

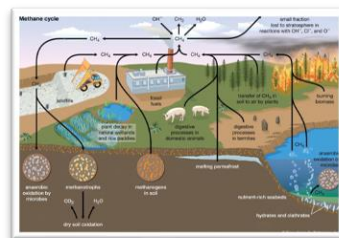
# Monthly Current Affairs March 2023 English



## Important News: International

## Methane Global Tracker report , 2023

**Why in news:** The International Energy Agency (IEA) released the annual Methane Global Tracker report in 2023.



1. The report points that energy sector accounts for around 40% of the total average methane emissions from human activity.
2. Oil and natural gas companies are known to release methane into the atmosphere when natural gas is flared or vented as well as through leaks .
3. Fossil fuel companies emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022 and have done nothing to find and fix leaking infrastructure.

**4. Recommendations :**

- Methane cuts (by 75%) from the energy sector are among the cheapest options to limit near-term global warming
- Reducing wastage , eg by leak detection, repair and upgrading leaky equipment would cost less than 3% of the net income received by oil and gas industry in 2022.

**5. About Methane :**

- It is a greenhouse gas (GHG) responsible for 30% of the warming since preindustrial times, second only to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).
- It is 80 times more potent at warming than CO<sub>2</sub>.

**6. About IEA :**

- International Energy Agency is an autonomous Intergovernmental Organisation established in 1974 in Paris, France.
- It mainly focuses on its energy policies which include economic development, energy security and environmental protection

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## Windsor framework

**Why in news :** UK Government recently reached a landmark deal with the European Union (Known as Windsor Framework) on post-Brexit trade rules that will govern Northern Ireland.



1. The 'Windsor Framework' will replace the Northern Ireland Protocol ( an addendum to the Brexit deal agreed by Boris Johnson and the EU in 2019.)
2. The protocol was created to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland by keeping Northern Ireland aligned with the EU, meaning goods don't need to be checked between the Republic and the province.
3. It improves upon its predecessor via on 3 points –
4. The deal will protect the flow of free trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland by creating green and red lanes for goods flowing into Northern Ireland.
  - Goods that might end up entering the Republic of Ireland will be placed in the red lane for checks before entering Northern Ireland.
  - Goods destined to remain in Northern Ireland will flow freely.
5. Protect "Northern Ireland's place in the union" by allowing the UK government to determine VAT rates applicable in Northern Ireland, as opposed to the current system where the rates are determined by the EU.
6. A new "Stormont brake" would allow Northern Ireland's devolved government to pull an "emergency brake" on any new EU laws from being imposed on the province.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## International Court of Justice

**Why in news:** A group of 16 countries led by Vanuatu - an island country in the South Pacific Ocean, recently launched an effort to fight the problem of climate change at the United Nations (UN), and the group seeks an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the issue of climate change.



1. ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the UN.
2. It was established in 1945 by the UN Charter and is located at Hague, Netherlands.
3. It is one of the six principal organs of UN.
4. Official languages : French and English
5. It looks into two types of cases: legal disputes between States submitted to it by them and requests for advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by United Nations organs and specialized agencies (advisory proceedings).



- Only member States of UN and other States which have become parties to the Statute of the Court or which have accepted its jurisdiction under certain conditions may register cases.
- The court's judgments in contentious cases are final and binding on the parties to a case and without appeal.
- Advisory opinions are not binding.

## 6. Composition:

- 15 judges
- elected for terms of office of nine years by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and Security Council (UNSC).
- To be elected, a candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes in both UNGA and UNSC.
- One-third of the composition of the Court is renewed every three years.
- Judges are eligible for re-election.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU )

## Senior Mission Leaders' (SML) course

**Why in news:** Centre seeks nominations for Senior Mission Leaders' course beginning in Japan from June 19

1. The course is also intended to deepen the understanding of Member State officials of contemporary United Nations peace operations.
2. The SML course is designed to prepare participants to assume roles and responsibilities in a mission's leadership team, such as Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Deputy SRSG, Force Commander, Police Commissioner, Director of Mission Support, or Chief of Staff.
3. About UN Peacekeeping Force :
  - UN Peacekeeping began in 1948 when the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East.
  - It deploys troops and police from around the world, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to address a range of mandates set by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the General Assembly in conflict prone areas.
  - Peacekeeping forces are contributed by member states on a voluntary basis.
  - India has been among the largest troop-contributing countries to the UN peacekeeping missions.



(SOURCE – THE PRINT )



## India wins GSMA Government Leadership Award 2023

**Why in news :** GSM Association (GSMA) has conferred Government Leadership Award 2023 to India for implementing best practices in telecom policy and regulation.



1. The GSMA, which represents more than 750 mobile operators and 400 companies in the telecom ecosystem, recognizes one country every year. India was declared winner in the ceremony held at Mobile World Congress Barcelona on 27 Feb, 2023.

### 2. Important Govt Initiatives in Telecom :

- 'National Broadband Mission' ,2019 : to facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services across the country, especially in rural and remote areas. The Mission is part of the National Digital Communications Policy, 2018.
- Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) : development of Public Wi-Fi Networks
- Bharat Net Project : It is the world's largest rural broadband connectivity programme using Optical fibre implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL).
- Draft Telecommunication Bill 2022: The Government of India has expressed plans to expand the definition of "telecommunication services" by including Over-the-top (OTT) communication services under the same umbrella, which means that internet-based communications and OTT would both require a licence to offer services.

(SOURCE – PIB )

## Lionel Messi won the best FIFA men's player prize for 2022

**Why in news:** The captain of the Argentina football team Lionel Messi recently won the Best FIFA Men's player award.



1. Lionel Messi was named FIFA player of the year on Monday after winning his maiden World Cup title with Argentina in December in Qatar. The 35-year-old forward scored two goals in the World Cup final, which Argentina won on penalties against France following a 3-3 draw after extra time. Currently, he belongs to the "Paris Saint Germain" club.
2. FIFA World Cup is the most prestigious tournament in the world - taking place quadrennially.
3. First FIFA WC was held in Uruguay in 1930, Won by Uruguay.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU )





## India hosts first meeting of Governing Board of BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC)

**Why in news:** The central government hosted the first meeting of the governing board of BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) on 27 February, 2023 in Bengaluru.



1. There was active participation from all BIMSTEC countries viz. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand along with BIMSTEC Sectt.
2. The Meeting recommended to add the additional following areas under the specialized Wings of BEC: (a) Cyber Security, (b) Green Hydrogen (c) Energy Transition.
3. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional multilateral organisation.
4. Its members lie in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity. Out of the 7 members -
  - Bangladesh
  - Bhutan
  - India
  - Nepal
  - Sri Lanka
  - Mynamar
  - Thailand

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## Methane Global Tracker report

**Why in news:** The report said 75 per cent of methane emissions from the energy sector can be reduced with the help of cheap and readily available technology. However, fossil fuel companies have failed to take any substantial action regarding the issue.



1. According to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) annual Methane Global Tracker report, fossil fuel companies emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022, only slightly below the record highs seen in 2019.
2. It added that these companies have done almost nothing to curb the emissions despite their pledges to find and fix leaking infrastructure.



3. Methane is responsible for 30% of the global warming happening on the earth. It is a greenhouse gas. The potential of methane to warm the earth's surface is 80 times higher than carbon dioxide.
4. The NOAA of the US says that atmospheric levels of methane increased to 17 parts per billion in 2021.
5. The energy sector accounts for around 40 per cent of the total average methane emissions from human activity, as oil and natural gas companies are known to release methane into the atmosphere when natural gas is flared or vented. The greenhouse gas is also released through leaks from valves and other equipment during the drilling, extraction and transportation process.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## India, Australia sign deal to recognise qualifications

**Why in news:** India and Australia signed a framework mechanism for mutual recognition of educational and skill qualifications to ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries.



1. India and Australia signed a Framework Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications that will help ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries.
2. This agreement is part of the commitment by Prime Ministers of both countries at the 2nd India-Australia Virtual Summit held on 21st March 2022, wherein they had agreed to establish a Joint Taskforce for mutual recognition of qualifications.
3. It has come up with a comprehensive mechanism that covers both education and skill qualifications of the two countries and will help facilitate two way mobility of young people for education and employment purposes by mutually recognizing various levels of education and skill qualifications.
4. In the bilateral meeting the two sides also discussed issues like promoting student mobility and enhancing research and academic collaborations between Indian and Australian universities through the mechanism of Joint/ Dual/ Twinning degrees that have been brought in recently under NEP2020.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## Naval Commanders' Conference 2023 begins aboard INS Vikrant

**Why in news:** The discussions at the conference will also cover issues related to operations, combat readiness, logistics, training, human resource development and training.



1. The conference serves as a platform for Naval Commanders to discuss important security issues at the military-strategic level as well as interact with Senior Government functionaries through an institutionalised forum .
2. Hon'ble Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will address the Naval Commanders onboard INS Vikrant on the conference's opening day.
3. During the conference, Naval Commanders would also be provided with an update on 'Agnipath Scheme' executed in the Indian Navy in Nov 22.
4. The Commanders would also deliberate the Navy's readiness to address the challenges to our Maritime interests. The Indian Navy remains focused on being a combat-ready, credible, cohesive and future-proof force and continues to assiduously execute its mandate as the maritime security guarantor of the country.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## INS TRIKAND PARTICIPATES IN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE/ CUTLASS EXPRESS 23 (IMX/ CE-23)

**Why in news:** INS Trikand is participating in the International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express 2023 (IMX/CE-23) being held in the Gulf region from 26 Feb to 16 Mar 23.



1. IMX/CE-23 is one of the largest multinational maritime exercises in the world. While this is Indian Navy's maiden IMX participation, it also marks the second occasion where an Indian Naval ship is participating in an exercise conducted by the CMF.
2. Earlier, in Nov 22, INS Trikand had participated in the CMF led Operation Sea Sword 2.
3. She will exercise with participants from over 50 nations and international maritime agencies with the common aim of enhancing maritime security and keeping sea lanes in the region safe for maritime commerce.



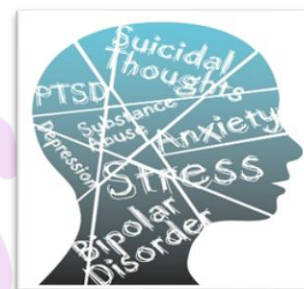


4. Participation in exercises like Sea Sword 2 and IMX/CE-23 enables the Indian Navy in strengthening relationships and enhancing interoperability and collective maritime capability with maritime partners in the IOR.
5. It also enables the Navy contribute constructively to regional stability and security.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

### Mental State of the World Report

**Why in news:** The third annual mental state of the world report was released recently by a non-profit called Sapien Labs. The report is based on the survey of over 4 lakh participants across 64 countries.

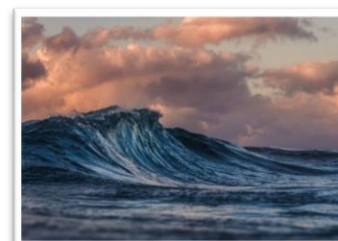


1. The report's mental health quotient found that, on a 300-point scale, the score of mental health fell by 33 points on average over the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. It found that mental health challenges are more likely among young adults. Individuals between ages 18 and 24 have lower "social self", which measures how an individual perceives themselves and their ability to maintain a meaningful relationship.
3. The global average MHQ was 64.
4. The report used the Mental Health Quotient to learn about the mental health of people in different countries. The quotient was calculated based on an online survey. The participants were randomly picked from India, Spain, France, Arab countries, North Africa, Germany, and other western countries.
5. Tanzania had good mental health and topped the list with an MHQ of 93.6. Panama, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic were in the second, third, and fourth places respectively. The score of the USA was 67.9, Australia: 54.4, Germany: 65.9, France 74.1, UK: 46.2.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

### UN High Seas Treaty

**Why in news:** After more than a decade of negotiations, the UN members have agreed (in New York, US) on the first-ever treaty – the UN High Seas Treaty, to protect the world's oceans outside national boundaries.



1. 2/3rd of the world's oceans are currently considered international waters/high seas. But until now only about 1% of these waters have been protected.
2. Nearly 10% of marine species on the high seas were found to be at risk of extinction mainly due to overfishing and pollution.
3. The treaty places 30% of the world's international waters into protected areas (MPAs) by 2030, and puts more money into marine conservation and new rules for mining at sea.
4. Richer nations have pledged money for the delivery of the treaty. For example, the EU announced nearly 820m euros.
5. It also provides for –
  - Arrangements for sharing marine genetic resources, such as biological material from plants and animals in the ocean.
  - Requirements for environmental assessments for deep sea activities like mining.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## U.N. takes step towards new way of tracking greenhouse gases

**Why in news:** The three major greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Of those, CO<sub>2</sub> accounts for around 66% of the warming effect on the climate.



1. The U.N.'s World Meteorological Organisation has come up with a new Global Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Infrastructure that aims to provide better ways of measuring planet-warming pollution and help inform policy choices.
2. The GGGMI will engage with the broader scientific community and other UN agencies involved in GHG monitoring activities.
3. The infrastructure will improve our understanding of the carbon cycle and provide critical and timely input to the UNFCCC processes.
4. It will help humans understand climate change and to provide support to mitigation action taken by the Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.
5. The World Meteorological Organization (est. 1950; HQ: Geneva) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for promoting international cooperation on atmospheric science, climatology, hydrology and geophysics

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## BSE & UN Women India launches a new programme, 'FinEMPOWER'

**Why in news:** It is a year-long joint capacity-building programme between BSE and UN Women to empower women towards financial security.

1. In commemoration of International Women's Day, BSE and UN Women India collaboratively organised the 'Ring the Bell for Gender Equality ceremony to accelerate investment in women leaders and entrepreneurs at BSE.
2. FinEMPOWER, a new initiative from BSE and UN Women India, was introduced at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).
3. In order to empower women towards financial security, BSE and UN Women have collaborated on a year-long capacity-building programme.
4. BSE MD and CEO : Sundararaman Ramamurthy

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## 'Group of Friends' to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers

**Why in news:** India, Bangladesh, Egypt, France, Morocco and Nepal are co-chairs of the 'Group of Friends to Promote Accountability for Crimes Against Peacekeepers'.

1. India has recently launched a "Group of Friends" to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. It was launched during India's presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
2. "Group of Friends to Promote Accountability for Crimes Against Peacekeepers" is an informal forum that will work to promote accountability for all acts of violence against the United Nations peacekeepers.
3. The Group of Friends involves countries championing the implementation of the provisions of the UNSC resolution 2589, which was adopted in August 2021 under India's UNSC presidency.
4. It seeks to provide capacity building and technical assistance for the host states' authorities to prevent and address such crimes.
5. The forum will actively share information with the Secretary-General and help member states that are hosting or have hosted peacekeeping operations and assist them in bringing the perpetrators to justice.



6. Resolution 2589 calls on the member states that are hosting or having hosted the UN peacekeeping operations to take necessary measures to bring to justice the perpetrators involved in all acts of violence against the United Nations personnel,  
(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## India Day Celebrations at PDAC-2023 in Toronto

**Why in news:** India Day was celebrated at the PDAC-2023 convention in Toronto on Tuesday.

1. Large gathering of prospective investors, mining experts and mineral explorers also attended the program.
2. On this occasion Indian officials gave presentation on the mining opportunities in India, followed by a question answer session.
3. Mines Secretary, Shri Vivek Bhardwaj also had one to one interaction with the dignitaries present on the occasion.
4. Event has concluded with a small Holi celebrations and distribution of sweets and millet items brought from India as part of International Year of Millets initiative by the Government of India.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## Russians launch six Kinzhal hypersonic missiles at once for first time on Ukraine

**Why in news:** Russia used the nuclear-capable Kinzhal missile, which it has described as a hypersonic weapon, on a few occasions in the first weeks of its invasion last year. But the powerful weapon, which Ukraine doesn't have the capability to shoot down, has rarely been seen over the country's skies.

1. The Kh-47M2, nicknamed "Kinzhal" (Dagger), is a nuclear-capable, Russian air-launched ballistic missile.
2. It was one of six "next generation" weapons unveiled by Russian President Putin during a speech in March 2018.
3. A hypersonic missile is a weapon system which flies at least at the speed of Mach 5 i.e. five times the speed of sound and is manoeuvrable.
4. The Kinzhal can reach speeds of up to Mach 10 (12,350 km/hr). It can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads with a payload of up to 480 kg and a thermonuclear option with a 10-50 kt warhead.



5. It has a reported range of 1,500-2,000 km and a launch weight of approximately 4,300 kg. This missile maneuvers during all stages of its flight to overcome hostile air defense systems.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## 2. 5th ASEAN-India Business summit

**Why in news:** The 5th Asean-India Business Summit was held at the Berjaya Times Square Hotel in Kuala Lumpur on March 6 this year.



1. The summit is part of the Asean-India Year of Friendship (an observation commemorating the 30-year-long engagement between the 10-member bloc and India), is an essential forum for charting the future roadmap for the business and economic engagement between the two parties.
2. It was organized with assistance from the Indian Government, through the External Affairs Ministry's Economic Diplomacy Division and Malaysian Government's International Trade and Industry Ministry.
3. The 5th ASEAN – India Business Summit was held under the theme “Strengthening and Moving Forward ASEAN – India Economic Relations for the strategic business partnership”
4. The session focused on improving trade ties and expanding business engagement in digital technology partnerships and fintech, among other sectors.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## PM Modi, Hasina to launch Rs 377-cr cross-border oil pipeline

**Why in news:** The 130-km-long friendship pipeline on West Bengal border will transport diesel from Numaligarh Refinery in Assam.



1. India's first-ever cross-border oil pipeline with Bangladesh is set to be launched on March 18 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina by video conferencing.
2. The 130-km-long Indo-Bangla Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) pipeline is part of several bilateral measures to allow Bangladesh to tap into larger volumes of energy to meet its growing domestic demands. It would carry high speed diesel from Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Assam.





3. The pipeline would carry fuel from NRL's marketing terminal in Siliguri, West Bengal to the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation's (BPC) oil depot in Parbatipur city in Dinajpur District of the neighbouring country.
4. One million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) can potentially be transported through the pipeline.
5. Only five km of the pipeline would run within Indian territory, the rest would run through Bangladesh.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## India, US relaunch commercial dialogue on supply chain, establish semiconductor partnership

**Why in news:** After three years of stalled commercial dialogue between the two biggest democracies in the world, India and the US, on 10 March re-launched their commercial dialogue to discuss supply chain issues and agree upon a semiconductor partnership initiative.



1. US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal jointly addressed a press conference at the India-USA Commercial Dialogue.
2. The dialogue focused on several emerging areas, including building supply chains, facilitating clean energy cooperation, talent development, and post-pandemic economic recovery for start-ups and small businesses.
3. Both the dignitaries discussed India-US strategic partnership, as well as economic and commercial engagement between the two countries, including through the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).
4. iCET aims to elevate and expand Indo-U.S. strategic technology partnership and defense industrial cooperation between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions of the two countries.
5. The initiative will be spearheaded by the National Security Council Secretariat in India and the US National Security Council.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## “Reddmatter”: New superconductor Material

**Why in news:** Materials that can conduct electric currents without any loss—so-called superconductors—have been wildly impractical because they typically need to be extremely cooled, to around minus 320 degrees Fahrenheit, and



subjected to extreme pressure to work.

1. A group of researchers at the University of Rochester report that they have created a new superconductor that can operate at room temperature and a much lower pressure than previously discovered superconducting materials.
2. It can operate at room temperature (21 degrees C) and much lower pressure (10,000 atmospheric pressure) than previously discovered superconducting materials.
3. They named the resulting material “reddmatter,” after observing how the material’s hue changed from blue to pink to red as it got compressed.
4. It is formed by combining lutetium (a rare earth metal) with hydrogen and nitrogen
5. Applications: The new superconductor could help create lossless electrical grids, and better and cheaper magnets for use in future nuclear fusion reactors, among other things.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## India and Australia join hands to develop innovative ecosystem

**Why in news:** Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), Niti Aayog, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia’s national science agency, have signed a letter of intent to encourage joint cooperation to drive innovation activities in areas of national challenges and shared priorities of both countries.



1. The core of the bilateral engagement is the India Australia Innovation and Technology Challenge (IA-ITC) - a program envisioned to bring together the innovation ecosystems of India and Australia to address our shared environmental and economic challenges by supporting cohorts of start-ups and SMEs on their commercialisation pathways and bring to market innovative tech-based solutions spanning across circular economy, energy transition and food system resilience etc.
2. The program intends to leverage the complementary capabilities and resources of the innovation ecosystem of both the countries.
3. The IA-ITC builds on the success of the India Australia Circular Economy (IACE) hackathon 2021, which witnessed university students, start-ups, and SMEs from both India and Australia develop innovative tech-based solutions for circularity in food system value chain.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)



## World's first 3D-printed rocket- Terran 1

**Why in news:** The 3d-printed rocket, called Terran 1, was scheduled to launch on a debut flight from Launch Complex 16 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. Despite three attempts, the company was unable to launch the rocket after suffering two last-minute aborts, including one that fired up its engines, and one hold when boat encroached in the offshore safety zone.



1. The Terran 1 rocket is built by California aerospace startup Relativity Space. The rocket is 110 feet (33.5 meters) tall with a diameter of 7.5 feet (2.2 meters) .
2. It is powered by Aeon engines using liquid oxygen and liquid natural gas as propellants. Eighty-five percent of its mass is 3D printed with metal alloys, including the engines.
3. The rocket will eventually be capable of putting up to 2,755 pounds (1,250 kilograms) into low Earth orbit.
4. 3D printing or additive manufacturing is a process of making three-dimensional solid objects from a digital file.
5. In an additive process, an object is created by laying down successive layers of material until the object is created. Each of these layers can be seen as a thinly sliced cross-section of the object.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## MARITIME PARTNERSHIP EXERCISE (MPX) WITH FRENCH NAVY

**Why in news :** Indian Navy's indigenously built guided missile frigate, INS Sahyadri participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with French Navy (FN) ships FS Dixmude, a Mistral Class Amphibious Assault Ship and FS La Fayette, a La Fayette Class Frigate, in the Arabian Sea on 10 – 11 March 2023.



1. The exercise witnessed a wide spectrum of evolutions at sea which included cross deck landings, boarding exercises and seamanship evolutions. The seamless conduct of the exercise reaffirmed the interoperability and high level of cooperation between the two navies.
2. INS Sahyadri is fitted with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors, which makes her capable of detecting and neutralising air, surface and sub-surface threats.
3. The ship is a part of Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam, under operational control of FOCinC (East).



## FACTS -

4. INS Sahyadri (F49) is a Shivalik-class stealth multi-role frigate built for the Indian Navy.
5. The Shivalik class or Project 17 class is a class of multi-role stealth frigates in service with the Indian Navy. They are the first stealth warships built in India. They were designed to have better stealth features and land-attack capabilities than the preceding Talwar-class frigates
6. A total of three ships were built between 2000 and 2010, and all three were in commission by 2012 – Shivalik, Satpura and Shayadri.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## WHO Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction.

**Why in news:** Only 5% of 194 WHO member states are protected by mandatory and comprehensive sodium reduction policies; 73% lack full range of implementing such policies.



1. The report allocated a sodium country score from 1 (the lowest level) to 4 (the highest level) to each member state based on the level of implementation of sodium reduction policies and other measures. This is a first-of-its kind step.
2. According to the WHO Global Report on Sodium Intake, Reduction two million deaths can be prevented by 2025 and seven million by 2030 if policies recommended by the World Health Organization to reduce sodium intake are implemented,
3. The global average salt intake is estimated to be 10.8 grams per day, more than double the WHO recommendation of fewer than 5 grams of salt per day (one teaspoon).
4. Bread and bread products are the most targeted food category for sodium reduction across the implemented reformulation policies in member states.
5. Sodium (Na) is a chemical element of the alkali metal group(Group 1 ) of the periodic table. It is a very soft silvery-white metal. It is the most common alkali metal and the sixth most abundant element on Earth, comprising 2.8 per cent of Earth's crust.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU )



## Air pollution mission: NASA, Italian space agency to study 11 most populated cities globally, including Delhi

**Why in news :** NASA and the Italian Space Agency are partnering on the MAIA mission which will use data from an Earth observation satellite to help scientists find correlations between air pollution and health problems in major cities across the world including New Delhi.



1. National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (ASI) will build and launch the Multi-Angle Imager for Aerosols (MAIA) missions, NASA announced on March 8, 2023.
2. The mission is set to launch before the end of 2024. The observatory will consist of the PLATiNO-2 satellite, which ASI will provide and a science instrument that will be built at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.
3. The three-year mission will focus on 11 primary target areas: Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston, Rome, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Barcelona, Spain, Beijing, Johannesburg, New Delhi, Taipei, Taiwan and Tel Aviv.
4. MAIA is a state-of-the-art satellite instrument producing data that will be used in health studies to examine the health effects of various types of air pollution. The MAIA mission will collect and analyse data from the observatory, sensors on the ground and atmospheric models.
5. Its measurements of sunlight reflecting off airborne particles will help researchers determine the abundance, size and optical properties of certain pollutants in the atmosphere.

(SOURCE – BUISNESS STANDARD )

## Doha Political Declaration adopted by world leaders to fast-track progress in least developed countries

**Why in news:** The declaration is significant since it comes amid simultaneous global risks of rising cost of living and inflation as well as climate change.



1. The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) held under the theme "From Potential to Prosperity" in Qatar concluded with adoption of the 'Doha Political Declaration' by the world leaders.
2. It is a 10-year plan to put the world's 46 most vulnerable countries back on track to achieving the UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
3. DPoA (2022-2031) consisted of six key focus areas:





- eradicating poverty;
  - leveraging the potential of science and technology;
  - addressing climate change;
  - environmental degradation;
  - recovering from COVID-19 pandemic;
  - building resilience against future shocks for risk-informed sustainable development;
4. Least developed countries (LDCs):
- They are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks.
  - There are currently 46 countries on the list of LDCs which is reviewed every three years by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) of the UN.
5. These countries, which include 33 African nations, face the challenge of high debt costs while having inadequate liquidity to provide essential services.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## India remains biggest arms importer between 2018-22 despite drop in overall imports

**Why in news:** Russia's share of total Indian arms imports fell from 64% to 45% during 2013–17 and 2018–22.

1. According to the SIPRI, India remained the world's largest arms importer for the five-year period between 2018-22 even though its arms imports dropped by 11% between 2013–17 and 2018–22.
2. Russia was the largest supplier of arms to India in both 2013–17 and 2018–22, but its share of total Indian arms imports fell from 64% to 45% while France (29%) and the US (11%) emerged as the 2nd and 3rd largest supplier between 2018-22.
3. Among the top 10 arms exporters for the period 2018-22, India was the biggest arms export market to three countries - Russia, France and Israel and the second largest export market to South Korea.
4. The U.S. share of global arms exports increased from 33% to 40% while Russia's fell from 22% to 16%.
5. Established in 1966 and based in Stockholm (Sweden), SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) provides data, analysis and recommendations, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)



## India-Bhutan satellite ground station inaugurated at Thimphu

**Why in news:** The ground station will allow the scientists at Bhutan to directly receive the data from the India-Bhutan satellite and process the data in realtime.



1. India-Bhutan Satellite is also known as the ISRO Nano Satellite 2 for Bhutan (INS-2B).
2. It was launched as a payload on ISRO's PSLV C54 rocket on November 26, 2022. It has been jointly developed by scientists from both countries.
3. The primary payload on the satellite is the NanoMx multispectral optical imager, is to help Bhutan with natural resource management.
4. The secondary payload was developed by the Department of Information Technology and Telecom in Bhutan, and is an Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) repeater to serve the amateur radio community, relaying realtime information about the region.
5. The ground station that ISRO worked with the scientists from Bhutan on, is equipped to receive the signals from the satellite.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## JOINT INDIA SINGAPORE EXERCISE 'BOLD KURUKSHETRA' CONCLUDES AT JODHPUR

**Why in news:** The Singapore Army and Indian Army participated in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra, a bilateral armour exercise from 06-13 March 2023 at Jodhpur Military Station, India.



1. Hosted by the Indian Army, the exercise involved soldiers from the 42nd Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment and an Armoured Brigade of Indian Army.
2. For the first time in the exercise series, both armies participated in a command post Exercise, which involved Battalion and Brigade level planning elements and computer wargaming.
3. First conducted in 2005, this exercise underscores the strong and long-standing bilateral defence relationship between both countries and enhances cooperation between the two armies.
4. The ten-day long joint training that commenced on 05th March fostered common understanding of mechanised warfare in emerging threats and



evolving technologies, developing inter-operability through a computer simulation-based Wargame using joint operational and tactical procedures controlled through a joint command post.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Denmark inaugurates world's first cross-border CO<sub>2</sub> storage site

**Why in news:** Denmark inaugurates a project to store carbon dioxide 1,800 metres beneath the North Sea, the first country in the world to bury CO<sub>2</sub> imported from abroad.



1. The CO<sub>2</sub> graveyard, where the carbon is injected to prevent further warming of the atmosphere, is on the site of an old oil field.
2. Led by British chemical giant Ineos and German oil company Wintershall Dea, the “Greensand” project is expected to store up to 8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year by 2030.
3. First captured at the source, the CO<sub>2</sub> is then liquefied, in Belgium in Greensand's case, then transported, currently by ship but potentially by pipelines, and stored in reservoirs such as geological cavities or depleted oil and gas fields.
4. The North Sea is particularly suitable for this type of project as the region already has pipelines and potential storage sites after decades of oil and gas production.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Bharti-backed OneWeb confirms deploying 40 satellites after SpaceX launch

**Why in news:** Bharti-backed OneWeb on Friday confirmed successfully deploying 40 satellites put up by a SpaceX rocket that took off from a launch station in Florida. The Launch enables company to expand coverage of communication services worldwide



1. This launch is OneWeb's 17th to-date and the penultimate mission, setting up the company set to complete its first-generation (Gen 1) low earth orbit (LEO) satellite constellation and enable global coverage in 2023.
2. With 582 satellites now in orbit, OneWeb will complete a global footprint of its Gen 1 constellation with a launch set to take place later this month with Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro).



3. The launch enables OneWeb to continue expanding its connectivity as it grows its fleet of satellites and seeks to initiate services for more partners around the world.
4. OneWeb already has connectivity solutions in key geographies across the globe and is bringing new areas online by partnering with leading providers including VEON, Orange, Galaxy Broadband, Paratus, Telespazio, and more.
5. OneWeb and its partners are focused on the mission to bridge the digital divide and provide internet connectivity to a greater number of unconnected and underserved rural and remote communities and businesses.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## IPCC meet in Switzerland: The significance, likely impact

**Why in news:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a UN-backed scientific body whose periodic assessments of climate science form the basis of global climate action, is set to finalise what is known as the Synthesis Report.



1. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is meeting in Switzerland this week to finalise the last report of its sixth assessment cycle, which is expected to set up the tempo for a string of climate change-focused discussions over the next fortnight.
2. The Synthesis Report is supposed to be a relatively non-technical summary of the previous reports, aimed largely at policymakers around the world. It is meant to address a wide range of policy-relevant scientific questions related to climate change, but, like all IPCC reports, in a non-prescriptive manner.
3. This will bring an end to the Sixth Assessment Report, a collective work of thousands of scientists over a period of eight years, starting in February 2015.
4. As part of the sixth assessment cycle, the IPCC published three comprehensive reports — one on scientific evidence for climate change, the other on impacts and vulnerabilities, and the third exploring mitigation options available. Besides these, special reports on the feasibility of keeping global temperature rise within the 1.5 degree Celsius limit, and the connections between land, ocean and cryosphere, were also released.
5. The ground station that ISRO worked with the scientists from Bhutan on, is equipped to receive the signals from the satellite.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## SCO Summit on 'Collaboration In Sports and Physical Fitness'

**Why in news:** The three-day Summit on the topic of 'Collaboration In Sports and Physical Fitness' with delegates from eight Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) nations held in New Delhi concluded.



1. The summit was attended by representatives of six nations, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan, who participated in the discussions in person. Representatives from China and Tajikistan participated virtually.
2. The summit aimed to explore opportunities for collaboration in the field of sports and physical fitness and to strengthen the common commitment to sports.
3. The summit was organized to explore opportunities for collaboration in the field of sports and physical fitness. The discussions revolved around a wide array of subjects, including training and development programs, sports science, sports medicine, anti-doping measures, and capacity building.
4. The delegates discussed ways to encourage sports tourism and promote sports among women and youth. They also exchanged ideas on organizing sports events and competitions and discussed the importance of sports diplomacy in promoting peace and harmony between nations.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## US recognises McMahon Line as international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh

**Why in news:** The bipartisan Senators' resolution condemns additional China's provocations, including the People's Republic of China's use of military force to change the status quo along the Line of Actual Control.



1. The United States recognises the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh, according to a bipartisan Senate resolution which sees Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India.
2. The resolution, which comes following the biggest clash between the Republic of India and China in the Eastern Sector along the Line of Actual Control in six years, reaffirms that the United States recognises the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.





3. The resolution also pushes back against People's Republic of China (PRC) claims that Arunachal Pradesh is PRC territory, which is a part of the PRC's increasingly aggressive and expansionist policies.
4. The McMahon Line serves as the de facto boundary between China and India in the Eastern Sector.
5. It specifically represents the boundary between Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, from Bhutan in the west to Myanmar in the east.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## India Signs Loan Agreement With World Bank For 781 km Green National Highways In 4 States

**Why in news:** It will be done using a loan of \$500 million from the World Bank, with a total project cost of US\$1288.24 million (7,662.47 crores).

1. Road and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari revealed that the Government of India and the World Bank have signed a contract for the construction of the Green National Highway Corridors Project (GNHCP) with a total length of 781 km in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.
2. The objective of the Green National Highway Corridors Project is to demonstrate safe and green highways keeping in view climate resilience and use of green technologies.
3. To do this, provisions for natural resource conservation will be incorporated using cement-treated sub-base/reclaimed asphalt pavement, the use of local/marginal materials like lime, fly ash, and waste plastic, and bio-engineering measures for slope protection like hydroseeding, coco/jute fiber, among other things.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)



## RBI, UAE central bank sign pact to enhance cooperation

**Why in news:** Under the MoU (memorandum of understanding), the two central banks will collaborate on various emerging areas of FinTech, especially Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) and explore interoperability between the CBDCs of CBUAE and RBI.

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on March 15 said that it



has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Central Bank of United Arab Emirates for promoting innovation in financial product and services.

2. Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates (CBUAE) and RBI will jointly conduct proof-of-concept (PoC) and pilot(s) of bilateral CBDC bridge to facilitate cross-border CBDC transactions of remittances and trade
3. The central bank said that bilateral engagement of testing cross-border use case of CBDCs is expected to reduce costs and increase efficiency of cross border transactions.
4. The MoU also provides for technical collaboration and knowledge sharing on matters related to Fintech and financial products and services.
5. The apex bank identified eight banks for phase-wise participation in the retail CBDC pilot and the first phase shall commence with four lenders — State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, YES Bank, and IDFC First Bank.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## ICC judges issue arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin over alleged war crimes

**Why in news:** The international criminal court (ICC) in The Hague has issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin for overseeing the abduction of Ukrainian children, sending Russia another significant step on the path to becoming a pariah state.



1. The situation between Russia and Ukraine has been poor ever since the annexation of Crimea, a south-eastern Ukrainian province by Russia in 2014.
2. Putin invoked Article 51 of the UN Charter, which enshrines inherent right of individual or collective self-defence in order to protect Article 1 (the right to self-determination of Donbas region).
3. Governed by an international treaty called 'The Rome Statute', the ICC is the world's first permanent international criminal court.
4. It investigates and, where warranted, tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.
5. ICC Headquarters at The Hague, the Netherlands.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## GPT-4 and how is it different from ChatGPT?

**Why in news:** GPT-4 is supposedly bigger, faster, and more accurate than ChatGPT, so much so, that it even clears several top examinations with flying colours, like the Uniform Bar Exam for those wanting to practice as lawyers in the US.



