindi by deputing Indian faculties.

30. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 26th National Youth Festival in **Hubballi, Karnataka** from 12th -16th January 2023.

Note: This festival is held every year to provide exposure to our talented youth at the national level. It is being held on National Youth Day (12th January), which is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Theme of this event: "Viksit Yuva - Viksit Bharat"

31. PM Narendra Modi launched the World's Longest River Cruise-MV Ganga Vilas in **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh** via video conferencing on 13th Jan 2023.

Note: He has also inaugurated Tent City at Varanasi. It will begin its journey from Varanasi to Dibrugarh in Assam via Bangladesh. It will sail around 3,200 km in 51 days. It will cover major cities of India and Bangladesh - Patna (Bihar), Sahib Ganj (Jharkhand), Kolkata (WB), Dhaka (Bangladesh), and Guwahati (Assam)

32. The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal, and Tripura CM, Manik Saha have inaugurated the School of Logistics, Waterways, and Communication in **Agartala, Tripura**.

Note: Aim: To enable the talent to become world-class experts in the transportation and logistics sector. It has been set up under State Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (SIPARD), an autonomous body funded by the govt of Tripura and MoRD.

33. The Godavari estuary in **Andhra Pradesh** has become a prime and safe habitat for the Indian skimmer (*Rynchops albicollis*).

Note: On January 10, as many as 250 Indian Skimmers were sighted in the southern part of the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary (Andhra Pradesh) in a day during the Asian Waterbird Census-2023. Indian Skimmer migrates to the Godavari estuary for feeding. It is found in the coastal estuaries of western and eastern India. IUCN status: Endangered

34. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified comprehensive regulatory standards for **Basmati Rice** for the first time and will come into effect from 1 August 2023.

Note: Aim: To establish fair practices in the trade of Basmati rice and protect consumer interest. As per the standards, Basmati rice shall possess natural fragrance characteristics of basmati rice and be free from artificial colouring, polishing agents, and artificial fragrances.

35. **PM Modi** has announced the "Aarogya Maitri" project during the Voice of Global South Summit.

Note: Through this project, the country will provide essential medical supplies to any developing country affected by natural disasters or humanitarian crises. He also proposed setting up a 'centre of excellence' to facilitate development

solutions to these countries. Also, India will launch the Global South Science and Technology Initiative to share its expertise in space technology.

36. A 'Soul of Steel' challenge was launched in **Uttarakhand** that aimed to test one's high-altitude endurance.

Note: The general area of the expedition would be the Nanda Devi National Park. The challenge is an initiative of CLAW Global and is being supported by the Indian Army. The idea behind Soul of Steel is pooling of skill sets and creating a challenge that will unlock the human ability to survive, stabilise and thrive in high altitude areas.

37. Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav inaugurated the Regional Office of EPFO in **Alwar, Rajasthan**.

Note: The Regional Office will help more than 2 lakh workers, 12,000 establishments, and 8,500 pensioners from Alwar and the neighboring districts of Bharatpur and Dholpur. The major industrial areas served by Regional Office are Bhiwadi, Khushkhera, Tapukara, Karoli, Neemrana, Behror, Gheelot, and Khairthal.

38. Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal will launch the MAARG platform. **Mentorship, Advisory, Assistance, Resilience, and Growth** is the full form of MAARG.

Note: The portal will facilitate mentorship between startups and entrepreneurs across sectors, stages, and functions. Goyal will also announce the results of the National Startup Awards 2022. The winning startups will be given a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh. One exceptional Incubator and one Accelerator each will also get a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh.

39. India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Panama** to enhance cooperation in the training of diplomat's.

Note: The agreement was signed by EAM, Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Panama's Foreign Minister, Janaina Tewaney Mencomo. Both countries have also discussed the opportunities for greater economic, health, finance and people to people linkages. Panamanian Minister has also joined the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Indore.

40. State-owned organisation, **REC** signed non-binding MoUs with the UP govt to extend financial

assistance for various projects during UP Global Investors Summit, Delhi.

Note: It will help UP in employment generation as well as exponential growth in the state. REC, formerly Rural Electrification Corporation, is a subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation under the Union Power ministry. The PSU provides loans to central or state sector power utilities in the country, state electricity boards etc

41. Minister of Youth Affairs, **Anurag Singh Thakur** has launched the themes, logo, and website of Y20 summit India in Curtain raiser event in New Delhi.

Note: Themes: Future of Work: Industry 4.0, Innovation & 21st Century skills. Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making Sustainability a way of life. Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: Ushering in an era of No War. Shared Future: Youth in Democracy and Governance and Health, Wellbeing & Sports: Agenda for Youth.

42. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually inaugurated the two-day Global Investors Summit in **Indore**.

Note: The inaugural session of summit was attended by Chandrika Prasad Santokhi (President of Suriname) and Dr Mohammed Irfan Ali (President of Guyana). Theme of the Global Investors Summit is 'Madhya Pradesh - a future-ready state'. Environmental protection has been taken care of in this summit that will be completely based on Carbon Neutral and Zero Waste.

43. The first G20 Infrastructure Working Group meeting under G20 India Presidency will be held on 16-17 January in **Pune**.

Note: The meeting will be hosted by the Department of Economic Affairs along with Australia and Brazil as the co-chairs. The Group deliberates on various aspects of infrastructure investments, including developing infrastructure as an asset class.

44. PM Modi flagged off the Vande Bharat Express train that connects Secunderabad (Telangana) with **Visakhapatnam** in Andhra Pradesh on 15th January 2023.

Note: As per the Railway officials, it will cover a distance of around 700 km in 8 hours and 30 minutes. It is the eighth Vande Bharat Express to be introduced by Indian Railways. The first Vande Bharat train was launched in 2019, between New

Delhi and Varanasi. It will enhance the ease of living, and benefit the economy.

45. Union Minister for Science and Technology, **Dr. Jitendra Singh** has launched Geospatial Hackathon to promote Innovation and Start-Ups in India's Geospatial ecosystem.

Note: This hackathon also aims to promote partnerships among the public and private geospatial. It was jointly launched by the Survey of India, the Ministry of Science and Technology, IIT Hyderabad, and Microsoft India. There will be two sets of challenges - (1) Research Challenge and (2) Start-Up Challenge

46. The GeM has organized an event to celebrate the success of "Womaniya on GeM" in New Delhi. In this context, GeM refers to **Government eMarketplace**.

Note: This event was organized in partnership with the Self-Employed Women's Association, Bharat. Presently, over 1,44,000 Udyam-verified women Micro, Small Enterprises are registered on GeM, known as "Womaniya". This initiative was launched in 2019 to encourage women entrepreneurs' participation and SHG from the informal sector on GeM.

47. Earth Sciences Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh announced that India will be covered by Doppler Weather Radar Network by **2025**.

Note: This announcement was made at the 148th Foundation Day of the Indian Meteorological Department. Aim: To predict extreme weather events more accurately. It will enhance weather monitoring capabilities and benefit the farmers to contribute significantly to the economy. IMD has taken proactive steps to increase the Radar Network from a mere 15 in 2013 to 37 in 2023.

48. **RailTel Corporation of India Ltd**, wholly owned subsidiary has received an order worth ₹170.11 crores from the Puducherry government.

Note: Agenda: To design, develop, supply, install, test, commission, and operations, and maintenance of integrated command control centre (ICCC) and other associated activities for the smart city. The contract is for five years and will be completed in 10 months.

49. The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY), New Delhi Municipal Council, and **Ministry of**

Culture have organized 'Music in the Park' series under the name 'Shruti Amrut'.

Note: Under this series, the first event of 2023 was organized in Nehru Park, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. The concert started with a Sarod performance by Aman Ali Bangash (7th Generation musician from Senia Bangash Gharana)

50. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the second phase of Saansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23 in **Basti District of Uttar Pradesh**.

Note: It organizes diverse competitions in both indoor and outdoor sports. Apart from these, competitions in essay writing, painting, rangoli making will also be organized. This event is being organized in two phases.

51. **Kollam** district was declared the country's first Constitution-literate district.

Note: It is achieved through 'The Citizen', a Constitution literacy campaign. This campaign was jointly launched by the Kollam district panchayat, the District Planning Committee, and the Kerala Institute of Local Administration. Aim: To provide constitution literacy to 23 lakh citizens belonging to 7 lakh families in the district.

52. **PM Modi** laid the foundation stone and inaugurated several projects in the northern districts of Yadgiri, and Kalaburagi (Karnataka), and Maharashtra.

Note: Developmental projects in Yadgiri district: Related to irrigation, drinking water, and NH development project. Kalaburagi district: Distribution of title deeds to the eligible beneficiaries of newly declared revenue villages. Maharashtra: Inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of projects worth around ₹38,800 crores

53. The Ministry of Tourism will organize the first Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023 in **Pragati Maidan, New Delhi**.

Note: Aim: To bring together global policymakers and business leaders to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India. In this regard, Tourism Ministry has organized a Roadshow for the Northern region, Chandigarh. Focus: Promoting India as an investment destination for travel, tourism, and hospitality

54. Along with Adani Enterprises, and Ashok Leyland, **Ballard Power** has signed a deal to develop Asia's first hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Truck (FCET) for mining logistics and transportation.