1. GPT-4 is a large multimodal model created by OpenAI.
2. Multimodal models can encompass more than just text – GPT-4 also accepts images as input. Meanwhile, GPT-3 and GPT-3.5 only operated in one modality, text, meaning users could only ask questions by typing them out.
3. GPT-4 also “exhibits human-level performance on various professional and academic benchmarks.”
4. For example, it can “answer tax-related questions, schedule a meeting among three busy people, or learn a user’s creative writing style.”
5. ChatGPT is an artificial-intelligence chatbot developed by San Francisco-based AI research company OpenAI in 2022.
6. The technology that underlies ChatGPT is referenced in the second half of its name, GPT, which stands for Generative Pre-trained Transformer.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Global Terrorism Index 2023

**Why in news:** Afghanistan has topped for the fourth consecutive year, despite attacks and deaths falling by 75 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively.



1. Afghanistan retains the top spot in the list of country impacted by terrorism in the new Global Terrorism Index report.
2. India ranked 13th on the index, marking only a marginal decrease from the previous year. Indian respondents refrained from ranking war and terrorism as the top threat to their daily safety, despite the country being one of the 25 worst-hit countries on the index.
3. The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) publishes the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), which was created by Steve Killelea, an IT entrepreneur, and IEP founder. Since 2000, the index has provided a thorough overview of the important global trends over time in terrorism. It is an effort to rate the countries of the globe in terms of terrorist activity in a methodical manner.
4. It is based on four parameters:



- Number of terrorist incidents per year.
  - Number of fatalities caused by terrorists per year.
  - Number of injuries caused by terrorists per year.
  - Total property damage caused by terrorism per year.
5. Pakistan saw the second-largest increase in terror-related fatalities globally last year, with a total of 643 dead. The highest year-to-year increase in deaths during the previous ten years was seen in Pakistan.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## NASA unveils new spacesuit specially tailored for lunar wear

**Why in news:** NASA unveiled the first prototype for a newly designed next-generation spacesuit specially tailored and accessorised for the first astronauts expected to venture back to the moon's surface in the next few years.



1. Branded by Axiom as the "Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit," or AxEMU for short, the new suits are more streamlined and flexible than the old Apollo get-ups, with greater range of motion and variability in size and fit.
2. It provides increased mobility, and its design accommodates a broader range of body types, making it more comfortable for astronauts.
3. The large clear bubble around the head provides a wider range of visibility and lighting, which will be essential for studying water ice in shadowed craters near the lunar south pole. The suit's headpiece also has a mount for a high-definition camera.
4. Additionally, the AxEMU still uses diapers, which is an effective solution for the astronauts' waste management during their missions.
5. Artemis 1 is aiming to send an uncrewed spacecraft around the moon using a combination of the never-flown Space Launch System rocket, along with the once-flown Orion spacecraft.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference

**Why in news:** The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference at Subramaniam Hall, NASC Complex, IARI Campus, PUSA New Delhi today.



1. The two-day global conference will have sessions on all important issues related to millets (Shree Anna) like promotion and awareness of millets among producers, consumers and other stakeholders; millets' value chain development;



health and nutritional aspects of millets; market linkages; research and development etc.

2. The Prime Minister also inaugurated and visited the Exhibition cum Buyer Seller Meet Pavilion. He also unveiled a Commemorative Stamp and Commemorative Coin. This was followed by the Prime Minister digitally launching a compendium of Indian Millet (Shri Anna) startups and a book of millet (Shri Anna) standards.
3. An Exhibition-cum-Buyer-Seller Meet (BSM) with a focus on millets will also be held, with the participation of more than 50 domestic and international buyers, importers, exporters, and processors for the promotion of millets. The exhibition of more than 100 stalls will showcase millets and millet-based ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products by millet-based startups, exporters, and live cooking sessions by various international and national chefs.
4. The Hyderabad-based Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) was named as the global centre of excellence.
5. The conference will also witness wider participation from Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)/Farmers Self-Help Groups, schools, Agri-Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), Gram Panchayats, Common Service Centres (CSC), Cooperative Institutions, Hotel Management Schools, Indian Embassies and Diaspora, etc.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## International SME Convention 2023

**Why in news:** 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of ISC is going to be organized jointly by the Ministry of MSME & Ministry of External Affairs, India SME Forum, along with Govt. of Madhya Pradesh as a Key State Partner and Govt. of Uttar Pradesh as Associate State Partner.

1. This year ISC, 2023 is expecting the participation of 1500+ SMEs with the main focus areas being India's major four Sunrise Sectors, which are Cleantech & Green Energy, Manufacturing, Services Sector and Agro food Processing & Agri Implements sector.
2. There will be several panel discussions that will aim to provide actionable insights and recommendations for building sustainable ecosystems for MSMEs and Plugging SMEs into Global Value Chains, by building strategic partnerships, leveraging digital platforms, focusing on innovation, complying with standards and regulations, and accessing finance.
3. The ISC 2023 has partnered with the International Network for SMEs (INSME) and the World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (WUSME) as international partners. TATA AIA is the insurance partner for the convention, which underscores the importance of risk management for SMEs.





4. The sessions will provide a platform for SMEs to network, share ideas, and explore business opportunities.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Finland Launches Worlds First Battery Made Out Of Sand

**Why in news:** Researchers from Finland have erected the first completely functional "sand battery" in the world, which can store green power for months at a time.



1. In Finland, the first completely functional sand battery has now been installed. It is a technology that could be used to keep homes warm throughout the winter because it can store sustainably generated heat for extended periods of time.
2. It functions by heating 100 tonnes of sand using electricity produced by solar or wind energy.
3. Polar Night Energy, a company that calls itself an "innovator of seasonal heat storage," created the battery.
4. Sand or sand-like materials are used as the store medium in a high-temperature thermal energy storage system known as a "sand battery." Sand acts as a heat reservoir for energy. Its primary function is to serve as a high-power and high-capacity energy storage system for extra wind and solar energy.
5. The energy is converted into heat, which can be utilised to heat buildings and other uses.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## Global conference on digital health

**Why in news:** The conclave will bring together global leaders and health development partners, health policymakers, digital health innovators and influencers, academia and other stakeholders.



1. Leveraging India's G20 presidency, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in association with the World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Regional office is organizing a two-day Global Conference on Digital Health – 'Taking Universal Health Coverage to the last citizen' on March 20-21 in New Delhi.
2. The objective of the Global Conference on Digital Health is to shift the focus from strategy to achieving a global consensus on a Plan of Action that produces impactful results on the ground in the member countries, through a set of digital



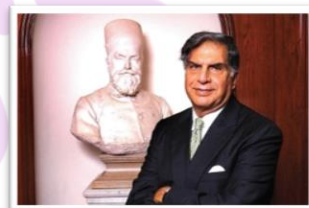
health initiatives aiming to accelerate the progress towards universal health coverage.

3. The conference will also focus on finding ways to invest, develop and share digital technologies following principles of transparency, accessibility, scalability, replicability, interoperability, privacy, security, and confidentiality.
4. This will help in establishing strategic enablers and technology enablers required for implementing digital health at population scale.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Indian Industrialist Shri Ratan Tata appointed in 'Order of Australia' for distinguished service

**Why in news:** Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), has been based in Australia since 1998, and employs the largest number of Australians of any Indian company, with 17,000 staff and associates.



1. For distinguished service to the Australia-India bilateral relationship, particularly to trade, investment, and philanthropy, Indian industrialist and philanthropist Ratan Tata has been appointed as an Honorary Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO).
2. Notably, Ratan Tata has been a strong and influential advocate for deeper ties between Australia and India, including advocating for the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, which was finalised in 2022, and supporting visiting business and government leaders in India.
3. The famous business tycoon has received numerous international awards and commendations for his contributions to business, industry, engineering, leadership, culture, and peace, including a Doctor of Business honoris causa from the University of New South Wales.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## World Happiness Report 2023

**Why in news:** India has been ranked at the 126th place among 146 countries in the recently released World Happiness Report.

1. It is an annual publication of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).



2. Finland has been named the happiest country in the world for the sixth consecutive year.
3. It is based on global survey data from people in more than 150 countries. It is based on people's own assessment of their happiness, as well as economic and social data.
4. The report considers six key factors: social support, income, health, freedom, generosity, and absence of corruption.
5. It assigns a happiness score based on an average of data over a three-year period.
6. India is ranked 126, ten places higher than its ranking of 136 in 2022. It remains below most neighboring countries, including Pakistan (108) and Sri Lanka (112).

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)

**Why in news:** Recently, an Inter-Ministerial delegation from India led by the Department of Commerce participated in the second Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) negotiating round in Bali, Indonesia from March 13-19, 2023.



1. Negotiators from 13 other countries, including, the United States, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam also participated in the Bali negotiating round.
2. During the Bali Round, discussions covered all the four pillars of the IPEF: Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chains (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Taxation & Anticorruption) - (Pillar IV). India participated in the discussions related to Pillars II to IV.
3. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) is an economic initiative launched by United States President Joe Biden on May 23, 2022.
4. IPEF Partners have committed to an aggressive negotiating schedule throughout 2023 with the objective of realizing concrete benefits to enhance a shared vision for economic competitiveness and prosperity in their respective economies.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## QS Rankings: IIT Delhi enters list of top 50 institutions

**Why in news:** The Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi has entered the list of top 50 institutions for engineering in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023.



1. As many as 44 programmes offered by Indian higher education institutions in different disciplines have figured in the top 100 globally. Last year, 35 Indian programmes made it to the top 100
2. The most represented Indian universities in this edition of the rankings are the University of Delhi (27 entries), IIT-Bombay (25 entries) and IIT-Kharagpur (23 entries).
3. IIT-Bombay has featured among the world's top 100 in mathematics by clinching the 92nd spot, up by 25 places, and IIT-Kanpur ranks among the world's top 100 in engineering-electrical electronic (87th, up by 21 places) and in computer science information systems (96th, up by 13 places).
4. The thirteen edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject has ranked 66 Indian universities, cumulatively achieving 355 entries, a 18.7 per cent increase compared to last year (299).
5. Five components were used to rank universities including academic reputation, employer reputation research citations per paper, H-index, and international research network. The h-index is a way of measuring both the productivity and impact of the published work of a scientist or scholar.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## World's Top 10 Billionaires list released by Hurun research platform

**Why in news:** According to the recently released Hurun Global Rich List, Mukesh Ambani, the Chairman of Reliance Industries and the richest man in Asia, is the only Indian to be ranked among the top 10 billionaires.



1. The report, which was compiled by research platform Hurun in collaboration with real estate group M3M, is titled 'The 2023 M3M Hurun Global Rich List'.
2. The Hurun Global Rich List 2023 ranked 3,112 billionaires, down from 3,384 last year, from 2,356 companies and 69 countries. The number of billionaires dropped by 8% and their total wealth dropped by 10% compared with last year.



3. In terms of number of billionaires, India ranks third in the 2023 M3M Hurun Global Rich List. In terms of number of billionaires, China is almost 5 times bigger than India.
4. The first position in the ranking is held by Elon Musk with a wealth of \$205 billion followed by Jeff Bezos at \$188 billion.
5. Despite experiencing a 20 percent decline in his wealth, Ambani still managed to secure the ninth position globally, with a net worth of \$82 billion.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Egypt joins BRICS bank as new member

**Why in news:** Egypt, officially became a member of BRICS' New Development Bank (NDB) which includes India, Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa as member countries. Cairo completed all the necessary procedures to become an eligible member on February 20, 2023.



1. The New Development Bank was set up by BRICS nations on the basis of the intergovernmental agreement signed at the sixth BRICS summit in Fortaleza in July 2014.
2. Earlier in September, the NDB board also approved similar procedures for United Arab Emirates (UAE), Uruguay, and Bangladesh. All three countries went on to become members of the bank.
3. The vision of the bank is to evolve into a leading provider of solutions for infrastructure and sustainable development for emerging market economies and developing countries.
4. The bank previously received an “AA+” international credit rating from Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings, allowing it to effectively attract long-term funding on international and local capital markets.
5. Since its establishment, the bank has approved numerous projects. More than 90 of them totalled \$32 billion and covered critical areas such as transportation, urban construction, water, clean energy, and digital and social infrastructure.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)





## G20 RIIG conference to deliberate on building a sustainable and circular bio-economy

**Why in news:** The two-day G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) Conference, will deliberate on ways towards building a sustainable and circular bio-economy.



1. The G20 RIIG Conference provided a platform for experts, policymakers, and industry leaders to discuss various aspects of a sustainable and circular bio-economy. Topics covered will include:
  - Innovation and Technology: Exploring the latest technological developments and innovations that can support a sustainable and circular bio-economy.
  - Sustainable Production and Consumption: Discussing ways to promote sustainable and circular production and consumption patterns.
  - Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry: Examining the role of sustainable agriculture and forestry in a circular bio-economy, including the use of agroforestry and sustainable land management practices.
  - Waste Management and Recycling: Exploring the role of waste management and recycling in a circular bio-economy and ways to promote more efficient and effective waste management practices.
  - Circular Business Models: Discussing the development of circular business models that can drive sustainable and regenerative economic growth.
2. The G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) Conference will be coordinated by the department of Biotechnology of the Union Ministry of Science and Technology
3. A bio-economy is an economic system that uses renewable biological resources, such as crops, forests, and fisheries, to produce food, energy, and materials.
4. A sustainable and circular bio-economy is one that ensures the long-term sustainability of these resources by minimizing waste and maximizing their value through efficient use and reuse. It involves transitioning away from fossil fuels and non-renewable resources and towards a more sustainable and regenerative economic model.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## More than quarter of world's population has no safe drinking water: UNESCO

**Why in news:** More than a quarter, 26 per cent of the world's population, comprising approximately 2 billion people, do not have safe drinking water and 3.6 billion or 46 per cent lack access to safely managed sanitation, according to the report, published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water released at the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York.



1. The global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to double from 930 million in 2016 to 1.7-2.4 billion people in 2050.
2. The growing incidence of extreme and prolonged droughts is also stressing ecosystems, with dire consequences for both plant and animal species, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report said.
3. As per the report, between two and three billion people experience water shortages for at least one month per year, posing severe risks to livelihoods, notably through food security and access to electricity.
4. The United Nations World Water Development Report is published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water and its production is coordinated by the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme. The report gives insight into the main trends concerning the state, use and management of freshwater and sanitation, based on work by Members and Partners of UN-Water. (ANI)

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## North Korea tests new nuclear-capable underwater drone

**Why in news:** The drone, dubbed “Haeil” or Tsunami, is designed to create massive radioactive waves through submarine explosions. North Korean state news agency KCNA claims that the drone can be deployed at any coast and port or towed by a surface ship for operation. The country's leader, Kim Jong-un, was reportedly “greatly satisfied” after the drone was successfully tested.



1. The drone can be deployed from the coast or towed by surface ships and is built to “stealthily infiltrate into operational waters and make a super-scale radioactive tsunami through an underwater explosion” that would destroy naval strike groups and ports.



2. The nuclear tsunami drone was launched earlier this week off the coast of Riwon County in South Hamgyong Province.
3. It reportedly cruised underwater for 59 hours at a depth of 80 to 150 metres before detonating at the target location. North Korea also launched four strategic cruise missiles affixed with mock nuclear warheads.
4. It is not confirmed whether North Korea has developed miniature versions of nuclear warheads that can be fitted on smaller weapons like drones. Additionally, there is no indication that the drones are deployment-ready.
5. Despite these uncertainties, experts have warned against downplaying the rising nuclear threat emanating from Pyongyang.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## Earth Hour

**Why in news:** “Earth Hour” encourages people to switch off all lights for an hour, from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm local time to promote awareness of climate change challenges and energy conservation.



1. It is a global grassroots movement uniting people to take action on environmental issues and protect the planet. It is organized by World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
2. It was started by WWF and partners as a symbolic lights-out event in Sydney in 2007.
3. It takes place on the last Saturday of March every year.
4. This symbolic act, known as the ‘lights off’ moment, unites people worldwide in a show of support for the planet and serves as a reminder of the environmental issues facing us.
5. WWF - It is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1961 in Morges, Switzerland, to protect endangered species of wildlife and preserve natural habitats.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## Marburg Virus Disease

**Why in news:** Tanzania has announced its first outbreak of the deadly Marburg virus disease (MVD). This was after five people died and three others were infected with the virus in Tanzania's north-west Kagera region.



1. Marburg, like Ebola, is a filovirus; and both diseases are clinically similar. After the onset of symptoms, which can begin anytime between two to 21 days, MVD can manifest itself in the form of high fever, muscle aches and severe headache.
2. Rousettus fruit bats are considered the natural hosts for the Marburg virus. However, as per WHO, African green monkeys imported from Uganda were the source of the first human infection.
3. The disease has an average fatality rate of around 50%. However, it can be as low as 24% or as high as 88% depending on virus strain and case management. It is a zoonotic virus that is initially transmitted from animals to humans.
4. Marburg spreads through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with infected people's blood, secretions, organs, or other body fluids.
5. There is no approved antiviral treatment or vaccine for MVD as of now. It can be managed with supportive care.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Chief Science Advisers of the G20 Countries to Gather at Ramnagar, Uttarakhand, to Discuss Issues of Mutual Interest on S&T

**Why in news:** CSAR is a one-of-a-kind programme that is being launched for the first time. Priorities listed are universal in nature and align with India's G20 concept of One Earth, One Family, One Future.



1. G20-CSAR is a government-to-government level initiative conceptualised under the India's G20-Presidency.
2. The motivation of this initiative is to bring together the Chief Science Advisers and their equivalents of G20 member countries, as well as the invited countries, to deliberate upon and develop collaborative frameworks for some of the common pressing global science and technology (S&T) policy issues. This initiative will also help in establishing an effective and coherent global science advice mechanism.



3. Chief Scientific Advisers of various countries, including America and Japan, will participate in this meeting. Foreign delegations from more than 100 countries are expected to participate in the three-day event.
4. Underlining the post-pandemic focus during India's G20 Presidency, the discussions at G20 CSAR Meeting will emphasize on the following themes:
  - Opportunities in One Health for better disease control and pandemic preparedness
  - Synergizing global efforts to expand the access to scholarly scientific knowledge
  - Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in Science and Technology (S&T)
  - An institutional mechanism for inclusive, continuous, and action-oriented Global S&T Policy Dialogue

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## India to host SCO-National Security Advisors meeting today; Pakistan, China likely to join virtually

**Why in news:** The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001 and it comprises eight member states, namely, India, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.



1. India, as the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), is set to host a meeting of National Security Advisors (NSA) and top officials in New Delhi.
2. In 2022, India assumed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Chairship for 2023.
3. India became a full member of SCO on June 9 in 2017. There are four Observer States viz Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia and six dialogue partners - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey.
4. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a major regional powerhouse that was established over two decades ago with the aim of promoting economic, political, and military cooperation among its member nations. The eight-member countries of SCO represent around 42 per cent of the world's total population and 25 per cent of the global GDP.





5. While the SCO summit is set to take place in Goa this summer, India is holding a host of events leading up to it. Notably, the next important SCO meeting will be the defence ministers' meeting scheduled to be held in Delhi from April 27-29.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

### Scientists Created a New Recyclable Plastic Not Made From Crude Oil

**Why in news:** In their paper, Allison Christy and Scott Phillips describe making a new type of plastic based on poly(ethyl cyanoacrylate) or PECA, which is prepared from the monomer used to make Super Glue.



1. Like all plastic polymers, the new product is formed through a process of polymerization where single, repeating monomer units are strung together in a chemical reaction to make one long chain.
2. The new recyclable plastic is based on Poly(ethyl cyanoacrylate) or PECA, which is prepared from the monomer used to make Super Glue.
3. It has comparable properties to existing plastics and is stable in hot, humid environments. The long polymer chains of the PECA plastic can be thermally 'cracked' at temperatures of 210 °C and the resulting monomers distilled into a clean product to use again.
4. Ethyl cyanoacrylate is a highly reactive monomer that has been used nearly exclusively to make Super Glue and related fast-setting adhesives. It is produced on the ton scale from methanol, chloroacetic acid, and sodium cyanide, which themselves are sourced from hydrogen, nitrogen, methane, carbon monoxide, chlorine, and sodium hydroxide.
5. Polymerization - It is a process in which relatively small molecules called monomers combine chemically to produce a very large chainlike or network molecule, called a polymer.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## Important News: National

### Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC) portal

**Why in news** : MeitY launched the Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC) portal under the IT Rules, 2021.

1. GAC was one of the provisions in the recently amended Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
2. GAC will look into user complaints regarding unsatisfactory grievance redressal by social media intermediaries.
3. Three such bodies have been constituted ; Each GAC will comprise three government-appointed, full-time members, including a chairperson.
4. Any user aggrieved by a decision of a platform's Grievance Officer can appeal to the GAC within 30 days of the receipt of communication from the Grievance Officer.
5. The Committee has to dispose of the appeals within 15 days of receiving them.
6. GAC's decisions will be binding on the intermediary
7. GAC portal will be a virtual Digital platform that will operate only online and digitally — wherein the entire appeal process, from the filing of the appeal to the decision thereof, shall be conducted digitally .

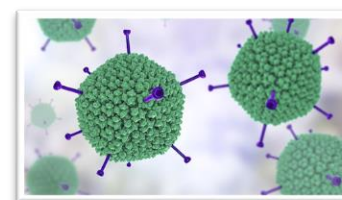
(SOURCE – THE PRINT )



### Adenovirus

**Why in news** : West Bengal is in the grip of an unprecedented adenovirus outbreak.

1. Adenoviruses are medium-sized, non-enveloped (without an outer lipid bilayer) viruses with an icosahedral nucleocapsid containing a double-stranded DNA genome.
2. It is highly contagious , especially in close-contact settings, such as childcare centres, schools, hospitals, and summer camps.
3. It can spread via respiratory droplets – making it an air borne disease ; it can also spread via the faecal route.
4. Symptoms: common cold or flu-like symptoms, fever, sore throat , acute bronchitis , pneumonia, conjunctivitis, gastroenteritis.
5. There is no specific treatment for an adenovirus infection — only supportive care is available.



(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES )



**Kerala temple deploys life-size 'robotic elephant' for festival**

**Why in news:** The life-size model of elephant costing Rs 5 lakh was donated by PETA India.



1. The 11-foot-tall 'robotic elephant', weighing 800 kg and made of an iron frame and rubber coating, was donated to Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple in Thrissur district by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India.
2. Notably, the 'elephant' has been named 'Irinjadappilly Raman' and a 'Nadayiruthal' ceremony (a ritual offering elephants to the deity in Kerala temples) was also conducted.
3. The elephant model, fitted with five powerful electric motors, will help the temple conduct ceremonies safely and cruelty-free, thereby supporting the call for rehabilitation of captive elephants.
4. Facts :
  - a. Karnataka has the highest number of elephants followed by Assam and Kerala.
  - b. Conservation Status:
    - i. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species:
      - African Forest Elephant- Critically Endangered
      - African Savanna Elephant- Endangered
      - Asian Elephant- Endangered
    - ii. Convention of the Migratory species (CMS): Appendix I
    - iii. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I Project
  - c. Govt Initiatives :
    - i. Project Elephant , 1991-92 : Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Ministry of Environment and Forests
    - ii. Elephant Reserves : notified by State Governments
    - iii. Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme - Mandated by Conference of Parties (COP) resolution of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )



## Zero Discrimination Day

**Why in news:** Zero Discrimination Day is observed every year on 1 March to create awareness among people about their rights to live an equal and productive life without any kind of discrimination.



1. This year the theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2023 is "Save lives: Decriminalise".
2. Under this year's theme UNAIDS is highlighting how the decriminalisation of key populations and people living with HIV saves lives and helps advance the end of the AIDS pandemic.
3. According to the UNAIDS, "Criminalisation drives discrimination and structural inequalities. It robs people of the prospect of healthy and fulfilling lives and it holds back the end of AIDS. We must end criminalisation to save lives."

(SOURCE – THE QUINT )

## World Civil Defence day

**Why in news :** On March 1, World Civil Defence Day is observed to raise awareness about the significance of civil defence measures in preventing accidents, natural disasters, and other emergencies from affecting people and their property.



1. World Civil Defence Day is observed to promote the value of being prepared for emergencies and to increase public awareness of civil defence and emergency management
2. Civil defence or civil protection is an effort to protect a state's citizens – typically non-combatants from both man-made and natural disasters. Mitigation, response, emergency evacuation, and recovery are the guiding principles of emergency operations.
3. In order to promote and coordinate civil defence efforts globally, the United Nations created the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) in 1950.
4. The theme of World Civil Defence Day 2023 is "unifying the world's leading industry specialists for the safety and security of future generations".

(SOURCE – BUISNESS STANDARD )

## Centre unveils 'VAIBHAV Fellowship' for NRI researchers



**Why in news :** Unveiling 'VAIBHAV Fellowship', Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said it aims to improve the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions.



1. The government on Tuesday unveiled a fellowship to bring Indian-origin researchers to higher educational institutions in the country for a maximum period of two months per year.
2. The fellowship offers NRI researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
3. The duration of the fellowship is three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
4. Researchers from institutions featuring in the top 500 QS World University Rankings will be eligible for the fellowship.
5. It will help in improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world via mobility of faculty/researchers from overseas institutions to India.

(SOURCE – THE ECONOMIC TIMES )

## Govt plans 10 'Clean Plant Centres' to boost fruit crop production

**Why in news :** In order to increase domestic production, the Center plans to establish 10 "Clean Plant Centers" as the demand for fruits like apple, avocado and blueberry has increased over time.



1. These centers will be set up under the 'Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program', which was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2023-24.
2. The Program will be launched with an outlay of 2,200 crores (in the next 7 years till 2030) to boost availability of disease-free, quality planting material for high value horticultural crops.
3. Program aims -
  - Enhance the yield of horticulture crops,
  - Disseminate and adopt climate resilient varieties,
  - Protect the ecosystem through proactive virus and disease control measures.





4. The programme will be handled by the National Horticulture Board (NHB) which in turn will set up Clean Plant Centers across the country and ensure the global competitiveness of the Indian horticulture sector.
5. The 10 centres will be established for fruit crops like apple, walnut, almond, grapes, mango, pomegranate, etc., and will be fully funded by the Centre.
6. The centres will be implemented in a PPP mode in partnership with research organisations, agriculture universities and private sector partners.
7. The Clean Plant Centres will provide services of disease diagnostic, therapeutics, multiplying of plants and generation of mother plants.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## Indian States'Electricity Transition (SET) Report

**Why in news:** Indian States'Electricity Transition (SET) Report was released by Institute For Energy Economics And Financial Analysis (IEEFA).



1. **The report analysed 16 states, which together account for 90% of India's annual power requirement.**
2. The analysis has tracked four dimensions :
  - Policies & Political Commitment
  - Readiness of Power Ecosystem
  - Performance of Power Ecosystem
  - Decarbonisation
3. Karnataka and Gujarat have made maximum progress towards clean electricity transition. Whereas, states like West Bengal, Bihar and UP are lagging far behind in the field.
4. The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) is a U.S. non-profit corporation.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS )

## Karnataka to get India's 1st Marina to promote coastal tourism

**Why in news:** The Karnataka government confirmed the construction of the country's first marina at Byndoor in Udupi district.



1. Marina is a specially designed place of pleasure for small boats and yachts
2. This project has been initiated to promote coastal tourism in the state.



3. The beach in Byndoor is called Someshwara beach. The place has several tourist attractions such as Koosalli waterfalls, Kshitija Nesara Dharma, Sri Seneshwara Temple, butterfly camp, etc.
4. Karnataka is blessed with nature's bounty. It has a 350-km coastal area, 10 different weather zones, 400-km of the Western Ghats, a rich biodiversity with sunshine for 300 days, and several rivers.

(SOURCE – LIVE MINT)

## Tali gets road connectivity first time

**Why in news :** The last administrative centre and the only unconnected Assembly constituency of Arunachal Pradesh — Tali — has been connected by road, ending years of wait by the locals.



1. Tali was the only remote constituency out of the 60 constituencies in Arunachal Pradesh which remained disconnected from the rest of the state due to lack of approach roads.
2. Connectivity Projects relevant for North East –
  - Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project (Myanmar) - to develop water connectivity.
  - Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Corridor.
  - India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.
  - Bharatmala Pariyojana (BMP), for road infrastructure.
  - Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN to make flying more affordable.
  - Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East (PM-DevINE):
    - announced in Union Budget 2022-23
    - will fund infrastructure in the spirit of PM Gati Shakti, and social development projects based on felt needs of the North-East.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## India's academic freedom declined strongly since 2013: Report

**Why in news:** India among populous countries like China, the United States that fared poorly in the latest academic freedom index.



1. The Academic Freedom Index report provides an overview of academic freedom in 179 countries by assessing five indicators.
2. It is based on assessments by more than 2,197 country experts from around the world.
3. The indicators include freedom to research and teach; freedom of academic exchange and dissemination; institutional autonomy of universities; campus integrity; and the freedom of academic and cultural expression.
4. On a scale of 0 (low) to 1 (high), India scored 0.38, lower than Pakistan's 0.43 and the United States' 0.79.
5. A lack of a legal framework to protect academic freedom has enabled attacks on academic freedom under the ruling government,
6. India scored low in campus integrity, which measures the extent to which campuses are free from politically motivated surveillance or security infringements. The country also fared poorly in institutional autonomy and academic and cultural expression related to political issues.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Yuva Utsava-India@2047

**Why in news:** The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports through its premier Youth organization Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), is organizing "YUVA UTSAV-India @2047" program in all districts across the country.



1. This pan India celebration of Yuva Shakti follows a 3-tier format, beginning with a one-day District Level Yuva Utsav to be held from March to June 2023. The first phase of the program is scheduled to be held in 150 districts, to be held during the period – 4th March to 31st March 2023 in the current financial year.
2. The programs in the first phase are being hosted by schools and colleges of the districts, with broad based participants/footfall from neighboring educational institutions apart from the Youth Volunteers and Members of Youth Club affiliated with NYKS.
3. The winners of the District Level will participate at the State level Yuva Utsav which is a 2-day program scheduled to be held during August to September 2023 at State Capitals. The winners of all the State level programs shall participate at the National Level Yuva Utsav scheduled to be held in 3rd/4th week of October, 2023 at Delhi.



4. Youth in the age group of 15 to 29 years are eligible to participate in the programs/competitions at District, State and National Levels with winners at each stage proceeding to the next level.
5. The theme for the Yuva Utsav will be Panch Pran :
  - Goal of developed India,
  - To remove any trace of slavery or colonial mindset,
  - Take pride in our heritage and legacy,
  - Unity and solidarity, and
  - Sense of duty among citizens.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## ‘SWAYATT’ proving a huge success, promoting start-ups on GeM

**Why in news:** GeM encourages social and financial inclusion by registering more than 8.5 lakh Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) on GeM portal and MSEs on GeM secure business worth over Rs. 1.87 lakh crore spread across 68 lakh+ orders.



1. The initiative to promote “Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage Through eTransactions” (SWAYATT) on GeM was first launched in February 2019.
2. The intent of SWAYATT 2019 was to promote inclusiveness of various categories of sellers and service providers on the portal, by taking proactive steps to facilitate their training and registrations of such specific category of manufacturers and sellers, develop women entrepreneurship and encourage participation of MSME sector and Start-ups in public procurement.
3. The event was attended by representatives from Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA-Bharat), National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), and Small Farmers Agri Consortium (SFAC), Sellers representing Start up space, FPOs, women entrepreneurs and youth along with senior officials of the GeM.
4. Government e Marketplace (GeM) - GeM is a Section 8 company setup under the administrative control of the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, for procurement of goods and services by Central Ministries, State Departments, PSEs and Autonomous Bodies. Social inclusion is a core value at GeM and we are focused on increasing participation from under-served sellers who face challenges in public procurement.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)



## Indo-France joint exercise at Pangode military station

**Why in news:** The exercise, on March 7 and 8, will have the largest contingent fielded by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army unit.



1. The maiden joint military exercise, FRINJEX-23, between the Indian Army and French Army will be conducted at the Pangode military station here on March 7 and 8.
2. It is for the first time that both countries are engaging in this format with each contingent comprising a Company Group. The French contingent is part of the French Marine Regiment on board DIXMUDE mission.
3. The exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination, and cooperation between both forces at tactical the level. The exercise will have the largest contingent fielded by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army unit and the French 6th light armoured brigade.
4. The theme for the exercise is based on "Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in a Contested Environment".
5. The joint exercise will consolidate the Indo-France strategic partnership at the tactical level and will build a strong foundation for both the nations to collaborate for peace and harmony.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## President Murmu to launch 'Catch the Rain-2023' campaign on March 4

**Why in news:** The theme of this year's campaign will be 'Source Sustainability for Drinking Water'.



6. President Droupadi Murmu will launch the 'Catch the Rain-2023' on March 4, 2023 as part of efforts to turn conservation of water into a mass campaign in the run-up to the monsoon season.
7. Recognising the roles of the women in water conservation and sanitation, the President conferred the 'Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023', under various categories of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission. The awards were given to acknowledge the leadership and contribution of women of grassroots level in the journey towards making of a Swachh Sujal Bharat.
8. She also launched a video on 'Jal Shakti se Nari Shakti' and a commemorative stamp.





9. The President released 'Swachh Sujal Shakti Ki Abhivyakti', which is a compendium of case stories from Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## 5<sup>th</sup> Jan Aushadhi Diwas

**Why in news:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in collaboration with Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI), the implementing agency of PMBJP and States and Union Territories is celebrating 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas 2023 under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP).



1. The 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas is organized across India based on the theme “Jan Aushadhi – Sasti bhi Acchi bhi”.
2. The programme kick started with Jan Aushadhi Jan Chetna Abhiyan on 1st March across the country.
3. The second day of the celebration stands as Jan Aushadhi Pratigya Yatra. Many such Pad Yatras carried out with the message of quality and affordable medicines.
4. The Government has set a target to increase the number of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJKs) to 10,000 by the end of December 2023.
5. Medicines available under PMBJP are priced 50%-90% less than that of branded prices. The objective is to make available quality medicines, consumables and surgical items at affordable prices for all and reduce out of pocket expenditure of consumers/patients.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## New India Assurance becomes second company to offer surety bonds

**Why in news:** The regulator IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) had permitted general insurers to issue surety insurance bonds in April 2022.



1. Nitin Gadkari had launched the country's first surety bond insurance for infrastructure projects by the private sector player Bajaj Allianz.
2. A surety bond is a legally binding contract entered into by three parties—the principal, the obligee, and the surety.



3. The obligee, usually a government entity, requires the principal, typically a business owner or contractor, to obtain a surety bond as a guarantee against future work performance.
4. Surety bonds are mainly aimed at infrastructure development, mainly to reduce indirect cost for suppliers and work-contractors thereby diversifying their options and acting as a substitute for bank guarantee.
5. Surety bond is provided by the insurance company on behalf of the contractor to the entity which is awarding the project. Surety bonds protect the beneficiary against acts or events that impair the underlying obligations of the principal. They guarantee the performance of a variety of obligations, from construction or service contracts to licensing and commercial undertakings.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## On the occasion of International Women's day, Union Health Ministry organises Mega walkathon event “WalkforHealth”

**Why in news:** Cyclathon - cycling event are also being organised under the theme of 'Healthy Women Healthy India' at district headquarters across the country.



1. The event “Walk for Health” was also organised in Delhi to promote physical fitness and wellbeing. The event started from Vijay Chowk via Kartavya Path and passed through India Gate to reach Nirman Bhawan.
2. Physical inactivity is one of the major risk factors for development of NCDs. The same is also reflected during the National NCD Monitoring Survey (NNMS) (2017-18) that 41.3% Indians are physically inactive.
3. The health benefits of physical activity is not only related to lower risk of NCDs including cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer etc. but also it has positive effects on mental health, delays the onset of dementia, and also promote wellbeing.
4. Earlier, in the month of February 2023, a similar cycling event was organised at all 1.5 lakhs Ayushman Bharat- Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWC) across all States/ UTs under the theme of 'Swastha Mann, Sawastha Ghar' to commemorate the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.
5. International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## India to launch global alliance for big cats, invest \$100 million

**Why in news:** India has proposed launching a mega global coalition under its leadership to protect the big cats and has pledged support of \$100 million (over Rs 800 crore) in guaranteed funding over five years.



1. The government has proposed to set up International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). It will focus on the conservation and conservation of the seven big cats: tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, puma, jaguar and chive.
2. Membership in the alliance is open to 97 “range” countries that have natural habitats for these big cats and other countries of interest, international organizations, etc.
3. The alliance’s mission is to provide a platform for disseminating information on “standardized practices, capacity building, resource pooling, research and development, awareness generation” on big cat conservation.
4. The IBCA’s governance structure will comprise –
  - General Assembly consisting of all member countries,
  - A council of at least seven but not more than 15 member countries elected by the General Assembly for a term of 5 years, and
  - A Secretariat.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## India Ranks 108th on Electoral Democracy Index 2023

**Why in news:** India ranks below countries such as Tanzania, Bolivia, Mexico, Singapore and even Nigeria, in the V-Dem report 2023.



1. India has now been ranked at the 108th spot globally for electoral democracy. Norway, on the other hand, is ranked at 1<sup>st</sup> position.
2. The report titled Defiance in the Face of Autocratization has further asserted that “advances in global levels of democracy made over the last 35 years have been wiped out.”
3. The report indicates that today there are more closed autocracies than liberal democracies and only 13% of the world’s humans (approximately one billion people) live in liberal democracies.



4. The report classifies countries into four regime types based on their score in the Liberal Democratic Index (LDI).
5. The LDI captures both liberal (individual and minority rights) and electoral aspects (free and fair elections) of a democracy based on 71 indicators that make up the Liberal Component Index (LCI) and the Electoral Democracy Index (EDI).
  - Liberal Democracy,
  - Electoral Democracy,
  - Electoral Autocracy, and
  - Closed Autocracy.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## RBI launches mission to make every citizen a user of digital payment

**Why in news:** As many as 58% of some 90,000 respondents in an RBI survey said they were not using digital payments; a large chunk, in fact, was not even aware of them.



1. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das launched a mission -- "Har Payment Digital" – with the aim of making every citizen in the country a user of digital payments as part of Digital Payments Awareness Week (DPAW) 2023.
2. The theme of the awareness week is "Adopt digital payments and Teach others also".
3. The central bank will launch "Har Payment Digital" (HPD) mission that would run till the period of Vision 2025, with an intention to convert the non-users into users of digital payments. Vision 2025 has its theme as "E-Payments for Everyone, Everywhere and Everytime".
4. Through the campaign, the users of digital payments will be encouraged to teach non-users about the ease, safety and convenience of digital payments to fulfil the mission of every citizen a digital payments user.
5. Among various other things, RBI regional offices will conduct "Jan Bhagidari" or mass scale people involvement programmes to enhance awareness on a large scale about the mission and the theme of the campaign and to encourage adoption of digital payments in the process.
6. Further, payment system operators will adopt 75 villages across the country to convert them into digital payment enabled villages.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)





## PM Modi, Australian PM Anthony Albanese watch India-Australia Test match

**Why in news:** The India-Australia Test match is being played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Gujarat's Motera.



1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese are attending the first day of the India-Australia Test in Ahmedabad at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Motera.
2. Modi and Albanese handed over Test caps to their respective team captains Rohit Sharma and Steve Smith as the match started.
3. Australia and India had finalised the Australia-India Education Qualification Recognition Mechanism.
4. He made the announcement that Australia's Deakin University would set up an international campus at GIFT City in Gandhinagar. He also announced the launch of a new scholarship — Maitri — for Indian students to study in Australia for up to four years.
5. The two PMs also visited the 'Hall of Fame museum at the Narendra Modi stadium.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Savlon Swasth India announces Sachin Tendulkar as the World's First 'Hand Ambassador' to inspire billions to wash hands

**Why in news:** Conceptualized by Ogilvy India, the campaign features a series of films that take an unexpected route by featuring Sachin Tendulkar's Hand as their chief protagonist - bringing the importance of hand hygiene to everyone's notice and reminding people in his inimitable style, to remember to wash their hands.



1. Savlon Swasth India Mission unveiled the World's first 'Hand Ambassador' with one of the greatest cricketers of all time, Sachin Tendulkar.
2. The Savlon Swasth India Mission programme by ITC, since its inception in 2016, has covered 25000 schools, reaching out to over 8 million children with its innovative outreach. The ongoing program has delivered measurable success in inculcating hand hygiene habits in primary school children.
3. With innovation in design and communication at its core, Savlon Swasth India Mission has initiated various initiatives over the years like the Savlon Healthy Hands Chalk Sticks, Savlon ID Guard and the recent #NoHandUnwashed campaign to educate and encourage good hygiene habits.





- Preventable infections create a huge economic burden on our country and regular handwashing is one of the simplest, most effective ways to stop the spread of diseases.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## Centre launches MSME Competitive (LEAN) scheme

**Why in news:** Under the scheme, MSMEs will implement LEAN manufacturing tools like 5S, Kaizen, KANBAN, visual workplace, and Poka Yoka under the able guidance of trained and competent LEAN consultants to attain LEAN levels like basic, intermediate and advanced.



- This Scheme is an extensive drive to create awareness amongst MSMEs about LEAN Manufacturing practices and motivate and incentivize them to attain LEAN levels while also encouraging them to become MSME Champions.
- Under the scheme, MSMEs will implement LEAN manufacturing tools like 5S, Kaizen, KANBAN, Visual workplace, Poka Yoka etc under the able guidance of trained and competent
- LEAN Consultants to attain LEAN levels like Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. Through the LEAN journey, MSMEs can reduce wastages substantially, increase productivity, improve quality, work safely, expanding their markets, and finally becoming competitive and profitable.
- The scheme will not only attempt to improve quality, productivity and performance, but also the capability to change the mindset of manufacturers.
- To support MSMEs, the government will contribute 90% of implementation cost for handholding and consultancy fees. There will be an additional contribution of 5% for the MSMEs which are part of SFURTI clusters, owned by women/SC/ST and located in NER.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches Swachhotsav under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0

**Why in news:** The campaign aims to recognize and celebrate the transition from women in sanitation to women-led sanitation.

- Swachhotsav is a 3-week women-led swachhata



campaign, under the Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0. The Swachhata Yatra will kick-off on 10th March and will conclude on 30th March, which has been declared as International Day of Zero Waste by the United Nations General Assembly. Representatives of 34 States/UTs will be travelling to 24 States and UTs as part of the Yatra.

2. A series of events and activities will be organized across cities to celebrate women from all walks of life, who will provide leadership in making the mission of garbage free cities (GFC) a success.
3. At the launch, the first edition of Women Icons leading Sanitation & Waste Management (WINS) Challenge-2023 was also announced, recognizing high-impact women entrepreneurs or women-led enterprises working towards urban swachhata.
4. The Swachhotsav aims to increase women's participation in garbage collection and waste management. Today 49% of the waste pickers are women. However, they make 33% less money than the men in the field.
5. The urban solid municipal waste is to increase to 165 million tonnes by 2030. This means we will require more workforce in solid waste management. With the women taking lead here, India will tackle the issues around garbage effortlessly.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## First Edition of Women Icons Leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023 Launched By MoHUA

**Why in news:** India is now poised to make a transformational shift from 'Women in Swachhata' to 'Women led Swachhata'. The WINS Awards 2023 aim to recognize celebrate and disseminate inspiring and exemplary initiatives in urban sanitation and waste management by women led organizations and individual women.



1. To highlight the impact of women in sanitation and waste management, the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri announced the 'Women Icons Leading Swachhata' (WINS) Awards 2023 on 7th March 2023, on the eve of International Women's Day.
2. The applications are open from 8th March to 5th April 2023. Applications for the Awards are open to (i) Self-Help Groups (SHGs) (ii) Micro-enterprises, (iii) Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), (iv) Startups and (v) Individual Women Leaders/Swachhata champions.



3. Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) will evaluate entries & nominate up to 5 applicants to the State via the Swachhatam portal.
4. ULBs can organize public felicitation of their nominees as city winners. ULB wise nominations will be evaluated at the State level. Up to 3 entries in each category will be nominated by the State to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
5. State can organize public felicitation of nominees as State winners. State nominations will be evaluated at the national level on their innovativeness, impact, uniqueness, sustainability & replicability.
6. Applications will be considered under the thematic areas of (i) Management of Community/Public Toilets (ii) Septic Tanks Cleaning Services (iii) Treatment Facilities (Used Water/Septage) (iv) Municipal Water collection and /or Transportation (v) Operation of Material Recovery Facilities (vi) Waste to Wealth products (vii) Treatment Facilities (Solid Waste Management) (viii) IEC, Training, Capacity Building (ix) Technology and Intervention and (x) Others.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## National Startup Advisory Council

**Why in news:** Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal will chair the sixth meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) in New Delhi.



1. With the theme of India at 2047, the NSAC will deliberate upon matters important for the evolution of the Indian startup ecosystem and will cover important topics as Tech Landscape and the Way Ahead, Innovation in Logistics, Making India the Global Skill Market, Innovation Hub, Women Entrepreneurship, Capacity Building for Domestic Capital, Thematic Seed Funds, etc.
2. The government is expected to launch the Startup India Investor Connect portal, ideated by the NSAC and co-developed by DPIIT and SIDBI
3. The Central Government had constituted the NSAC to advise the Government on measures required to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country resulting in sustainable economic growth and large-scale employment opportunities.
4. Composition of the council
  - Chairman: Minister for Commerce & Industry.
  - Ex-officio Members: Nominees of the concerned Ministries/Departments /Organisations not below the rank of Joint Secretary.



## Daily Current Affairs

- Besides the ex-officio members, the council has non-official members, representing various stakeholders such as founders of successful startups, veterans who have grown and scaled companies in India
- Programs such as MAARG, National Mentorship Program, Incubator Capacity Development Program, Adoption of NavIC Grand Challenge, Startup Champions 2.0 etc are some of the programs ideated and incubated by NSAC.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

### Committee to oversee transfer and import of captive wild animals in India: Supreme Court

**Why in news :** The high-powered committee, led by a former judge, is tasked with the procurement or welfare of wild animals by any rescue or rehabilitation centre or zoo.

1. The Supreme Court has increased the jurisdiction and powers of a high-powered committee led by its former judge, Justice Deepak Verma, to conduct necessary checks and undertake fact-finding exercises concerning the import, transfer, procurement, rescue and rehabilitation of wild animals, including those in captivity, across India.
2. The ambit of the committee was earlier restricted to Tripura and Gujarat.
3. Other Members of the Committee:
  - Director General of Forest
  - Head of Project Elephant Division (MoEF)
  - Member Secretary (Central Zoo Authority of India)
  - Chief Wild Life Warden(s) of the State(s) to which the issue relates will be co-opted as Members.
4. Powers and Functions:
  - All State and Central authorities shall report the seizure of wild animals or abandonment of captive wild animals to the Committee.
  - The Committee shall be at liberty to recommend the transfer of ownership of captive animals or of seized wild animals to any willing rescue center or zoo for their immediate welfare, care, and rehabilitation.
  - The Committee is free to conduct necessary checks and to undertake fact-finding exercises in any pending or future complaint.

(SOURCE – THE PRINT )



## High Price Day Ahead Market (HP-DAM) and Surplus Power Portal (PUSHp)

**Why in news :** The Central Government has launched a High Price Day Ahead Market and Surplus Power Portal (PUSHp) - an initiative to ensure greater availability of power during the peak demand season. The portal will allow DISCOMs to indicate their surplus power, which can be requisitioned by those in need.



1. The Power Ministry has launched PUDhP portal that aggregates excess generation capacity on a national basis, offering Discoms a better view of the electricity supply and demand scenario.
2. PUSHp will ensure better utilization of power capacity at a reasonable rate and prevent power producers from charging exorbitant prices.
3. Ministry also launched the High Price Day Ahead Market (HP-DAM) segment on power exchanges, which will offer costly electricity produced by gas-based and imported coal-based (ICB) power plants in the country.
4. Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) launched trading in the HP-DAM segment. This will provide a new avenue to the high-variable-cost generators who may not have been able to participate in DAM due to the existing price ceiling of ₹12 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).
5. These generators will now be able to sell electricity on IEX with a price range of ₹0 per unit to ₹50.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES )

## CBI's 'Operation Trishul' nets 33 fugitives in one year

**Why in news:** Under its 'Operation Trishul,' the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has extradited 33 fugitives involved in various criminal activities in the past one year.

1. CBI uses Interpol's Star Global Focal Point Network and analysis of financial crime files to not only trace suspects but also the proceeds of financial crimes.
2. Also, recently, India has called upon G20 countries to adopt multilateral action for faster extradition of 'fugitive economic offenders'.



Who are 'fugitive economic offenders' (FEO)?

3. FEO is defined as an individual against whom a warrant of arrest in relation to a scheduled offence has been issued by any court in India and the value of the offence is at least Rs. 100 crore.





4. Fugitive economic offenders act, 2018 aims to seize the property of economic offenders who have fled the nation to avoid being prosecuted or who refuse to come back to face charges.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## Svaya Robotics develops 1st indigenous quadruped robot and exoskeleton in India

**Why in news:** The robots can carry 25 kg in payload and walk along with the soldier, and added that these robots can be used in nuclear plants and other industries as well.



1. As part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, Hyderabad-based Svaya Robotics has developed India's first indigenous quadruped (four-legged) robot and exoskeleton for the defence sector.
2. The indigenous robots and wearable exoskeletons were developed in collaboration with the DRDO Labs, Research and Development Establishment (R&DE), Pune, and the Defence Bioengineering and Electromedical Laboratory (DEBEL), Bengaluru, as technology demonstrators with their design inputs.
3. Quadruped robots are four-legged robots which can walk or run in uneven and rough terrains. For example, in Leh, where soldiers have to navigate through unfavourable conditions, these robots can be used instead. These are also useful in recognising terrorist activities and other unsafe locations and capturing the visuals which can be monitored from any part of the country.
4. Exoskeleton robot is developed to suit Indian soldiers' anthropometry and augment soldier strength for walking long distances.
5. These active exoskeletons, when worn by soldiers, can carry heavy loads without expending much effort.
6. India currently imports these robots from the US and Switzerland to help strengthen the country's defence capabilities.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Atal Innovation Mission launches ATL Sarthi

**Why in news:** Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India to foster curiosity, creativity, and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design thinking mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.



1. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) – NITI Aayog launched ATL Sarthi, a comprehensive self-monitoring framework to strengthen the ever-growing ecosystem of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL).
2. The initiative has four pillars ensuring the performance enhancement of ATLs through regular process improvements like a self-reporting dashboard known as 'MyATL Dashboard' and Compliance SOPs for schools to ensure financial and non-financial compliances, on-ground enablement of ATLs in collaboration with relevant local authorities through Cluster-based Approach and providing ownership to schools to analyze their performance through Performance-Enablement (PE) Matrix.
3. The ATL Cluster aims at providing a self-sustainable model for enablement and monitoring wherein the ATLs and local authorities work in tandem with each other on-ground to form clusters of 20-30 ATLs in a particular region.
4. These ATLs can learn from each other through training, collaborations, events and best practices. As a pilot, AIM executed ATL Sarthi with different partners in regions like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Bar council allows foreign lawyers, legal firms to practice in India

**Why in news:** The Bar Council of India (BCI) allowed foreign lawyers and law firms to practice in India on a reciprocity basis.



1. In this regard, the BCI had notified the Rules for Registration and Regulation of Foreign Lawyers and Foreign Law Firms in India, 2022.
2. According to the rules, a foreign lawyer or law firm is not entitled to practice law in India without registering with the BCI. Foreign lawyers will only be allowed to advise on international laws and will not be permitted to appear before any Indian courts and tribunals.
3. Reciprocal laws are statutes of one state that give rights and privileges to the citizens of another state if it extends similar privileges to the citizens of the former.
4. The BCI is a statutory body established under the Advocates Act, 1961, and it regulates legal practice and legal education in India.
  - It also conducts the All India Bar Examination to grant 'Certificate of Practice' to advocates practicing law in India.



- BCI regulates legal professional standards in India including directing the state bar councils, standardizing law education, and course framework at the universities and law colleges in India.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## India Venture Capital Report 2023: Important Findings

**Why in news:** For the second year in a row, India outpaced China in terms of new unicorns created. This is a significant achievement for India, as it demonstrates its growing reputation as a hub for entrepreneurship and innovation.



1. Bain & Company's annual India Venture Capital Report 2023 reveals that venture capital investments in India saw a decrease in deal value of 33% from \$38.5 billion to \$25.7 billion in 2022.
2. The report highlights macroeconomic uncertainty and recessionary fears as the primary drivers of the decrease in deal value.
3. Late-stage large deals were affected the most by the decrease in deal value. This could be attributed to the cautious approach adopted by investors in light of the economic uncertainty. As a result, investors focused on preserving their capital and were more selective with their investments.
4. While early-stage deals continued to see momentum in India. This resulted in a slight expansion in deal volume.
5. The report suggests that SaaS and Fintech continued to see momentum in funding in 2022. This is not surprising as these sectors have been growing rapidly in recent years and are expected to continue their growth trajectory in the future.
6. The report also highlights the emergence of new sectors in India. Sectors such as EV, Agritech, generative AI, space tech, and climate tech gained momentum in 2022. These sectors are expected to play a significant role in India's future growth story.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Banks from 18 countries get RBI's nod to trade in rupee

**Why in news:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted banks from 18 countries to open Special Vostro Rupee Accounts (SVRAs) to settle payments in rupees.



1. These 18 nations include Botswana, Fiji, Germany, Guyana, Israel, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand,



Oman, Russia, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and the United Kingdom.

2. A vostro account is an account that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in the former's domestic currency, in this case, the rupee.
3. Domestic banks use it to provide international banking services to their clients who have global banking needs.
4. The SRVA is an additional arrangement to the existing system that uses Freely convertible currencies and works as a complimentary system.
5. The existing systems require maintaining balances and position in such currencies like US dollar and pound to facilitate trade.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Startup20 Engagement Group set to meet in Sikkim

**Why in news:** The second meeting of the Startup20 Engagement group, newly formed under India's G20 Presidency, will take place in Gangtok, Sikkim on 18 & 19 March 2023. The meeting will invite delegates from G20 member and invitee countries, representatives from multilateral organisations, and stakeholders from the Indian startup ecosystem.



1. The Startup20 Engagement Group has been initiated under India's G20 Presidency in 2023.
2. The group aims to create a global narrative for supporting startups and enabling synergies between startups, corporates, investors, innovation agencies and other key ecosystem stakeholders.
3. Three taskforces: The engagement group comprises of three taskforces, namely Foundation & Alliance, Finance, and Inclusion & Sustainability, where delegates will come together to discuss efficient policy frameworks to promote scaling up of startups in the G20 nations.
4. Inception Meeting of the Startup 20 Engagement Group of G20 was held in Hyderabad.
5. At the Sikkim Sabha, the taskforce members (comprising of delegates from the G20 nations) of the Startup20 Engagement Group will be discussing and deliberating on the first draft of the official policy communiqué. The event will also host a variety of side events, Startup20X events, startups showcase at MG Marg, and delegates visit to the Rumtek Monastery.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)



## Personal Genome Mapping

**Why in news:** There is also a huge biological data opportunity from PGM; mapped at the population level, it can be a huge boost for drug development and disease prevention.



1. All the genetic information of an organism is called its genome. It consists of nucleotide sequences of DNA.
2. PGM Genetic mapping can offer firm evidence that a disease transmitted from parent to child is linked to one or more genes.
3. As per Global Market Insights, the genetic testing market stood at \$18 billion in 2022, and will grow by nearly 2.4x by 2032. Reliance's foray must be seen against this backdrop. Currently, in the pilot phase, the kit will be marketed across Reliance's e-commerce platforms.
4. Reliance acquired Strand Life Sciences in 2021, which developed the genome sequencing kit that is priced at ₹12,000.
5. PGM will help an individual identify and assess the genes that are implicated in a disease that she currently suffers from as well as diseases that she is predisposed to because of her genes.
6. This can play a big role in healthcare choices, especially relating to precision medicine, which is basically tailoring treatment of a condition in view of how your genetic make-up influences the efficacy of treatment options—for instance, reaction to a specific drug. It will also allow those intending to have children to make informed plans about their child's health.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Indian Army awards contract for procurement of indigenously developed Integrated Mobile Camouflage System for Mechanised Forces

**Why in news:** The Indian Army recently placed its first order for Integrated Mobile Camouflage Systems (IMCS) for Mechanised Forces with an Indian start-up Hyper Stealth Technologies Private Limited.



1. This is the first-ever procurement order of an Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) project by the Indian Army.
2. Integrated Mobile Camouflage Systems (IMCS): comprises low emissivity and/or CAM-IIR coatings and mobile camouflage system materials that enable armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs) to blend in with their terrain background.





3. It achieves a reduction in the detection range of AFVs when viewed through a Hand Held Thermal Imager (HHTI)/Battle Field Surveillance Radar (BFSR) tank-based thermal camera under given environmental and weather conditions.
4. It achieves signature management by controlling the Visual, Thermal, infrared, and Radar Signatures of the object. It will provide significant capability enhancement in stealth for AFVs.
5. The iDEX initiative was launched by the Government in April 2018.
6. It Aims to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries including MSMEs, start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes, and academia.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Research, Education and Training Outreach (REACHOUT) scheme capacity building

**Why in news:** The program aims to encourage collaboration between academic institutions, industry, and government to improve the quality of education and research in India.



1. The Indian Ministry of Earth Sciences has initiated the REACHOUT Scheme to advance research, education, and training in the realm of Earth Sciences.
2. The scheme is expected to benefit students, researchers, and institutions across the country, and contribute to the development of India as a hub for innovation and research.
3. The main objectives of the above sub-schemes are
  - Supporting various R &D activities in the thrust areas of different components of Earth System Sciences that are theme and need based and that would help in attaining the National goals set up for MoES.
  - Develop useful collaborations with international organizations for mutual transfer of advanced knowledge in science and technology in Earth Sciences and to provide services to developing countries.
  - Develop skilled and trained manpower in Earth Sciences with the support of academic institutions in the country and abroad.
4. It consists of the following sub-schemes:
  - R&D in Earth System Science (RDESS)
  - International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOocean)



- Program for Development of Skilled manpower in Earth System Sciences (DESK)

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Nutrition for all: Fifth Poshan Pakhwada celebrations to begins

**Why in news:** According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Pakhwada aims to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and promote healthy eating habits through “Jan Andolan and Jan Bhagidari”.



1. Poshan Abhiyaan, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 8, 2018, has been instrumental in ensuring people's participation and bringing the discourse on nutrition to the forefront. Poshan Abhiyan was launched with the aim to improve nutritional outcomes in a holistic manner. Behavioural change at individual and community level is an important component to achieve the desired goals of a Kuposhan-mukt Bharat
2. Every year, Poshan Pakhwada is celebrated in the month of March for 15 days.
3. The theme of this year's Poshan Pakhwada 2023 is “Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India”. With the declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets, this year the focus of Poshan Pakhwada will be to popularise ‘Shree Anna’, as a valuable asset to address malnutrition.
4. Further, campaigns will be organized to increase awareness and popularise Saksham Anganwadis with upgraded infrastructure and facilities as centres of improved nutrition delivery and early childhood care and education.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## YUVIKA- YUva Vigyani KARYakram

**Why in news:** ISRO YUVIKA 2023 registrations will begin on March 20, 2023, and end on April 30, 2023. The ISRO YUVIKA 2023 program involves a two-week residential training at different ISRO centers - SSC, URSC, SAC.



1. According to current news, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is organizing a unique program for school children called the Young Scientist Programme – Yuva Vigyani Karyakram (YUVIKA).
2. The ISRO young scientist program was launched with the wide goal of teaching younger people the fundamentals of space technology, science, and applications.



ISRO runs this program to teach younger students about space technologies, science, and applications, as well as to educate them about emerging developments in space science as well as technology.

3. Students who have completed class VIII and are presently enrolled in class IX are eligible to apply for the ISRO YUVIKA 2023 program. Students in Class 9 in India on January 1, 2023, are qualified to register for the ISRO Young Scientist Programme – YUVIKA 2023.
4. ISRO YUVIKA 2023 is chosen primarily on its educational record. Applicants from rural regions were given special consideration in the selection process.
5. The selected candidate list for ISRO YUVIKA 2023 from each state will be released by the end of March. Every year, three students from each state/union territory will participate in this program, which will encompass CBSE, ICSE, and the state board curriculum.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Geoheritage sites of Jhamarkotra and Zawar

**Why in news:** Society of Earth Scientists (SES), a group of independent researchers bridging the gap between earth science and society, organized the International Geodiversity Day in October 2022.



1. The term geological heritage is used for natural geological or geo-morphological features that have aesthetic, intrinsic or scientific and educational value, that provide unique insight into geological processes affecting the formation or evolution of Earth.
2. The fossil park at Jhamarkotra is located in the state of Rajasthan. It hosts stromatolites dating back 1.8 billion years, exhibiting a variety of textures and sizes.
3. Jhamarkotra's fossils are phosphate-rich because the trapped sediments were mainly phosphate minerals.
4. Zawar is an interesting geo-heritage site that lies some 40 km south of Udaipur. It is the world's oldest known zinc-smelting site.
5. The discovery here of earthen retorts – brinjal-shaped, long-necked vessels – is particularly significant. Their presence here suggests Zawar had a unique zinc-smelting legacy.
6. Geological Survey of India (GSI) declares geo-heritage sites/ national geological monuments for protection and maintenance.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## “Pathways to Atmanirbhar Bharat” Report

**Why in news:** The study said a rapid expansion of clean energy infrastructure will be needed. "Because of transport, industrial electrification and green hydrogen production, electricity demand could increase nearly five-fold - from 1,300 TWh/year to over 6,600 TWh/year by 2050. This would require a massive scale-up of renewable energy deployment to 40 GW a year through 2030, ramping up to about 100 GW a year between 2030 and 2050."



1. The study titled “Pathways to Atmanirbhar Bharat” was released recently by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and The India Energy and Climate Center (IECC). According to this report, India has an opportunity to achieve energy independence by 2047 through investments in clean energy technologies.
2. The report highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat push, which includes a target to install 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and grow EV sales in India to capture a significant portion of the market. Additionally, the government aims to produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.
3. The report highlights that clean energy will reduce and inflation-proof India's energy expenditure as renewables, EV batteries, and hydrogen infrastructure are capital assets with rapidly falling costs. A shift to electric transportation will create USD 2.5 trillion in net consumer savings by 2047.
4. The report suggests that the policy ecosystem needs five pillars: deployment mandates for commercial/cost-effective clean technologies that provide economies of scale, financial support for emerging technologies, long-term infrastructure planning, accelerating/scaling domestic manufacturing, and planning for a just transition.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Over 26,000 defence items uploaded on SRIJAN Portal and offered to Industry for indigenization

**Why in news:** In the Rajya Sabha, the State Minister for the defence claimed that from 2018–19, defence imports have decreased from 46% to 36.7%.

1. The Department of Defence Production Portal "SRIJAN" was virtually inaugurated by the defence minister as part of the Make in India initiatives in the defence industry during the Ministry of Defense's "Atmanirbhar Bharat Week" celebrations in August 2020.



2. The portal offers details on the defence products and equipment that the country's defences Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) are now importing or plan to import. The government will take the appropriate steps To make these products indigenous.
3. The portal is a "one-stop shop" internet platform that gives suppliers access to take up things that can be taken up for indigenization.
4. The portal systematically presents data, including item names, images and specifications, import values, etc. There is a search function as well.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## States to get rewards for organic farming

**Why in news:** The Union government intends to launch a scheme — named PM PRANAM — to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers by incentivising states.



1. The scheme—PM programme for restoration, awareness, nourishment and melioration of mother earth (PM Pranam). As part of the scheme, if the promotion of organic farming by a state leads to a decline in the use of chemical fertilizers, then half the subsidy saved on that account will be transferred to the state.
2. The scheme will have no separate budget and will be financed through the “savings of existing fertiliser subsidy” under schemes run by the Department of Fertilizers.
3. 50% of subsidy savings will be passed on as a grant to the state that saves the money.
4. 70% of the grant provided under the scheme can be used for asset creation related to the technological adoption of alternate fertilisersand alternate fertiliser production units at the village, block and district levels.
5. The remaining 30% of grant money can be used for rewarding and encouraging farmers, panchayats, farmer producer organisations and self-help groups that are involved in the reduction of fertiliser use and awareness generation.
6. For this purpose, data available on a Fertilizer Ministry dashboard, IFMS (Integrated Fertilizers Management System) will be used.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)





## India aims at becoming 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030 with launch of Green Tug Transition Programme(GTTP)

**Why in news:** India aims at becoming 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030 with launch of Green Tug Transition Programme(GTTP).



1. The programme will start with Green Hybrid Tugs, which will be powered by green hybrid propulsion systems, and will subsequently adopt non-fossil fuel solutions like Methanol, Ammonia, and Hydrogen.
2. Green shipping refers to the use of environment-friendly resources and energy to transport people and goods by ship. Green ship technology adopts procedures to decrease emissions, consume less energy, and be more efficient.
3. Tugs are special boats that assist other vessels into and out of port. The primary purpose of these boats is to help move larger ships by towing, pushing, and guiding.
4. Also, India's first National Centre of Excellence in Green Port & Shipping (NCoEGPS) was inaugurated recently in Gurugram, Haryana.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Launch of Sagar Manthan dashboard a positive development towards Digital India vision of PM

**Why in news:** The platform has been developed completely in-house under the guidance of the Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), in the span of fewer than 1.5 months.



1. It is the real-time performance monitoring dashboard of MoPSW. Features of the dashboard:
  - Data visualization;
  - Real-time monitoring;
  - Improved communication;
  - Data-driven decision-making;
  - Increased accountability;
2. It will have all the integrated data related to the ministry and other subsidiaries.
3. It also promotes real-time project tracking, risk management, resource allocation, and progress reporting.



4. The dashboard in the future would further be integrated with Input from the CCTV camera, Live streaming from Drones, and AI-based Algorithms.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Seekho Aur Kamao scheme

**Why in news:** The Ministry of Minority Affairs implemented 'Seekho Aur Kamao' scheme (SAK) for providing employment and employment opportunities, improving the employability of existing workers, school dropouts etc.



1. Seekho Aur Kamao is a skill development scheme for the youth of the 14 - 35 years age group.
2. As per scheme guidelines, the implementing organizations will be required to establish linkages with placement services. The scheme ensures 75% placement, out of which 50% should be in the organized sector.
3. For the candidates interested in self-employment after availing the training, the organization shall arrange easy microfinance/ loans for them through financial institutions, National Minority Development Finance Corporation (NMDFC), banks etc.
4. Post-placement support of Rs. 2000/- per month is provided to placed trainees for two months as placement assistance.
5. In the last 7 years around 3.92 lakh persons have been benefitted under this employment oriented scheme. This scheme was launched in the year 2013 and it is implemented by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Government launches DigiClaim for claim disbursal through National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP)

**Why in news:** Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launched National Crop Insurance Portal's digitized claim settlement module namely DigiClaim under the ambit of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).



1. With the launch of the module, claims will be disbursed electronically, which will benefit the respective farmers of six states. Now, the automated claim settlement process will be an ongoing activity to ease all insured farmers' lives and provide them with a sustainable financial flow and support.



2. This technology has been enabled through the integration of National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP) and Public Finance Management System (PFMS).
3. With this, now farmers' claims will be processed directly to their respective bank accounts in a transparent and accountable manner.
4. With the launch of a DigiClaim Module, insurance claims totaling Rs 1260.35 crore have been disbursed on March 23, 2023 to insured farmers in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Haryana with the click of a button, and the process will continue as and when the claims are released.
5. DigiClaim is yet another feather in PMFBY's cap in its ongoing effort to usher in advanced technological solutions such as automated calculation and disbursement of crop insurance claims.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Vedic Heritage portal

**Why in news:** The portal aims to communicate message enshrined in the Vedas. It will help common people to have a general understanding about the Vedas.

1. The portal will be a one-stop solution for the user, who would like to search any information regarding the Vedic heritage.
2. It has been created by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).
3. This portal has over 18 thousand mantras of the four vedas with a duration of over 550 hours.
4. It gives detailed information about oral traditions, textual tradition in form of published books/manuscripts, or implements

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)



## National Initiative for Promotion of Upskilling of Nirman workers (NIPUN) Scheme

**Why in news:** The National Initiative for Promoting Upskilling of Nirman workers (NIPUN) has recently completed its training program for construction workers engaged in the Central Vista project in New Delhi.



1. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing & Urban



Affairs (MoHUA) under its flagship scheme of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).

2. To train over 1 lakh construction workers through fresh skilling and upskilling programmes and provides them with work opportunities in foreign countries
3. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the nodal agency under the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, will be the Implementation Partner for the project NIPUN.
4. The project implementation is divided into three parts:
  - training through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at construction sites;
  - training through Fresh Skilling by Plumbing and Infrastructure Sector Skill Council (SSC);
  - International Placement through industries/ builders/ contractors;
5. It will provide trainees with 'Kaushal Bima', three-year accidental insurance with coverage of Rs 2 lakhs.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## PENCIL Portal

**Why in news:** Recently, the Minister of State for Labour and Employment informed Rajya Sabha about the PENCIL portal and implementation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme.



1. Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL) is a separate online portal to ensure effective enforcement of the provisions of the Child Labour Act and smooth implementation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme.
2. The Portal connects Central Government to State Government(s), District(s), all Project Societies and the General public. Further, online complaints regarding child labour can also be filed by anybody on the Pencil Portal. The complaint gets assigned to the concerned Nodal Officer automatically by the system for further necessary action.
3. The PENCIL Portal has various components, namely Child Tracking System, Complaint Corner, State Government, National Child Labour Project and Convergence.
4. The National Child Labour Project (NCLP) is a Central Sector Scheme for the rehabilitation of child labour.



5. Under this Scheme, funds are provided directly to the District Project Societies headed by the District Magistrate/Collector/Deputy Commissioner who in turn allocates the funds to NGOs/Voluntary Agencies, etc. for running Special Training Centres.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Rubber Board launches comprehensive rubber information system

**Why in news:** Recently, the Rubber Board has launched a mobile app CRISP to inform growers about rubber cultivation and provides solutions online.



1. CRISP gives information to rubber cultivators related to production and productivity enhancement, reduction of cultivation cost, maintenance of soil fertility, disease control measures, etc.
2. CRISP (Comprehensive Rubber Information System Platform) has been developed by the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) in collaboration with the Digital University of Kerala. The app was launched by ZP Patel, Vice Chancellor, Navsari Agricultural University, Gujarat.
3. India is the world's largest producer and the third-largest user of natural rubber.
4. Rubber Growing Areas in India
  - Traditional Areas: Primarily in Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari District and Kerala.
  - Non-traditional regions: Coastal Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra's Konkan Region, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, the northeastern provinces, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, among other places.
5. The Climatic conditions required for Rubber
  - Rainfall: It requires moist and humid climates with heavy rainfall of more than 200 cm.
  - Temperature: It grows well in equatorial climates and temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius.
  - Soil: Well-drained, weathered soils.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)





## LaQshya Programme

**Why in news:** A total of 283 obstetric high dependency unit (HDU) /Intensive care unit (ICU) have been approved in high caseload tertiary care facilities including Government Medical College hospitals and district hospitals, across the country.



1. LaQshya is a quality improvement initiative which aims to ensure Quality of Care during intrapartum and immediate post-partum period in Labour Room and Maternity OT. It targets all Government Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities, designated FRUs as well as high case load CHCs.
2. Under the purview of LaQshya, one of the facility-level targets is to achieve 5% or less Surgical Site Infection Rate in Maternity OT or at least a reduction of 30% from the baseline. At the time of LaQshya certification, compliance with the above-mentioned requirement is verified by the independent empanelled NQAS assessors.
3. The goal is to reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in the Labour room and Maternity OT and ensure respectful maternity care.
4. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
5. At the time of LaQshya certification, compliance with the above-mentioned requirement is verified by the independent empanelled NQAS assessors.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

**Why in news:** The Lok Sabha passed Finance Bill, 2023 with 64 amendments, including one that seeks to set up the much-awaited GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), which will deal with tax disputes, and also lessen the burden on the higher judiciary, which has repeatedly sought the institution of such a body.