- Note:** The FCET is scheduled to be launched in India in 2023. The demonstration project will be led by Adani Enterprises Limited. Ballard will supply the FCmove™ fuel cell engine for the hydrogen truck. Ashok Leyland will provide the vehicle platform and technical support.
55. Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA) signed an MoU with **SBI** to facilitate farmers in providing low-interest rate loans.
Note: Reason: To promote awareness about the new loan product called Produce Marketing Loan to exclusively fund against e-NWRs (electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt). It also aimed to provide information to depositors about the benefits, besides doing further outreach activities to improve agricultural pledge finance in India.
56. The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum started in **Davos, Switzerland** from 16-20 January, 2023.
Note: The theme of the 53rd annual event is 'Cooperation in a Fragmented World'. Aim: To address the pressing issues the world is facing and promote innovative solutions. A range of topics will be discussed at the 2023 meeting - New Energy, Climate Change, Jobs, Travel and Tourism, Health, Tech, and Banking.
57. The first G20 Health Working Group meeting has started at **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**.
Note: It was attended by Bharati Pravin Pawar (MoS Health and Family Welfare) and V. Muraleedharan (MoS External Affairs). Focus: Health emergencies prevention, preparedness and response; strengthening cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector; and digital health innovations to aid universal health coverage Other locations of HWG meetings: Goa, Hyderabad, and Gandhinagar
58. First Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group Meeting of G20 will be held from 9th to 11th Feb **Bengaluru**.
Note: Aim: promotion of the blue economy along with coastal sustainability, restoration of degraded lands and ecosystems, enhancement of biodiversity and circular economy. Conference focused on Master Planning and Building the National Capacity for species Management & Conservation Breeding
59. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended All India Conference of Directors General and Inspectors General of Police 2022 in **New Delhi**.
Note: It is a three-day conference which was inaugurated by Home Minister Amit Shah. Conference held discussions on futuristic themes in policing and security, Cyber Crime, Technology in Policing, Counter Terrorism challenges, Left Wing Extremism, Capacity Building, and Prison Reforms.
60. Business20 (B20) inception meeting will be held in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat** from January 22-24 as a part of India's G 20 presidency.
Note: It will be held to formulate policy recommendations to be submitted to G20 ahead of the leaders' summit and will be the first of 15 events that the state is set to organize as part of India's G20 presidency. More than 150 policymakers, business executives, CEOs, and senior executives will take part in the inaugural meeting.
61. **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution** has released 'Endorsements Know-hows!' guidelines for celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers on social media platforms.
Note: Aim: To ensure that individuals do not mislead their audiences. It also ensures that they are in compliance with the Consumer Protection Act 2019. Endorsements must be made in simple terms such as "advertisement," "sponsored," or "paid promotion" can be used.
62. Indian Embassy in Kathmandu has organized a 5 km marathon named '**Run for Life**' from Pashupatinath Temple premises in Nepal.
Note: 2023 Theme: lifestyle for Environment. It was participated by college-going students, rescued human trafficking victims, sports persons, health enthusiasts, medics, and children. The Run for life marathon celebrates 75 years of diplomatic ties between India and Nepal as well as 75 years of India's Independence.
63. The American India Foundation (AIF) has inaugurated India's first STEM Innovation and Learning Center (SILC) in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
Note: It was inaugurated under the scheme of Vanavil Mandram. AIF is an award-winning flagship education Program 'Digital Equalizer (DE)'. It has designed the Center to be a one-stop solution for STEM among students and teachers. AIF's DE has

also launched Drone and Satellite Launch Vehicle (DSLV) Mission on the occasion.

64. Twenty-One unnamed islands of Andaman & Nicobar was named after Param Vir Chakra awardees on January 23, 2023.

Note: He has also unveiled the model of the National Memorial dedicated to Netaji, to be constructed on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep (earlier known as Ross Islands). The event was attended by Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief of Defence Staff General, Anil Chauhan.

65. NTPC has crossed 71 GW with the successful completion of the trial operation of the first unit of 660 MW North Karanpura Super Thermal Power Project, Jharkhand (3x660 MW).

Note: Impact: It will provide affordable power to Jharkhand, Bihar, WB, and Odisha. With this addition, the total installed capacity of NTPC has become 71544 MW. The foundation for this NTPC project in Jharkhand was laid by the former PM, Atal Bihari Vajpayee

66. The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has organized a two-day event, 'Krishi-Mahotsav: Pradarshani evam Prashikshan' in **Rajasthan**.

Note: It was organized in association with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan. Aim: To make Kota Division advanced and leading in the field of agriculture and rural development. Through the exhibition, the government can also spread awareness about the schemes of governments.

67. PepsiCo Foundation joined hands with CARE to launch a programme 'She Feeds the World'.

Note: It is a USD 18.2-million global agriculture-focused women empowerment programme in India. It commenced from two districts in North Bengal of West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh could be the next state. The PepsiCo Foundation invested USD 18.2 million to scale CARE's 'She Feeds the World' initiative in six countries.

68. The government of India has launched the U-WIN platform to digitize India's UIP. In this context, UIP refers to **Universal Immunisation Programme**.

Note: It has been launched in pilot mode across two districts of each state and union territory. This platform will help in registering and vaccinating every pregnant woman, recording her delivery

outcome, and administering birth vaccinations and all immunizations. It will also act as a single source of information for reminders of upcoming vaccine doses.

69. Union Health Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya has unveiled the world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine '**innCOVACC**' in New Delhi.

Note: It is developed by Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL) in collaboration with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance. According to the statement of the ministry, the intranasal COVID-19 vaccine is to receive approval for the primary 2-dose schedule and as a heterologous booster dose.

70. Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) has launched a massive District Outreach Programme "Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0".

Note: This programme was launched by Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Arti Ahuja. It is a grievance redressal platform and information exchange network for employers. It also exchanges information with the district-level authorities of various State and Central Government departments.

71. Home Minister, Amit Shah has laid the foundation stone for a National Forensic Sciences University at the premises of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad in Karnataka.

Note: Aim: It will help to create expert manpower for the country to combat crime and result in the prosecution of criminals. He was also part of a road show in Dharwad and addressed a public rally in Belagavi district. He had a darshan of God Shambulingeshwara and visit Sri Basavanna Devara mutt in Dharwad.

72. Asia's second and country's first cable suspension bridge "Bajrang Setu" is being constructed in **Rishikesh, Uttarakhand**.

Note: It will be completed by July 2023. This bridge is coming up next to the famous 90-year-old Laxman Jhula. Laxman Jhula was closed in 2022 when it was found that it wasn't safe for pedestrians anymore. However, it will not be removed and will be preserved as a heritage. The construction of the new bridge would cost Rs 67 crores.

73. Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, **Sarbananda Sonowal** has inaugurated National Logistics Portal (marine).

Note: Aim: To connect all the stakeholders of the logistics community using IT. It will improve efficiency and transparency by reducing costs and promoting the growth of the logistics sector. It will be a single window for all trade processes of the logistics sector spread across the country. It will cover all modes of transport in the waterways, roadways, and airways

74. Meta and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology released the list of 120 startups and innovators for the XR Startup Programme.

Note: It includes an Accelerator and a Grand Challenge. Aim: To boost the emerging Tech ecosystem. Out of the startups selected in the Accelerator Programme, over 30% are from tier II or tier III cities across India. It will discover, nurture, and accelerate Extended Reality (XR) Technology startups and innovators.

75. The government has renamed the iconic Mughal Gardens in Rashtrapati Bhavan as **Amrit Udyan**.

Note: It would be open to the public from 31st January to 26 March 2023. This decision is said to be part of the government of India's 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The cluster of about 15 gardens will collectively be known as Amrit Udyan. Individual gardens within the sprawling Presidential Estate - Herbal Garden, Musical Garden, and Spiritual Garden - will retain their names.

76. Suzuki Motor Corporation will use cow dung to power its CNG cars.

Note: Suzuki signed an MoU with Asia's largest dairy manufacturer, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). Suzuki has invested in Fujisan Asagiri Biomass which generates power from biogas derived from cow dung in Japan. The biogas could be used for Suzuki's CNG models which account for approximately 70 percent of the CNG car market in India.

77. According to the latest ranking by the Indian Institutional Ranking Framework (IIRF), IIM Ahmedabad is the best college to pursue the Master of Business Administration (MBA) course in India.

Note: IIM Ahmedabad is followed by IIM Bengaluru and IIM Kolkata at second and third spots, respectively. Among private colleges, the Xavier

Labour Relations Institute (XLRI), Jamshedpur has topped the rankings.

78. India signed an MoU with Egypt to facilitate content exchange and Co-Productions between Prasar Bharati and the National Media Authority.

Note: It was signed by Anurag Singh Thakur (I&B Minister) and Sameh Hassan Shoukry (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Egypt). Aim: To expand the reach of DD India Channel to showcase the country's progress through programmes. It will be valid for three years and will also facilitate co-productions and training of the officials.

79. Atal Innovation Mission and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have collaborated with **Intel India** to bring a change in the education sector.

Note: They will embed future skills such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Tinkering in the formal curriculum. Aim: To align the National Education Policy 2020's guidance to increase the pace of tech integration for youth, the need to bridge the future skills gap in the country, and optimize the current infrastructure.

80. India and South Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to introduce 12 African Cheetahs annually over the next eight to ten years.

Note: An initial batch of 12 cheetahs will be flown from South Africa to India in February 2023. The cats will join eight cheetah brought to India from Namibia in 2022. Aim: To reintroduce cheetah to a former range state is being carried out following the local extinction of this iconic species due to overhunting and loss of habitat

81. SAMEER has signed a memorandum of understanding with Siemens Healthineers to make available low-cost MRIs, a step towards affordable healthcare, and diagnostic access for every Indian. In this context, SAMEER refers to **Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research**.