1. GSTAT will have a "Principal Bench" in New Delhi, with the President, a judicial member, a technical member (centre) and a technical member (state). It will also have state benches.
2. The principal bench and state boards would have two technical and two judicial members each, with equal representation from the Centre and states.



3. All four members would not sit for hearing each case. It depends on the threshold or value of dues involved.
4. North-eastern states could opt for one bench for 2-3 states and an additional bench for very far-flung areas.
5. The body aims to resolve the rising number of disputes under GST regime. It will also unclog the pendency of number of cases related to GST in High Courts and other judicial courts.
6. GSTAT is a statutory body under the Central Goods and Service Tax Act, 2017

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## Sebi proposes regulatory framework for index providers

**Why in news:** The proposed regulation shall be applicable to index providers (both domestic and foreign) if the users of the index/products based on index are located in India.



1. The proposed regulation requires the index providers to be legal entities with a minimum net worth of ₹25 crore. It bars an individual or a group of persons from registering as an index provider. It also requires a minimum vintage of five years in index administration.
2. Index providers are those institutions that formulate and manage indices.
3. One of the important roles of the index provider is to classify and define markets, as their indices represent a market or a proportion of a market and provide a benchmark of performance for that market or sector.
4. S&P Dow Jones, MSCI, and Bloomberg are some of the globally renowned institutions that provide indices.
5. In India, this activity is generally carried out by subsidiaries of stock exchanges. The most prominent indices in India are the Nifty50 by NSE Indices and Sensex provided by a venture of S&P Dow Jones Indices and BSE Ltd.
6. SEBI's proposed regulations adhere to the principles of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), the global standard setter for the securities sector.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)



### Gaj Utsav 2023 – Celebrating 30 Years of Project Elephant

**Why in news:** The Gaj Utsav 2023 will be inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu on April 9 at Kaziranga National Park in Assam. This event is significant as Kaziranga is a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to the highest density of tigers in the world.



1. This two-day event aims to promote elephant conservation, protect their habitat and corridors, and prevent human-elephant conflicts. It will also ensure the welfare of captive elephants in India.
2. In order to conserve elephants, their habitat, and migration routes, reduce conflicts between humans and elephants, and assure the health of captive elephants in India, the government of India created Project Elephant in 1991–1992.
3. The Wild Life Preservation Act of 1972 lists elephants as a Schedule I national heritage animal. More than 60% of the world's wild elephant population is in India. They are primarily found in the southern and north-eastern areas of India as well as the east-central and northern regions.
4. In addition to the Gaj Utsav, India is also celebrating the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger in Mysuru, Karnataka. Starting on April 7, this event aims to showcase India's tiger conservation success globally, release the latest tiger census data, and present the government's vision for tiger conservation.
5. Project Tiger, launched in 1973, promotes tiger conservation in India. Approximately 2.4 per cent of India's geographical area is covered by tiger reserves, which serve as repositories for biodiversity conservation, ensure regional water security and carbon sequestration, and contribute to accomplishing India's climate change mitigation targets.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

### NALCO-BARC Releases India's 1st Bauxite CRM

**Why in news:** National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), the Navratna CPSE, under Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India and country's leading manufacturer and exporter of alumina and aluminium, has successfully developed a Bauxite Certified Reference Material (CRM) naming as BARC B1201 in joint collaboration with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).



1. This new product will act as an import substitution for use by Industries, Research Laboratories and Academic Institutions as a calibration standard in evaluating



analytical methods, performance of Instruments, and data quality control in routine analysis of bauxite.

2. This is the first of its kind CRM in India and 5 th in the World. A CRM is a sample of a material that has been analyzed and certified for its composition, purity, and other important characteristics. It is used as a standard to compare other samples of the same material, ensuring that the results obtained from different laboratories are comparable.
3. BARC, short for Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, is India's premier nuclear research facility. It was founded by Homi Jehangir Bhabha in January 1954 and is headquartered in Trombay, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.
4. Bauxite is an important ore that is used for making aluminium. It is not a specific mineral but a rock consisting mainly of hydrated aluminium oxides.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## India's first cloned desi Gir female calf, Ganga produced at NDRI

**Why in news:** Recently, the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal has produced cloned female calves of the desi breed Gir.



1. Amid the government push for increasing milk production, the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal has produced the country's first cloned female calf of the desi breed Gir which can produce more than 15 litres of milk per day.
2. Under a project by National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal to work on cloning of indigenous cow breeds such as Gir and Sahiwal, India's first cloned Gir female calf named 'Ganga' weighing 32 kg was born and is growing well,
3. Indigenous cattle breeds such as Gir, Sahiwal, Tharparkar, and Red-Sindhi, play a pivotal role in milk production and the growth of the Indian dairy industry.
4. To clone the Gir, oocytes are isolated from live animals using ultrasound-guided needles, and then, matured for 24 hours under control conditions.
5. The somatic cells of elite cows are used as donor genomes, which are fused with OPU-derived enucleated oocytes. Following chemical activation and in-vitro culture, the developed blastocysts are transferred into recipient mothers to deliver the Gir calf.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)





## Important News: States

### Centre okays India's largest hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh

**Why in news:** Dibang Hydropower Project, which was approved by the Central Government recently, is India's largest-ever hydropower project. This multipurpose project is being set up close to China's border on the Dibang River, in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Dibang Valley District. Notably, it is being developed in a mountainous region.



1. This project will be developed by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited. The estimated cost of this 2,880-megawatt hydropower project is 319 billion INR.
2. The main purpose of the project is flood control and also water storage.

#### **FACTS**

3. Dibang river- originates on the Indo-China border, that is, near Keya pass. It flows through the Mishmi hills. It joins River Lohit near Dibru-Saikhowa Sanctuary. The tributaries of Dibang are Emra, Ithun, Dri, Rangon, Mathun, and Sisar.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

### President Murmu to inaugurate 7th Dharma-Dhamma Conference in Bhopal

**Why in news:** The conference will have 45 speakers in the inaugural session, a ministers' session, keynote session and five plenary sessions to discuss various sub-themes.



1. The three-day conference with the theme 'Eastern Humanism for the New Era' has been organised by India Foundation in collaboration with Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies, and aims to bring together religious, political and thought leaders from Dharma-Dhamma traditions to ponder over building a philosophical framework for the emerging new world order.
2. The conference will have 45 speakers in the inaugural session, a ministers' session, keynote session and five plenary sessions to discuss various sub-themes, along with 115 paper presentations by experts from India and abroad in 15 sessions.
3. Fifteen countries will be participating in the conference. Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, state culture minister Usha Thakur and Vice Chancellor of Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies Dr Neerja Gupta will be present on the occasion.





4. India Foundation is a New Delhi-based independent think tank that focuses on issues, challenges and opportunities of Indian polity.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Geological Survey of India Reports Gold Mines in Deogarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj

**Why in news:** The presence of gold mines in Odisha has come to light thanks to surveys conducted by the state Directorate of Mines and Geology and the Geological Survey of India.



1. The eastern state of Odisha already accounts for about 98% of the country's chromite deposits, and now, reserves of a more precious metal have been uncovered in the state.
2. The gold reserves have been found in four different areas of Keonjhar and four in Mayurbhanj, and one location in Deogarh. These areas include Dimirimunda, Kushakala, Gotipur, Gopur, Joshipur, Suriaguda, Ruansila, Dhushura hill and Adas.

### FACTS

3. India has three functional gold mines — the Hutti and Uti mines in Karnataka and the Hirabuddini mines in Jharkhand. Through these mines, our country manages to produce around 1.6 tonnes of gold compared to the 774 tonnes a year of gold it consumes.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Ashwini Vaishnaw releases 'Go Green, Go Organic' cover for Sikkim

**Why in news:** Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and four Sikkim ministers released a unique cover of the Department of Posts, 'Go Green, Go Organic' for Sikkim.



1. Sikkim has become the first state of the world to get recognized as an Organic state by the World Book of Records (London).
2. The special cover is a testament to the state's achievements in organic farming and progress and a reminder of the importance of sustainable development for the entire country.
3. Meanwhile, the state has also won the prestigious Future Policy Gold Award from the UN Food and Agriculture. Sikkim has the title of the 'first 100% organic state' in the world.



4. Organic farming can be defined as an agricultural process that uses biological fertilisers and pest control acquired from animal or plant waste. Organic farming was actually initiated as an answer to the environmental sufferings caused by the use of chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilisers.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport cleanest in Asia Pacific

**Why in news:** Delhi airport has been adjudged as one of the best airports as well as the cleanest airport in the Asia Pacific region by international grouping ACI.



1. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), operated by DIAL, has bagged the award for Airport Service Quality (ASQ) best airport for 2022 in the category of over 40 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA). It has also been named as the cleanest airport in the Asia Pacific region by the Airports Council International (ACI).
2. ACI is a non-profit organisation of airport operators. Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) is a GMR Airports Infrastructure Ltd-consortium.
3. "The ASQ programme is the world's leading airport customer experience measurement and benchmarking programme. This recognition is based on live research via surveys gathered at the airport direct from the traveller rating their satisfaction on the day of travel".
4. Tiruchirappalli International Airport has been rated the best in the Asia Pacific region in the category of under 2 million passengers by ACI.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## Uttarakhand CM Dhami announced the launch of self-employment scheme for single women

**Why in news:** Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami has announced the launch of Mukhyamantri Ekal Mahila Swarozgar Yojana in the state at the end of Women Empowerment and Safety Week.



1. Chief Minister of Uttarakhand has announced the launch of Mukhyamantri Ekal Mahila Swarozgar Yojana in the state at the end of Women Empowerment and Safety Week.



2. Women in remote villages of the state are giving impetus to the rural economy through self-help groups. Through their skill potential, women are providing strength to the economy of their families.
3. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, India has taken steps such as linking 23 crore women to banks through Jan Dhan accounts. From financial inclusion to social security, quality health care to housing, education to entrepreneurship, several steps have been taken in recent years to keep women at the forefront of India's development journey
4. The government has highlighted a legislation passed to grant 30 per cent reservation in public services to women domiciled in Uttarakhand.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Delhi is India's most polluted megacity, but others are catching up: CSE report

**Why in news:** CSE analyses winter pollution data from Delhi, Kolkata-Howrah, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai; only the national capital has shown improvement.



1. All megacities in India, irrespective of their locations in different geo-climatic zones, faced the challenge of worsening PM2.5 levels during the winter season of 2022-23, according to a new analysis by the Delhi-based non-profit Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).
2. The winter period is a special challenge in all cities as adverse meteorological conditions trap pollution and increase concentration and exposure. The impact is worse if the overall pollution in the city is high and worsening.

### **ABOUT PM2.5**

3. The term fine particles, or particulate matter 2.5 (PM5), refers to tiny particles or droplets in the air that are two and half microns or less in width.
4. Particles in the PM5size range are able to travel deeply into the respiratory tract, reaching the lungs.
5. Exposure to fine particles can cause short-term health effects such as eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and shortness of breath.
6. Long term exposure to fine particulate matter may be associated with increased rates of chronic bronchitis, reduced lung function and increased mortality from lung cancer and heart disease.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)



## Manik Saha takes oath as Tripura chief minister for second time

**Why in news:** The Governor of the state Satyadeo Narain Arya had administered the oath of secrecy to Manik Saha at a ceremony that was held at Raj Bhawan.



1. Dr Manik Saha took the oath as the chief minister of Tripura for the second consecutive term in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home minister Amit Shah
2. The swearing-in ceremony was held at Vivekananda Maidan in Agartala.
3. Others who took the oath included Ratan Lal Nath, Pranjit Singha Roy, Santana Chakma, Sushanta Chowdhury, Tinku Roy, Bikas Debbarma, Sudhangshu Das and Shukla Charan Noatia.
4. In the recently concluded Assembly election, the BJP won 32 seats out of 60 with a vote share of around 39%.
5. Tipra Motha emerged as the second-largest party securing 13 seats.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Yaoshang festival begins in Manipur

**Why in news:** The thabal chongba is a traditional dance of the Meitei, where boys and girls gathered in an open ground and dance in a circle.



1. The five-day-long Yaoshang festival, Manipur's version of Holi, has begun in Manipur.
2. The festival is celebrated every year on the full moon of Lamta (February-March) of the Meitei lunar calendar. Yaoshang begins just after sunset followed by Yaosang Mei thaba, also known as Burning of the Straw Hut. Children visit neighbours to ask for monetary donations, called nakatheng.
3. Yaoshang is celebrated with a traditional twist in Manipur. During these five days Manipur comes alive with sporting events during the day and traditional "thabal chongba" dance in the night.
4. The thabal chongba is a traditional dance of the Meitei, where boys and girls gathered in an open ground and dance in a circle. But these days thabal chongba is performed throughout the month of Lamta.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)





## Kerala government to constitute Pattaya Mission to resolve issues related to land records

**Why in news:** The state government of Kerala is planning to establish a Pattaya Mission by the end of April to tackle land record issues in the state.



1. The Pattaya Mission is an initiative by the Kerala government to expedite the distribution of title deeds to individuals who do not possess them.
2. Under the leadership of MLAs in each district, the mission will work towards providing title deeds for all individuals.
3. The mission aims to provide title deeds to all individuals by the end of 2024.
4. The Pattaya Mission is named after a village in Kannur district, which was the first village in Kerala to achieve 100% land distribution. The success of the Pattaya model has inspired the government to adopt a similar approach at the state level.

### FACTS

5. Kerala is a mountainous region where coffee and tea plantations are the major sources of income apart from paddy, wheat, and maize cultivation.
6. With the cash crop plantation placed out of the land reforms, the majority of the lands in the state were not distributed. This is why the present Kerala Government is launching the Pattaya mission.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## 10 days 'DIVYA KALA MELA' to be organized from 12th to 21st March, 2023 in Bhopal Haat, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

**Why in news:** Around 150 Divyang artisans/artists and entrepreneurs from about 21 states/UTs to showcase their unique products and skills.



1. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) is organizing a unique event showcasing the products and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs/artisans from across the country, 'Divya Kala Mela' from 12th to 21st March, 2023 at Bhopal Haat, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
2. The event would present an enthralling experience to the visitors as vibrant products from various parts of the country including Jammu and Kashmir, North Eastern states, handicrafts, handlooms, embroidery works and packaged food etc. will be seen together.





3. There would be Products in the following broad category: Home Décor & Lifestyle, Clothing, Stationery and eco-friendly products, packaged food and organic products, Toys & Gifts, Personal Accessories - Jewellery, Clutch Bags. It will be an opportunity for all to go 'vocal for local' and products made by Divyang craftsmen with their extra determination can be seen/purchased.
4. Department has grandiose plans to promote the concept, as part of which 'Divya Kala Mela' would be organized every year and will not be limited to Delhi and Mumbai, but across the country.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Bobbili Veena likely to be presented to G-20 delegates

**Why in news:** Bobbili Veena, popularly known as Saraswati Veena, a large plucked string instrument is used in Carnatic music.

1. The State government has ordered at least 200 replicas of Bobbili Veena to Sarwasiddi family, which is famous for making the musical instrument, through Andhra Pradesh Handicrafts Development Corporation (APHDC) to present as a token of honour to the delegates.
2. The making of the veena began in the 17th century during the reign of Pedda Rayudu, the king of Bobbili Samsthanam who was a great patron of music. It has earned a GI tag in 2012 for its unique design and high-quality craftsmanship.
3. Bobbili Veena is carved from a single piece of jackwood by Sarwasiddi community artisans of Gollapalli under Bobbili Samsthanam.
4. Sarwasiddi hereditary artisans from Gollapalli have been continuing the tradition of making these veenas over the past three centuries. The artisans of Gollapalli have made the veenas by using elephant tusks, stag horns and strings to get 'Sapta Swaras' during Bobbili Raja's regime.
5. They toiled at least 30 days for making of the veena. Later, they replaced the elephant tusks and stag horns with plastic material imported from Mumbai.

(SOURCE – THE INDIAN EXPRESS)

## PM Modi inaugurates world's longest railway platform in Hubballi, Karnataka

**Why in news:** With the inauguration of the Hubballi railway platform, the city has registered its name in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest railway platform in the World.

1. The 1,507-metre-long platform has been built at a cost of about ₹20 crore.



2. The Hubballi station is an important junction in Karnataka and a major hub of trade and commerce. It connects the railway lines towards Bengaluru (Davanagere side), Hosapete (Gadag side), and Vasco-Da-Gama/Belagavi (Londa side).
3. The longer platform will help to cater to the increasing transportation needs of the city and will also enhance the operational capacity of the yard. It will also facilitate multiple trains to simultaneously start from two directions.
4. PM Modi also inaugurated the electrification of the Hosapete - Hubballi - Tinaighat railway section and the upgrading of the Hosapete station, aimed at improving connectivity in the area.

(SOURCE – THE QUINT )

## India's first behavioural lab to be set up in Jaipur

**Why in news:** Rajasthan: Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved Rs 1.22 crore for setting up India's first Behavioural lab in Jaipur.

1. To come up at the Patel Bhawan at HCM-RIPA, the first behavioural lab in the country will be built with state-of-the-art technology, and IIM Udaipur will manage and run it.
2. Training programmes will be organised in various colleges and universities in the field of experiential studies through this laboratory along with imparting training to teachers and programmes for practical training.
3. International experts will also be involved in conducting experiments and workshops.
4. Human behavior will be studied with the help of innovative technology, including ultra-modern software and hardware.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)



## Nitin Gadkari to unveil first methanol run buses in Bengaluru

**Why in news:** The project is aimed at reducing the level of emissions and the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) NITI Aayog, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Ashok Leyland are conducting the project together.



1. The concept of 'Methanol Economy' is being actively pursued by China, Italy, Sweden, Israel, the US, Australia, Japan, and many other European countries. 10 percent of fuel in China in the transport sector is Methanol
2. The National Biofuel policy also talks about ethanol blending which is a clean, low-cost alternative to fossil fuel-based products.
3. Methanol can be produced through the reaction of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and hydrogen, which are also known as syngas. The syngas can be produced from various sources such as natural gas, coal, or biomass.
4. Methanol can be blended with gasoline or used as a standalone fuel in vehicles with modified engines. It has a high octane rating, which means it can improve engine performance and reduce harmful emissions.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Narender Singh Tomar inaugurates “AgriUnifest” in Bengaluru

**Why in news:** The chief guest in the program Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Mr. Narendra Singh Tomar said that India is a huge democracy, whose characteristics are population and secondly 60 percent of our population is youth.



1. A 5-day cultural program "AgriUnifest" organized by Bangalore Agricultural University in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
2. More than 2500 talented students from 60 State Agricultural Universities/Deemed Universities/Central Universities have participated, showcasing their skills in 18 events under 5 disciplines (Music, Dance, Literature, Theatre, Fine Arts).
3. The All India Inter Agricultural University Youth Festival was conceptualized and initiated by ICAR during 1999-2000 with the objective of integrating Indian agriculture by connecting various Indian cultures, so that the talents of the youth of agricultural universities can be nurtured and they can appreciate Indian cultural diversity.
4. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is an autonomous body responsible for co-ordinating agricultural education and research in India. The Union Minister of Agriculture serves as its president.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



## National Institute of Ocean Technology to set up green, self-powered desalination plant in Lakshadweep

**Why in news:** The NIOT is providing potable water in six islands of Lakshadweep using Low Temperature Thermal Desalination technology. The desalination plant is the first of its kind in the world as it generates drinking water from sea water using indigenous technology using green energy and environmentally friendly processes.



1. LTTD exploits the difference in temperature (nearly 15°C) in ocean water at the surface and at depths of about 600 feet. This cold water condenses water at the surface, that is warmer but whose pressure has been lowered using vacuum pumps. Such de-pressurised water can evaporate even at ambient temperatures and this resulting vapour when condensed is free of salts and contaminants and fit to consume.
2. In 2005, National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), set up a 100,000 litre-a-day plant in Kavaratti, Lakshadweep islands and this has been providing water to about 10,000 residents.
3. Currently the desalination plants, each of which provides at least 100,000 litres of potable water every day, are powered by diesel generator sets.
4. But for the first time in the world, probably, we are setting up a [desalination] plant that will also supply power to the plant.
5. The NIOT was established in 1993 as an autonomous society under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
  - Objective – To develop reliable indigenous technologies to solve various engineering problems associated with harvesting of non-living and living resources in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which is about two-thirds of the land area of India.
  - Headquarters – Chennai, Tamil Nadu

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Barda Wildlife Sanctuary

**Why in news:** The Gujarat government has proposed a second home for Asiatic lions in Gujarat at Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, about 100km away from their present home at Gir National Park.



1. A report on “Lion@2047: A vision for Amrutkal”, prepared by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) for the Gujarat government, has identified Barda as a potential site where a population of 40 adult and sub-adult lions can be accommodated in the larger landscape of Barda-Alech hills and coastal forests.
2. The Gujarat government has proposed a second home for Asiatic lions in Gujarat at Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, about 100km away from their present home at Gir National Park, finally pushing ahead with a long-delayed plan to move some lions from their only and very crowded home in the country, a move that would also protect the population from diseases.

## **FACTS**

3. Barda Wildlife Sanctuary area falls into two districts, Porbandar and Jamnagar in the state of Gujarat.
4. IUCN STATUS – Endangered.
5. The Project is being implemented in the Gir landscape in Gujarat which is the last home of the Asiatic lion.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## **Tripura's lone butterfly park a major tourist attraction**

**Why in news:** The Butterfly EcoPark at Chottakhola, Tripura, close to the Trishna Wildlife sanctuary is the first butterfly park in the northeast and is now a major attraction for tourists from different parts of the country and also Bangladesh.



1. According to wildlife and environment experts, butterflies are deemed to be indicators of a good ecological balance and healthy nature.
2. It is nestled in a village near the India-Bangladesh international border in Tripura's South district.
3. The park is near the endangered bison park at Trishna wildlife sanctuary and Indo-Bangla Maitri Park to commemorate the Bangladesh liberation war.

## **FACTS**

4. Trishna wildlife sanctuary is located in the state of Tripura.
5. Fauna: The Indian Gaur (Bison), Deer, Hooklock Gibbon, Golden langur, Pheasants, Lalmukh Bandar, Wild Boar, Wild Cat, Leopard etc.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)





## Maharashtra Hosts C20 India Conference to Highlight Civil Society Voices

**Why in news:** The participants will deliberate on various issues like Health, Lifestyle for Environment, and Art and Crafts, which will take the shape of Policy pact.

1. In Nagpur City, Maharashtra, the Civil20 India (C20) Inception Meeting will commence on March 20th, bringing together civil society organizations from around the world to voice their aspirations to G20 leaders.
2. As one of the empowered groups under the G20 Secretariat, C20 provides a platform for non-governmental organizations to discuss and deliberate on various issues that concern the global community.
3. Around 250 delegates and 30 speakers will participate in the two-day inception meeting. After the conference, the delegates will also visit the wildlife in Pench Tiger Reserve of Nagpur along with other tourist places on March 22nd.
4. C20 India is an official engagement group of the G20, comprising Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the European Union.
5. The conference provides an opportunity for civil society organizations from G20 and other countries to highlight their aspirations and concerns to world leaders, promoting global collaboration towards a better world.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)



## 'Jharniyojan' portal

**Why in news:** The Jharkhand government has launched a portal called 'Jharniyojan' to ensure 75% local quota in pvt sector.

1. Private employers can share information about business, manpower and vacancy on the new employment portal designed and developed by the Department of Labour, Employment, Training and Skill Development.
2. Portal will allow job aspirants to register and post their applications for the vacancies posted. Also the employers, who make use of the portal, will have to adhere to the Jharkhand State Employment of Local Candidates in Private Sector Act, 2021.
3. It applies to all establishments which are in the private sector and where 10 or more people are employed.



4. Central or state government undertakings will not be included in the Act, but the provisions of the Act.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Rajasthan becomes first State to pass Right to Health Bill

**Why in news:** Right to Health Bill have the provision for mandatory free-of-cost emergency treatment for every resident of the State at both the government hospitals and the privately-run institutions. With this, Rajasthan has become the first and the only State in the country to legislate the right to health.



1. The Bill gives every resident of the State the right to emergency treatment care “without prepayment of requisite fee or charges” by any public health institution, health care establishment and designated health care centres.
2. As per the Bill, free healthcare services including diagnostics, drugs, emergency transport, emergency care and procedure will be provided at the public institutions and select private facilities subject to conditions which will be formulated now. All citizens of the state will be entitled to emergency and accidental emergency care free of cost.
3. In case of medico-legal nature, no private or public hospital can delay treatment on grounds of police clearance.
4. The legislation also stated that after emergency care, transfer of patient and stabilisation, the healthcare provider would be entitled to a requisite free and charges or proper reimbursement from the government if the patient does not pay requisite charges.
5. As per the state government, the Bill intends to, “provide protection and fulfilment of rights and equity in health and well-being under Article 47 (Duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health) of Constitution of India and to secure the Right to Health as per the expanded definition of Article 21 (Protection of life and personal liberty)”.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## Govt approves installation of 'Statue of Knowledge' dedicated to Ambedkar

**Why in news:** The Maharashtra government has given approval for a 75-foot tall 'Statue of Knowledge' dedicated to Dr B. R. Ambedkar in Latur city.



1. The statue has been erected in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Park and the ceremony will be held a day before his 131st birth anniversary.
2. The statue will be showered with flower petals from a helicopter on April 14 to commemorate the occasion.
3. Using fiber as the primary material, a team of 35 artists has been tirelessly working to construct the statue of Dr. Ambedkar.
4. The lead artist, Akshay Halke, has announced that this is the first statue in the world of Dr. Ambedkar to be created in just 20 days, and it is also the first of its kind in the state.
5. On April 13, a 70-foot tall statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar will be unveiled in Latur city, Maharashtra.
6. The unveiling ceremony will take place in the presence of Union ministers Kiren Rijju and Ramdas Athawale, along with other dignitaries such as former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis and state minister Sanjay Bansode.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Asia's Largest 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope at Devasthal

**Why in news:** Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences (Independent Charge), Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated Asia's largest 4-metre International Liquid Mirror telescope.



1. Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (AREES) announced that the world-class 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope (IMLT) is now ready to explore distant and deep celestial space. It received its first light in the second week of May 2022.
2. This telescope is located at an altitude of 2450 metres in the observatory complex at Deosthal in Nainital district of Uttarakhand (India) at AREES, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
3. The telescope was designed and built by Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems (AMOS) Corporation and the Center Spatial de Liège in Belgium.



4. ILMT is the first liquid mirror telescope specially designed for astronomical observation and is the largest aperture telescope currently available in the country as well as the first optical survey telescope in India.
5. The ILMT is designed to survey the strip of sky it passes over every night, helping to detect transient or variable celestial objects such as supernovae, gravitational lenses, space debris and asteroids.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## Odisha declares Gandhamardan Hill as biodiversity heritage site

**Why in news:** In 1980s, a highly successful people's resistance against bauxite mining in Gandhamardan Hill had emerged in the area.



1. The Odisha government has declared the Gandhamardan Hill Range in Bargarh and Balangir district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS), three decades after a highly successful people's resistance against bauxite mining there.
2. This ecologically fragile ecosystem is rich in floral and faunal diversity and is protected under the Odisha Biodiversity Rules - 2012.
3. Biodiversity heritage sites are notified by state government under Section 37(1) of 'The Biological Diversity Act, 2002'
4. This hill consists of medicinal plants, the hill system is considered the 'Ayurvedic paradise' of Odisha.
5. The hills have 2 historical monuments (hill shrines) which are major pilgrimage sites of Odisha.
6. Nrusinghanath temple is located on the northern slope.
7. Harishankar temple on the southern side.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Baghel launches “Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana”

**Why in news:** Under the scheme, the state government will provide 100 per cent subsidy for tree plantation on up to 5 acres of land, and 50 per cent financial subsidy for tree plantation on more than 5 acres of land.



1. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched



the state government's ambitious scheme 'Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana', a mega scheme aimed at encouraging commercial plantation.

2. Farmers, willing landowners, government, semi-government, autonomous institutions, private educational institutions, private trusts, panchayats, and land contract holders can reap the benefits of the scheme. The state government has set a target to plant 15 crore trees on 36 thousand acres of land in 5 years.
3. The government will decide the minimum purchase price for the sale of earmarked species of trees.
4. The trees of all species planted in five years are likely to earn Rs 10,000 crore after they get matured. Farmers can earn between Rs 15,000 to Rs 50,000 per acre of land per annum. Moreover, the farmers will also earn extra income through carbon credit, a government communiqué informed.
5. Under the scheme, a total of 30 thousand acres of land of 19653 beneficiaries has been registered for tree-plantation. Interested landowners of all the categories will be eligible under this scheme.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## 'Call Before u Dig' application

**Why in news:** It has been built to facilitate coordination between excavation agencies and underground utility owners to prevent damage to utilities due to digging.



1. It aims to prevent damage to underlying assets like optical fibre cables that occurs because of uncoordinated digging and excavation, leading to losses of about Rs 3,000 crore every year.
2. The CBuD app will connect excavators and asset owners through SMS/Email notifications and click-to-call so that there are planned excavations in the country while ensuring the safety of underground assets.
3. It aims to give excavating companies a point of contact, where they can inquire about existing subsurface utilities before starting excavation work. Utility owners can also find out about impending work at the location.
4. It will save potential business loss and minimise discomfort to the citizens due to reduced disruption in essential services like road, telecom, water, gas and electricity.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Kashmiri Stag ((Hangul)





**Why in news:** In a recent census conducted at Kashmir's Dachigam National Park, it was found that the population of Hangul or Kashmiri Stag has gradually increased over time at the national park.



1. The Kashmir stag also called hangul is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer endemic to Kashmir and surrounding areas.
2. It is found in dense riverine forests in the high valleys and mountains of Jammu and Kashmir and northern Himachal Pradesh.
3. In Kashmir, it is found primarily in the Dachigam National Park where it receives protection.
4. A small population has also been witnessed in Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary in south Kashmir.
5. Conservation status
  - IUCN: Critically Endangered
  - CITES : Appendix I

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Aravalli Green Wall Project

**Why in news:** Government launched Aravalli Green Wall Project, a major initiative to green the 5 km buffer area around the Aravalli Hill Range in four states at a function organised to celebrate the International Day of Forests at Tikli Village in Haryana.



1. The Aravalli Green Wall Project will not only increase the green cover and biodiversity of the Aravalli through afforestation, reforestation and restoration of water bodies, but also improve the soil fertility, water availability and climate resilience of the region.
2. The project will benefit the local communities by providing them with employment opportunities, income generation and ecosystem services.
3. The project covers states of Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi - where the Aravalli hills landscape span over 6 million hectares of land. The project will involve planting native species of trees and shrubs on scrubland, wasteland and degraded forest land, along with rejuvenating and restoring surface water bodies such as ponds, lakes and streams.
4. The Aravalli Green Wall Project has the following objectives:



- Improving the ecological health of the Aravalli range
- To prevent eastward expansion of Thar Desert and to reduce land degradation by creating green barriers that will prevent soil erosion, desertification and dust storms
- This green wall will help in carbon sequestration and mitigating climate change to enhance the biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Aravalli range by planting native tree species in the Aravalli region, providing habitat for wildlife, improving water quality and quantity.
- Promote sustainable development and livelihood opportunities by involving local communities in afforestation, agro-forestry and water conservation activities that will generate income, employment, food security and social benefits.
- The project will be executed by various stakeholders such as central and state governments, forest departments, research institutes, civil society organisations, private sector entities and local communities. Adequate funding, technical skills, policy coordination and public awareness will be called upon to ensure the success of the project.
- Contribute to India's commitments under various international conventions such as UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) and UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).
- Enhancing India's image as a global leader in environmental protection and green development.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## World's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir

**Why in news:** The 111 km stretch from Katra to Banihal is essential, and the 1.3 km long Chenab Bridge is a crucial part of this stretch. Once completed, the entire USBRL Railway project will provide all-weather connectivity and join Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of India.

1. The Indian Railways is constructing the world's highest railway bridge in the challenging terrain of the Himalayas, which is expected to be completed in the coming months.
2. The Chenab Bridge, an engineering marvel, is a part of the strategically important Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramullah (USBRL) railway link that will connect Jammu & Kashmir to the rest of India.



3. The Chenab Bridge is 35 meters taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, making it the world's highest rail bridge. The 1.3 km long bridge has a design speed of 100 kmph for trains and a lifespan of 120 years.
4. The USBRL project is expected to be completed by December 2023 or January 2024. The Vande Bharat Express train will run over the Chenab bridge, and a maintenance facility for Vande Bharat trains will be established in Badgam.
5. The new Vande Metro, developed for short-distance inter-city travel, will also run between Jammu and Srinagar.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Polavaram Irrigation Project

**Why in news:** Polavaram Irrigation Project in Andhra Pradesh has a cost overrun of Rs 45,397 crore. The project has been delayed by 216 months due to fund constraints and forest land as reported by the implementing agency on the on-line computerised monitoring system portal.



1. It is an under-construction multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in the Eluru District and East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh.
2. The project implements the Godavari-Krishna link under the Interlinking of rivers project. It envisages the transfer of 80TMC of surplus Godavari water to river Krishna which will be shared between Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.
3. The project envisages the generation of 960 MW of hydropower, drinking water supply to a population of 28.50 lacks in 611 villages
4. The ultimate irrigation potential of the project is 4.368 lakh ha.
5. The project has been accorded National project status by the Union Government of India.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Assam NGO wins Children's Champion Award 2023

**Why in news:** Based in western Assam's Pathsala, Tapoban has been working for special and autistic children.

1. An Assam-based NGO that cares for special and autistic children has won the Children's Champion Award 2023 in the health and nutrition category.



2. The award, instituted by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights in 2022, recognises individuals and institutions championing the cause of children in education, justice, health, nutrition, sports, and artistic expression.
3. In 2022, the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights launched the Children's Champion Award to honour people and organizations who have made significant contributions to children's education, health, nutrition, justice, sports, and artistic expression. The award was open to nominations from all over India, and the Commission received over 1,100 submissions.
4. Tapoban, which was set up in 2005 and is based in Pathsala, Assam, has won the Children's Champion Award 2023 in the health and nutrition category for its consistent efforts to provide quality care to children with special needs.
5. The NGO also runs a care home for 18 specially-abled and orphaned children and has helped more than 700 children so far.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

## Important News: Day

### World Wildlife Day 2023

**Why in news:** March 3 marks the 50th anniversary of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973. CITES is considered a landmark agreement on conservation that focuses on ensuring the sustainability of endangered species.



1. This year, the theme is 'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation'.
2. In 2013, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed March 3 as the UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of protecting the world's wild animals and plants. This was as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed in 1973 on this day.
3. CITES is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species.
4. Currently, there are 184 parties to the convention, including India. The CITES Secretariat is administered by UNEP (The United Nations Environment Programme) and is located in Geneva, Switzerland. The Conference of the Parties to CITES is the supreme consensus-based decision-making body of the Convention and comprises all its parties.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



## No Smoking Day 2023 observed on March 8

**Why in news:** No Smoking Day 2023: Every year on the second Wednesday of March, No Smoking Day is observed. It falls on March 8 this year.



1. This year's theme is: "Stopping smoking improves your brain health". The day is celebrated to help those who wish to quit smoking as well as to raise awareness about the implications of smoking on an individual's health.
2. The United Kingdom witnessed that the people in the country are getting addicted to smoking.
3. In 1984, the day was observed for the first time. Earlier, it was celebrated on the first Wednesday of March as it began on Ash Wednesday.
4. However, with time, it shifted to the second Wednesday. Now, it is celebrated as an annual event all over the United Kingdom and in other countries too.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## World obesity Day 2023

**Why in news:** Theme for this year is 'Changing Perspectives: Let's Talk About Obesity,' according to the World Obesity Federation (World Obesity), a global organisation devoted solely to obesity.