Note: SAMEER is specialized in RF Microwaves Radar and Communication Systems. It is India's premier R&D Institute of the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY).

82. Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd has signed an MoU with **Rolls Royce Solutions** for the manufacture of high-quality marine diesel engines at the former's plant in Ranchi.

Note:The MoU deals with the transfer of technology related to engine assembly, painting, parts sourcing, and after-sales service for these engines.Both will co-operate in the license production and localization of the technologically advanced MTU S4000 governmental marine engines.

83. Election Commission of India (ECI) has hosted the 2nd International Conference in New Delhi, India from 23-24 January 2023 with the theme of Use of Technology and Elections Integrity.

Note: The two-day international conference was inaugurated by Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar. Around 43 Participants from 17 Countries including Angola, Argentina, Australia, Croatia, Indonesia, Mauritius, Nepal, Philippines, and Suriname have joined the conference.

84. The Smart Cities CEOs Conference on Data and Technology was organised in **Panaji, Goa**.

Note: The two-day conference was organized by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in coordination with Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Ltd (IPSCDL). The conference has witnessed the participation of Chief Executive Officers/Municipal Commissioners of 100 Smart Cities.

85. The 30th National Child Science Congress was organized in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.

Note: It is being organized at Science City and will conclude on 31st January 2023. Focal theme: Understanding Ecosystem for Mental and Wellbeing. The program is being hosted by the Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, the Gujarat Council of Science City, and SAL Education. More than 1400 delegates including child scientists and government officials will attend the congress.

86. 15th of the BRICS summit will be held in Durban, South Africa in August 2023.

Note: It was announced by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov in a joint conference with Foreign Minister of the State of Eritrea Osman Saleh in Massawa, Eritrea. The fifth annual BRICS summit was held in Durban, South Africa in 2013. BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

87. The 3rd INTERPOL Young Global Police Leaders Programme (YGPLP) is being organized from 25 January to 2 February 2023 in **New Delhi**.

Note: It was virtually addressed by INTERPOL Secretary General, Jurgen Stock. The event was organized by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). As many as 59 participants from 44 countries participate in the programme.

88. The first Employment Working Group Meeting under the Sherpa track of the G20 will be held from February 2 to 4 in **Jodhpur, Rajasthan**.

Note: Focus areas: Addressing Global Skill Gaps, Gig and Platform Economy and Social Protection, and Sustainable Financing of Social Security. The city has been decorated with Rajasthani culture and a special theme.

89. The first G20 International Financial Architecture Working Group meeting under the G20 Indian Presidency has organized in **Chandigarh**.

Note: The meeting was inaugurated by Union agriculture minister, Narendra Singh Tomar, and food processing industries minister, Pashupati Kumar Paras.Focus: On strengthening the international financial architecture.

90. National Centre for Good Governance Director General, Bharat Lal has addressed a Conference on “Water Security for high Economic Growth and Prosperity at the 14th South Asia Conference on Think20@G20, New Delhi.

Note: The “Har Ghar Nal Se Jal” drive under Jal Jeevan Mission will be completed by 2024. It is being implemented in a unique bottom-up and decentralized approach by mobilizing Village Water and Sanitation Committees to manage the village water supply infrastructure.

91. The Central Government has sanctioned 2,600 crore rupees to Uttarakhand under the RDSS. In this context, RDSS refers to **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme**.

Note: Reason: For the construction of new power lines, sub-stations, and underground power lines. Aim: To strengthen the power supply system, the capacity of sub-stations will be increased in several districts including Dehradun. All power lines in Haldwani will be underground. The State's project has been approved in the Regional Power Committee meeting.

Important News – State

- 1. Meitei community** of Manipur celebrated Imoinu Eratpa festival every year.
Note: They regard the Imoinu goddess as a goddess of wealth and prosperity. She is also associated as one of the incarnations of the goddess Leimarel Sidabi. This festival falls on the twelfth lunar day of Wakching month of Meitei calendar (falls either in December or January according to the Gregorian calendar).
- 2. West Bengal** state government has launched two programme named 'Didir Suraksha Kawach' and 'Didir Doot', ahead of the 2023 panchayat polls.
Note: The programme will focus on 15 state government schemes, covering various sectors such as food, housing, health, education, social security, income and employment. 'Didir Doot', a mobile application has also been developed for people to register their problems.
- 3.** The Election Commission has appointed folk singer, Maithili Thakur as the state icon for **Bihar**.
Note: She will create awareness among the voters for their participation in the electoral process. She was born in Madhubani district of Bihar. She is a trained in Indian classical and folk music. She was recently selected for the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar of the Sangeet Natak Akademi for her contribution to the folk music of Bihar for 2021.
- 4. Uttar Pradesh** state government has signed an MoU with six UAE-based companies worth Rs 18,590 crore ahead of the Global Investors Summit to be held in Lucknow in February 2023.
Note: Aim: To create over 20,000 new employment opportunities. Astha Green Energy Venture and Shree Siddharth Infratech and Services will invest in renewable energy worth Rs 4480 and Rs 8000 crore respectively. Sharaf Group and Hindustan Port will invest in the Logistics Park sector.
- 5. MP** state government has launched the Chief Minister's Residential Land Rights scheme (Mukhyamantri Awasiya Bhu Adhikar Yojana) at the Bagaj Mata temple complex in Tikamgarh district.
Note: Under the scheme, plots worth about 129 crore rupees were distributed to 10 thousand 918 families of Tikamgarh district. Aim: To provide free plots to the poor living in rural areas for building their houses.
- 6. Odisha** state government has inaugurated the Birsra Munda International Hockey Stadium, the largest hockey stadium in the country.
Note: Rourkela is the second venue of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023 after the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Rourkela will host 20 of the 44 matches while the remaining 24 matches will be played at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.
- 7. Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)** has joined hands with the government of Goa for the development of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the state.
Note: The exchange will look at creating awareness amongst SMEs in the state on the benefits of listing on the exchange. BSE will also guide them on the efficient ways of raising capital through equity infusion. The exchange will also provide training and capacity-building support to District Industries Centre officials.
- 8. Chhattisgarh** state has celebrated the traditional Cherchera festival at Dudhadhari Math.
Note: This traditional festival is celebrated on the full moon night of 'Paush' Hindu calendar month. It is celebrated in the happiness of taking the crops to their homes after cultivation. According to mythological belief, on this day Lord Shankar has begged from Mata Annapurna, so people used to donate green vegetables along with paddy on this day.
- 9.** Union Home Minister, Amit Shah has inaugurated the **122 foot-high** foot-high Sagol Kangjei Statue at the Ibudhou Marjing complex at Heingang in Imphal, Manipur.
Note: He has also inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several projects in the state. He has also inaugurated Churachandpur Medical College and hoisting of 175 feet tall National flag at INA headquarters, Moirang. Sagol Kangjei: It is the name of the game of polo played in Manipur.
- 10. Gujarat** state has organized the International Kite Festival 2023 from the 8th to 14th January, 2023.
Note: The theme of this festival will be held with the theme of G20 - 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. The event is organized after a gap of two years due to the covid 19 pandemic. The delegates from G20 countries have been invited to the

inauguration of the international kite festival 2023 to exchange their culture.

11. Madhya Pradesh state Tourism Board has signed MoUs with chapters of eight countries of the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) at the 17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention, Indore.

Note: Aim: To boost cooperation in the development of the Tourism sector of the State, and promotion, and publicity of tourist places. These MoUs were signed with France Metropole Paris, Mauritius, Reunion Island, Martinique, Sri Lanka, GOPIO International, Malaysia, and Mauritius.

12. Meghalaya state government launched the shared school bus system, prime tourism vehicles, and agriculture response vehicle scheme.

Note: The buses are part of Sustainable Transport and Efficient Mobility Society (STEMS) programme. Agriculture Response Vehicles: Provided to farmers' associations and groups for a strong transportation network. Prime tourist vehicles: Step to improve the overall tourism sector, and to provide good transportation services to tourists

13. Odisha state government's state-level steering committee for CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management & Planning Authority) has approved an annual plan of Rs 1,086 crore action plan for 2023-24 to reduce man-animal conflict.

Note: The plan was approved during a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary S. C. Mohapatra. He has also raised the issue relating to wildlife management activities that are being extensively being carried out through CAMPA funds.

14. Rajasthan has become the first State in India to implement a blindness control policy to ensure the "right to sight".

Note: This drive aims to reduce the rate of blindness and bring light into the lives of people suffering from visual impairment. The prevalence rate of blindness was 1.1% in 2020, aimed to bring it down to 0.3% through the policy. The State government would mandatorily run keratoplasty centres for cornea transplants and eye banks in medical colleges

15. NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd (NTPC REL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with **Tripura** government for the development of Floating and Ground Mounted based Renewable Energy Projects in the state.

Note: This MoU was signed by Rajiv Gupta (Chief GM, NTPC REL) and Mahananda Debbarma (DG and CEO, Tripura Renewable Energy Development Agency). It also embarks upon the journey towards the development of large-sized Renewable Energy Projects in Tripura.

16. Punjab launched its first major education project, 'Schools of Eminence' on 21st January 2023.

Note: It will be launched at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Mohali. Under the project, the state government will upgrade existing govt schools into 'Schools of Eminence' for classes 9 to 12. Under phase 1, the govt plans to upgrade nearly 110 government schools as 'Schools of Eminence'. The Punjab govt had set aside a fund of Rs 200 crore for this project.

17. Kanti Velugu initiative was launched by **Telangana**.

Note: Telangana CM, K Chandrasekhar Rao launched the second phase of 'Kanti Velugu' initiative in Khammam district on January 18, 2023. It is considered to be the world's largest eye screening programme. It is a free eye screening programme. It will be organized at the special health camps for 100 days with 1500 medical teams. 1st phase: It was conducted for eight months by 827 health teams. The health camps will commence on January 19 in the rest of the state.

18. Maharashtra government has signed a deal with Taiwan's Gogoro and automotive system maker Belrise Industries for an investment of \$2.5 billion for eight years.

Note: Reason: To establish batteries as a leading source for mobility and energy storage in Maharashtra. Gogoro is known for its green-hued battery swap distribution network for riders in Taiwan. India's Belrise Industries Ltd produces about one-third of all two-wheel and three-wheel chassis made in the country.

19. Nagaland observed the third edition of the annual Orange festival 2023 at Rusoma village.

Note: The two-day festival was organized in collaboration with the Department of Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development, Land Resources, and Kohima Smart City. Aim: To recognize and celebrate the hard work of the orange growers. It also facilitates the market linkages to sell their produce at one hub.

20. Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik has inaugurated an 'International Craft Summit' in **Jajpur**.

Note: This is the first-of-its-kind craft summit featuring a confluence of pioneering craftspeople, culture, and art enthusiasts. International delegates from 15 countries have joined with the local artisans and other stakeholders. Four UN agencies and five UNESCO Creative Cities have partnered with the District to realize this event on behalf of the State Government.

21. Himachal Pradesh government is planning to make the state as the first Green Energy State by the end of 2025.

Note: The state government would also invest in solar plants and will install 500 MW solar projects during the year 2023-24. He also directed HIMURJA to ensure 5% premium for the state in each solar power project up to 5 MW and 10% share in the solar power projects of more than 5 MW capacity.

22. The annual Ethnic Mamani Festival was organized at Historical Styangkung Village and Chiktan Shagaran by the Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation (HCHF) and **Ladakh** tourism department.

Note: This village is being developed as one of the well-maintained heritage villages in Ladakh. During Mamani, people would exchange food with their relatives and neighbours and worship a variety of spirits. These festivals have helped in the revival of more than 35 cuisines of Kargil Ladakh

23. The Governor of Punjab, Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurated North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in **Chandigarh**.

Note: He has also inaugurated a 500kWp floating Solar Project with Fountains at Dhanas Lake in Chandigarh. These projects were designed and executed by CREST (Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science & Technology Promotion Society). It will generate a minimum of 35 Lac Units(kWh) of Solar Energy per year with 20% module efficiency.

24. Bihar government in association with the Forest Survey of India (FSI) has decided to conduct a 'Trees Outside Forest' (TOF) field survey.

Note: Aim: To identify the dominant tree species that are growing outside the recorded forest areas (RFA). As per the FSI India State of Forest Report, 2021, Bihar has registered an increase of 3.79% in growing stock in RFA and 0.58% in TOF. The overall tree cover has also increased in the state from 2,003 sq km in 2019 to 2,341 sq km in 2021

25. Odisha cabinet has cleared the inclusion of 22 castes in the list of Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBC).

Note: The state government has approved the proposed Amendment of the Odisha State Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 by inserting subsection 3 under Section 9. This enables the State Government to include such Backward Classes in the State list of SEBCs. Article 15(4): It enables the State to make any special provisions for the advancement of any SEBC

26. Assam government approved a state floriculture mission with an initial investment of Rs 150 crore that covers 20,000 farmers.

Note: The cabinet has also approved several other essential decisions including setting up a different CM secretariat at Dibrugarh and building a new Raj Bhavan in Tezpur. Under State Floriculture Mission, the flower cultivation area will be expanded from 2,200 hectares to 3,288 hectares within three years.

27. Delhi government has inaugurated a "super site" and a mobile van to collect real-time pollution data and tell its constituents.

Note: Delhi would become the first city in the country to get a real-time source segmentation of air pollution. It will identify factors that are responsible for the increase in air pollution in Delhi. The project has been initiated by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee in collaboration with IIT Kanpur, IIT Delhi, and TERI.

Important News – World

- India** has assumed the chairmanship of the plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement for one year on 1st January 2023.
Note: At the 26th annual plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement, 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 December 2017 as 42nd participating state.
- India** will take charge of the Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) in Bangkok, Thailand from January 2023.
Note: Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh will take over the charge of Secretary General of the Union for a tenure of four years. The APPU is an intergovernmental organization of 32-member countries of the Asian-Pacific region. Aim of APPU: To extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between member countries and to promote cooperation in the field of postal services.
- Croatia** has adopted the euro as its currency with effect from 1 January 2023 and become the 20th member of the eurozone.
Note: Croatia has entered the EU in 2013. It becomes the 27th country to join the Schengen area. Schengen Area: It is an area that comprises 27 European countries that have abolished all passports and border control at their respective mutual borders. Eurozone: It is officially called the euro area.
- According to aviation analytics firm Cirium, Along with Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport, **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport** was among the top 10 on-time airports globally.
Note: Bengaluru's airport was the second best airport globally in 2022 in terms of on-time arrivals and departures. While, Japan's Haneda Airport was the best-performing airport. Indira Gandhi Airport stood seventh in the on-time rankings globally.
- According to the Nikkei Asia report, India has surpassed **Japan** to become the third-largest auto market for the first time.
Note: As per the report, India's sales of new vehicles totalled at least 4.25 million units, based on preliminary results, topping the 4.2 million sold in Japan. According to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, New vehicles delivered in India totalled 4.13 million between January and November 2022. China has topped the list, followed by US
- LKAB, has discovered more than one million tonnes of rare earth oxides in the northern area of **Sweden**.
Note: This is the largest known deposit in Europe. Currently, no rare earths are mined in Europe and it mostly imports them from other regions. Almost 98 per cent of rare earths used by the European Union were sent by China.
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) awarded \$ 425 million to **Boeing** for the agency's sustainable flight demonstrator project.
Note: Boeing and NASA will work together to build, test, and fly a full-scale demonstrator aircraft. They will also validate technologies that aimed to lower emissions. NASA will invest \$425 million and the remaining amount of the agreement funding (estimated at 725 million dollars) will be contributed by the Boeing and its partners.
- During the visit to Maldives, EAM Dr. S Jaishankar announced an additional grant of **100 Million Maldivian Rufiyaa** for community development projects in Maldives.
Note: He also witnessed an MoU between Maldivian National University and Kochi University of Science & Technology. He has also announced that India has handed over two sea ambulances to help the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF). India has completed 23 out of 45 impactful community development projects.
- WhatsApp** was fined 5.5 million euros (\$5.95 million) by the Data Privacy Commissioner (DPC) of Ireland for an additional breach of the EU's privacy laws.
Note: The DPC acts as the EU's lead privacy regulator for Meta. The DPC has issued a similar order to Meta's other main platforms, Facebook and Instagram, which stated Meta must reassess the legal basis upon which it targets advertising through the use of personal data.

10. Four Indian companies have been featured in the list of the world's top 10 most valuable IT service brands list, released by Brand Finance's rankings for 2023.

Note: Four Indian companies are TCS (2), Infosys (3), HCLTech (8), and Wipro (9). While Accenture has succeeded in retaining its position as the most valuable IT services brand for the fifth consecutive year. While IBM ranked fourth followed by Capgemini, NTT Data, Cognizant.

11. According to the report, released by the Dealroom and London & Partners, India ranked **4th** globally with USD \$24.1\$ billion worth of venture capital (VC) investments in 2022.

Note: The United States of America (USA) with a USD \$233.3\$ billion tech investment topped the list, followed by China (USD 48 billion) and the United Kingdom (UK) (USD \$29.9\$ billion). As per the research, USD \$10.7\$ billions of the total tech investment to India went into Bengaluru-based companies.

12. Mukesh Ambani has been ranked second on Brand Finance's list of the world's top CEOs.

Note: Top performer of Brand Guardianship Index 2023: Jensen Huang (Nvidia CEO). The Index was

released annually by brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance, celebrates CEOs who balance the needs of commercial success with long-term brand building and personal reputation management. Satya Nadella slipped to 3rd place, followed by Sundar Pichai.

13. Brazil government has declared a medical emergency in the Yanomami territory, after the reports of children dying of malnutrition and other diseases caused by illegal gold mining.

Note: Reason: To restore health services to the Yanomami people that had been dismantled by the previous government. The government announced food packages that be provided to the Yanomamis lives in a region of rainforest and tropical savanna the size of Portugal.

14. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had designated the historic center of Odesa as a World Heritage in Danger site. This is located in **Ukraine**.

Note: The status was awarded by a UNESCO panel meeting in Paris. This status will help to protect Odesa's cultural heritage, which has been under threat since Russia's invasion and enable access to financial and technical international aid.

Honor & Awards

1. The government of India has selected **27** people for the highest honour for overseas Indians, Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) 2023.

Note: The awards will be conferred by the President Droupadi Murmu at 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention held at Indore in Madhya Pradesh from January 8-10, 2023. President of Guyana Mohamed Irfaan Ali will be the chief guest this year. PBW 2023 theme: Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal

2. Assam CM, Himanta Biswa Sarma has selected **21** personalities for the Assam State Civilian Awards 2022.

Note: The State's highest civilian award, 'Assam Baibhav' to Dr. Tapan Saikia for his contributions in the field of cancer care. Assam Saurav (Assam second highest civilian award) will be conferred to Krishna Roy; Gilbertson Sangma; Nayanmoni Saikia; Dr. Binoi Kumar Saikia and Dr. Shashidhar Phukan.