1. World Obesity Day is celebrated to promote practical solutions to assist people in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, receiving proper treatment, and reversing the obesity epidemic.
2. This year's theme was given with a goal of changing perspectives on obesity: correcting misconceptions, ending stigmas, and getting everyone to make the decision to shift from single points of view to shared strategies.
3. The day was first observed in 2015 as an annual campaign with the goal of encouraging and supporting practical actions that will assist people in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, as well as reversing the global obesity crisis.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)





## National Security Day 2023

**Why in news:** The National Safety Council of India announced the theme for this year to be 'Nurture young minds - Develop safety culture'. The NSC announces a new theme for the year to celebrate the week-long celebration.



1. March 4 is observed as National Security Day in India annually. It is also known as Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas, celebrated to honour the Indian Security Forces.
2. The day aims to show gratitude to our security forces which include the police force, para-military force, guards, commandos, army officers and other forces who are involved in maintaining peace and security of the people of our country.
3. The idea of National Security Day or National Safety Day was launched in 1972 and is organised every year. The NSC or the National Safety Council takes responsibility for managing the event every year.
4. The Safety Council was founded by the Ministry of Labour on March 4, 1966, to develop sustainable Safety, Health and Environment movement.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## World International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness

**Why in news:** The International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness seeks to promote better awareness and understanding of disarmament issues among the public, especially young people.



1. Observed on 5 March, the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness plays a role in deepening the global public's understanding about how disarmament efforts contribute to enhancing peace and security, preventing and ending armed conflicts, and curbing human suffering caused by weapons.
2. Weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of primary concern, owing to their destructive power and the threat that they pose to humanity.
3. The excessive accumulation in conventional weapons and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons jeopardizes international peace and security and sustainable development, while the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is seriously endangering civilians.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



## India to become pharmacy of the world: Pharma Anveshan 23

**Why in news:** The Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) has announced 6th March as the National Pharmacy Education Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Professor Mahadeva Lal Schroff and to recognise his contribution to establishing pharmacy education in India.



1. On the occasion of National Pharmacy Education Day, Union Minister of State (HFW) Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurated Pharma Anveshan 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan.
2. She also launched the 'One Stop-Non Stop' digital job portal of the Pharmacy Council of India.
3. Pharmacy Council of India under its patronage celebrated Prof. M. L. Shroff's 121st birth anniversary as Pharma Anveshan-2023 on 6th March 2023 in New Delhi with a vision of providing a platform for sharing Academic Research with Industry to exchange the benefits of research outcomes between academia and industry.
4. The Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) is a statutory body working under the Ministry of Health, Government of India. It is constituted under the Pharmacy Act, 1948 to regulate pharmacy education & practice of profession in the country.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## International Women Day 2023

**Why in news:** International Women's Day or Women's Day celebrated annually on March 8 is an important occasion where achievements of women in their social, economic, cultural, and political spheres are hailed, acknowledged and appreciated the world over.



1. The theme for International Women's Day 2023, "Embrace Equity", highlights the critical difference between equity and equality. While equality means giving everyone the same resources and opportunities, equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
2. The day encourages individuals and organisations to promote women's empowerment, raise awareness of women's issues, and advocate for gender equality.
3. The first National Women's Day was observed in the United States on February 28, 1909, to honour the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York. In 1917, women in Russia protested and went on strike for 'Bread and Peace,' ultimately leading to women's suffrage in Russia.

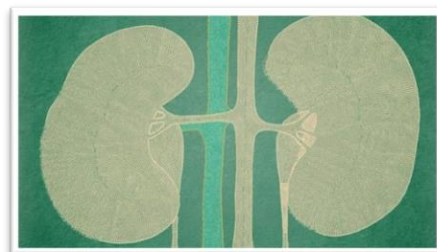


4. In 1975, the United Nations celebrated its first official International Women's Day during International Women's Year.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## World Kidney Day 2023

**Why in news:** On the second Thursday in March each year, the world observes World Kidney Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about kidney health. On March 9, 2023, it will be remembered this year.



1. "Kidney Health for Everyone – Preparing for the Unexpected, Supporting the Vulnerable" is the theme for World Kidney Day in 2023.
2. The 2023 campaign will focus on raising awareness about disastrous events, natural or man-made, international or local, and their impact on people living with kidney disease whose access to appropriate diagnostic services, treatment, and care is hindered.
3. The International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations – World Kidney Alliance (IFKF-WKA) collaborated to address the health problem associated with kidneys globally. Each year since 2006, the day promotes excellent kidney health for everybody.
4. The kidneys, which are two bean-shaped organs located at the bottom of your rib cage, perform many important functions in the body.
5. Besides filtering out excess water and impurities in the blood, they regulate the body's pH level, salt and potassium and produce hormones that control the production of red blood cells, which carry oxygen to the entire body.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## International Day of Women Judges 2023

**Why in news:** International Day of Women Judges, observed on March 10 annually, celebrates female judges who have led from the forefront in the fight against social injustice

1. In India, this changed with Anna Chandi, who became the first female judge of a high court in 1937. In 1989, Fathima Beevi became the first female judge of the Supreme Court of India.



2. To honour female judges across the globe and their contributions towards justice, equality and fairness in society, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to mark an international day for female judges.
3. On April 28, 2021, resolution 75/274 was adopted by the UNGA, declaring March 10 as the International Day of Women Judges. On March 10, 2022, the International Day of Women Judges was celebrated for the first time.
4. This International Day of Women Judges is being observed with the campaign "Women in Justice, Women for Justice" to encourage the full and equal participation of women at all levels of the judicial system, to celebrate the accomplishments thus far, and to increase awareness of the challenges that still lie ahead.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## 100 Days Countdown of 9th International Day of Yoga to begin with Yoga Mahotsav 2023

**Why in news:** IDY 2023 to focus on taking Yoga to every village through participation of Gram Panchayat/Gram Sabhas.



1. Yoga Mahotsav-2023 is being organized to give a wider promotion and publicity to various dimensions of Yoga and its utility, and to kindle a mass movement to promote health and wellbeing and peace across the globe.
2. Ministry of Ayush along with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) is organizing Yoga Mahotsav 2023 from 13th to 14th March 2023 at Delhi's Talkatora Stadium and Post Mahotsav Yoga Workshops on March 15, 2023 at MDNIY.
3. This year's International Day of Yoga (IDY) endeavours to connect with larger global community, as India's G20 presidency theme "One World, One Health" resonance with the principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam". Along with global outreach, IDY will focus on taking Yoga to each and every village in India through active participation of Gram Panchayat/Gram Sabhas.
4. Ministry of Ayush, being the nodal ministry for IDY in India, has taken the lead in organizing eight successful editions of International Day of Yoga (IDY) which has found great enthusiasm and worldwide support.
5. The Ministry through the whole government approach and support from Government of India's other Ministries/Organization/Institutes has initiated various programs and collaborations to build on the progress achieved over the last 8 years in taking the message of Yoga globally.

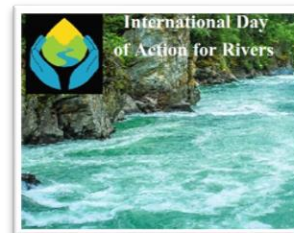
(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)





## International Day of Action for Rivers 2023

**Why in news:** It is observed on 14 March to spread awareness about the importance of rivers and climate change.



1. This year, the 25th anniversary of the day will be observed. It is a day which is dedicated to solidarity when several communities across the world come together with one voice to say that rivers matter.
2. The day also highlights the importance of rivers to biodiversity. We all know that rivers are key to restoring and maintaining biodiversity across the world.
3. This year, the world meets for the 15th Convention on Biological Diversity. The river system is the Earth's highest biological diversity zone.
4. The "Rights of Rivers" campaign, which promotes river recognition as a national treasure, is the theme of the 2023 International Day of Action for Rivers. Additionally, it involves the legal ability to stop rivers from being used as sewage or garbage disposal areas.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## World Consumer Rights Day 2023:

**Why in news:** On this day, people across the world support all consumers' basic rights, demanding that those rights be protected and respected and denouncing market injustices.



1. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 every year with an aim to raise global awareness about consumer rights and promote consumer protection.
2. The day is also commemorated to be aware about the market injustices across the world. It is an annual event that celebrates solidarity within the international consumer movement.
3. The day was first observed on March 15, 1983 which was inspired by US President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's US Congress address on March 15, 1962.
4. This year the theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2023 is "Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transitions." It aims to raise awareness of consumer empowerment and their role to push for a faster clean energy transition.

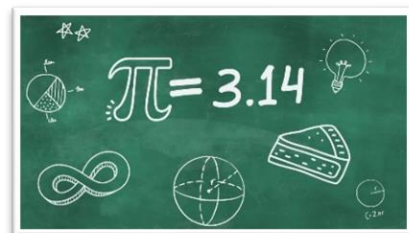
(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)





## International Day of Mathematics or Pi Day

**Why in news:** The day is celebrated by mathematics enthusiasts and educators worldwide to recognize and appreciate the significance of mathematics in our lives.



1. The first Pi Day was celebrated in 1988 by physicist Larry Shaw at the San Francisco Exploratorium.
2. In 2009, the United States House of Representatives designated March 14 as Pi Day.
3. UNESCO marked Pi Day as the 'International Day of Mathematics' during its general conference in 2019.
4. Pi has been known for nearly 4,000 years and was discovered by the ancient Babylonians. One of the first calculations of pi was carried out by Greek mathematician Archimedes of Syracuse (287 B.C. to 212 B.C.)
5. The approximate value of Pi is 3.14. The date, when written in the format of month/day (3/14), matches the first three digits of the mathematical constant. Hence it is celebrated on March 14.
6. Pi is a mathematical constant that represents the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Global Recycling Day 2023

**Why in news:** Every year on March 18th, Global Recycling Day is celebrated to increase people's comprehension about the harmful effects of plastic on the environment.



1. Global Recycling Day is officially recognized by the United Nations.
2. This day also promotes recycling as a crucial concept and encourages people to organize events throughout the year to spread awareness about this cause.
3. The theme of Global Recycling Day 2023 is "Creative Innovation". When it comes to recycling, we all have to be creative. In order to do it effectively, we need to think outside the box. Putting our recyclables in the bin is not sufficient – we need to be proactive and find new ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle.
4. It draws attention to the growing problem of waste and pollution and encourages people to take action to reduce their environmental impact.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



## World Sleep Day 2023

**Why in news:** World Sleep Day is an annual event observed on the Friday before the Spring Vernal Equinox to raise awareness about the significance of sleep.



1. The World Sleep Society has announced the theme for this year's Sleep Day as 'Sleep is Essential for Health'.
2. The purpose of this theme is to emphasize the importance of good sleep for overall physical, mental, and social well-being, just as a healthy diet and exercise are essential for good health.
3. World Sleep Day was first observed on March 14, 2008, as an initiative of the World Sleep Society.
4. The annual event is aimed at raising awareness about the importance of sleep and the impact that sleep disorders can have on an individual's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## International Day of Happiness 2023

**Why in news:** The International Day of Happiness is an annual celebration that occurs on March 20. International Day of purpose is to emphasize the importance of happiness and the overall well-being of individuals.



1. The theme of International Day of Happiness for this year has been kept as "Be Mindful, Be Grateful, Be Kind."
2. On July 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly announced March 20 as the International Day of Happiness through its resolution 66/281.
3. The resolution acknowledged the universality of happiness and well-being as crucial goals and recognized their importance in public policy objectives.
4. The first celebration of the International Day of Happiness event took place in 2013 and has since served as a means of acknowledging the significance of happiness in the lives of people worldwide.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



## World Oral Health Day 2023

**Why in news:** World Oral Health Day is observed globally every year on March 20, with the primary objective of increasing awareness about the significance of oral health.



1. The World Dental Federation (FDI) launches a campaign for World Oral Health Day every year with a specific theme. The theme for 2023 is 'Be Proud of Your Mouth,' which is the same theme used for the past three years. The campaign was launched by the FDI in 2021.
2. The main goal of World Oral Health Day is to increase awareness among those who are affected by or deal with oral diseases. Unhealthy oral hygiene is believed to have negative effects on one's overall health, including emotional, social, mental, and physical health.
3. World Oral Health Day was first observed on September 12, 2007, as World Oral Health Awareness Day, initiated by FDI World Dental Federation. However, in 2013, the FDI in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) established March 20 as the official date for World Oral Health Day.
4. The day aims to educate people on the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene, as it can help prevent various diseases such as tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)

## World Sparrow Day 2023

**Why in news:** The first commemoration of the day occurred in 2010. The goal of the day is to educate people about the value of sparrows in the ecosystem, their role in pollination, and their importance in pest control.



1. The goal of World Sparrow Day is to raise awareness of the plight of sparrows and other common birds and to inspire people and organisations around the world to take action to protect them. Sparrows are known to be an indicator of a region's environmental health, and their decreasing numbers are cause for concern.
2. World Sparrow Day is observed in a variety of ways around the world, including bird-watching, building birdhouses, and educational programmes.
3. The theme of World Sparrow Day 2023 is "I Love Sparrows", with the goal of encouraging more people to appreciate the relationship between humans and sparrows.

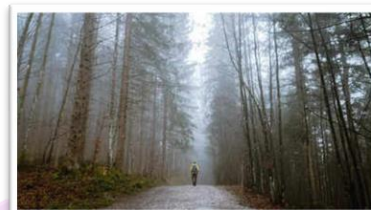


4. The first World Sparrow Day was held on March 10, 2010, and has been celebrated annually since then. Mohammed Dilawar founded The Nature Forever Society to raise awareness about sparrows. In 2008, TIME Magazine named him a conservation hero for his efforts.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## International Day of Forests 2023

**Why in news:** According to the UN, forests are home to about 80% of terrestrial biodiversity across the world, with more than 60,000 tree species. Approximately 1.6 billion people depend directly on forests for food, shelter, energy, medicine, and income.



1. It is observed on March 21st annually to spread awareness about the importance of all types of forests.
2. The history of the International Day of Forests can be traced back to 1971 when the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations established World Forest Day.
3. The theme for International Day of Forests changes every year with the aim of highlighting different aspects of forest conservation and management. The theme for 2023 is 'forests and health'.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)

## International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination:

**Why in news:** The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is a call to action for individuals, organizations, and all levels of government to actively work towards ending all forms of racial discrimination, injustice, systemic racism, and hatred. The day serves as a reminder of the need for ongoing efforts to combat the alarming rise of xenophobia, racism, and intolerance worldwide.



1. March 21 is marked as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
2. This day holds great significance as it marks the tragedy that took place in Sharpeville, South Africa, on March 21, 1960. During a peaceful protest against apartheid "pass laws," police opened fire and killed 69 people. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Day in 1966, urging the international community to work towards eradicating all forms of racial discrimination.





3. The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is also an opportunity to draw attention to the International Decade for People of African Descent.
4. This group includes some of the world's poorest and most marginalized people. The International Decade for People of African Descent was launched by the United Nations General Assembly and aims to promote respect, protection, and fulfilment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for people of African descent worldwide.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## World Water Day 2023

**Why in news:** The main objective is to inspire people to sustainably manage the freshwater resources and learn more about water-related issues.



1. To highlight the importance of water and raise awareness about the global water crisis, World Water Day is being observed on March 22 every year.
2. The main objective of the day is to aware and inspire people to sustainably manage the freshwater resources and learn more about water-related issues like water pollution, water scarcity, inadequate water, and lack of sanitation, and take appropriate steps to make a difference.
3. The theme for World Water Day 2023 is 'Accelerating the change to solve the water and sanitation crisis', emphasising the necessity of taking stern action to address the global water crisis.
4. The resolution to observe World Water Day was first adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 22, 1992, after which March 22 was declared as World Water Day and is celebrated around the world since then.
5. The first World Water Day was observed in the year 1993.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## World Meteorological Day 2023:

**Why in news:** The world celebrates World Meteorological Day on March 23 to honor the founding of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on that date in 1950.

1. This day has a different theme each year, and the theme for 2023 is "The Future of Weather, Climate, and Water Across Generations".





2. World Meteorological Day started in 1950, when the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was created. The group was started on March 23, 1950, with the goal of dealing with all national and international problems related to climate and weather change.
3. The day showcase the essential contribution of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to the safety and well-being of society and will be celebrated with activities around the world. These activities may include conferences, seminars, exhibitions, and workshops to educate the public about weather and water-related issues and promote international cooperation in these fields.
4. The day celebrates the crucial role of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in ensuring the safety and well-being of society and is observed worldwide with various activities. The themes chosen for World Meteorological Day are related to current weather, climate, or water-related issues.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## World Tuberculosis Day 2023

**Why in news:** World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24th every year to raise awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease.



1. The theme for this year's World Tuberculosis Day is "Yes! We can end TB!" and it focuses on urging leaders from around the world to take action to stop the TB epidemic.
2. The theme highlights the significance of various factors, including increased funding, prompt action, collaboration among different sectors, swift implementation of new WHO guidelines, and innovative approaches to eliminate tuberculosis.
3. World Tuberculosis Day has been observed annually on March 24th since 1982, commemorating the date when Dr. Robert Koch announced his discovery of the tuberculosis (TB) bacterium in 1882. Koch's discovery paved the way for diagnosing and treating TB, which had been a major cause of illness and death in Europe at the time.
4. Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection caused by the Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria. It most commonly affects the lungs but can also affect other parts of the body, such as the kidneys, spine, and brain. TB spreads through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and another person inhales the bacteria.



5. Symptoms of TB include persistent coughing, chest pain, fatigue, weight loss, fever, and night sweats. However, not everyone with TB experiences symptoms, and some people may not develop symptoms until the disease is advanced.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## World Theatre Day 2023

**Why in news:** Every year on March 27, World Theatre Day is celebrated worldwide to promote the significance of theatrical forms. Theatre not only provides entertainment but also serves as an art form that educates.



1. Every year on March 27, World Theatre Day is celebrated worldwide to promote the significance of theatrical forms. Theatre not only provides entertainment but also serves as an art form that educates and inspires individuals.
2. The theme of World Theatre Day is "Theatre and a Culture of Peace" set by the International Theatre Institute.
3. World Theatre Day was first observed in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI). ITI is a worldwide organization that promotes international exchange in theatre arts and promotes the values of UNESCO.
4. The idea of World Theatre Day was proposed by the ITI founder, Arvi Kivimaa, during the organization's ninth world congress in Helsinki, Finland. The proposal was unanimously accepted, and the first World Theatre Day was celebrated on March 27, 1962.
5. Through plays, theatre brings awareness to social issues, promotes cultural diversity, and encourages empathy and understanding. It also helps individuals develop critical thinking skills by challenging their perspectives and providing a space for dialogue and discussion.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## Rally for Garbage Free Cities on International Day of Zero Waste

**Why in news:** In line with the theme for International Day of Zero Waste 2023 - 'Achieving sustainable and environmentally sound practices of minimizing and managing waste', The Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs is organizing



Swachhotsav- International Day of Zero Waste: Rally for Garbage Free Cities in New Delhi.

1. Swachhotsav - International Day of Zero Waste: Rally for Garbage Free Cities will see discussions and best practices presentations on Circularity in Garbage Free Cities, Women and Youth for GFC, Business and Tech for GFC and Fireside chat with Mayors. The event will be organized by MoHUA in collaboration with GIZ, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, UNEP.
2. The Swachh Mashaal March will set the tone for the 'Women-led Swachhotsav', where citizens will rally for Garbage-Free Cities on 29, 30, 31st March, 2023. This will be followed by cleanliness drives at public places, open plots, water bodies, railway tracks, public toilets in every ward of a participating Urban Local Bodies (ULB). Over 2000 cities have already joined hands for the Mashaal march.
3. The campaign aimed to recognize and celebrate the transition from women in sanitation to women-led sanitation. A series of events and activities were organized across cities to celebrate women from all walks of life, who provide leadership in making the mission of GFC a success. The 3-week campaign will culminate in a Swachhotsav event on 29th March, 2023, as a run up to the International Day of Zero Waste on 30th March, 2023.
4. Under the campaign, the first edition of Women Icons leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023 was announced to recognize high-impact women entrepreneurs or women-led enterprises working for urban swachhata.
5. A unique peer learning initiative, Swachhata Yatra has been rolled out wherein SHG members engaged as waste entrepreneurs are getting the exciting opportunity of inter- state travel. Acting as Swachhata Doots, many of these women are first time travelers and this enriching experience is offering them a platform to see, interact and learn.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## Daylight Saving Time

**Why in news:** Lebanon was thrown into mass confusion after its government at the last minute delayed the start of daylight saving time by a month. Meanwhile, Greenland has chosen to stay with daylight saving time forever.



1. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is used to save energy and make better use of daylight. It was first used in 1908 in Thunder Bay, Canada.



2. However, globally Germany and Austria introduced DST on April 30, 1916, the rationale being to minimize the use of artificial lighting to save fuel during World War I.
3. Daylight Saving Time is the practice of setting the clocks one hour ahead of standard time to make use of more sunlight in the spring, summer, and fall evenings.
4. The practice was first suggested in a whimsical essay by Benjamin Franklin in 1784.
5. In countries in the Northern Hemisphere, clocks are usually set ahead one hour in late March or in April and are set back one hour in late September or in October.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

## Important News: Defense

### Exercise Shinyuu Maitri

**Why in news:** The Exercise is being conducted on 01 and 02 March 2023. The first phase of the exercise consists of discussions on transport operations and tactical manoeuvring, followed by the second phase of flying drills by IAF's C-17 and JASDF C-2 transport aircraft.



1. The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF). The exercise is being organised on the side-lines of the Indo-Japan Joint Army Exercise, Dharma Guardian, which is being conducted from 13 February 2023 to 02 March 2023 at Komatsu, Japan.
2. The IAF contingent is participating in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri 23 with one C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.
3. The exercise gives an opportunity for the respective subject matter experts to interact and study each other's operational philosophies and best practices. The exercise shall also enhance mutual understanding and interoperability between the IAF and the JASDF.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)



## TROPEX-23: Indian Navy's largest war game culminates in Arabian Sea

**Why in news:** The Exercise TROPEX 23 witnessed participation of approximately 70 Indian Navy ships, six submarines and over 75 aircraft.



1. TROPEX 23 is being conducted over a duration of three months from Jan - Mar 23. As part of the exercise, all surface combatants of the Indian Navy including Destroyers, Frigates, Corvettes as well as submarines and aircraft are put through complex maritime operational deployments to validate and refine the Navy's Concept of Operations including operational logistics and interoperability with other Services.
2. The exercise is being conducted in different phases, both in harbour and at sea, encompassing various facets of combat operations, including live weapon firings.
3. The overall exercise construct included Coastal Defence exercise Sea Vigil and the Amphibious Exercise AMPHEX.
4. The maritime exercise also facilitates operational level interaction with the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and the Coast Guard, which will further strengthen interoperability and joint operations in a complex environment.
5. The exercise gives an opportunity for the respective subject matter experts to interact and study each other's operational philosophies and best practices.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## EXERCISE SEA DRAGON 23

**Why in news:** A P8I aircraft of the Indian Navy arrived at Guam, USA on 14 Mar 23 to participate in 'Exercise Sea Dragon 23', the third edition of the coordinated multi-lateral ASW exercise for Long Range MR ASW aircraft, conducted by the US Navy.



1. The Sea Dragon is an annual, multinational anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercise conducted by the United States Navy.
2. Participating Countries: India, USA, Japan, Canada and South Korea.
3. The Exercise aims to achieve high levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific.
4. Ex Sea Dragon 23 will test the capabilities of participating aircraft in tracking simulated and live underwater targets, whilst also sharing mutual expertise.





5. The Exercise would witness representation by an Indian Navy P8I, along with P8A of the US Navy, P1 from the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, CP 140 from the Royal Canadian Air Force and P3C from the RoKN.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## EXERCISE AFINDEX 2023

**Why in news:** The first Africa-India Field Training Exercise was held in Pune in March 2019. It saw participation from 20 African nations.



1. The Indian Army is set to host the second edition of the Africa-India field training exercise (AFINDEX-23) from March 21 to 30, and African Chiefs Conclave on March 28, in Pune. Over 22 countries are scheduled to attend the conclave while 20 countries are expected to be part of the exercise
2. The exercise is divided into four phases in which trainers would be initially trained. This would be followed by a humanitarian mine action and a peace-keeping operations phase.
3. Maximum use of indigenous equipment is being made during the exercise and new-generation equipment manufactured in India would be showcased during the exercise.
4. The objective is to continue to build upon the initiatives taken to strengthen India-Africa relations, with a focus on enhancing peace and security and create opportunities to exchange ideas and perspectives

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Anti-submarine craft INS Androth launched

**Why in news:** These ships, used to conduct anti-submarine operations and mine laying operations, can attain a maximum speed of 25 knots.



1. The ship has been named Androth to signify the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Androth, located about 170 Nm north-west of Kochi, in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep
2. Indian Navy launched another Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASWSWC) — the second in a series of eight indigenous ships built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers.



3. INS Androth is about 77.6 metres long and 10.5 metres wide, and requires a draught of only 2.7 metres.
4. Primary Role: To conduct anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low-intensity maritime operations, and mine-laying operations. It is also capable of full-scale sub-surface surveillance of coastal waters and various surface platforms and coordinated ASW operations with aircraft.
5. It carries lightweight torpedoes, ASW rockets and mines, a close-in weapon system (with a 30 mm gun), and 16.7 mm stabilized remote-controlled guns.
6. It will be fitted with hull-mounted sonar and a low-frequency variable depth sonar.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Army, Air Force conduct multi domain exercise in Eastern Theatre

**Why in news:** The Vayu Prahar exercise enabled coordination and rehearsal among various agencies for quick mobilisation, transportation and deployment of forces.



1. The Army and the Air force jointly conducted a multi domain air-land exercise — Vayu Prahar — in the Eastern Theatre to validate joint plans for synergised multiple domain operations.
2. The special forces also participated along with the Army and the Navy in the 96-hour exercise which was held in the eastern theatre.
3. The air-landed force further executed contingency tasks as per a realistic exercise scenario in challenging high-altitude terrain conditions.
4. The scope of the exercise included the rapid mobilization of an earmarked Rapid Reaction Force from the hinterland to undertake air-landed operations in a nominated Advance Landing Ground.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)

## Exercise Konkan 2023

**Why in news:** Konkan 2023, the bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the UK's Royal Navy, was recently held off the Konkan coast in the Arabian Sea.

1. INS Trishul, a guided missile frigate, and HMS Lancaster, a Type 23 guided missile frigate, participated in this edition and undertook multiple maritime drills to enhance interoperability and imbibe best practices.



2. The exercises covered all domains of maritime operations, air, surface and sub-surface, and included gunnery shoots on surface inflatable target 'Killer Tomato', helicopter operations, anti-air and anti-submarine warfare drills, Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS), ship manoeuvres and exchange of personnel.
3. The exercise yielded excellent training value to personnel of both navies. A high level of professionalism and enthusiasm was also evident during its conduct.
4. The focus personnel exhibited on op-readiness, enhancing interoperability and improving the ability to conduct joint operations will go a long way in bolstering the combined efforts of the IN and RN to strengthen maritime security and uphold a rules-based order in the region.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## British Challenger 2 main battle tank recently arrived in Ukraine.

**Why in news:** The armour of the Challenger-2 is called the Chobham armour or the Dorchester armour and is considered among the best in the world. It has a range of 547 kilometres with a maximum speed of 59 kilometres per hour.



1. It is the British Army's main battle tank (MBT). It is a third-generation MBT, the same generation as the Russian T-80 and T-90 tanks.
2. It is heavily armoured and highly mobile, designed for use in direct fire zones.
3. Whilst its primary role is to destroy or neutralise armour, Challenger 2 can operate across a spectrum of high-intensity conflict, counter-insurgency and peacekeeping roles.
4. Countries using: It is in service with the United Kingdom (386) and Oman (38).
5. It is armed with a rifled Royal Ordnance L30 120-mm main gun, which can deliver main armament rounds up to a range of around four kilometres.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)



## Important News: Reports

### Hunger Funding Gap Report 2023

**Why in news:** The report By Action Against Hunger found that countries experiencing the worst hunger crises received less hunger funding (by the percentage of appeals filled) than countries with lower rates of hunger.



1. Only 47% of hunger funding needs through the UN humanitarian system are met, leaving a hunger funding gap of 53%, according to the Action Against Hunger 2023 Hunger Funding Gap Report
2. In 2022, only 3% of hunger program needs were fully funded and the majority (65%) of appeals were not even fulfilled to the halfway point. In 2021, 7% of hunger programs were fully funded and 57% of were not funded halfway.
3. Countries with Worst Hunger Crisis: Afghanistan, Haiti, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Honduras, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Somalia, Kenya, Mozambique, Guatemala etc.
4. It requires 4 billion USD to stop the hunger crisis in the world. This is approximately equal to the cost of the 2030 Winter Olympics. Wealthy countries should contribute more to reducing hunger levels in the world.

(SOURCE – NEWS ON AIR)

### IEA's CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Report 2023

**Why in news:** According to the CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions in 2022 Report by the International Energy Agency released on March 2, 2023, global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased by less than 1% in 2022.



1. The report highlights that this rise in emissions was significantly lower than the exceptional increase of over six per cent in 2021. It recommended stronger steps to accelerate the clean energy transition to achieve energy and climate goals.
2. The Carbon emissions from the fuel coal increased by 1.6%. The emissions from oil increased by 2.5%. The aviation sector was the major polluter in this fuel category.
3. In the energy sector, the major emissions came from electricity generators, particularly coal-based electricity generators. Solar energy and wind energy power plants increased throughout the world.



4. According to the report, emissions in China decreased in 2022 due to the COVID lockdown. In the European Union, emissions decreased by 2.5%. This was because, with Russia invading Ukraine, many countries stopped importing gas and oil from Russia and moved towards clean energy. In the US, emissions increased by 0.8%.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Important News: Sports

### Mirabai Chanu wins BBC Indian Sportswoman Of The Year for second year running

**Why in news:** Chanu becomes the first athlete to win the award twice in a row after winning for the year 2021.



1. Tokyo Olympic Games silver-medallist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has bagged the 2022 'BBC Indian Sportswoman Of The Year' award after a public vote.
2. At the Tokyo Games, she had become the first Indian to win a silver in the sport. Last year, she went on to secure gold at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. She also won a silver medal at the World Weightlifting Championships in 2022.
3. The other short-listed contenders for the award were wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik, boxer Nikhat Zareen and badminton player PV Sindhu.
4. Table tennis player Bhavina Patel won the 'BBC Para Sportswoman of the Year' award, a category introduced this year.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

### IDFC FIRST Bank becomes official banking partner for Mumbai Indians

**Why in news:** IDFC FIRST Bank will be the Official Banking Partner and marks IDFC FIRST Bank's debut in cricket partnerships



1. IDFC FIRST Bank, announced its three-year partnership with Mumbai Indians today. Beginning this season, IDFC FIRST Bank will be the Official Banking Partner and marks IDFC FIRST Bank's debut in cricket partnerships.
2. As the official banking partner, IDFC FIRST Bank will provide a range of financial products and services to Mumbai Indians and its players, including banking solutions, credit cards, and digital banking services.





3. The history of IDFC FIRST Bank can be traced back to 1997 when Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) was established as a specialized financial institution to finance infrastructure projects in India. In 2015, IDFC received a banking license from the Reserve Bank of India and set up IDFC Bank.
4. In January 2018, IDFC Bank announced its plans to merge with Capital First, a non-banking finance company (NBFC) that specialized in consumer lending. The merger was completed in December 2018, and the newly merged entity was named IDFC FIRST Bank.
5. IDFC FIRST Bank Headquarters: Mumbai;

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## PM congratulates boxer, Lovlina Borgohain for winning gold medal at Boxing World Championships

**Why in news:** India's Lovlina Borgohain has set a record by winning gold at the World Boxing Championships by defeating Australia's Caitlin Parker.



1. India bagged 4th gold in World Women's Boxing Championship. In the 75 kg category, Indian athlete Lovelina Borgohain has created a record by winning gold.
2. The Women's World Boxing Championship is being held in the capital city of Delhi. Indian players are accumulating medals in this tournament.
3. India's Nikat Zareen won the gold medal by defeating Vietnam's Niguyen 5-0 in the finals of the 50 kg category. 26-year-old Nikat Zareen has set a record by winning the World Championship title for the second year in a row.
4. At the same time, it is noteworthy that India's golden monkey Mary Kom has won 6 World Championship gold medals and created a historic record.

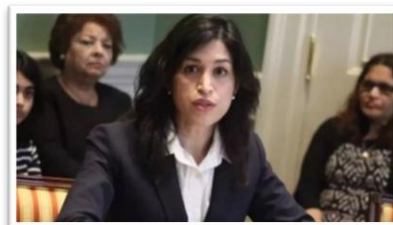
(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## Important News: Personality

### World Indo-American woman judge Tejal Mehta named first justice of a district court in US

**Why in news:** Tejal Mehta, an Indian-American woman judge who promised to make a real impact to the community and treat people with compassion, has taken oath as the first Justice of a district court.



1. Tejal Mehta, an Indian-American woman judge who promised to make a real impact to the community and treat people with compassion, has taken oath as the first Justice of a district court in the US state of Massachusetts.
2. Mehta will serve as the first Justice of the Ayer District Court. She has served as an Associate Justice with the same court and was unanimously selected and sworn in by Judge Stacey Fortes, Chief Justice of the District Court.
3. Mehta began her legal career in civil work before becoming a prosecutor with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, where she served for more than a decade.
4. She went on to open her own practice and became a public defender before pursuing a position on the bench as a circuit judge.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)

### Arun Subramanian becomes first Indian-American NY district court judge

**Why in news:** Arun Subramanian was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1979. His parents immigrated to America from India in the early 1970s and served as a control systems engineer at several companies while his mother worked several jobs, including as a bookkeeper.



1. The United States Senate has confirmed Indian-American Arun Subramanian to be the District Judge for the Southern District of New York.
2. With this, Subramanian has become the first South Asian judge to serve on this bench. The Senate confirmed the nomination of Subramanian by a vote of 58-37.
3. Earlier, in September 2022, US President Joe Biden announced the nomination of Subramanian for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)



## 1st woman IAF officer to command frontline combat unit

**Why in news:** Shaliza Dhami is the 1st female officer selected to head a frontline combat unit. This is for the first time in the IAF's history, a woman officer has been given command of a frontline combat unit.



1. The IAF's move comes just two months after Captain Shiva Chauhan of the Indian Army's Fire and Fury Corps became the first woman officer to be operationally deployed at the world's highest battlefield in Siachen.
2. Group Captain Dhami was commissioned in 2003 as a Helicopter pilot and has over 2,800 hours of flying experience.
3. A Qualified Flying Instructor, she has served as Flight Commander of a Helicopter Unit in the Western sector.
4. The armed forces have opened up command appointments for women officers following a Supreme Court verdict. The Army recently conducted interviews and approved the first batch of women officers for command appointments.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

## Climate Entrepreneur Shreya Ghodawat Appointed as the India Ambassador of She Changes Climate

**Why in news:** Shreya Ghodawat hosted an event at One8 Commune, Pune that witnessed impactful discussions and a special film screening on the occasion of International Women's Day.



1. Shreya Ghodawat is a name to watch in the world of sustainability and social impact. Driven by a passion for promoting climate solutions and aspirational ethical living, she is making a difference with her work as a sustainability strategist, writer, speaker and advisor.
2. She has newly been appointed as the India Ambassador of She Changes Climate - a global campaign driving awareness of the crucial role of women in accelerating just climate action.
3. She Changes Climate India Event - The global non-profit organisation launched a special initiative for International Women's Day titled 'Embrace Equity' that aims to amplify the voices of women around the impacts of climate change.
4. The main objective of the event was to inspire and encourage women to take up more space in climate change conversations and lead innovative climate action solutions.

(SOURCE – TIMES OF INDIA)



**Important News: Awards****Central Banking Awards 2023**

**Why in news:** The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has congratulated the RBI Governor, Shri Shaktikanta Das for being conferred with the 'Governor of the year' award in the Central Banking Awards 2023.

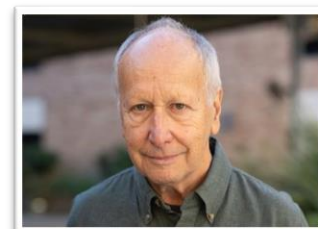


1. This is the second time an Indian central bank governor has received the award, with Raghuram Rajan being the previous recipient in 2015. Das's leadership at RBI was critical in implementing essential reforms, innovative payment systems, and growth-oriented measures during the pandemic. He skillfully navigated political pressures and economic crises, earning accolades for his efforts.
2. Although the National Bank of Ukraine was also honored with the Central Bank of the Year award, Das was deemed a deserving recipient of the Governor of the Year award due to his leadership during times of crisis and his significant contributions to India's economic reforms.
3. Shaktikanta Das, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has been honored with the title "Governor of the Year" for 2023 by Central Banking, an international economic research journal.
4. The publication praised Das for his steady leadership during challenging periods, including the collapse of a significant non-banking company, the initial and second waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, and inflationary pressures due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

(SOURCE – NEWS18)

**Argentina's Luis Caffarelli wins 'Abel' of mathematics for illuminating what happens in a glass with ice**

**Why in news:** The researcher, the first Latin American to win the Abel Prize, uncovered the interactions between solids and liquids, opening new doors to medicine, the automotive industry and even knowledge of the universe



1. The prize is conferred every year by the King of Norway and is awarded to one or more outstanding mathematicians. This year, the Abel Prize was awarded to Argentine-American mathematician Luis Caffarelli for his groundbreaking contributions to several areas of mathematics.



2. Caffarelli's work has had a significant impact on several areas of mathematics, including partial differential equations, calculus of variations, and free boundary problems.
3. He is best known for his work on the regularity of solutions to partial differential equations.
4. His research has helped to establish fundamental results on the regularity of solutions to nonlinear elliptic and parabolic equations.
5. Caffarelli has also made important contributions to the study of free boundary problems. Free boundary problems arise in a variety of contexts, including fluid mechanics, materials science, and finance. Caffarelli's work has led to new insights into the behavior of free boundaries and has helped to develop new techniques for studying these problems.

(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)

## Important News: Schemes

**National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala” to improve connectivity in hilly areas.**

**Why in news:** The scheme will be taken up on PPP (Public Private Partnership) mode, which will be a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.



1. Aim: To decongest mountainous areas where road and train connectivity cannot be upgraded beyond a limit.
2. Nodal Ministry: The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways undertakes the project.
3. The National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) has been mandated by the ministry to implement the project. It is a 100% owned SPV of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
4. Under phase-I of the project, 30 priority points or stretches will be constructed. The ministry will oversee all the affairs related to the ropeway construction, research, and policy-making.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)





## Monthly Practice Quiz

1. Consider the following statements on WHO's - Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2020 report:

- 1) Globally, Maternal mortality declined by 34 % between 2000 and 2020
- 2) India recorded 24,000 maternal deaths in 2020, second only to Nigeria.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**WHO released - Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2020 report.**

- a) Maternal Mortality Ratio is maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.
- b) The report showed –
  - Globally, Maternal mortality declined by 34 % between 2000 and 2020.
  - Every day in 2020, approximately 800 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth i.e., a woman dies around every two minutes.
  - In 2020, about 70% of all maternal deaths were in sub-Saharan Africa.
  - India recorded 24,000 maternal deaths in 2020, second only to Nigeria.
  - However, there has been an overall reduction of 73.5 per cent in maternal mortality ratio (MMR) in India — deaths per lakh live births — between 2000 and 2020
  - In 2020, India's MMR stood at 103, a vast improvement from 384 at the turn of the century.
- c) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.1 aims to reduce maternal mortality to less than 70 maternal deaths per 100000 live births by 2030.

Hence, option C is correct.



2. Hayabusa 2 space mission has been launched by which of the following countries?

- A. Russia
- B. South Korea
- C. China
- D. Japan
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

### Hayabusa 2 Mission

Scientists at NASA recently discovered life-forming molecules from studying samples returned by Hayabusa 2 explorer.

- a) Hayabusa 2 is a Japanese spacecraft that studied the asteroid Ryugu, collected samples, and brought them to Earth for analysis.
- b) It was the first to deploy rovers to operate on an asteroid.
- c) It was launched by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in December 2014 and arrived at asteroid Ryugu on June 2018, collected samples from the asteroid during two touchdowns in 2019, and delivered the sample capsule back to the Earth on December 2020.

### d) Mission Objectives:

- a. To understand origin and evolution of Solar System, including beginning of life.
- b. To establish deep space exploration technology by taking on new challenges.
- e) Hayabusa2 is a follow-up to Japan's original Hayabusa mission, which was the first spacecraft to take samples from an asteroid, and was also the first mission to successfully land and take off from an asteroid. It returned samples from asteroid 25143 Itokawa to Earth on June 13, 2010.

Hence, option D is correct.

3. Which of the following institutions has developed 'AFTER' application (to detect human emotions)?



- A. AIIMS, New Delhi
- B. SGPGI, Lucknow
- C. PGIMER, Chandigarh
- D. NIMHANS, Bengaluru
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### **AIIMS, New Delhi has developed 'AFTER', a new tool to detect human emotions**

AIIMS has developed a new tool to map emotions that can help treat autism, schizophrenia and depression

- a. In a way forward to treating people with autism, schizophrenia and depression, doctors at the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) Delhi have come up with a new tool to detect human emotions known as Facial Toolbox for Emotion Recognition (AFTER) database.
- b. It will create an emotional facial expression database (collection of images with great social and biological relevance).
- c. It rates emotions on a 5-point Likert scale in three dimensions: intensity, clarity, and authenticity.
- d. Likert scale is a unidimensional scale that researchers use to collect respondents' attitudes and opinions.
- e. It will be useful in treating persons with autism, schizophrenia, and depression.

Hence, option A is correct.

### **4. Who will be the Chief Guest at the 8th Raisina Dialogue?**

- A. Vladimir Putin
- B. Jacinda Ardern
- C. Giorgia Meloni
- D. Kevin Rudd
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| C



Solution |||

## 8th Raisina Dialogue

MEA announced Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni would be the chief guest and keynote speaker at the 8th Raisina Dialogue.

- a. Raisina Dialogue is India's premier conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics, committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community.
- b. It is annually organized by Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India since 2016.
- c. It is multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral discussion involving heads of state, cabinet ministers, and local government officials, leaders from the private sector, media, and academia.
- d. About Observer Research Foundation (ORF):
  - Established in 1990
  - It is an independent think tank that conducts policy research on good governance, foreign policy, and sustainable economic development for India.
  - Mandate: It seeks to lead and aid policy thinking towards building a strong and prosperous India in a fair and equitable world.

Hence, option C is correct.

5. Consider the following statements on **Fab 4 (Chip 4) Alliance**:

- 1) Fab 4 or Chip 4 is an alliance of world's top producers of semiconductors: Taiwan, United States, Japan and South Korea.
- 2) It was proposed by US in 2022 to enhance the "security" and "resilience" of semiconductor supply chains, including by reducing the world's reliance on chips made in China.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2



Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## **Fab 4 (Chip 4) Alliance**

### **US-led 'Fab 4' chip alliance met to coordinate supply chain resilience**

a. Fab 4 or Chip 4 is an alliance of world's top producers of semiconductors: Taiwan, United States, Japan and South Korea.

b. It was proposed by US in 2022 to enhance the "security" and "resilience" of semiconductor supply chains, including by reducing the world's reliance on chips made in China.

c. Facts:

- Semiconductors are materials which have a conductivity between conductors and insulators.
- They can be pure elements, silicon or germanium or compounds, gallium, arsenide or cadmium selenide.
- They are the basic building blocks of all modern electronics and information and communications technology (ICT) products.

d. Steps taken by Indian Government:

- India has launched the Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPeCS) - for manufacturing of electronics components and semiconductors.
- In 2021, MeitY also launched the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme - to nurture at least 20 domestic companies involved in semiconductor design and facilitate them to achieve a turnover of more than Rs.1500 Crore in the next 5 years.

Hence, option C is correct.

6. Which of the universities will become the first foreign university to establish a campus in India?

- A. Columbia University
- B. Harvard University
- C. Cambridge University
- D. Deakin University
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above





Answer ||| D

Solution |||

## Australia's Deakin University to become the first foreign varsity to set up campus in India

Australia's Deakin University is set to become the first foreign university to enter India via an independent campus in Gujarat's GIFT City.

- a. Australia's Deakin University is set to become the first foreign university to set up campus in India. The University will set up an independent campus in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- b. The Deakin University is ranked 266th in the QS World University Rankings and features among the top 50 young universities in the world.
- c. Budget 2022 speech mentioned permitting world class foreign universities and institutions to offer courses in the GIFT City and that such institutions would be exempted from domestic regulations in order to facilitate the availability of high-end human resources for financial services and technology.
- d. About Gujarat International Finance Tech-City (GIFT City):
  - It is a planned business district in Gujarat; located on the banks of Sabarmati River, connecting business capital (Ahmedabad) and political capital (Gandhinagar) of Gujarat state.
  - It is India's first operational greenfield smart city and International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
  - It has a dedicated multi-services Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for international operations for various services sector players.
  - It is a vertical city that will optimise the land area consumption.

Hence, option D is correct.

7. The International Energy Agency (IEA) released the annual Methane Global Tracker report in 2023. Consider the following statements in this regard:

- 1). The energy sector accounts for around 40% of the total average methane emissions from human activity.
- 2). Methane is the most responsible for global warming since preindustrial times.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?



- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2.
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

The International Energy Agency (IEA) released the annual Methane Global Tracker report in 2023. According to it the energy sector accounts for around 40% of the total average methane emissions from human activity and methane is responsible for 30% of the warming since preindustrial times, second only to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).

Methane is 80 times more potent at warming than CO<sub>2</sub>.

Oil and natural gas companies are known to release methane into the atmosphere when natural gas is flared or vented as well as through leaks.

International Energy Agency is an autonomous Intergovernmental Organisation established in 1974 in Paris, France.

8. Windsor Framework belongs to which of the following countries?

- A. United States of America
- B. United Kingdom
- C. Australia
- D. Brazil

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

Windsor Framework belongs to the United Kingdom. It is deal of the United Kingdom with the European Union on post-Brexit trade rules that have to govern Northern Ireland.

The Framework will replace the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Northern Ireland Protocol was created to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland by keeping Northern Ireland aligned with the EU, meaning goods don't need to be checked between the Republic and the province.



9. A group of 16 countries led by Vanuatu approached the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to seek an advisory opinion from the Court on the issue of climate change. In this regard consider the following statements:

- 1). The official languages of the ICJ are French and English.
- 2). The judgments of the ICJ in contentious cases are just advisory in nature and they are not binding.
- 3). The ICJ is an org not the United Nations Organisation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. All of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is an org not the United Nations Organisation.

The official languages of the Court are French and English.

The Court's judgments in contentious cases are final and binding on the parties to a case and without appeal. But the advisory opinions of the Court are not binding.

It is located at Hague, Netherlands and it has 15 judges who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.

10. In February-March 2023, which the state of India came in the grip of an adenovirus outbreak?

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Haryana
- C. Rajasthan
- D. West Bengal

Answer ||| D



Solution |||

In February-March 2023, Bengal is in the grip of an unprecedented adenovirus outbreak.

The symptoms of the infected person from the virus are common cold or flu-like symptoms, fever, sore throat, acute bronchitis, pneumonia, conjunctivitis, and gastroenteritis.

Adenoviruses are medium-sized, non-enveloped (without an outer lipid bilayer) viruses with an icosahedral nucleocapsid containing a double-stranded DNA genome.

It is highly contagious, especially in close-contact settings, such as childcare centres, schools, hospitals, and summer camps.

11. In March 2023, a 11-foot-tall 'robotic elephant' was donated to Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple in Thrissur district of Kerala by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India. In this reference consider the following states of India:

- 1). Kerala
- 2). Karnataka
- 3). Assam

Arrange the states given above in descending order of the number of elephants they have and select the correct answer from the codes given below:

- A. 1-2-3
- B. 2-1-3
- C. 2-3-1
- D. 1-3-2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

Karnataka has the highest number of elephants in India followed by Assam and Kerala.

In March 2023, a 11-foot-tall 'robotic elephant', weighing 800 kg and made of an iron frame and rubber coating, was donated to Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple in Thrissur district of Kerala by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India.

The 'elephant' has been named 'Irinjadappilly Raman'.



Project Elephant , launched in 1991-92, scheme is sponsored by the Ministry of Environment and Forests of India.

12.Zero Discrimination Day is observed every year on 1 March. What is the theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2023?

- A. Save lives: Decriminalize
- B. Save Women: Save World
- C. Save minorities for Society
- D. Respect Transgenders for Humanity
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

The theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2023 is Save lives: Decriminalize.

The theme UNAIDS is highlighting how the decriminalization of key populations and people living with HIV saves lives and helps advance the end of the AIDS pandemic.

The Day is observed every year on 1 March to create awareness among people about their rights to live an equal and productive life without any kind of discrimination.

13.On which of the following dates, World Civil Defence Day is observed?

- A. 15 February
- B. 28 February
- C. 1 March
- D. 15 March

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

World Civil Defence Day is observed on 1 March to raise awareness about the significance of civil defence measures in preventing accidents, natural disasters, and other emergencies from affecting people and their property.





In order to promote and coordinate civil defence efforts globally, the United Nations created the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) in 1950.

The theme of World Civil Defence Day 2023 is "unifying the world's leading industry specialists for the safety and security of future generations".

14. Consider the following statements on **‘VAIBHAV Fellowship’ announced by the central government**:

- 1) The fellowship offers NRI researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
- 2) Researchers from institutions featuring in the top 500 QS World University Rankings will be eligible for the fellowship.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**Centre unveils ‘VAIBHAV Fellowship’ for NRI researchers:**

Unveiling 'VAIBHAV Fellowship', Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said it aims to improve the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions.

- a. The government on Tuesday unveiled a fellowship to bring Indian-origin researchers to higher educational institutions in the country for a maximum period of two months per year.
- b. The fellowship offers NRI researchers an opportunity to work for a minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
- c. The duration of the fellowship is three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
- d. Researchers from institutions featuring in the top 500 QS World University Rankings will be eligible for the fellowship.



e. It will help in improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world via mobility of faculty/researchers from overseas institutions to India.

Hence, option C is correct.

15. Which of the following statements about **Indian States' Electricity Transition (SET) Report** is/are not correct?

- A. Indian States' Electricity Transition (SET) Report was released by the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- B. The report analyzed 16 states, which together account for 90% of India's annual power requirement.
- C. Karnataka and Gujarat have made maximum progress towards clean electricity transition.
- D. All of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### Indian States' Electricity Transition (SET) Report

Indian States' Electricity Transition (SET) Report was released by Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).

- a. The report analyzed 16 states, which together account for 90% of India's annual power requirement.
- b. The analysis has tracked four dimensions:
  - Policies & Political Commitment
  - Readiness of Power Ecosystem
  - Performance of Power Ecosystem
  - Decarbonisation
- c. Karnataka and Gujarat have made maximum progress towards clean electricity transition. Whereas, states like West Bengal, Bihar and UP are lagging far behind in the field.
- d. The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) is a U.S. non-profit corporation.



Hence, option A is correct.

16. Which of the following countries has recently won **GSMA Government Leadership Award 2023**?

- A. India
- B. China
- C. France
- D. South Korea
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## India wins GSMA Government Leadership Award 2023

GSM Association (GSMA) has conferred Government Leadership Award 2023 to India for implementing best practices in telecom policy and regulation.

a. The GSMA, which represents more than 750 mobile operators and 400 companies in the telecom ecosystem, recognizes one country every year. India was declared winner in the ceremony held at Mobile World Congress Barcelona on 27 Feb, 2023.

b. Important Govt Initiatives in Telecom:

- 'National Broadband Mission', 2019: to facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services across the country, especially in rural and remote areas. The Mission is part of the National Digital Communications Policy, 2018.
- Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI): development of Public Wi-Fi Networks
- Bharat Net Project: It is the world's largest rural broadband connectivity programme using Optical fibre implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL).
- Draft Telecommunication Bill 2022: The Government of India has expressed plans to expand the definition of "telecommunication services" by including Over-the-top (OTT) communication services under the same umbrella, which means that internet-based communications and OTT would both require a license to offer services.

Hence, option A is correct.



17. Who among the following recently won the **FIFA best men's player prize for 2022**?

- A. Mohammad Salah
- B. Cristiano Ronaldo
- C. Lionel Messi
- D. Paul Pogba

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**Lionel Messi won the best FIFA best men's player prize for 2022**

The captain of the Argentina football team Lionel Messi recently won the Best FIFA Men's best player award.

- a) Lionel Messi was named FIFA player of the year on Monday after winning his maiden World Cup title with Argentina in December in Qatar. The 35-year-old forward scored two goals in the World Cup final, which Argentina won on penalties against France following a 3-3 draw after extra time. Currently, he plays the "Paris Saint Germain" club.
- b) FIFA World Cup is the most prestigious tournament in the world - taking place quadrennially.
- c) First FIFA WC was held in Uruguay in 1930, Won by Uruguay.

Hence, option C is correct.

18. Consider the following statements on '**Clean Plant Centres**' to be established by the central government:

- 1) In order to increase domestic production, the Center plans to establish 10 "Clean Plant Centers" as the demand for fruits like apple, avocado and blueberry has increased over time.
- 2) The program will be launched with an outlay of 2,200 crores (in the next 7 years till 2030) to boost availability of disease-free, quality planting material for high value horticultural crops.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2



D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## Govt plans 10 'Clean Plant Centres' to boost fruit crop production:

In order to increase domestic production, the Center plans to establish 10 "Clean Plant Centers" as the demand for fruits like apple, avocado and blueberry has increased over time.

a. These centers will be set up under the 'Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program', which was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2023-24.

b. The Program will be launched with an outlay of 2,200 crores (in the next 7 years till 2030) to boost availability of disease-free, quality planting material for high value horticultural crops.

c. Program aims -

- Enhance the yield of horticulture crops,
- Disseminate and adopt climate resilient varieties,
- Protect the ecosystem through proactive virus and disease control measures.

d. The programme will be handled by the National Horticulture Board (NHB) which in turn will set up Clean Plant Centers across the country and ensure the global competitiveness of the Indian horticulture sector.

e. The 10 centres will be established for fruit crops like apple, walnut, almond, grapes, mango, pomegranate, etc., and will be fully funded by the Centre.

f. The centres will be implemented in a PPP mode in partnership with research organisations, agriculture universities and private sector partners.

g. The Clean Plant Centres will provide services of disease diagnostic, therapeutics, multiplying of plants and generation of mother plants.

Hence, option C is correct.

19. In which of the following states, India's first marina will be constructed?





- A. Maharashtra
- B. Kerala
- C. Goa
- D. Karnataka

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

### **Karnataka to get India's 1st Marina to promote coastal tourism:**

The Karnataka government confirmed the construction of the country's first marina at Byndoor in Udupi district.

- a. Marina is a specially designed place of pleasure for small boats and yachts.
- b. This project has been initiated to promote coastal tourism in the state.
- c. The beach in Byndoor is called Someshwara beach. The place has several tourist attractions such as Koosalli waterfalls, Kshitija Nesara Dharma, Sri Seneshwara Temple, butterfly camp, etc.
- d. Karnataka is blessed with nature's bounty. It has a 350-km coastal area, 10 different weather zones, 400-km of the Western Ghats, a rich biodiversity with sunshine for 300 days, and several rivers.

Hence, option D is correct.

### **20. Consider the following statements on Methane Global Tracker report released by International Energy Agency's (IEA):**

- 1) According to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) annual Methane Global Tracker report, fossil fuel companies emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022, only slightly below the record highs seen in 2019.
- 2) It added that these companies have done almost nothing to curb the emissions despite their pledges to find and fix leaking infrastructure.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2



D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## Methane Global Tracker Report

The report said 75 per cent of methane emissions from the energy sector can be reduced with the help of cheap and readily available technology. However, fossil fuel companies have failed to take any substantial action regarding the issue.

- a. According to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) annual Methane Global Tracker report, fossil fuel companies emitted 120 million metric tonnes of methane into the atmosphere in 2022, only slightly below the record highs seen in 2019.
- b. It added that these companies have done almost nothing to curb the emissions despite their pledges to find and fix leaking infrastructure.
- c. Methane is responsible for 30% of the global warming happening on the earth. It is a greenhouse gas. The potential of methane to warm the earth's surface is 80 times higher than carbon dioxide.
- d. The NOAA of the US says that atmospheric levels of methane increased to 17 parts per billion in 2021.
- e. The energy sector accounts for around 40 per cent of the total average methane emissions from human activity, as oil and natural gas companies are known to release methane into the atmosphere when natural gas is flared or vented. The greenhouse gas is also released through leaks from valves and other equipment during the drilling, extraction and transportation process.

Hence, option C is correct.

21. India has recently signed a “**Framework Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications**” with which of the following countries?

- A. Australia
- B. Ireland
- C. New Zealand
- D. Canada

Answer ||| A



Solution |||

## India, Australia sign deal to recognise qualifications

India and Australia signed a framework mechanism for mutual recognition of educational and skill qualifications to ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries.

- a. India and Australia signed a Framework Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications that will help ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries.
- b. This agreement is part of the commitment by Prime Ministers of both countries at the 2nd India-Australia Virtual Summit held on 21st March 2022, wherein they had agreed to establish a Joint taskforce for mutual recognition of qualifications.
- c. It has come up with a comprehensive mechanism that covers both education and skill qualifications of the two countries and will help facilitate two way mobility of young people for education and employment purposes by mutually recognizing various levels of education and skill qualifications.
- d. In the bilateral meeting the two sides also discussed issues like promoting student mobility and enhancing research and academic collaborations between Indian and Australian universities through the mechanism of Joint/ Dual/ Twinning degrees that have been brought in recently under NEP2020.

Hence, option A is correct.

22. Which two countries participated in the FRINJEX-23 military exercise in March 2023?

- A. India and France
- B. India and Russia
- C. India and Canada
- D. India and Japan

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## Indo-France joint exercise at Pangode military station

The exercise, on March 7 and 8, will have the largest contingent fielded by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army unit.



- a. The maiden joint military exercise, FRINJEX-23, between the Indian Army and French Army will be conducted at the Pangode military station here on March 7 and 8.
- b. It is for the first time that both countries are engaging in this format with each contingent comprising a Company Group. The French contingent is part of the French Marine Regiment on board DIXMUDE mission.
- c. The exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination, and cooperation between both forces at tactical the level. The exercise will have the largest contingent fielded by the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army unit and the French 6th light armoured brigade.
- d. The theme for the exercise is based on “Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations in a Contested Environment”.
- e. The joint exercise will consolidate the Indo-France strategic partnership at the tactical level and will build a strong foundation for both the nations to collaborate for peace and harmony.

Hence, option A is correct.

23. Who among the following recently launched the ‘Catch the Rain-2023’ campaign?

- A. Narendra Modi
- B. Jagdeep Dhankar
- C. Droupadi Murmu
- D. Om Birla

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### President Murmu to launch ‘Catch the Rain-2023’ campaign on March 4

The theme of this year's campaign will be ‘Source Sustainability for Drinking Water’.

- a. President Droupadi Murmu will launch the ‘Catch the Rain-2023’ on March 4, 2023 as part of efforts to turn conservation of water into a mass campaign in the run-up to the monsoon season.
- b. Recognising the roles of the women in water conservation and sanitation, the President conferred the 'Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023', under various categories of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission. The awards were given to acknowledge the leadership and contribution of women of grassroot level in the journey towards making of a Swachh Sujal Bharat.



- c. She also launched a video on 'Jal Shakti se Nari Shakti' and a commemorative stamp.
- d. The President released 'Swachh Sujal Shakti Ki Abhivyakti', which is a compendium of case stories from Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen, Jal Jeevan Mission and National Water Mission.

Hence, option C is correct.

24. In which of the following states, Geological Survey of India has found gold mines in India?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Haryana
- C. Odisha
- D. Punjab

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **Geological Survey of India Reports Gold Mines in Deogarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj**

The presence of gold mines in Odisha has come to light thanks to surveys conducted by the state Directorate of Mines and Geology and the Geological Survey of India.

- a. The eastern state of Odisha already accounts for about 98% of the country's chromite deposits, and now, reserves of a more precious metal have been uncovered in the state.
- b. The gold reserves have been found in four different areas of Keonjhar and four in Mayurbhanj, and one location in Deogarh. These areas include Dimirimunda, Kushakala, Gotipur, Gopur, Joshipur, Suriaguda, Ruansila, Dhushura hill and Adas.

### **FACTS**

- c. India has three functional gold mines — the Hutti and Uti mines in Karnataka and the Hirabuddini mines in Jharkhand. Through these mines, our country manages to produce around 1.6 tonnes of gold compared to the 774 tonnes a year of gold it consumes.

Hence, option C is correct.

25. When is the National Security Day celebrated annually in India?





- A. January 24
- B. February 12
- C. February 28
- D. March 4

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

## National Security Day 2023

The National Safety Council of India announced the theme for this year to be 'Nurture young minds - Develop safety culture'. The NSC announces a new theme for the year to celebrate the week-long celebration.

- a. March 4 is observed as National Security Day in India annually. It is also known as Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas, celebrated to honour the Indian Security Forces.
- b. The day aims to show gratitude to our security forces which include the police force, para-military force, guards, commandos, army officers and other forces who are involved in maintaining peace and security of the people of our country.
- c. The idea of National Security Day or National Safety Day was launched in 1972 and is organised every year. The NSC or the National Safety Council takes responsibility for managing the event every year.
- d. The Safety Council was founded by the Ministry of Labour on March 4, 1966, to develop sustainable Safety, Health and Environment movement.

Hence, option D is correct.

26. The naval commanders conference 2023 of India took place on which of the following ships?

- A. INS Vikramaditya
- B. INS Vikrant
- C. INS Rajput
- D. INS Chennai

Answer ||| B

Solution |||



- \* The naval commanders conference 2023 of India took place on INS Vikrant.
- \* The conference serves as a platform for Naval Commanders to discuss important security issues at the military-strategic level as well as interact with Senior Government functionaries through an institutionalised forum.
- \* The conference covered issues related to operations, combat readiness, logistics, training, human resource development and training.

27. The duration of the International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express (IMX/CE) 2023 is 26 February to 16 March. Consider the following statements in this regard:

1. The IMX/CE 23 is one of the largest multinational maritime exercises in the world.
2. Indian Navy's participation in the IMX is its maiden participation in the exercise.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- \* The International Maritime Exercise/ Cutlass Express (IMX/CE) is one of the largest multinational maritime exercises in the world.
- \* Indian Navy's participation in the IMX is its maiden participation in the exercise. Though, it is the second occasion where an Indian Naval ship is participating in an exercise conducted by the CMF
- \* The Indian naval warship INS Trikand is participating in the exercise.
- \* Earlier, in Nov 22, INS Trikand had participated in the CMF led Operation Sea Sword 2.

28. What is the theme of the 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas?



- A. “Aapka Swasthya- Jan Aushadhi ke Saath
- B. “Jan Aushadhi-Sabake Paas”
- C. “Uttam Aushadhi- Jan Aushadhi”
- D. “Jan Aushadhi – Sasti bhi Acchi bhi”

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* The 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas is organized across India based on the theme “Jan Aushadhi – Sasti bhi Acchi bhi”.

\* The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is celebrating 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas 2023 under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP).

\* The Government has set a target to increase the number of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJKs) to 10,000 by the end of December 2023.

\* Medicines available under PMBJP are priced 50%-90% less than that of branded prices.

29. Which of the following players of the private sector launched India's first surety bond insurance for infrastructure projects?

- A. Bajaj Allianz.
- B. Tata AIG
- C. Birla Sun Life
- D. Reliance Life

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* India's first surety bond insurance for infrastructure projects has been launched by the private sector player Bajaj Allianz.

\* A surety bond is a legally binding contract entered into by three parties—the principal, the obligee, and the surety.

\* Surety bonds are mainly aimed at infrastructure development, mainly to reduce indirect cost for suppliers and work-contractors thereby diversifying their options and acting as a substitute for bank guarantee.



30. According to the Hunger Funding Gap Report 2023 released by the Action Against Hunger, what was the ratio of the hunger program needs that were fully funded in 2022?

- A. 3%
- B. 20%
- C. 25%
- D. 30%

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* According to the Hunger Funding Gap Report 2023 By Action Against Hunger, in 2022, only 3% of hunger program needs were fully funded and the majority (65%) of appeals were not even fulfilled to the halfway point.

\* In 2021, 7% of hunger programs were fully funded and 57% of were not funded halfway.

\* Only 47% of hunger funding needs through the UN humanitarian system are met, leaving a hunger funding gap of 53%.

\* The Countries with Worst Hunger Crisis are Afghanistan, Haiti, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Honduras, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Somalia, Kenya, Mozambique, Guatemala etc.

31. The CO2 Emissions in 2022 Report was released by the International Energy Agency on March 2, 2023. According to the Report, in 2022:

1. Emissions in China decreased.
2. Emissions in European Union decreased.
3. Emissions in the United States of America increased.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. All of the above



Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* The CO2 Emissions in 2022 Report was released by the International Energy Agency on March 2, 2023.

\* According to the Report, emissions in China decreased in 2022 due to the COVID lockdown. In the European Union, emissions decreased by 2.5%. This was because, with Russia invading Ukraine, many countries stopped importing gas and oil from Russia and moved towards clean energy. In the US, emissions increased by 0.8%.

\* The Carbon emissions from the fuel coal increased by 1.6%. The emissions from oil increased by 2.5%. The aviation sector was the major polluter in this fuel category.

\* In the energy sector, the major emissions came from electricity generators, particularly coal-based electricity generators. Solar energy and wind energy power plants increased throughout the world.

32. On which of the following dates, the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness is observed?

- A. 3 March
- B. 5 March
- C. 8 March
- D. 11 March

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

\* The International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness is observed on 5 March.

\* The observation of the Day seeks to promote better awareness and understanding of disarmament issues among the public, especially young people.

\* Weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of primary concern, owing to their destructive power and the threat that they pose to humanity.

\* The excessive accumulation in conventional weapons and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons jeopardizes international peace and security and sustainable development, while the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is seriously endangering civilians.





33. Consider the following statements on **WMO's Global Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Infrastructure (GGGMI)**:

- 1) **GGGMI** aims to provide better ways of measuring planet-warming pollution and help inform policy choices.
- 2) The infrastructure will improve our understanding of the carbon cycle and provide critical and timely input to the UNFCCC processes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **U.N. takes step towards new way of tracking greenhouse gases**

The three major greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Of those, CO<sub>2</sub> accounts for around 66% of the warming effect on the climate.

- a. The U.N.'s World Meteorological Organisation has come up with a new Global Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Infrastructure that aims to provide better ways of measuring planet-warming pollution and help inform policy choices.
- b. The GGGMI will engage with the broader scientific community and other UN agencies involved in GHG monitoring activities.
- c. The infrastructure will improve our understanding of the carbon cycle and provide critical and timely input to the UNFCCC processes.
- d. It will help humans understand climate change and to provide support to mitigation action taken by the Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.
- e. The World Meteorological Organization (est. 1950; HQ: Geneva) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for promoting international cooperation on atmospheric science, climatology, hydrology and geophysics.

Hence, option C is correct.



34. 'FinEMPOWER' is a collaborative effort of which of the following?

- A. BSE & UN Women India
- B. BSE & RBI
- C. RBI & UN Women India
- D. RBI & Finance Ministry

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### **BSE & UN Women India launches a new programme, 'FinEMPOWER'**

It is a year-long joint capacity-building programme between BSE and UN Women to empower women towards financial security.

- a. In commemoration of International Women's Day, BSE and UN Women India collaboratively organised the 'Ring the Bell for Gender Equality ceremony to accelerate investment in women leaders and entrepreneurs at BSE.
- b. FinEMPOWER, a new initiative from BSE and UN Women India, was introduced at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).
- c. In order to empower women towards financial security, BSE and UN Women have collaborated on a year-long capacity-building programme.
- d. BSE MD and CEO (Mar 2023): Sundararaman Ramamurthy

Hence, option A is correct.

35. Who among the following recently inaugurated the "Har Payment Digital" mission?

- A. Shaktikanta Das
- B. Nirmala Sitaraman
- C. Narendra Modi
- D. Anurag Thakur

Answer ||| A

Solution |||



## RBI launches mission to make every citizen a user of digital payment

As many as 58% of some 90,000 respondents in an RBI survey said they were not using digital payments; a large chunk, in fact, was not even aware of them.

- a. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das launched a mission -- "Har Payment Digital" – with the aim of making every citizen in the country a user of digital payments as part of Digital Payments Awareness Week (DPAW) 2023.
- b. The theme of the awareness week is "Adopt digital payments and Teach others also".
- c. The central bank will launch "Har Payment Digital" (HPD) mission that would run till the period of Vision 2025, with an intention to convert the non-users into users of digital payments. Vision 2025 has its theme as "E-Payments for Everyone, Everywhere and Everytime".
- d. Through the campaign, the users of digital payments will be encouraged to teach non-users about the ease, safety and convenience of digital payments to fulfil the mission of every citizen a digital payments user.
- e. Among various other things, RBI regional offices will conduct "Jan Bhagidari" or mass scale people involvement programmes to enhance awareness on a large scale about the mission and the theme of the campaign and to encourage adoption of digital payments in the process.
- f. Further, payment system operators will adopt 75 villages across the country to convert them into digital payment enabled villages.

Hence, option A is correct.

36. Which of the following states recently launched the “Mukhyamantri Ekal Mahila Swarozgar Yojana”?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Rajasthan
- C. Uttarakhand
- D. Jharkhand

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**Uttarakhand CM Dharam Singh announced the launch of self-employment scheme for single women**



Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami has announced the launch of Mukhyamantri Ekal Mahila Swarozgar Yojana in the state at the end of Women Empowerment and Safety Week.

- a. Chief Minister of Uttarakhand has announced the launch of Mukhyamantri Ekal Mahila Swarozgar Yojana in the state at the end of Women Empowerment and Safety Week.
- b. Women in remote villages of the state are giving impetus to the rural economy through self-help groups. Through their skill potential, women are providing strength to the economy of their families.
- c. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, India has taken steps such as linking 23 crore women to banks through Jan Dhan accounts. From financial inclusion to social security, quality health care to housing, education to entrepreneurship, several steps have been taken in recent years to keep women at the forefront of India's development journey.
- d. The government has highlighted a legislation passed to grant 30 per cent reservation in public services to women domiciled in Uttarakhand.

Hence, option C is correct.

37. According to a recent report of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), which of the following megacities of India is most polluted?

- A. Mumbai
- B. Chennai
- C. Delhi
- D. Kolkata

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **Delhi is India's most polluted megacity, but others are catching up: CSE report**

CSE analyses winter pollution data from Delhi, Kolkata-Howrah, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai; only the national capital has shown improvement.

- a. All megacities in India, irrespective of their locations in different geo-climatic zones, faced the challenge of worsening PM2.5 levels during the winter season of 2022-23, according to a new analysis by the Delhi-based non-profit Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).



b. The winter period is a special challenge in all cities as adverse meteorological conditions trap pollution and increase concentration and exposure. The impact is worse if the overall pollution in the city is high and worsening.

## ABOUT PM2.5

c. The term fine particles, or particulate matter 2.5 (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), refers to tiny particles or droplets in the air that are two and half microns or less in width.

d. Particles in the PM<sub>2.5</sub> size range are able to travel deeply into the respiratory tract, reaching the lungs.

e. Exposure to fine particles can cause short-term health effects such as eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and shortness of breath.

f. Long term exposure to fine particulate matter may be associated with increased rates of chronic bronchitis, reduced lung function and increased mortality from lung cancer and heart disease.

Hence, option C is correct.