Asom Gaurav (third highest civilian award) will be conferred to 15 people.

3. Indian filmmaker **SS Rajamouli** has honoured with the Best Director Award for RRR at the New York Film Critics Circle Awards 2022.

Note: RRR has also been nominated in the Best Foreign Film category, and Best Original Song (for Naatu Naatu Song) at the Golden Globe Awards 2023. Naatu Naatu has also shortlisted in the Best Song category at the 95th Academy Awards.

- Best Picture: Tar (Directed by Todd Field)
- Best Actor: Colin Farrell (Tar)
- Best Actress: Cate Blanchett

4. Indian state **Odisha** has won the UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023 for Jaga Mission (5T initiative of the state).

Note: 5T: Team work, Technology, Transparency, Transformation and Time limit. It is the world's largest land titling and slum upgrading program that aims to empower the lives of slum dwellers.

Under this mission, 100% households in 2,724 slums have been provided with pipe water connections, and 8 cities become slum-free.

5. Jalna district police and Nagpur city police in **Maharashtra** have bagged the 'Best Police Unit' awards for 2021 in the state.

Note: The award has been given under different classes for maintaining law and order, and evolving community policing. The Jalna police got the award in 'Class A' and the Nagpur police in 'Class B'. Police units with less than 6,100 Indian Penal Code cases are grouped in 'Class A', while those with more than 6,100 IPC cases are grouped in 'Class B'.

6. Veteran actor-director, **Aparna Sen** was honoured with the lifetime achievement award at the opening ceremony of the 15th edition of the Jaipur International Film Festival (JIFF).

Note: She made her film debut in Teen Kanya (directed by Satyajit Ray) in 1961. She has directed acclaimed movies like 36 Chowringhee Lane (1981), Paroma (1985), Paromitar Ek Din (2000), and Mr and Mrs Iyer (2002). 282 films from 63 countries are being screened from 6th -10th January 2023.

7. The e-NAM was awarded the platinum award in Digital Empowerment of Citizens category by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu at the Digital India Awards 2022, is associated with **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.

Note: The e-Vivechna App (Madhya Pradesh) was awarded the platinum award in Digital Initiatives at Grassroots Level. The Mine Mitra (Uttar Pradesh) was awarded in Digital Initiatives for Ease of Doing Business category.

8. **CJI D.Y. Chandrachud** has been selected for the "Award for Global Leadership" by the Harvard Law School Center.

Note: Reason: In recognition of his lifetime service to the legal profession in the country and around the world. The award will be presented to him at an online event on January 11, 2023. He took over as the 50th CJI on November 9, 2022.

9. Indian movie **RRR (Directed by SS Rajamouli)** has won the 2023 Golden Globe Awards for the best original song-motion picture for "Naatu Naatu" track.

Note: The movie was also nominated for the 'best picture-non English'. This track was composed by

veteran music director, MM Keeravaani and sung by Kala Bhairava and Rahul Sipligunj.

- Best Film:
 - Drama: The Fabelmans
 - Musical or Comedy: The Banshees of Inisherin
- Best Drama Series: House of the Dragon
- Best Musical or Comedy Series: Abbott Elementary

10. Harry Brook has won his maiden ICC Men's Player of the Month crown for December 2022, is belonged to **England**.

Note: Reason: His blistering run of scores which helped England win World Test Championship series in Pakistan. While, Australia's Ashleigh Gardner has won the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for December 2022. Reason: For her contributions to win the T20I series in India. She has scored 115 runs at an impressive strike rate of 166.66 and also took 7-wicket during T20I series.

11. R'Bonney Gabriel is associated with the **USA** who has been crowned the Miss Universe 2022 at the 71st Miss Universe pageant organized in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Note: She is a model, fashion designer, and sewing instructor who prioritizes the environment in her work. She is also the first Filipino American to win Miss USA. Amanda Dudamel from Venezuela was the first runner-up, and Andreína Martínez from the Dominican Republic was the second runner-up.

12. DNPA has announced Digital Impact awards 2023 in eight categories. The DNPA refers to **Digital News Publishers Association**.

Note:

- The Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) has announced Digital Impact awards 2023 in eight categories.
- Categories (Best Use of Digital Media):
- For Health – CoWIN App
- For Women & Child Welfare Reforms – (A) Poshan Tracker App, (B) Himmat Plus Ap
- For Ease of Living –Digilocker
- For Financial Reforms – PMJDY
- For Human Resource Development & Education – DIKSHA
- For Sustainability and Environment Protection – CAMPA

13. K Venu won the first-ever Federal Bank Literary Award 2022 for his autobiography 'Oranweshananthinte Katha'.

Note: The award was presented by the chairman and independent director of the Federal Bank, Balagopal Chandrasekhar. It was presented at an event held as part of the ongoing sixth edition Kerala Literature Festival, Kozhikode beach. The prize money was handed over by Nandakumar V (executive vice-president of the bank).

14. RRR has won the Critics Choice Awards 2023 in the Best Foreign Language Film category.

Note: India's 'RRR' directed by SS Rajamouli has won the Critics Choice Awards 2023 in the Best Foreign Language Film category and Best Song category for 'Naatu Naatu'

➤ Television:

- Best Actor: Bob Odenkirk (Best Drama Series: Better Call Saul)
- Best Actress: Zendaya (Euphoria)

➤ Film:

- Best Actor: Brendan Fraser (The Whale as Charlie)
- Best Actress: Cate Blanchett (Tár)
- Best Director: Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert (Best Movie: Everything Everywhere All at Once)

15. Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB) was awarded the Best Small Bank Award 2022 under the category of banks with a book size of less than ₹1 lakh crore, in the Best Banks Survey for the year 2022 conducted by Business Today-KPMG.

Note: The award was presented by Union Minister, Nitin Gadkari to S.Krishnan (TMB MD and CEO). TMB was awarded under the category of banks with a book size of less than ₹1 lakh crore. BT-KPMG: It is conducting BT-KPMG Best banks survey and awarding the best banks with 37 parameters.

16. The book titled, 'Broke to Breakthrough', written by **Harish Damodaran**, won Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2022.

Note: This book is a detailed and perceptive account of the rise of dairy company Hatsun Agro and its founder R.G. Chandramogan. Gaja Capital Business Book Prize: It was instituted in 2019. Aim: To encourage Indian entrepreneurs, writers, and journalists to tell stories

17. Rajasthani movie "Naanera" has won the 'Golden Kailasha' award for the best movie at the 8th Ajanta-Ellora film festival.

Note: It was directed by Deepankar Prakash. It has also bagged awards for best director, best screenplay, and best editor. Best Actress: Akshatha Pandavapura. Best Actor: Jeetu Kamal (Bengali film: Aparajito). As many as 55 films were screened in this five day film festival.

18. Nepal's Dr Sanduk Ruit, who won the top civilian award of Bahrain, the ISA Award for Service to Humanity.

Note: He is a co-founder of the Himalayan Cataract Project. He is a pioneer in delivering high-quality microsurgical procedures in remote eye camps. The award carries a cash prize (\$1 million), a certificate, and a gold medal. He was awarded the Honorary Officer of the Order of Australia (2007), the Ramon Magsaysay Award (2006), and Padma Shri (2018).

19. Dr. Prabha Atre was awarded the Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia Lifetime Achievement Award.

Note: The award was conferred by Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde to her, at a function at Ram Ganesh Gadkari Rangayatan in Mumbai. She was also presented with a citation and Rs 1 lakh. She is an Indian classical vocalist from the Kirana Gharana. She has been awarded Padma Shri (1990), Padma Bhushan (2002), and Padma Vibhushan (2022) by the Government of India.

20. Aparajito was awarded for the best script writer in the Asian Film Competition section at the 21st Dhaka International Film Festival organized from 14-22 Jan 2023.

Note: Aparajito (directed by: Anik Dutta) won the best scriptwriting award. Ketaki Narayan won the best actress award for Prappeda (directed by: Krishnendu Kalesh). Best Actor: Japanese Ikkei Watanabe (for Nakodo- Matchmakers). Best Director: Iranian Ali Ghavitan (for Zendegi va Zendegi)

21. ESAF Small Finance Bank has bagged the prestigious Inclusive Finance India Awards 2022 for its contributions to advancing the goal of financial inclusion and supporting inclusive growth.

Note: K. Paul Thomas (MD and CEO, ESAF Bank) received the award from Anantha Nageshwaran (Chief Economic Advisor) at the 19th Inclusive Finance India Summit in New Delhi. This award

recognized ESAF's unique spectrum of Financial Inclusion projects ESAF Dhansree, and ESAF Udyog Jyothi.

22. Eleven exceptional children were awarded the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) 2023 by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 23rd January 2023.

Note: The awards are conferred upon children in the age group 5 – 18 years. This award is given in six categories - Art & Culture, Bravery, Innovation, Scholastic, Social Service, and Sports. Each awardee of PMRBP is given a medal, a cash prize of Rs.1 Lakh and a Certificate.

23. In January 2023, **R Vishnu Prasad** was awarded the "most distinguished scientist of the year 2022" award at the Indian Achievers Award ceremony held in Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi.