38. Who among the following Indian-Americans has been recently appointed as 'first justice of a district court' in USA?

- A. Ro Khanna
- B. Pramila Jaypal
- C. Vivek Murthy
- D. Tejal Mehta

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

## Indo-American woman judge Tejal Mehta named first justice of a district court in US

Tejal Mehta, an Indian-American woman judge who promised to make a real impact to the community and treat people with compassion, has taken oath as the first Justice of a district court.

a. Tejal Mehta, an Indian-American woman judge who promised to make a real impact to the community and treat people with compassion, has taken oath as the first Justice of a district court in the US state of Massachusetts.





b. Mehta will serve as the first Justice of the Ayer District Court. She has served as an Associate Justice with the same court and was unanimously selected and sworn in by Judge Stacey Fortes, Chief Justice of the District Court.

c. Mehta began her legal career in civil work before becoming a prosecutor with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, where she served for more than a decade.

d. She went on to open her own practice and became a public defender before pursuing a position on the bench as a circuit judge.

Hence, option D is correct.

39. Which of the following countries launched the "Group of Friends", in the United Nations Organisation, to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers?

- A. United States of America
- B. Brazil
- C. India
- D. Sweden

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

\* India launched the "Group of Friends" in the United Nations Organisation to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers.

\* It is an informal forum that will work to promote accountabilities for all acts of violence against the United Nations peacekeepers.

\* It was launched during India's presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

\* India, Bangladesh, Egypt, France, Morocco and Nepal are co-chairs of the Group.

40. In March 2023, India Day was celebrated in which of the following cities of Canada?

- A. Toronto
- B. Ottawa
- C. Victoria
- D. Regina



Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- \* In March 2023, India Day was celebrated at the PDAC-2023 convention in Toronto.
- \* On this occasion Indian officials gave presentation on the mining opportunities in India, followed by a question answer session.
- \* Event has concluded with a small Holi celebrations and distribution of sweets and millet items brought from India as part of International Year of Millets initiative by the Government of India.

41. Prime Minister of which of the following countries attended the first day of a cricket test match in March 2023 in Ahmedabad?

- A. New Zealand
- B. Australia
- C. United Kingdom
- D. Bangladesh

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- \* Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese attended the first day of the India-Australia cricket test match in Ahmedabad at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Motera in March 2023.
- \* Australia and India had finalised the Australia-India Education Qualification Recognition Mechanism.
- \* Prime Minister of Australia announcement that Australia's Deakin University would set up an international campus at GIFT City in Gandhinagar. He also announced the launch of a new scholarship — Maitri — for Indian students to study in Australia for up to four years.

42. Savlon Swasth India Mission unveiled the World's first 'Hand Ambassador' with whom among the following?

- A. Mahendra Singh Dhoni
- B. Virat Kohli
- C. Kapil Dev



D. Sachin Tendulkar

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* Savlon Swasth India Mission unveiled the World's first 'Hand Ambassador' with one of the greatest cricketers of all time, Sachin Tendulkar.

\* Savlon Swasth India Mission has initiated various initiatives over the years like the Savlon Healthy Hands Chalk Sticks, Savlon ID Guard and the recent #NoHandUnwashed campaign to educate and encourage good hygiene habits.

\* Preventable infections create a huge economic burden on our country and regular handwashing is one of the simplest, most effective ways to stop the spread of diseases.

43. In March 2023, Dr Manik Saha took the oath as the chief minister of which of the following Indian states?

- A. Nagaland
- B. Mizoram
- C. Tripura
- D. Manipur

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

\* In March 2023, Dr Manik Saha took the oath as the chief minister of Tripura.

\* He took the oath as the chief minister of Tripura for the second consecutive term.

\* In the Assembly election of the state, the BJP won 32 seats out of 60 with a vote share of around 39%.

\* Tipra Motha emerged as the second-largest party securing 13 seats.

44. The five-day-long Yaoshang festival, a version of Holi, is celebrated in which of the following Indian states?



- A. Assam
- B. Odisha
- C. Jharkhand
- D. Manipur

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- \* The five-day-long Yaoshang festival, a version of Holi, is celebrated in Manipur.
- \* The festival is celebrated every year on the full moon of Lamta (February-March) of the Meitei lunar calendar.
- \* During the festival, Manipur comes alive with sporting events during the day and traditional “thabal chongba” dance in the night.
- \* The thabal chongba is a traditional dance of the Meitei, where boys and girls gathered in an open ground and dance in a circle.

45.No Smoking Day is observed every year on which of the following days?

- A. First Monday of March
- B. Second Wednesday of March
- C. Second Tuesday of March
- D. First Friday of March

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- \* No Smoking Day is observed every year on the second Wednesday of March. It falls on March 8 in 2023.
- \* This year’s theme of the Day is: “Stopping smoking improves your brain health”.
- \* In 1984, the day was observed for the first time. Earlier, it was celebrated on the first Wednesday of March as it began on Ash Wednesday.
- \* However, with time, it shifted to the second Wednesday. Now, it is celebrated as an annual event all over the United Kingdom and in other countries too.



46. The TROPEX 23 is an exercise of which of the following forces?

- A. Indian Navy
- B. Indian Air Force
- C. Indian Army
- D. Indian Border Security Force

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- \* The TROPEX 23 is an exercise of the Indian Navy.
- \* It is being conducted over a duration of three months from Jan - Mar 23.
- \* The overall exercise construct included Coastal Defence exercise Sea Vigil and the Amphibious Exercise AMPHEX.

47. Consider the following statements on India's first-ever cross-border oil pipeline:

- 1) India's first-ever cross-border oil pipeline with Bangladesh is set to be launched on March 18 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina by video conferencing.
- 2) The pipeline would carry fuel from NRL's marketing terminal in Siliguri, West Bengal to the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation's (BPC) oil depot in Parbatipur city in Dinajpur District.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**PM Modi, Hasina to launch Rs 377-cr cross-border oil pipeline**





The 130-km-long friendship pipeline on West Bengal border will transport diesel from Numaligarh Refinery in Assam.

- a. India's first-ever cross-border oil pipeline with Bangladesh is set to be launched on March 18 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina by video conferencing.
- b. The 130-km-long Indo-Bangla Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) pipeline is part of several bilateral measures to allow Bangladesh to tap into larger volumes of energy to meet its growing domestic demands. It would carry high speed diesel from Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Assam.
- c. The pipeline would carry fuel from NRL's marketing terminal in Siliguri, West Bengal to the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation's (BPC) oil depot in Parbatipur city in Dinajpur District of the neighbouring country.
- d. One million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) can potentially be transported through the pipeline.
- e. Only five km of the pipeline would run within Indian territory, the rest would run through Bangladesh.

Hence, option C is correct.

48. The recently created material 'Redmatter' is a type of

- A. Superconductor
- B. Semiconductor
- C. Insulator
- D. Fuse

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### “Redmatter”: New superconductor Material

Materials that can conduct electric currents without any loss—so-called superconductors—have been wildly impractical because they typically need to be extremely cooled, to around minus 320 degrees Fahrenheit, and subjected to extreme pressure to work.

- a. A group of researchers at the University of Rochester report that they have created a new superconductor that can operate at room temperature and a much lower pressure than previously discovered superconducting materials.



- b. It can operate at room temperature (21 degrees C) and much lower pressure (10,000 atmospheric pressure) than previously discovered superconducting materials.
- c. They named the resulting material “reddmatter,” after observing how the material’s hue changed from blue to pink to red as it got compressed.
- d. It is formed by combining lutetium (a rare earth metal) with hydrogen and nitrogen
- e. Applications: The new superconductor could help create lossless electrical grids, and better and cheaper magnets for use in future nuclear fusion reactors, among other things.

Hence, option A is correct.

49. India-Australia Innovation and Technology Challenge (IA-ITC) is a collaboration of which of the following?

- A. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), Niti Aayog and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia
- B. NIC, India and Information Secretariat, Australia
- C. CSIR, India and CSIRO, Australia
- D. CSIR, India and Information Secretariat, Australia

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## India and Australia join hands to develop innovative ecosystem

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), Niti Aayog, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia’s national science agency, have signed a letter of intent to encourage joint cooperation to drive innovation activities in areas of national challenges and shared priorities of both countries.

- a. The core of the bilateral engagement is the India Australia Innovation and Technology Challenge (IA-ITC) - a program envisioned to bring together the innovation ecosystems of India and Australia to address our shared environmental and economic challenges by supporting cohorts of start-ups and SMEs on their commercialisation pathways and bring to market innovative tech-based solutions spanning across circular economy, energy transition and food system resilience etc.
- b. The program intends to leverage the complementary capabilities and resources of the innovation ecosystem of both the countries.



c. The IA-ITC builds on the success of the India Australia Circular Economy (IACE) hackathon 2021, which witnessed university students, start-ups, and SMEs from both India and Australia develop innovative tech-based solutions for circularity in food system value chain.

Hence, option A is correct.

50. Which of the following ministries has launched the **first edition of Women Icons Leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023**?

- A. Ministry of Rural Development
- B. Ministry of Woman and Child Development
- C. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- D. Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**First Edition of Women Icons Leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023 Launched by MoHUA**

India is now poised to make a transformational shift from 'Women in Swachhata' to 'Women led Swachhata'. The WINS Awards 2023 aim to recognize celebrate and disseminate inspiring and exemplary initiatives in urban sanitation and waste management by women led organizations and individual women.

a. To highlight the impact of women in sanitation and waste management, the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri announced the 'Women Icons Leading Swachhata' (WINS) Awards 2023 on 7th March 2023, on the eve of International Women's Day.

b. The applications are open from 8th March to 5th April 2023. Applications for the Awards are open to (i) Self-Help Groups (SHGs) (ii) Micro-enterprises, (iii) Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), (iv) Startups and (v) Individual Women Leaders/Swachhata champions.

c. Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) will evaluate entries & nominate up to 5 applicants to the State via the Swachhatam portal.

d. ULBs can organize public felicitation of their nominees as city winners. ULB wise nominations will be evaluated at the State level. Up to 3 entries in each category will be nominated by the State to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).



e. States can organize public felicitation of nominees as State winners. State nominations will be evaluated at the national level on their innovativeness, impact, uniqueness, sustainability & replicability.

f. Applications will be considered under the thematic areas of (i) Management of Community/Public Toilets (ii) Septic Tanks Cleaning Services (iii) Treatment Facilities (Used Water/Septage) (iv) Municipal Water collection and /or Transportation (v) Operation of Material Recovery Facilities (vi) Waste to Wealth products (vii) Treatment Facilities (Solid Waste Management) (viii) IEC, Training, Capacity Building (ix) Technology and Intervention and (x) Others.

Hence, option C is correct.

51. Who among the following will chair the sixth meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC)?

- A. Ashwini Vaishnav
- B. Nirmala Sitaraman
- C. Piyush Goyal
- D. Anurag Thakur

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### National Startup Advisory Council

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal will chair the sixth meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) in New Delhi.

a. With the theme of India at 2047, the NSAC will deliberate upon matters important for the evolution of the Indian startup ecosystem and will cover important topics as Tech Landscape and the Way Ahead, Innovation in Logistics, Making India the Global Skill Market, Innovation Hub, Women Entrepreneurship, Capacity Building for Domestic Capital, Thematic Seed Funds, etc.

b. The government is expected to launch the Startup India Investor Connect portal, ideated by the NSAC and co-developed by DPIIT and SIDBI

c. The Central Government had constituted the NSAC to advise the Government on measures required to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country resulting in sustainable economic growth and large-scale employment opportunities.

d. Composition of the council



- Chairman:Minister for Commerce & Industry.
  - Ex-officio Members:Nominees of the concerned Ministries/Departments/Organisations not below the rank of Joint Secretary.
  - Besides the ex-officio members, the council has non-official members, representing various stakeholders such as founders of successful startups, veterans who have grown and scaled companies in India
- e. Programs such as MAARG, National Mentorship Program, Incubator Capacity Development Program, Adoption of NavIC Grand Challenge, Startup Champions 2.0 etc are some of the programs ideated and incubated by NSAC.

Hence, option C is correct.

52.Which of the following cities will host the 'DIVYA KALA MELA' in March 2023?

- A. Indore
- B. Gwalior
- C. Jabalpur
- D. Bhopal

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

**10 days 'DIVYA KALA MELA' to be organized from 12th to 21st March, 2023 in Bhopal Haat, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**

Around 150 Divyang artisans/artists and entrepreneurs from about 21 states/UTs to showcase their unique products and skills.

- a. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) is organizing a unique event showcasing the products and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs/artisans from across the country, 'Divya Kala Mela'from 12th to 21st March, 2023 at Bhopal Haat, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- b. The event would present an enthralling experience to the visitors as vibrant products from various parts of the country including Jammu and Kashmir, North Eastern states, handicrafts, handlooms, embroidery works and packaged food etc. will be seen together.
- c. There would be Products in the following broad category: Home Décor & Lifestyle, Clothing, Stationery and eco-friendly products, packaged food and organic products, Toys & Gifts,





Personal Accessories - Jewellery, Clutch Bags. It will be an opportunity for all to go 'vocal for local' and products made by Divyang craftsmen with their extra determination can be seen/purchased.

d. Department has grandiose plans to promote the concept, as part of which 'Divya Kala Mela' would be organized every year and will not be limited to Delhi and Mumbai, but across the country.

Hence, option D is correct.

53. The 3d-printed rocket, called Terran 1, belongs to which of the following countries?

- A. United States of America
- B. China
- C. Japan
- D. India

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- The 3d-printed rocket, called Terran 1, belongs to the United States of America.
- It is built by California aerospace startup Relativity Space.
- It is powered by Aeon engines using liquid oxygen and liquid natural gas as propellants. Eighty-five percent of its mass is 3D printed with metal alloys, including the engines.
- The rocket will eventually be capable of putting up to 2,755 pounds (1,250 kilograms) into low Earth orbit.

54. Indian Navy participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with the navy of which of the following countries?

- A. United Kingdom
- B. France
- C. Japan
- D. Russia



Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- Indian Navy's guided missile frigate, INS Sahyadri participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with French Navy (FN) ships.
- INS Sahyadri is fitted with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors, which makes her capable of detecting and neutralising air, surface and sub-surface threats.
- INS Sahyadri (F49) is a Shivalik-class stealth multi-role frigate built for the Indian Navy.
- The Shivalik class or Project 17 class is a class of multi-role stealth frigates in service with the Indian Navy. They are the first stealth warships built in India.

55. With regards to the WHO Global Report on Sodium Intake released in March 2023, consider the following statements:

1. Only 5% of 194 WHO member states are protected by mandatory and comprehensive sodium reduction policies.
2. Bread and bread products are the most targeted food category for sodium reduction across the implemented reformulation policies in member states.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- The WHO Global Report on Sodium Intake was released in March 2023.
- According to the Report, only 5% of 194 WHO member states are protected by mandatory and comprehensive sodium reduction policies; 73% lack full range of implementing such policies.
- The report allocated a sodium country score from 1 (the lowest level) to 4 (the highest level) to each member state based on the level of implementation of sodium reduction policies and other measures. This is a first-of-its kind step.



- The global average salt intake is estimated to be 10.8 grams per day, more than double the WHO recommendation of fewer than 5 grams of salt per day (one teaspoon).

56. NASA and the Italian Space Agency are partnering on the MAIA mission which will use data from an Earth observation satellite to help scientists find correlations between air pollution and health problems in major cities across the world. Which of the following Indian city is included in the mission?

- A. Mumbai
- B. Varanasi
- C. Kolkata
- D. New Delhi

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- NASA and the Italian Space Agency are partnering on the MAIA mission which will use data from an Earth observation satellite to help scientists find correlations between air pollution and health problems in major cities across the world including New Delhi.
- The mission is set to launch before the end of 2024.
- The three-year mission will focus on 11 primary target areas: Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston, Rome, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Barcelona, Spain, Beijing, Johannesburg, New Delhi, Taipei, Taiwan and Tel Aviv.
- Its measurements of sunlight reflecting off airborne particles will help researchers determine the abundance, size and optical properties of certain pollutants in the atmosphere.

57. The Supreme Court of India has increased the jurisdiction and powers of a high-powered committee that is tasked with the procurement or welfare of wild animals by any rescue or rehabilitation centre or zoo. Who among the following is leading the Committee?

- A. Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul
- B. Justice Deepak Verma
- C. Justice Mukesh Shah
- D. Justice Ajay Rastogi

Answer ||| B



Solution |||

- A high-powered committee, led by a former judge of the Supreme Court of India Justice Deepak Verma, is tasked with the procurement or welfare of wild animals by any rescue or rehabilitation centre or zoo.
- The Supreme Court of India has increased the jurisdiction and powers of the Committee to conduct necessary checks and undertake fact-finding exercises concerning the import, transfer, procurement, rescue and rehabilitation of wild animals, including those in captivity, across India.
- The ambit of the committee was earlier restricted to Tripura and Gujarat.

58. The government of which of the following states has ordered at least 200 replicas of Bobbili Veena to present as a token of honour to the delegates of G20?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Tamil Nadu

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- The government of Andhra Pradesh has ordered at least 200 replicas of Bobbili Veena to present as a token of honour to the delegates of G20.
- Bobbili Veena, popularly known as Saraswati Veena, a large plucked string instrument is used in Carnatic music.
- Bobbili Veena is carved from a single piece of jackwood by Sarwasiddi community artisans of Gollapalli under Bobbili Samsthanam.
- The making of the veena began in the 17th century during the reign of Pedda Rayudu, the king of Bobbili Samsthanam who was a great patron of music. It has earned a GI tag in 2012 for its unique design and high-quality craftsmanship.

59. Which of the following cities has registered its name in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest railway platform in the World?



- A. Gorakhpur
- B. Nagpur
- C. Coimbatore
- D. Hubballi

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- With the inauguration of the Hubballi railway platform, the city has registered its name in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest railway platform in the World.
- The platform is 1,507-metre-long.
- The Hubballi station is an important junction in Karnataka and a major hub of trade and commerce.

60. Consider the following statements on **Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5)**:

- 1) It was held under the theme “From Potential to Prosperity” in Qatar and concluded with adoption of the ‘Doha Political Declaration’ by the world leaders.
- 2) ‘Doha Political Declaration’ is a 10-year plan to put the world’s 46 most vulnerable countries back on track to achieving the UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

**Doha Political Declaration adopted by world leaders to fast-track progress in least developed countries**

The declaration is significant since it comes amid simultaneous global risks of rising cost of living and inflation as well as climate change.





a. The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) held under the theme “From Potential to Prosperity” in Qatar concluded with adoption of the ‘Doha Political Declaration’ by the world leaders.

b. It is a 10-year plan to put the world’s 46 most vulnerable countries back on track to achieving the UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

c. DPoA (2022-2031) consisted of six key focus areas:

- eradicating poverty;
- leveraging the potential of science and technology;
- addressing climate change;
- environmental degradation;
- recovering from COVID-19 pandemic;
- building resilience against future shocks for risk-informed sustainable development;

d. Least developed countries (LDCs):

- They are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks.
- There are currently 46 countries on the list of LDCs which is reviewed every three years by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) of the UN.

e. These countries, which include 33 African nations, face the challenge of high debt costs while having inadequate liquidity to provide essential services.

Hence, option C is correct.

61. According to SIPRI’s (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) latest report, which of the following countries was the biggest arms importer between 2018-22?

- A. India
- B. Saudi Arabia
- C. Qatar
- D. Japan

Answer ||| A



Solution |||

## India remains biggest arms importer between 2018-22 despite drop in overall imports

Russia's share of total Indian arms imports fell from 64% to 45% during 2013–17 and 2018–22.

- a. According to the SIPRI, India remained the world's largest arms importer for the five-year period between 2018-22 even though its arms imports dropped by 11% between 2013–17 and 2018–22.
- b. Russia was the largest supplier of arms to India in both 2013–17 and 2018–22, but its share of total Indian arms imports fell from 64% to 45% while France (29%) and the US (11%) emerged as the 2nd and 3rd largest supplier between 2018-22.
- c. Among the top 10 arms exporters for the period 2018-22, India was the biggest arms export market to three countries - Russia, France and Israel and the second largest export market to South Korea.
- d. The U.S. share of global arms exports increased from 33% to 40% while Russia's fell from 22% to 16%.
- e. Established in 1966 and based in Stockholm (Sweden), SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) provides data, analysis and recommendations, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

Hence, option A is correct.

62. 'Operation Trishul' is an initiative of which of the following agencies?

- A. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
- B. Enforcement Directorate (ED)
- C. Financial Services Bureau (FSB)
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## CBI's 'Operation Trishul' nets 33 fugitives in one year

Under its 'Operation Trishul,' the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has extradited 33 fugitives involved in various criminal activities in the past one year.



a. CBI uses Interpol's Star Global Focal Point Network and analysis of financial crime files to not only trace suspects but also the proceeds of financial crimes.

b. Also, recently, India has called upon G20 countries to adopt multilateral action for faster extradition of 'fugitive economic offenders'.

Who are 'fugitive economic offenders' (FEO)?

c. FEO is defined as an individual against whom a warrant of arrest in relation to a scheduled offence has been issued by any court in India and the value of the offence is at least Rs. 100 crores.

d. Fugitive economic offenders act, 2018 aims to seize the property of economic offenders who have fled the nation to avoid being prosecuted or who refuse to come back to face charges.

Hence, option A is correct.

63. India's first behavioral lab will be established in which state?

- A. Jharkhand
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Rajasthan
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### India's first behavioural lab to be set up in Jaipur

Rajasthan: Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved Rs 1.22 crore for setting up India's first behavioural lab in Jaipur.

a. To come up at the Patel Bhawan at HCM-RIPA, the first behavioural lab in the country will be built with state-of-the-art technology, and IIM Udaipur will manage and run it.

b. Training programmes will be organised in various colleges and universities in the field of experiential studies through this laboratory along with imparting training to teachers and programmes for practical training.

c. International experts will also be involved in conducting experiments and workshops.



d. Human behavior will be studied with the help of innovative technology, including ultra-modern software and hardware.

Hence, option C is correct.

64. Which of the following statements about the Kamalam (Dragon Fruit) is NOT correct?

- A. In India, the cultivation of Kamalam fruit is done in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh.
- B. It grows in all kinds of soil and does not require much water.
- C. It is an herbaceous perennial climbing cactus with origin in China.
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **Kamalam (Dragon Fruit) cultivation area in India**

Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Kamalam Fruit to be set up at IIHR, Bengaluru to help make Atmanirbhar Bharat by cutting down on its imports valued at about Rupees 100 crores in 2021.

a. Kamalam or Dragon Fruit, a herbaceous perennial climbing cactus widely known as Pitaya, has its origin in Southern Mexico, Central America and South America. It is widely cultivated in South-East Asia, India, USA, The Caribbean Islands, Australia throughout the tropical and sub-tropical world. Pitaya, called as Dragon fruit in English, is popular by different names such as Pithaya in Mexico, Pitaya Roja in Central and Northern America, Pithajah in Thailand and Kamalam after the Sanskrit name lotus in India. It is also known as “Wondrous Fruit of the 21st century”.

b. It grows in all kinds of soil and does not require much water.

c. The world’s largest producer and exporter of dragon fruit is Vietnam, where the plant was brought by the French in the 19th century.

d. In India, the cultivation of Kamalam Fruit is done in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Mizoram and Nagaland.

e. With focus on Atmanirbhar Bharat, there is need to reduce import and increase our own capacity for production. The target for area expansion under MIDH for Kamalam is 50,000 ha. in 5 years.



f. The Centre of Excellence will focus on developing high performance variety with improved yield, nutrient use efficiency, nutritional quality, tolerance against biotic & abiotic stresses, Standardization of propagation techniques, distribution of quality planting material through public participatory approach, development of protocol for post-harvest handling and storage to reduce post-harvest losses.

Hence, option C is correct.

65. When will 'International Day of Action for Rivers' be observed in 2023?

- A. March 30
- B. March 18
- C. February 22
- D. March 14

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

### International Day of Action for Rivers 2023

It is observed on 14 March to spread awareness about the importance of rivers and climate change.

a. This year, the 25th anniversary of the day will be observed. It is a day which is dedicated to solidarity when several communities across the world come together with one voice to say that rivers matter.

b. The day also highlights the importance of rivers to biodiversity. We all know that rivers are key to restoring and maintaining biodiversity across the world.

c. This year, the world meets for the 15th Convention on Biological Diversity. The river system is the Earth's highest biological diversity zone.

d. The "Rights of Rivers" campaign, which promotes river recognition as a national treasure, is the theme of the 2023 International Day of Action for Rivers. Additionally, it involves the legal ability to stop rivers from being used as sewage or garbage disposal areas.

Hence, option D is correct.





66. India-Bhutan Satellite ground station was inaugurated in March 2023 at which of the following cities?

- A. Thimphu
- B. Gelephu
- C. Punakha
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- India-Bhutan Satellite ground station was inaugurated in March 2023 at Thimphu.
- India-Bhutan Satellite is also known as the ISRO Nano Satellite 2 for Bhutan (INS-2B).
- The ground station that ISRO worked with the scientists from Bhutan on, is equipped to receive the signals from the satellite.

67. Indian Army participated in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra with Army of which of the following countries?

- A. Sri Lanka
- B. Singapore
- C. United Arab Emirates
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- Indian Army participated in the 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra with Singapore Army.
- The exercise was done from 06-13 March 2023 at Jodhpur Military Station, India.
- The first edition of the exercise was done in 2005.



68. Which of the following countries inaugurated world's first project to bury CO<sub>2</sub> imported from abroad?

- A. Germany
- B. Switzerland
- C. Denmark
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- Denmark inaugurated a project to store carbon dioxide 1,800 meters beneath the North Sea, the first country in the world to bury CO<sub>2</sub> imported from abroad.
- The CO<sub>2</sub> graveyard, where the carbon is injected to prevent further warming of the atmosphere, is on the site of an old oil field.
- Led by British chemical giant Ineos and German oil company Wintershall Dea, the "Greensand" project is expected to store up to 8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year by 2030.

69. In March 2023, which of the following confirmed successfully deploying 40 satellites put up by a SpaceX rocket that took off from a launch station in Florida?

- A. Verizon Communications
- B. Deutsche Telekom
- C. China Mobile
- D. OneWeb

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- Bharti-backed OneWeb confirmed successfully deploying 40 satellites put up by a SpaceX rocket that took off from a launch station in Florida.
- The Launch enables company to expand coverage of communication services worldwide.
- OneWeb is a communications company that aims to build broadband satellite Internet services.



70. Which of the following companies has developed India's first indigenous quadruped (four-legged) robot and exoskeleton for the defence sector?

- A. FANUC India
- B. Svaya Robotics
- C. Invento Robotics
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- Hyderabad-based Svaya Robotics has developed India's first indigenous quadruped (four-legged) robot and exoskeleton for the defence sector.
- The robots can carry 25 kg in payload and walk along with the soldier, and added that these robots can be used in nuclear plants and other industries as well.
- Quadruped robots are four-legged robots which can walk or run in uneven and rough terrains.
- Exoskeleton robot is developed to suit Indian soldiers' anthropometry and augment soldier strength for walking long distances.

71. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) – NITI Aayog launched ATL Sarthi. What is ATL Sarthi?

- A. It is an initiative for advanced research in space.
- B. It is a new syllabus for primary level education.
- C. It is a comprehensive self-monitoring framework.
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) – NITI Aayog launched ATL Sarthi. ATL Sarthi is a comprehensive self-monitoring framework to strengthen the ever-growing ecosystem of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL).



- Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India to foster curiosity, creativity, and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design thinking mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

72. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on which of the following dates every year?

- A. 1<sup>st</sup> March
- B. 5<sup>th</sup> March
- C. 10<sup>th</sup> March
- D. 15<sup>th</sup> March

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 every year with an aim to raise global awareness about consumer rights and promote consumer protection.
- The day was first observed on March 15, 1983 which was inspired by US President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's US Congress address on March 15, 1962.
- This year the theme of World Consumer Rights Day 2023 is "Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transitions."

73. Pi Day or 'International Day of Mathematics' is celebrated on which of the following dates?

- A. 14<sup>th</sup> March
- B. 8<sup>th</sup> March
- C. 4<sup>th</sup> March
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- Pi Day or 'International Day of Mathematics' is celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> March.
- The first Pi Day was celebrated in 1988 by physicist Larry Shaw at the San Francisco Exploratorium.



- In 2009, the United States House of Representatives designated March 14 as Pi Day.
- UNESCO marked Pi Day as the 'International Day of Mathematics' during its general conference in 2019.
- Pi is a mathematical constant that represents the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter.

74. Consider the following statements on **Exercise La Perouse – 2023**:

- 1) The third edition of the multilateral exercise La Perouse was conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023.
- 2) This edition saw the participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### Exercise La Perouse – 2023

The third edition of the multilateral exercise La Perouse is scheduled to be conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023.

- a. This edition will witness participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy.
- b. The biennial exercise La Perouse is conducted by the French Navy, and is aimed at enhancing maritime domain awareness and optimising maritime coordination amongst the participating navies in the Indo-Pacific Region.
- c. The two-day exercise provides an opportunity for like-minded navies to develop closer links in planning, coordination and information sharing for seamless maritime operations.





d. The exercise will witness complex and advanced naval operations including surface warfare, anti-air warfare, air defence exercises, cross deck landings and tactical manoeuvres.

e. Indigenously built guided missile frigate INS Sahyadri and fleet tanker INS Jyoti will be participating in this edition of the exercise.

Hence, option C is correct.

75. Which of the following countries recently hosted the **SCO Summit on 'Collaboration in Sports and Physical Fitness'**?

- A. India
- B. Russia
- C. Kazakhstan
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### **SCO Summit on 'Collaboration in Sports and Physical Fitness'**

The three-day Summit on the topic of 'Collaboration in Sports and Physical Fitness' with delegates from eight Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) nations held in New Delhi concluded.

- a. The summit was attended by representatives of six nations, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan, who participated in the discussions in person. Representatives from China and Tajikistan participated virtually.
- b. The summit aimed to explore opportunities for collaboration in the field of sports and physical fitness and to strengthen the common commitment to sports.
- c. The summit was organized to explore opportunities for collaboration in the field of sports and physical fitness. The discussions revolved around a wide array of subjects, including training and development programs, sports science, sports medicine, anti-doping measures, and capacity building.
- d. The delegates discussed ways to encourage sports tourism and promote sports among women and youth. They also exchanged ideas on organizing sports events and competitions and discussed the importance of sports diplomacy in promoting peace and harmony between nations.



Hence, option A is correct.

76. The Senate of which of the following countries recently adopted a resolution recognising McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh?

- A. USA
- B. Australia
- C. Japan
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### **US recognises McMahon Line as international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh**

The bipartisan Senators' resolution condemns additional China's provocations, including the People's Republic of China's use of military force to change the status quo along the Line of Actual Control.

- a. The United States recognises the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh, according to a bipartisan Senate resolution which sees Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India.
- b. The resolution, which comes following the biggest clash between the Republic of India and China in the Eastern Sector along the Line of Actual Control in six years, reaffirms that the United States recognises the McMahon Line as the international boundary between China and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.
- c. The resolution also pushes back against People's Republic of China (PRC) claims that Arunachal Pradesh is PRC territory, which is a part of the PRC's increasingly aggressive and expansionist policies.
- d. The McMahon Line serves as the de facto boundary between China and India in the Eastern Sector.
- e. It specifically represents the boundary between Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, from Bhutan in the west to Myanmar in the east.

Hence, option A is correct.



77. The report 'India Venture Capital Report 2023' has been published by which of the following?

- A. McKinsey
- B. Boston Consulting Group
- C. Bain and Company
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### India Venture Capital Report 2023: Important Findings

For the second year in a row, India outpaced China in terms of new unicorns created. This is a significant achievement for India, as it demonstrates its growing reputation as a hub for entrepreneurship and innovation.

- a. Bain & Company's annual India Venture Capital Report 2023 reveals that venture capital investments in India saw a decrease in deal value of 33% from \$38.5 billion to \$25.7 billion in 2022.
- b. The report highlights macroeconomic uncertainty and recessionary fears as the primary drivers of the decrease in deal value.
- c. Late-stage large deals were affected the most by the decrease in deal value. This could be attributed to the cautious approach adopted by investors in light of the economic uncertainty. As a result, investors focused on preserving their capital and were more selective with their investments.
- d. While early-stage deals continued to see momentum in India. This resulted in a slight expansion in deal volume.
- e. The report suggests that SaaS and Fintech continued to see momentum in funding in 2022. This is not surprising as these sectors have been growing rapidly in recent years and are expected to continue their growth trajectory in the future.
- f. The report also highlights the emergence of new sectors in India. Sectors such as EV, Agritech, generative AI, space tech, and climate tech gained momentum in 2022. These sectors are expected to play a significant role in India's future growth story.

Hence, option C is correct.



78. India has signed a loan agreement for construction of 781 kms green national highways with which institution?

- A. Asian Development Bank
- B. New Development Bank
- C. World Bank
- D. None of the above
- E. More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **India Signs Loan Agreement with World Bank For 781 kms Green National Highways In 4 States**

It will be done using a loan of \$500 million from the World Bank, with a total project cost of US\$1288.24 million (7,662.47 crores).

- a. Road and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari revealed that the Government of India and the World Bank have signed a contract for the construction of the Green National Highway Corridors Project (GNHCP) with a total length of 781 km in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.
- b. The objective of the Green National Highway Corridors Project is to demonstrate safe and green highways keeping in view climate resilience and use of green technologies.
- c. To do this, provisions for natural resource conservation will be incorporated using cement-treated sub-base/reclaimed asphalt pavement, the use of local/marginal materials like lime, fly ash, and waste plastic, and bio-engineering measures for slope protection like hydroseeding, coco/jute fiber, among other things.

Hence, option C is correct.

79. Who has been appointed as the India ambassador for 'She Changes Climate' campaign?

- A. Sonal Khanna
- B. Priyamvada Singhal
- C. Anila Verma
- D. Shreya Ghodawat



Answer ||| D

Solution |||

## Climate Entrepreneur Shreya Ghodawat Appointed as the India Ambassador of She Changes Climate

Shreya Ghodawat hosted an event at One8 Commune, Pune that witnessed impactful discussions and a special film screening on the occasion of International Women's Day.

- a. Shreya Ghodawat is a name to watch in the world of sustainability and social impact. Driven by a passion for promoting climate solutions and aspirational ethical living, she is making a difference with her work as a sustainability strategist, writer, speaker and advisor.
  - b. She has newly been appointed as the India Ambassador of She Changes Climate - a global campaign driving awareness of the crucial role of women in accelerating just climate action.
  - c. She Changes Climate India Event - The global non-profit organisation launched a special initiative for International Women's Day titled 'Embrace Equity' that aims to amplify the voices of women around the impacts of climate change.
  - d. The main objective of the event was to inspire and encourage women to take up more space in climate change conversations and lead innovative climate action solutions.
- Hence, option D is correct.

80. In March 2023, the international criminal court (ICC) in The Hague has issued an arrest warrant against the president of which of the following countries?

- A. Russia
- B. Ukraine
- C. Syria
- D. Myanmar

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- In March 2023, the international criminal court (ICC) in The Hague has issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin for overseeing the abduction of Ukrainian children.
- Putin invoked Article 51 of the UN Charter, which enshrines inherent right of individual or collective self-defence in order to protect Article 1 (the right to self-determination of Donbas region).





- Governed by an international treaty called 'The Rome Statute', the ICC is the world's first permanent international criminal court.

81. The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) published the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2023. Consider the following statements in this regard:

1. Pakistan has topped in the list of country impacted by terrorism in the Index.
2. India's rank decreased from the previous year.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) publishes the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2023. Afghanistan retains the top spot in the list of country impacted by terrorism in the Index.
- Afghanistan has topped for the fourth consecutive year, despite attacks and deaths falling by 75 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively.
- India ranked 13th on the index, marking only a marginal decrease from the previous year.
- Pakistan saw the second-largest increase in terror-related fatalities globally last year, with a total of 643 dead.
- Since 2000, the index has provided a thorough overview of the important global trends over time in terrorism.

82. Barda Wildlife Sanctuary is a second home for Asiatic lions in India in which of the following states?

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Karnataka
- C. Gujarat



D. Assam

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- Barda Wildlife Sanctuary is a second home for Asiatic lions in India in Gujarat.
- Gir National Park is the first home for Asiatic lions in India in Gujarat.
- Barda Wildlife Sanctuary area falls into two districts, Porbandar and Jamnagar in the state of Gujarat.
- Gujarat is the last home of the Asiatic lion.