Note: The award recognized individuals for their outstanding contributions in various fields, including culture, science, sports, and innovation. He contributed to smart cities, solid waste management, large-scale water treatment, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

24. Ben Stokes won the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the year 2022.

Note:

- England all-rounder, Nat Sciver won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year 2022.
- Other winners (Cricketer of the Year 2022):
- Women's ODI: Nat Sciver
- Men's ODI: Babar Azam (Pakistan)
- Women's T20: Tahlia McGrath (Australia)
- Men's T20: Suryakumar Yadav (India)
- Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy: Babar Azam

25. 106 Padma Awards 2023 were announced on the eve of the 74th Republic Day.

Note: Of the 106 Padma awards, six are Padma Vibhushan, nine are Padma Bhushan and 91 are

Padma Shri. Nineteen of the Padma awardees are women. ORS pioneer, Dilip Mahalanobis will be awarded the Padma Vibhushan posthumously in the field of Medicine (Pediatrics). Mulayam Singh Yadav will be awarded Padma Vibhushan posthumously in the field of public affairs.

26. Total **412** gallantry awards and other Defence decorations were awarded to Armed Forces personnel and others by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

Note: These awards include six Kirti Chakras and 15 Shaurya Chakras. It also includes one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry), 92 Sena Medals, one Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry), seven Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry), and 29 Param Vishisht Seva Medals. President has also awarded President's Tatrakshak Medal and Tatrakshak Medal to ICG Personnel.

27. Visakhapatnam railway station of East Coast Railway has been awarded the 'Green Railway Station Certification with the highest rating of Platinum'.

Note: The award was presented by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC). Reason: For adopting green concepts and reducing the adverse environmental impact. Visakhapatnam is one of the few railway stations to get this prestigious certificate. It has secured 82 out of 100 points in six environmental categories.

28. Usman Khawaja has claimed the inaugural Shane Warne Award as the men's Test player of the year in 2023.

Note: He has been Australia's top run-scorer in the five-day format since rejoining the Test team, with 1020 runs at 78.46 during the voting period. Belinda Clark Award (Women's): Beth Mooney. Allan Border Medal (Men's): Steve Smith. Men's ODI Player of the Year: David Warner. Women's ODI Player of the Year: Beth Mooney

Sports News

1. Madhya Pradesh has clinched the Qualifiers title of Khelo India Youth Games 2022 Men's Under-18 after defeating Odisha by 6-5 in the final at Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Note: Ali Ahmad, Mohammad Zaid Khan and Captain Ankit Pal netted one goal each for Madhya

Pradesh. While, Haryana claimed third place in the competition with a win against Jharkhand. With this, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Haryana and Jharkhand have qualified for the 2023 Khelo India Youth Games to be held in MP.

2. **Jio Platforms Limited (Jio)** has signed a partnership agreement with Manchester City to become the Official Mobile Communications Network Partner of Club in the country.
Note: Man City's OTT platform 'CITY' will be integrated into the JioTV platform. It will provide fans further access to exclusive club content including match highlights, live Manchester City Women's team and Elite Development Squad fixtures, matchday content and City Studios documentaries.
3. The president of World Boxing Council, Mauricio Sulaiman has announced that it will introduce **Transgender Category** from 2023.
Note: A 'at birth rule' will be used, which means a transgender boxer who is registered as male at birth will be allowed to fight others who have also been registered as male at birth. While, those registered as female at birth will be allowed to fight others who have been registered as female at birth.
World Boxing Council HQ: Mexico
4. **Koustav Chatterjee** has become 78th Grandmaster of India at the MPL 59th National Senior Chess Championship in New Delhi.
Note: He is also the tenth Grandmaster of West Bengal. He won his maiden GM-norm in October 2021 at Sheikh Russel GM 2021 in Bangladesh. He scored his second GM-norm at Asian Continental Championship in November 2022. He has also crossed 2500 in the August FIDE rating list.
5. **M Pranesh** has secured the title in the 2022/2023 Rilton Cup, the first tournament of the FIDE Circuit, to become the 79th chess Grandmaster of India.
Note: He has crossed the live rating of 2,500 Elo points. He won his first norm at the 18th Delhi GM Open, second norm at the Sunway Sitges International Chess Festival in Spain and third norm at the Asian Continental Chess Championship in Stockholm, Sweden. He was trained by renowned coach RB Ramesh.
6. Indian tennis player **Sania Mirza** has announced her retirement from professional Tennis.
Note: She will retire at the WTA 1000 event in Dubai in February 2023. She became the first Indian to win a WTA singles title, when she won her hometown Hyderabad event in 2005. She broke into the top 30 by 2007 and reached her career-high ranking of world number 27.
7. Indian squash prodigy **Anahat Singh** has clinched the girl's Under-15 squash title at the 2023 British Junior Open tournament, held in Birmingham (United Kingdom) from January 4-8, 2023.
Note: She defeated Sohaila Hazem of Egypt by 3-1 in the final. The British Junior Open is held in January every year in the UK. She has also won the 2022 Scottish Junior Open held in Edinburgh, Scotland in the Girls under-17 categories.
8. Indian batter **Suryakumar Yadav** has become the fastest player to reach 1,500 runs in T20 International cricket in terms of balls faced.
Note: He took only 843 balls to reach this landmark. In 45 matches and 43 innings, Suryakumar has scored 1,578 runs at an average of 46.41. He has three centuries and 13 half-centuries in the format, with the best individual score of 117.
9. The Khelo India Senior Women National Kho Kho league organised at **Chandigarh University, Punjab** from January 10 to January 13, 2023.
Note: The league is being organized by the Kho Kho Federation of India. It will be held over three phases with full financial support from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Kho Kho women's league for junior and sub-junior age groups is scheduled from January 16 to 19 at the Alberta Ekka Kho Kho stadium in Hotwar, Ranchi.
10. **Novak Djokovic** has defeated America's Sebastian Korda to win the 2023 Adelaide International 1 men's singles title.
Note: While, Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus) has won women's singles title, after defeating Czech Republic's Linda Nosková. Men's doubles: Lloyd Glasspool(United Kingdom) / Harri Heliövaara(Finland). Women's doubles: Asia Muhammad (United States) / Taylor Townsend (United States)
11. Indian cricketer, **Virat Kohli** has equalled Sachin Tendulkar record of slamming 20 One Day International centuries on the home soil.
Note: He has scored a hundred in just 80 balls against Sri Lanka in the first ODI of the three-match series. He took only 99 innings to score his 20th ODI hundred on home soil, while Sachin did so in 160 innings. Kohli now has 73 centuries to his credit across all formats, second only to Tendulkar's 100 centuries.

12. Falak Mumtaz won a gold medal at the national level in the Sqay championship.

Note: Falak is one of them who won the gold medal in the Sqay championship that was played last week in Jammu. She is currently studying 6th standard at Aisha Ali Academy in Kulgam. Recently four girls were selected for the Sqay championship.

13. Indian duo **Yuki Bhambri and Saketh Myneni** won the men's double Bangkok Open title 2023 organized at Nonthaburi, Thailand.

Note: They defeated Christopher Rungkat and Akira Santillan (Indonesian-Australian team). With this win, Yuki will get a career-high doubles rank of 90 and Saketh should also touch a career-best 74 in the ATP doubles chart. They will next compete in the Australian Open where they have been given a wild card entry.

14. Yonex- Sunrise India Open 2023, also known as India Open, is being organized in **KD Jadhav Indoor Hall** sports complex from 17-22 January 2023.

Note: Since 2008, it will be the first time when India Open is organized in the super 750 status category. The tournament will see some top players from 29 countries, and a total of 97 players will compete in various categories.

15. Viacom 18 has won the bid for the media rights for the Women's IPL for a whopping Rs 951 crore for five years.

Note: The auction for the T20 League was conducted by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in Mumbai. BCCI will launch the Women's Indian Premier League in March 2023. The detailed terms and conditions governing the tender process including eligibility requirements etc. are contained in the 'Invitation to Tender' (ITT).

16. Viktor Axelsen won the men's singles Malaysia Open title 2023, after defeating Kodai Naraoka from Japan.

Note: While Akane Yamaguchi (Japanese player) lifted the title in the women's final, after beating South Korea's An Se-young. Men's doubles: Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto (Indonesia). Women's doubles: Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China). Mixed doubles: Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (China)

17. Shubman Gill become the fifth Indian player to score a double-hundred in the One Day International (ODI) match against New Zealand.

Note: With this feat, he has broken several records including the fastest Indian to score 1,000 runs in ODI cricket (19 ODI innings). He has also broken the records of Shikhar Dhawan and Virat Kohli, who complete 1,000 runs in 24 innings. He also broke Tendulkar's record of the highest individual score against New Zealand in an ODI.

18. Laxman Rawat of Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) has defeated Aditya Mehta by 9-6 to win the final of the 'Baulkline' NSCI All India Snooker Open 2023.

Note: Cash prize: Rs 3 lakh (winner); Rs 1.5 lakh (Runner-up). NSCI Snooker Open Crown is a snooker tournament, organized by the National Sports Club of India (NSCI). This is open to players from all over India and features a best-of-17-frame final.

19. Friends Pashkum has lifted the 14th CEC Ice Hockey Cup 2023 in the men's category, after defeating the Humas Warriors Drass.

Note: While in the women's category, DownHill Kargil won the cup, after beating Wakha Mulbekh. CEC LAHDC Kargil, Feroz Ahmad was the chief guest of this event. The tournament was held in Ladakh and was participated by 27 teams, including 4 Women's teams. The efforts of the Rural Development Dept and Youths service and Sports Dept were appreciated.

20. Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the India Open title 2023 after defeating Viktor Axelsen in the men's singles of the India Open Badminton Championship, held at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Stadium in New Delhi.

Note: While An Seyoung (Korean) won the Women's singles final after defeating Japanese Akane Yamaguchi. Other winners (doubles):

- Men's: Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang (China)
- Women's: Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida (Japan)

21. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has signed a partnership with **JSP Foundation** for its development programs and FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 Bhubaneswar-Rourkela as a Global Partner.

Note: FIH will be working closely with JSP Foundation for some of its key initiatives for hockey development. JSP Foundation is the social arm of Jindal Steel & Power.

22. Indian cricket team has become the No. 1 team in the ICC ODI rankings after defeating New Zealand by 90 runs.

Note: India won the first match by 12 runs in Hyderabad and the second match by 8 wickets in Raipur. This was India's second consecutive clean sweep after defeating Sri Lanka last week. At present, England with 113 ratings placed second, followed by Australia (112), New Zealand (111), Pakistan (106), and South Africa (100).

23. In January 2023, **Adani Group** women's teams was sold for the highest price at the BCCI Women's IPL team auction.

Note: Mumbai Indians, Delhi Capitals, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Adani Group, and Capri Global won the bid for the inaugural edition. The teams will be based in Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, and Lucknow respectively. The Ahmedabad team was sold for the highest price INR 1289 crore, followed by Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi, and Lucknow. BCCI secretary, Jay Shah has confirmed that the total bids received from the winners were worth Rs 4,669.99 crore (USD 572.78 million).

24. India women's cricket team defeated **England** by 7 wickets in the final to win the first-ever ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup 2023, held in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

Note: BCCI secretary, Jay Shah announced a whopping cash reward of ₹5 crores for the entire India squad. England captain and stellar all-rounder, Grace Scriver has been named Player of the Tournament. Player of the Match: Titas Sadhu (India). India's Captain for U-19 Women's T20: Shafali Verma

25. Novak Djokovic defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas to win Men's singles 2023 Australian Open title in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Note: It is the 10th Australian Open championship and 22nd Grand Slam title (overall) of Novak Djokovic. While Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus) won the Women's singles. Men's doubles: Rinky Hijikata and Jason Kubler (Australia). Women's doubles:

Barbora Krejčíková and Kateřina Siniaková (Czech Republic)

26. Germany lifted the title of FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023 held at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, India.

Note: Germany defeated Belgium by 5-4 in the penalty shootout. With this win, Germany became the fourth team to have won three or more hockey World Cup titles, after Pakistan, Netherlands, and Australia. Best Player: Niklas Wellen (Germany). Best Goalkeeper: Vincent Vanasch (Belgium). Best Junior Player: Mustapha Cassiem. Fair Play Award: Belgium

27. Fifth edition of the Khelo India Youth Games 2022 started at TT Nagar Stadium in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Note: The event was inaugurated by Anurag Singh Thakur (Union sports minister) and MP CM, Shivraj Singh Chouhan. The event will be continued till February 11 in eight cities of MP (Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Jabalpur, Gwalior, Mandla, Balaghat, and Maheshwar). The Khelo India Youth Games was started in 2018

28. New Zealand Cricket (NZC) board introduced the Debbie Hockley Medal annual awards ceremony, to honour the outstanding female cricketer of the year.

Note: The medal will be the women's equivalent of the Sir Richard Hadlee Medal. Debbie is the only woman to have won the supreme New Zealand Cricketer of the Year Award in 1998. She was the fourth woman to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. She was also the first woman to be elected President of NZC.

29. Murali Vijay (38) announced his retirement from international **Cricket**.

Note: He last represented India in 2018 against Australia in the Perth Test. He had played 61 Tests, 17 ODIs, and 9 T20Is for India since making his debut in November 2008 in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. He scored 3,982 runs for India in the longest format that including 12 centuries and 15 fifties.

Books and Authors

- 1. Shashi Tharoor** is the writer of a book titled 'Ambedkar: A Life', that has been launched at the Kitaab Kolkata event.
Note: The event was organized by Prabha Khaitan Foundation (PKF) at the ITC Sonar presented by Shree Cement. The event was attended by bibliophiles young and old, members of Ehsaas Women and FICCI FLO. Other notable books of Shashi Tharoor: Riot (2001), Why I Am A Hindu (2018), The Paradoxical Prime Minister (2018), India: From Midnight to the Millennium (1997).
- 2. Former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi** who has released a book titled 'Chief Minister's Diary No.1'.
Note: This book containing the account of events of the first year in office of Assam CM, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma. The book featured accounts of daily activities he undertook as a Chief Minister. His diary essentially featured the growth initiatives that the state has witnessed over the last 11 months.
- 3. Mahendra Singh Dhoni** has released an autobiography of Techno-educationalist, Professor K.K. Abdul Gaffar 'Njaan Sakshi' (me as the witness).
Note: It will provide an insight into the journey of Prof. Gaffar and how education and students have changed over the time. The first copy of this book was received by Marwan Al Mulla, the CEO of Dubai Health Authority (DHA). He also presented copies of the book to dignitaries including actor Tovino Thomas at the occasion.
- 4. Home Minister, Amit Shah** has released a book titled Revolutionaries- The Other Story of How India Won Its Freedom. This book was authored by veteran Economist **Sanjeev Sanyal**.
Note: The book has written the stories of freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, V D Savarkar, Aurobindo Ghosh, Rashbehari Bose, and Bagha Jatin, in a collective manner.
- 5. Health and Family Welfare Minister, Mansukh Mandaviya** has officially launched the book titled Braving A Viral Storm: India's Covid-19 Vaccine Story, was co-authored by **Aashish Chandorkar and Suraj Sudhir**.
Note: This book has explained the growth of India as a self-sufficient nation where all sections of society contributed to fighting the pandemic. The book was launched ahead of India's second anniversary of starting its COVID-19 vaccination drive in January 2021.
- 6. A book titled 'COACHING BEYOND: My Days with the Indian Cricket Team'** was written by **R. Kaushik & R. Sridhar**.
Note: The book reflects primarily on R. Sridhar's seven-year coaching tenure with the Indian cricket team as its fielding coach. This book isn't as technical as it is anecdotal.
- 7. Meghnad Desai** authored a new book titled "The Poverty Of Political Economy: How Economics Abandoned the Poor".
Note: This book highlighted how the discipline of economics, since the time it evolved from the late 18th century, systematically kept the interests of the poor at the periphery. The book is published by HarperCollins Publishers India
- 8. Dr Ashwin Fernandes** authored a book titled "India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn".
Note: This book was launched by the honorable Minister of Education of India Shri Dharmendra Pradhan. It focuses on India's knowledge supremacy, and journey showcasing changing trends in newly emerging India.

Science and Defence

- 1. Indian Space and Research Organization, National Centre for Earth Sciences (NCES), and Andhra University (AU)** have researched and concluded that constant rip current zones at Rushikonda beach and RK Beach have become a danger to the beach visitors.
Note: They have set up equipment to identify Rip currents to warn marines and local police. Rip currents are common at all beaches across the globe. People can enter the waters in rip current zones up to knee-deep levels.
- 2. Centre of Excellence (CoE) of IIT Madras** has collaborated with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to develop Advanced Defence Technologies.

- Note:** IIT Madras CoE- 'DRDO Industry Academia-Ramanujan Centre of Excellence' (DIA-RCoE) will be conducting a directed research process to meet the national defence and security needs of the nation. DIA-RCoE was initially established by DRDO and then IIT Madras took it over.
- Space start-up **Digantara** has launched its second satellite Pushan-Alpha as rideshare onboard SpaceX's Transporter-6 mission from Cape Canaveral in Florida, US.
Note: The satellite will serve as a space weather testbed in the sun synchronous orbit. It will also enhance precision driven situational space awareness applications. Its observations will help complement Digantara's ROBI (ROBust Integrating proton fluence meter) mission.
 - Captain Shiva Chauhan (Indian Army's Fire and Fury Corps)** has become the first woman officer to be operationally deployed in Kumar Post (height: 15,632 feet) at the highest battlefield in the world-Siachen.
Note: She hails from Rajasthan. She led an arduous 508-km long 'Sura Soi' Siachen Sappers cycling expedition from the Siachen War Memorial to Kargil War Memorial in July 2022. She got inducted to the Siachen Glacier on January 2 after an arduous climb.
 - Drone maker organisation **Garuda Aerospace** and Former cricketer, Mahendra Singh Dhoni have launched a surveillance drone named 'Droni'.
Note: MS Dhoni is an investor-cum-ambassador of Garuda Aerospace. Droni is a battery-operated quadcopter surveillance drone. Garuda Aerospace recently became the first-ever drone company in India to get dual DGCA approvals for both drone manufacturing type certificate and RTPO. In 2022, he unveiled the camera drone called Droni at the Global Drone Expo in Chennai.
 - Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully launched SRBM, Prithvi-II from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, Odisha coast. **Short-Range Ballistic Missile** is the full form of SRBM.
Note: Prithvi-II missile is a well-established system. It has been an integral part of nuclear deterrence in India. During the training launch, the missile hit its target with high accuracy and successfully validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile. Range: 350 km
 - DAC under the chairmanship of Rajnath Singh, has given its approval to the proposal of worth Rs 4,276 crore with an aim to strengthen the Indian defence system. **Defence Acquisition Council** is the full form of DAC.
Note: The amount will be utilised to procure the indigenous anti-tank missiles to be fitted onboard the advanced light helicopter and a new short-range air defence missile. All projects are under the Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) category.
 - European officials and **Carl XVI Gustaf** (Swedish King) have inaugurated the first mainland orbital launch complex of the European Union in **Sweden**.
Note: Aim: To bolster the capacity to launch small satellites into space with a new launchpad in Arctic Sweden. The new facility should complement the EU's current launching capabilities in French Guiana.
 - Astronomers from McGill University in Canada and the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)** detected a radio signal, originating from atomic hydrogen in a distant galaxy.
Note: The signal was detected with the help of data from the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) in Pune. The findings have been published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society. It is also the first confirmed detection of strong lensing of 21 cm emission from a galaxy.
 - According to a report, the Shukrayaan I, the ISRO Venus mission may be delayed until **2031**.
Note: The mission was scheduled to launch in December 2024. The concept was conceived in 2012. After five years, the Department of Space received a 23% increase in the 2017-2018 budget and ISRO started preliminary investigations. The best time to launch from Earth to Venus is once every 19 months or thereabouts
 - IIT Madras** incubated firm has developed an Indigenous Mobile Operating System named 'BharOS'.
Note: About BharOS: It can be installed on commercial off-the-shelf handsets. It provides access to trusted apps from organization-specific Private App Store Services (PASS). It comes with No Default Apps (NDA), which means that users are not forced to use apps that they may not be familiar

with or that they may not trust. Developed by: JandK Operations Private Limited

12. A Science Literature Festival 'Vigyanika' will be organized from 22-23 January 2023 at the Indian International Science Festival (IISF) in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.

Note: "Science Literature Festival" is being organized as part of the 8th IISF. In 2023, IISF is being coordinated and organized by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Ministry of Science & Technology, and Vijnana Bharati. The Geotail spacecraft ended after 30 years in orbit due to the failure of the spacecraft's remaining data recorder. This was a mission operation of NASA and **JAXA**. **Note:** Reason: Failure of the spacecraft's remaining data recorder. This mission was launched on July 24, 1992. Geotail orbited Earth had gathered an immense dataset on the structure and dynamics of the magnetosphere, Earth's protective magnetic bubble. It was originally slated for a four-year run, but the mission was extended due to its high-quality data return.

13. The fifth and last vessel of the series of Fast Patrol Vessels (FPV), the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ship 'Kamla Devi' was commissioned at Kolkata, West Bengal. It was designed, built, and delivered by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd**.

Note: It is 48.9 meters long and 7.5 meters wide with a displacement of 308 Tons. It has three engines and water jets. It is capable of a top speed of 34 knots and an endurance of over 1,500 nautical miles.

14. **21st** edition of the bilateral naval exercise between India and France '**VARUNA**' was organized on the Western Seaboard from 16 -20 January 2023.

Note: It will witness advanced air defense exercises, tactical manoeuvres, surface firings, underway replenishment, and other maritime operations. This exercise will provide an opportunity to learn best practices from each other. It was initiated in 1993 and was christened 'VARUNA' in 2001.

15. **Second** edition of "SAINYA RANAKSHETRAM 2.0" was organized by the Indian Army under the aegis of HQ Army Training Command from October 2022 to January 2023.

Note: Aim: To provide a platform to identify indigenous talent in niche domains and enhance the standard of training in domains of Cyber

Deterrence, Security Software Coding, Electro Magnetic Spectrum Operations.

16. The 14th edition of Aero India 2023 will be held in **Yelahanka, Bengaluru** from 13-17 February 2023.

Note: This event will be a combination of the major trade exhibition of the aerospace and defence industries as well as an aerial display by IAF. It will also be participated by global leaders and big investors in the aerospace industry. This platform provides a unique opportunity for the exchange of information, and new developments in the aviation industry.

17. **European Space Agency** will launch Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) from the agency's spaceport in French Guiana in April 2023.

Note: Aim: To explore the large, frigid worlds that orbit Jupiter, Ganymede, Callisto, and Europa. Ariane 5 will carry the satellite. JUICE will be the first satellite from the earth to enter the orbit of Ganymede. If launched in April 2023, the satellite is expected to enter Jupiter orbit by 2034 and will be deorbited in 2035.

18. NASA and **DARPA** will join hands to develop nuclear-powered rockets that could fly astronauts to Mars.

Note: This mission could allow spacecraft to travel faster, reduce transit time, and have other benefits. US Space agency could develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear thermal propulsion technology as soon as 2027. NASA also believes that they could be ready to send humans to Mars by the late 2030s

19. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to launch the Aditya-L1 mission by **June or July 2023**.

Note: Aditya-L1 is the first Indian space mission to observe the Sun and the solar corona. The ISRO recently received the Visible Line Emission Coronagraph (VELC), which is the primary payload onboard Aditya-L1, from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA). VELC is the first scientific mission of India for studying the sun.

20. **Fifth** edition of Kalvari class submarine INS Vagir has been inducted into Indian Navy on January 23, 2023.

Note: It was built by Mumbai's Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited in collaboration with the France-based Naval Group. It was commissioned by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar. It

will boost the capabilities of the Indian Navy as it is capable of undertaking diverse missions including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, etc.

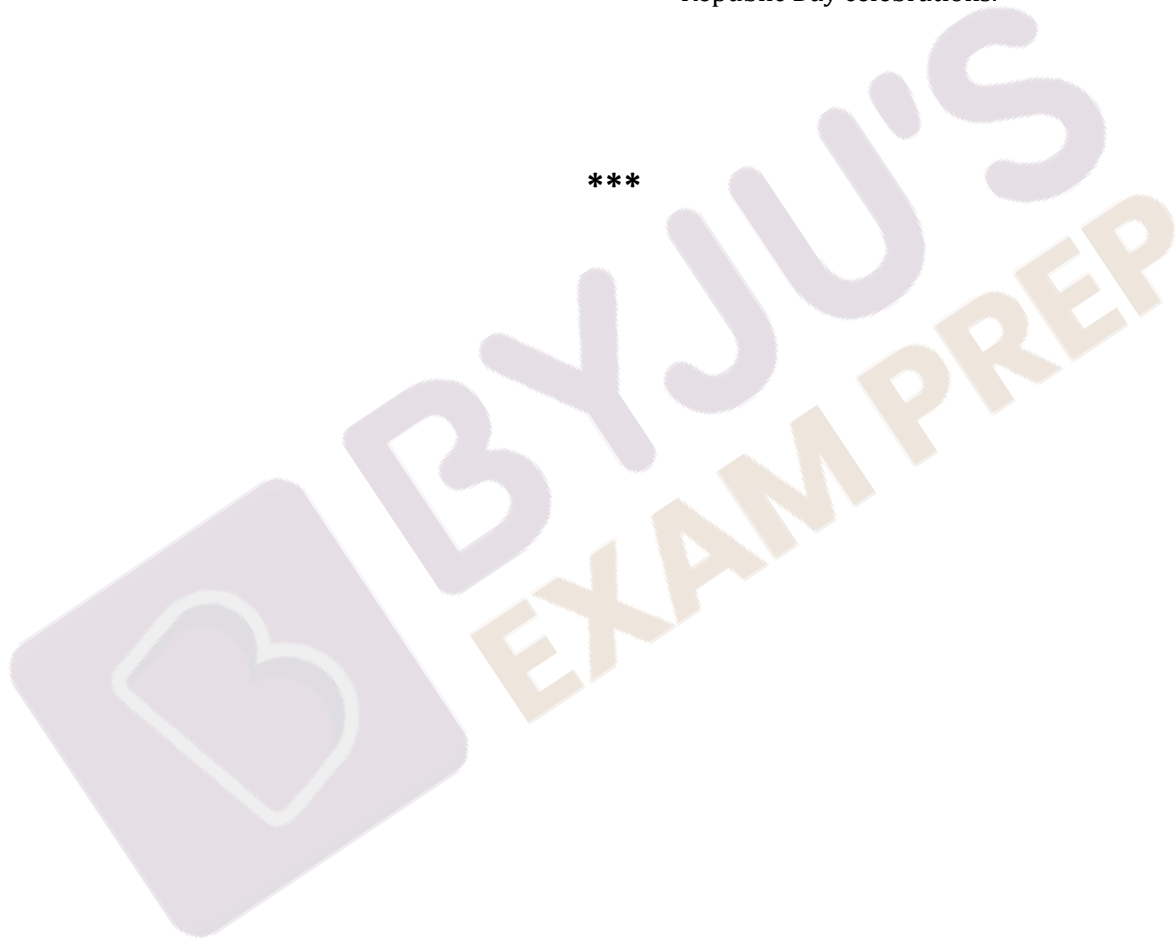
21. The **Indian Navy** has organized a **six-day-long mega biennial tri-services** amphibious exercise '**AMPHEX 2023**' in **Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh**.

Note: The military exercise was organized between the Indian Navy, Army, and IAF. It included complex activities in all domains that demonstrated and validated the high level of preparedness and excellent coordination. It took place amid growing

concerns over China's increasing military forays into the Indian Ocean

22. **Border Security Force (BSF)** started an "Ops Alert" exercise with an aim to enhance security along the India-Pakistan border in the Kutch district of Gujarat and Barmer in Rajasthan.

Note: As per the release, this exercise commenced on January 21 and will continue till January 28 along the International Border from Sir Creek (marshy area). It is being carried out to "thwart any ill-designs of anti-national elements" during the Republic Day celebrations.



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