83.What is the theme of the Global Recycling Day 2023?

- A. "Recycle a New World"
- B. "Recycle Today Smile Tomorrow"
- C. "Recycling is the Future"
- D. "Creative Innovation"

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- The theme of Global Recycling Day 2023 is "Creative Innovation".
- Every year on March 18th, Global Recycling Day is celebrated to increase people's comprehension about the harmful effects of plastic on the environment.
- It draws attention to the growing problem of waste and pollution and encourages people to take action to reduce their environmental impact.

84.The REACHOUT Scheme has been launched by which of the following ministries of the Government of India?

- A. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- B. Ministry of Earth Sciences
- C. Ministry of Home Affairs



D. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- The Indian Ministry of Earth Sciences has initiated the REACHOUT Scheme to advance research, education, and training in the realm of Earth Sciences.
- The program aims to encourage collaboration between academic institutions, industry, and government to improve the quality of education and research in India.
- The scheme is expected to benefit students, researchers, and institutions across the country, and contribute to the development of India as a hub for innovation and research.

85.What is the theme of World Sleep Day 2023?

- A. "Sleep and Grow"
- B. "A Good Sleep-A Good Life"
- C. "Sleep is Essential for Health"
- D. "Sleep Well and Get Well"

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- World Sleep Day is an annual event observed on the Friday before the Spring Vernal Equinox to raise awareness about the significance of sleep.
- The World Sleep Society has announced the theme for World Sleep Day 2023 as 'Sleep is Essential for Health'.
- World Sleep Day was first observed on March 14, 2008, as an initiative of the World Sleep Society.
- The Day is aimed at raising awareness about the importance of sleep and the impact that sleep disorders can have on an individual's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

86.Consider the following statements on **EXERCISE AFINDEX 2023**:



1) The Indian Army is set to host the second edition of the Africa-India field training exercise (AFINDEX-23) from March 21 to 30, and African Chiefs Conclave on March 28, in Pune.

2) Over 22 countries are scheduled to attend the conclave while 20 countries are expected to be part of the exercise.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## EXERCISE AFINDEX 2023

The first Africa-India Field Training Exercise was held in Pune in March 2019. It saw participation from 20 African nations.

- a. The Indian Army is set to host the second edition of the Africa-India field training exercise (AFINDEX-23) from March 21 to 30, and African Chiefs Conclave on March 28, in Pune. Over 22 countries are scheduled to attend the conclave while 20 countries are expected to be part of the exercise
- b. The exercise is divided into four phases in which trainers would be initially trained. This would be followed by a humanitarian mine action and a peace-keeping operations phase.
- c. Maximum use of indigenous equipment is being made during the exercise and new-generation equipment manufactured in India would be showcased during the exercise.
- d. The objective is to continue to build upon the initiatives taken to strengthen India-Africa relations, with a focus on enhancing peace and security and create opportunities to exchange ideas and perspectives.

Hence, option C is correct.

87. The Butterfly EcoPark at Chottakhola is situated in which state?

- A. Tripura
- B. Sikkim



- C. Nagaland
- D. Arunachal Pradesh

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

### Tripura's lone butterfly park a major tourist attraction

The Butterfly EcoPark at Chottakhola, Tripura, close to the Trishna Wildlife sanctuary is the first butterfly park in the northeast and is now a major attraction for tourists from different parts of the country and also Bangladesh.

- a. According to wildlife and environment experts, butterflies are deemed to be indicators of a good ecological balance and healthy nature.
- b. It is nestled in a village near the India-Bangladesh international border in Tripura's South district.
- c. The park is near the endangered bison park at Trishna wildlife sanctuary and Indo-Bangla Maitri Park to commemorate the Bangladesh liberation war.

### FACTS

- d. Trishna wildlife sanctuary is located in the state of Tripura.
- e. Fauna: The Indian Gaur (Bison), Deer, Hoolock Gibbon, Golden langur, pheasants, Lalmukh Bandar, Wild Boar, Wild Cat, Leopard etc.

Hence, option A is correct.

88. When is the International Day of Happiness celebrated annually?

- A. March 20
- B. February 20
- C. February 24
- D. March 10

Answer ||| A

Solution |||





## International Day of Happiness 2023

The International Day of Happiness is an annual celebration that occurs on March 20.

- a. The theme of International Day of Happiness for this year has been kept as “Be Mindful, Be Grateful, Be Kind.”
- b. On July 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly announced March 20 as the International Day of Happiness through its resolution 66/281.
- c. The resolution acknowledged the universality of happiness and well-being as crucial goals and recognized their importance in public policy objectives.
- d. The first celebration of the International Day of Happiness event took place in 2013 and has since served as a means of acknowledging the significance of happiness in the lives of people worldwide.

Hence, option A is correct.

89. When is the World Oral Health Day celebrated annually?

- A. March 20
- B. February 20
- C. February 24
- D. March 10

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## World Oral Health Day 2023

World Oral Health Day is observed globally every year on March 20, with the primary objective of increasing awareness about the significance of oral health.

- a. The World Dental Federation (FDI) launches a campaign for World Oral Health Day every year with a specific theme. The theme for 2023 is ‘Be Proud of Your Mouth,’ which is the same theme used for the past three years. The campaign was launched by the FDI in 2021.
- b. The main goal of World Oral Health Day is to increase awareness among those who are affected by or deal with oral diseases. Unhealthy oral hygiene is believed to have negative effects on one’s overall health, including emotional, social, mental, and physical health.



c. World Oral Health Day was first observed on September 12, 2007, as World Oral Health Awareness Day, initiated by FDI World Dental Federation. However, in 2013, the FDI in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) established March 20 as the official date for World Oral Health Day.

d. The day aims to educate people on the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene, as it can help prevent various diseases such as tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath.

Hence, option C is correct.

90. 'Poshan Pakhwada' is celebrated in India every year in which month?

- A. January
- B. February
- C. March
- D. April

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### **Nutrition for all: Fifth Poshan Pakhwada celebrations to begins**

According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Pakhwada aims to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and promote healthy eating habits through "Jan Andolan and Jan Bhagidari".

a. Poshan Abhiyaan, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 8, 2018, has been instrumental in ensuring people's participation and bringing the discourse on nutrition to the forefront. Poshan Abhiyan was launched with the aim to improve nutritional outcomes in a holistic manner. Behavioural change at individual and community level is an important component to achieve the desired goals of a Kuposhan-mukt Bharat

b. Every year, Poshan Pakhwada is celebrated in the month of March for 15 days.

c. The theme of this year's Poshan Pakhwada 2023 is "Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India". With the declaration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets, this year the focus of Poshan Pakhwada will be to popularise 'Shree Anna', as a valuable asset to address malnutrition.

d. Further, campaigns will be organized to increase awareness and popularise Saksham Anganwadis with upgraded infrastructure and facilities as centres of improved nutrition delivery and early childhood care and education.



Hence, option C is correct.

91. What is 'AxEMU' recently unveiled by NASA?

- A. Cryogenic engine
- B. Satellite launcher
- C. Satellite
- D. Spacesuit
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

### **NASA unveils new spacesuit specially tailored for lunar wear**

NASA unveiled the first prototype for a newly designed next-generation spacesuit specially tailored and accessorised for the first astronauts expected to venture back to the moon's surface in the next few years.

- a. Branded by Axiom as the "Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit," or AxEMU for short, the new suits are more streamlined and flexible than the old Apollo get-ups, with greater range of motion and variability in size and fit.
- b. It provides increased mobility, and its design accommodates a broader range of body types, making it more comfortable for astronauts.
- c. The large clear bubble around the head provides a wider range of visibility and lighting, which will be essential for studying water ice in shadowed craters near the lunar south pole. The suit's headpiece also has a mount for a high-definition camera.
- d. Additionally, the AxEMU still uses diapers, which is an effective solution for the astronauts' waste management during their missions.
- e. Artemis 1 is aiming to send an uncrewed spacecraft around the moon using a combination of the never-flown Space Launch System rocket, along with the once-flown Orion spacecraft.

Hence, option D is correct.

92. Which country has launched the world's first battery made of sand?



- A. Finland
- B. America
- C. Russia
- D. China

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- Researchers from Finland have erected the first completely functional "sand battery" in the world, which can store green power for months at a time.
- In Finland, the first completely functional sand battery has now been installed. It is a technology that could be used to keep homes warm throughout the winter because it can store sustainably generated heat for extended periods of time.
- It functions by heating 100 tonnes of sand using electricity produced by solar or wind energy.

93. In March 2023, the Global Conference on Digital Health was organized by?

- A. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- B. WHO South-East Asia Region
- C. UNICEF
- D. A and B both

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- The conclave will bring together global leaders and health development partners, health policymakers, digital health innovators and influencers, academia and other stakeholders.
- Leveraging India's G20 presidency, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in association with the World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Regional office is organizing a two-day Global Conference on Digital Health – 'Taking Universal Health Coverage to the last citizen' on March 20-21 in New Delhi.
- The objective of the Global Conference on Digital Health is to shift the focus from strategy to achieving a global consensus on a Plan of Action that produces impactful results on the ground in the member countries, through a set of digital health initiatives aiming to accelerate the progress towards universal health coverage.



- The conference will also focus on finding ways to invest, develop and share digital technologies following principles of transparency, accessibility, scalability, replicability, interoperability, privacy, security, and confidentiality.
- This will help in establishing strategic enablers and technology enablers required for implementing digital health at population scale.

94. Which industrialist was appointed to the 'Order of Australia' to strengthen bilateral ties?

- A. Mukesh Ambani
- B. Ratan Tata
- C. Gautam Adani
- D. Aditya Vikram Birla

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- For distinguished service to the Australia-India bilateral relationship, particularly to trade, investment, and philanthropy, Indian industrialist and philanthropist Ratan Tata has been appointed as an Honorary Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO).
- Notably, Ratan Tata has been a strong and influential advocate for deeper ties between Australia and India, including advocating for the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, which was finalised in 2022, and supporting visiting business and government leaders in India.

95. Which of the following organisation is organising Yuvika- Yuva Vigyan program for school children?

- A. DRDO
- B. BEL
- C. ISRO
- D. NTRO

Answer ||| C

Solution |||





- The ISRO YUVIKA 2023 program involves a two-week residential training at different ISRO centers - SSC, URSC, SAC (Start on March 20, 2023, and end on April 30, 2023).
- According to current news, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is organizing a unique program for school children called the Young Scientist Programme – Yuva Vigyani Karyakam (YUVIKA).
- The ISRO young scientist program was launched with the wide goal of teaching younger people the fundamentals of space technology, science, and applications. ISRO runs this program to teach younger students about space technologies, science, and applications, as well as to educate them about emerging developments in space science as well as technology.
- Students who have completed class VIII and are presently enrolled in class IX are eligible to apply for the ISRO YUVIKA 2023 program. Students in Class 9 in India on January 1, 2023 are qualified to register for the ISRO Young Scientist Programme – YUVIKA 2023.
- ISRO YUVIKA 2023 is chosen primarily on its educational record. Applicants from rural regions were given special consideration in the selection process.
- The selected candidate list for ISRO YUVIKA 2023 from each state will be released by the end of March. Every year, three students from each state/union territory will participate in this program, which will encompass CBSE, ICSE, and the state board curriculum.

96. In which state are the Jhamarkotra and Jawar heritage sites located?

- A. Gujarat
- B. Madhya Pradesh
- C. Odisha
- D. Rajasthan

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- Jhamarkotra's fossils are phosphate-rich because the trapped sediments were mainly phosphate minerals.
- Zawar is an interesting geo-heritage site that lies some 40 km south of Udaipur. It is the world's oldest known zinc-smelting site.
- The discovery here of earthen retorts – brinjal-shaped, long-necked vessels – is particularly significant. Their presence here suggests Zawar had a unique zinc-smelting legacy.



- Geological Survey of India (GSI) declares geo-heritage sites/ national geological monuments for protection and maintenance.

97. World Sparrow Day is celebrated to raise awareness about the conservation of sparrows-

- A. 26 February
- B. 20 March
- C. 22 March
- D. 20 April

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- The goal of World Sparrow Day is to raise awareness of the plight of sparrows and other common birds and to inspire people and organisations around the world to take action to protect them. Sparrows are known to be an indicator of a region's environmental health, and their decreasing numbers are cause for concern.
- World Sparrow Day is observed in a variety of ways around the world, including bird-watching, building birdhouses, and educational programmes.
- The theme of World Sparrow Day 2023 is "I Love Sparrows", with the goal of encouraging more people to appreciate the relationship between humans and sparrows.
- The first World Sparrow Day was held on March 10, 2010, and has been celebrated annually since then. Mohammed Dilawar founded The Nature Forever Society to raise awareness about sparrows. In 2008, TIME Magazine named him a conservation hero for his efforts.

98. Consider the following statements regarding the World Happiness Report 2023:

1. The report is published by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
2. India's rank improved in the Report.
3. India secured a higher rank than its all neighboring countries in the Report.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only



- C. 1 and 3 only  
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- World Happiness Report is published by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- In the report, India is ranked 126, ten places higher than its ranking of 136 in 2022.
- In the report, India remains below most neighboring countries, including Pakistan (108) and Sri Lanka (112).
- The Report is based on global survey data from people in more than 150 countries.

99. "Pathways to Atmanirbhar Bharat" is a study that highlighted the need for a rapid expansion of clean energy infrastructure in India. The study was released by which of the following organizations?

1. Center for Policy Research
2. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
3. The India Energy and Climate Center

Select the correct answers from the codes given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only  
B. 2 and 3 only  
C. 1 and 3 only  
D. All of the above

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- "Pathways to Atmanirbhar Bharat" is a study that highlighted the need for a rapid expansion of clean energy infrastructure in India.



- The study was released by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and The India Energy and Climate Center (IECC).
- The study highlighted that India would require a massive scale-up of renewable energy deployment to 40 GW a year through 2030, ramping up to about 100 GW a year between 2030 and 2050.
- It also highlighted that the Government of India aims to produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.

100. A production portal "SRIJAN" was virtually inaugurated in March 2023, by which of the following ministries of the Government of India?

- A. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- B. Ministry of Finance
- C. Ministry of Defence
- D. Ministry of Culture
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- The Department of Defence Production Portal "SRIJAN" was virtually inaugurated by the defence minister as part of the Make in India initiatives in the defence industry during the Ministry of Defense's "Atmanirbhar Bharat Week" celebrations.
- The Defence Ministry claimed that from 2018–19, defence imports of India have decreased from 46% to 36.7%.
- The portal offers details on the defence products and equipment that the country's defence Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) are now importing or plan to import.

101. What is the objective of the scheme PM PRANAM?

- A. To increase the literacy rate among adults
- B. To develop infrastructure at a fast pace
- C. To promote Indian culture in other countries
- D. To reduce the use of chemical fertilizers
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above



Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- The Government of India intends to launch PM PRANAM (programme for restoration, awareness, nourishment and melioration of mother earth) scheme to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers by incentivizing states.
- As per the scheme, if the promotion of organic farming by a state leads to a decline in the use of chemical fertilizers, then half the subsidy saved on that account will be transferred to the state.
- The scheme will have no separate budget and will be financed through the “savings of existing fertilizer subsidy” under schemes run by the Department of Fertilizers.
- 50% of subsidy savings will be passed on as a grant to the state that saves the money.

102.INS Androth, launched in March 2023, belongs to which of the following categories?

- A. Destroyer
- B. Anti-submarine ship
- C. Amphibious carrier
- D. Frigate
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- INS Androth, launched in March 2023, is an anti-submarine vessel.
- The name of the ship signifies the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Androth, located in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep.
- The primary role of the ship is to conduct anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low-intensity maritime operations, and mine-laying operations.

103.The Jharniyojan portal was launched by the government of Jharkhand. What is its objective?

- A. To implement family planning schemes
- B. To boost the service sector
- C. To ensure local quota in private sector





D. To develop food processing industry

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- The Jharniyojan portal was launched by the government of Jharkhand to ensure 75% local quota in private sector.
- Private employers in the state can share information about business, manpower and vacancy on this portal.
- It applies to all establishments which are in the private sector and where 10 or more people are employed.
- The employers, who make use of the portal, will have to adhere to the Jharkhand State Employment of Local Candidates in Private Sector Act, 2021.

104. Which of the following dates is marked as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination?

- A. 1 March
- B. 8 March
- C. 16 March
- D. 21 March
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- March 21 is marked as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- The observation of the day is a call to action for individuals, organizations, and all levels of government to actively work towards ending all forms of racial discrimination, injustice, systemic racism, and hatred.
- The day serves as a reminder of the need for ongoing efforts to combat the alarming rise of xenophobia, racism, and intolerance worldwide.



- This day holds great significance as it marks the tragedy that took place in Sharpeville, South Africa, on March 21, 1960. During a peaceful protest against apartheid “pass laws,” police opened fire and killed 69 people.
- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Day in 1966, urging the international community to work towards eradicating all forms of racial discrimination.

105. World Water Day is observed on which of the following dates?

- A. 22 March
- B. 17 March
- C. 9 March
- D. 2 March

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

- World Water Day is being observed on March 22 every year.
- The theme for World Water Day 2023 is 'Accelerating the change to solve the water and sanitation crisis'.
- The resolution to observe World Water Day was first adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 22, 1992, after which March 22 was declared as World Water Day and is celebrated around the world since then.
- The first World Water Day was observed in the year 1993.

106. Consider the following statements on **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)**:

- 1) Recently, an Inter-Ministerial delegation from India led by the Department of Commerce participated in the second Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) negotiating round in Bali, Indonesia from March 13-19, 2023.
- 2) During the Bali Round, discussions covered all the four pillars of the IPEF: Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chains (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Taxation & Anticorruption) - (Pillar IV).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?



- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)

Recently, an Inter-Ministerial delegation from India led by the Department of Commerce participated in the second Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) negotiating round in Bali, Indonesia from March 13-19, 2023.

- a. Negotiators from 13 other countries, including, the United States, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam also participated in the Bali negotiating round.
- b. During the Bali Round, discussions covered all the four pillars of the IPEF: Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chains (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Taxation & Anticorruption) - (Pillar IV). India participated in the discussions related to Pillars II to IV.
- c. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) is an economic initiative launched by United States President Joe Biden on May 23, 2022.
- d. IPEF Partners have committed to an aggressive negotiating schedule throughout 2023 with the objective of realizing concrete benefits to enhance a shared vision for economic competitiveness and prosperity in their respective economies.

Hence, option C is correct.

107. Which of the following engineering institutions has entered the list of top 50 institutions for engineering in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023?

- A. IIT Delhi
- B. IIT Bombay
- C. IIT Roorkee
- D. IIT Guwahati
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A



Solution |||

## QS Rankings: IIT Delhi enters list of top 50 institutions

The Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi has entered the list of top 50 institutions for engineering in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023.

- a. As many as 44 programmes offered by Indian higher education institutions in different disciplines have figured in the top 100 globally. Last year, 35 Indian programmes made it to the top 100
- b. The most represented Indian universities in this edition of the rankings are the University of Delhi (27 entries), IIT-Bombay (25 entries) and IIT-Kharagpur (23 entries).
- c. IIT-Bombay has featured among the world's top 100 in mathematics by clinching the 92nd spot, up by 25 places, and IIT-Kanpur ranks among the world's top 100 in engineering-electrical electronic (87th, up by 21 places) and in computer science information systems (96th, up by 13 places).
- d. The thirteenth edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject has ranked 66 Indian universities, cumulatively achieving 355 entries, a 18.7 per cent increase compared to last year (299).
- e. Five components were used to rank universities including academic reputation, employer reputation research citations per paper, H-index, and international research network. The h-index is a way of measuring both the productivity and impact of the published work of a scientist or scholar.

Hence, option A is correct.

108. Which of the following Indians has featured in the list of top 10 billionaires (as per Hurun Global Rich List released in Mar 2023)?

- A. Mukesh Ambani
- B. Gautam Adani
- C. Azim Premji
- D. Naveen Jindal
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||



## World's Top 10 Billionaires list released by Hurun research platform

According to the recently released Hurun Global Rich List, Mukesh Ambani, the Chairman of Reliance Industries and the richest man in Asia, is the only Indian to be ranked among the top 10 billionaires.

- a. The report, which was compiled by research platform Hurun in collaboration with real estate group M3M, is titled 'The 2023 M3M Hurun Global Rich List'.
- b. The Hurun Global Rich List 2023 ranked 3,112 billionaires, down from 3,384 last year, from 2,356 companies and 69 countries. The number of billionaires dropped by 8% and their total wealth dropped by 10% compared with last year.
- c. In terms of number of billionaires, India ranks third in the 2023 M3M Hurun Global Rich List. In terms of number of billionaires, China is almost 5 times bigger than India.
- d. The first position in the ranking is held by Elon Musk with a wealth of \$205 billion followed by Jeff Bezos at \$188 billion.
- e. Despite experiencing a 20 percent decline in his wealth, Ambani still managed to secure the ninth position globally, with a net worth of \$82 billion.

Hence, option A is correct.

109. Which state has become the first state to pass the right to health bill?

- A. Jharkhand
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Rajasthan
- D. Kerala
- E. None of the above/More than one of the above

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### Rajasthan becomes first State to pass Right to Health Bill

Right to Health Bill have the provision for mandatory free-of-cost emergency treatment for every resident of the State at both the government hospitals and the privately-run institutions. With this, Rajasthan has become the first and the only State in the country to legislate the right to health.





- a. The Bill gives every resident of the State the right to emergency treatment care “without prepayment of requisite fee or charges” by any public health institution, health care establishment and designated health care centres.
- b. As per the Bill, free healthcare services including diagnostics, drugs, emergency transport, emergency care and procedure will be provided at the public institutions and select private facilities subject to conditions which will be formulated now. All citizens of the state will be entitled to emergency and accidental emergency care free of cost.
- c. In case of medico-legal nature, no private or public hospital can delay treatment on grounds of police clearance.
- d. The legislation also stated that after emergency care, transfer of patient and stabilisation, the healthcare provider would be entitled to a requisite free and charges or proper reimbursement from the government if the patient does not pay requisite charges.
- e. As per the state government, the Bill intends to, “provide protection and fulfilment of rights and equity in health and well-being under Article 47 (Duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health) of Constitution of India and to secure the Right to Health as per the expanded definition of Article 21 (Protection of life and personal liberty)”.

Hence, option C is correct.

110. In which of the following cities of Maharashtra, 'Statue of Knowledge' will be installed?

- A. Aurangabad
- B. Nagpur
- C. Latur
- D. Nasik

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

### Govt approves installation of 'Statue of Knowledge' dedicated to Ambedkar

The Maharashtra government has given approval for a 75-feet tall 'Statue of Knowledge' dedicated to Dr B. R. Ambedkar in Latur city.

- a. The statue has been erected in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Park and the ceremony will be held a day before his 131st birth anniversary.



- b. The statue will be showered with flower petals from a helicopter on April 14 to commemorate the occasion.
- c. Using fiber as the primary material, a team of 35 artists has been tirelessly working to construct the statue of Dr. Ambedkar.
- d. The lead artist, Akshay Halke, has announced that this is the first statue in the world of Dr. Ambedkar to be created in just 20 days, and it is also the first of its kind in the state.
- e. On April 13, a 70-feet tall statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar will be unveiled in Latur city, Maharashtra.
- f. The unveiling ceremony will take place in the presence of Union ministers Kiren Rijiju and Ramdas Athawale, along with other dignitaries such as former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis and state minister Sanjay Bansode.

Hence, option C is correct.

111. In which of the following districts of Uttarakhand is the International Liquid Mirror Telescope (IMLT) installed?

- A. Dehradun
- B. Haridwar
- C. Chamoli
- D. Nainital

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

### Asia's Largest 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope at Devasthal

Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences (Independent Charge), Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated Asia's largest 4-metre International Liquid Mirror telescope.

- a. Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (AREES) announced that the world-class 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope (IMLT) is now ready to explore distant and deep celestial space. It received its first light in the second week of May 2022.
- b. This telescope is located at an altitude of 2450 metres in the observatory complex at Deosthal in Nainital district of Uttarakhand (India) at AREES, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.



c. The telescope was designed and built by Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems (AMOS) Corporation and the Center Spatial de Liège in Belgium.

d. ILMT is the first liquid mirror telescope specially designed for astronomical observation and is the largest aperture telescope currently available in the country as well as the first optical survey telescope in India.

e. The ILMT is designed to survey the strip of sky it passes over every night, helping to detect transient or variable celestial objects such as supernovae, gravitational lenses, space debris and asteroids.

Hence, option D is correct.

112. Approximately how many people do not have access to safe drinking water as per the report published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water released at the United Nations 2023 Water Conference?

- A. 10 million
- B. 2 billion
- C. 20 million
- D. 15 million

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

More than a quarter, 26 per cent of the world's population, comprising approximately 2 billion people, do not have safe drinking water and 3.6 billion or 46 per cent lack access to safely managed sanitation, according to the report, published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water released at the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York. The global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to double from 930 million in 2016 to 1.7-2.4 billion people in 2050.

113. Which portal has been launched by the Central Government for claim disbursement through National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP)?

- A. Saras Portal
- B. USOF Portal
- C. MTCTE Portal
- D. DigiClaim Portal



Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launched National Crop Insurance Portal's digitized claim settlement module namely DigiClaim under the ambit of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

\* With the launch of the module, claims will be disbursed electronically, which will benefit the respective farmers of six states. Now, the automated claim settlement process will be an ongoing activity to ease all insured farmers' lives and provide them with a sustainable financial flow and support.

\* This technology has been enabled through the integration of National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP) and Public Finance Management System (PFMS).

\* With this, now farmers' claims will be processed directly to their respective bank accounts in a transparent and accountable manner.

\* With the launch of a DigiClaim Module, insurance claims totaling Rs 1260.35 crore have been disbursed on March 23, 2023 to insured farmers in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Haryana with the click of a button, and the process will continue as and when the claims are released.

\* DigiClaim is yet another feather in PMFBY's cap in its ongoing effort to usher in advanced technological solutions such as automated calculation and disbursement of crop insurance claims.

114. Which state has launched "Mukhyamantri Vriksha Sampada Yojana"?

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Arunachal Pradesh
- C. Chhattisgarh
- D. Odisha

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the state government's ambitious scheme 'Mukhyamantri Vriksh Sampada Yojana', a mega scheme aimed at encouraging commercial plantation.



115. Consider the following statements about Kashmiri Stag (Hangul).

- 1) Kashmir stag also called hangul is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer endemic to Kashmir and surrounding areas.
- 2) it is found primarily in the Dachigam National Park.
- 3) In a recent census conducted (2023) at Kashmir's Dachigam National Park, it was found that the population of Hangul or Kashmiri Stag has gradually increased over time at the national park.

Select the correct statements using the code given below.

**Code:**

- A. Only 1 and 3
- B. Only 1 and 2
- C. Only 2 and 3
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* In a recent census conducted at Kashmir's Dachigam National Park, it was found that the population of Hangul or Kashmiri Stag has gradually increased over time at the national park.

\* The Kashmir stag also called hangul is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer endemic to Kashmir and surrounding areas.

\* It is found in dense riverine forests in the high valleys and mountains of Jammu and Kashmir and northern Himachal Pradesh.

\* In Kashmir, it is found primarily in the Dachigam National Park where it receives protection.

\* A small population has also been witnessed in Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary in south Kashmir.

116. Consider the following statements about National Ropeways Development Programme – "Parvatmala"





- 1) Parvatmala, that is, the National Ropeways Development Programme was announced in the Union Budget for 2022-23
- 2) The Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended in February 2023 and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways was given the authority to take care of the development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions in the country.

Select the correct statements using the code given below.

**Code:**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* Parvatmala, that is, the National Ropeways Development Programme was announced in the Union Budget for 2022-23. It focuses on improving connectivity in hilly areas. The scheme has been launched for areas like Manipur, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and other North Eastern states. Hence statement 1 is correct.

\* The Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended in February 2021 and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways was given the authority to take care of the development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions in the country. Hence statement 2 is incorrect.

117. Which mathematician was awarded the Abel Prize for the year 2023?

- A. Luis Caffarelli
- B. Avi Wigderson
- C. Hillel Furstenberg
- D. Dennis Sullivan

Answer ||| A

Solution |||



Luis Caffarelli has won the 2023 Abel Prize for his contributions to regularity theory for nonlinear partial differential equations, including free-boundary problems and the Monge-Ampère equation.

118. Which of the following countries has designed the drone 'Haeil'?

- A. Iran
- B. North Korea
- C. Ukraine
- D. Turkey

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

- \* North Korea has designed the drone 'Haeil'.
- \* It can create massive radioactive waves through submarine explosions.
- \* The drone can be deployed from the coast or towed by surface ships.
- \* It is built to "stealthily infiltrate into operational waters and make a super-scale radioactive tsunami through an underwater explosion" that would destroy naval strike groups and ports.

119. Consider the following statements regarding the "Earth Hour":

- 1). It is observed on the last Sunday of March every year.
- 2). It is organized by UNESCO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| D

Solution |||



- \* “Earth Hour” is observed on the last Saturday of March every year.
- \* It is organized by World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- \* It is a global grassroots movement uniting people to take action on environmental issues and protect the planet.
- \* It was started by WWF and partners as a symbolic lights-out event in Sydney in 2007.

120. The first outbreak of the deadly Marburg virus disease took place in which of the following countries?

- A. Sudan
- B. Libya
- C. Tanzania
- D. South Africa

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

- \* Tanzania announced its first outbreak of the deadly Marburg virus disease (MVD).
- \* Marburg, like Ebola, is a filovirus; and both diseases are clinically similar.
- \* The disease has an average fatality rate of around 50%. However, it can be as low as 24% or as high as 88% depending on virus strain and case management.
- \* Rousettus fruit bats are considered the natural hosts for the Marburg virus. However, as per WHO, African green monkeys imported from Uganda were the source of the first human infection.

121. Consider the following statements regarding the NIPUN:

- 1). It is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
- 2). It is to train construction workers and to provide them with opportunities for work in foreign countries.
- 3). It will provide trainees with 'Kaushal Bima' accidental insurance for lifetime.



Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. All of the above

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* The National Initiative for Promoting Upskilling of Nirman workers (NIPUN) is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

\* To train over 1 lakh construction workers through fresh skilling and upskilling programmes and provides them with work opportunities in foreign countries.

\* It will provide trainees with 'Kaushal Bima', three-year accidental insurance with coverage of Rs 2 lakhs.

\* The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the nodal agency under the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, will be the Implementation Partner for the project NIPUN.

122. The PENCIL portal belongs to which of the following?

- A. Child Labour
- B. Adult Education
- C. Financial Inclusion
- D. Rural Digitization

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL) is a separate online portal to ensure effective enforcement of the provisions of the Child Labour Act and smooth implementation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme.

\* The Portal connects Central Government to State Government(s), District(s), all Project Societies and the General public.



\* Online complaints regarding child labour can also be filed by anybody on the Pencil Portal. The complaint gets assigned to the concerned Nodal Officer automatically by the system for further necessary action.

123. Lovlina Borgohain has set a record by winning gold at the World Women's Boxing Championships. She belongs to which of the countries?

- A. Australia
- B. India
- C. Cuba
- D. Brazil

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

\* India's Lovlina Borgohain has set a record by winning gold at the World Boxing Championships by defeating Australia's Caitlin Parker.

\* The Women's World Boxing Championship is being held in the capital city of Delhi.

\* India's Nikat Zareen won the gold medal by defeating Vietnam's Niguyen 5-0 in the finals of the 50 kg category. She has set a record by winning the World Championship title for the second year in a row.

\* India's golden monkey Mary Kom has won 6 World Championship gold medals and created a historic record.

124. Government launched Aravalli Green Wall Project, a major initiative to green the 5 km buffer area around the Aravalli Hill Range in how many states?

- A. Two states
- B. Three states
- C. Four states
- D. Five states

Answer ||| C

Solution |||





- \* The government launched Aravalli Green Wall Project, a major initiative to green the 5 km buffer area around the Aravalli Hill Range.
- \* The project covers states of Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi - where the Aravalli hills landscape span over 6 million hectares of land.
- \* The project will benefit the local communities by providing them with employment opportunities, income generation and ecosystem services.

125. World Theatre Day is celebrated on which of the following dates?

- A. 1<sup>st</sup> March
- B. 12<sup>th</sup> March
- C. 17<sup>th</sup> March
- D. 27<sup>th</sup> March

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- \* World Theatre Day is celebrated on 27<sup>th</sup> March.
- \* It is celebrated worldwide to promote the significance of theatrical forms.
- \* The theme of World Theatre Day is “Theatre and a Culture of Peace” set by the International Theatre Institute.
- \* World Theatre Day was first observed in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI).

126. Consider the following statements on **G20-CSAR**:

- 1) G20-CSAR is a government-to-government level initiative conceptualised under the India's G20-Presidency.
- 2) The motivation of this initiative is to bring together the Chief Science Advisers and their equivalents of G20 member countries, as well as the invited countries, to deliberate upon and develop collaborative frameworks for some of the common pressing global science and technology (S&T) policy issues.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?



- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## **Chief Science Advisers of the G20 Countries to Gather at Ramnagar, Uttarakhand, to Discuss Issues of Mutual Interest on S&T**

CSAR is a one-of-a-kind programme that is being launched for the first time. Priorities listed are universal in nature and align with India's G20 concept of One Earth, One Family, One Future.

- a. G20-CSAR is a government-to-government level initiative conceptualised under the India's G20-Presidency.
- b. The motivation of this initiative is to bring together the Chief Science Advisers and their equivalents of G20 member countries, as well as the invited countries, to deliberate upon and develop collaborative frameworks for some of the common pressing global science and technology (S&T) policy issues. This initiative will also help in establishing an effective and coherent global science advice mechanism.
- c. Chief Scientific Advisers of various countries, including America and Japan, will participate in this meeting. Foreign delegations from more than 100 countries are expected to participate in the three-day event.
- d. Underlining the post-pandemic focus during India's G20 Presidency, the discussions at G20 CSAR Meeting will emphasize on the following themes:
  - Opportunities in One Health for better disease control and pandemic preparedness
  - Synergizing global efforts to expand the access to scholarly scientific knowledge
  - Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in Science and Technology (S&T)
  - An institutional mechanism for inclusive, continuous, and action-oriented Global S&T Policy Dialogue

Hence, option C is correct.

127. Which of the following organisations has recently launched CRISP app?



- A. Rubber Board
- B. Jute Board
- C. Tea Board
- D. Coffee Board

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## Rubber Board launches comprehensive rubber information system

Recently, the Rubber Board has launched a mobile app CRISP to inform growers about rubber cultivation and provides solutions online.

- a. CRISP gives information to rubber cultivators related to production and productivity enhancement, reduction of cultivation cost, maintenance of soil fertility, disease control measures, etc.
- b. CRISP (Comprehensive Rubber Information System Platform) has been developed by the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) in collaboration with the Digital University of Kerala. The app was launched by ZP Patel, Vice Chancellor, Navsari Agricultural University, Gujarat.
- c. India is the world's largest producer and the third-largest user of natural rubber.
- d. Rubber Growing Areas in India
  - Traditional Areas: Primarily in Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari District and Kerala.
  - Non-traditional regions: Coastal Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra's Konkan Region, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, the northeastern provinces, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, among other places.
- e. The Climatic conditions required for Rubber
  - Rainfall: It requires moist and humid climates with heavy rainfall of more than 200 cm.
  - Temperature: It grows well in equatorial climates and temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius.
  - Soil: Well-drained, weathered soils.

Hence, option A is correct.

128. Which of the following is the nodal ministry of LaqShya programme?



- A. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- B. Ministry of Commerce
- C. Ministry of Rural Development
- D. Ministry of Women and Child Development

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

## LaQshya Programme

A total of 283 obstetric high dependency unit (HDU) /Intensive care unit (ICU) have been approved in high caseload tertiary care facilities including Government Medical College hospitals and district hospitals, across the country.

- a. LaQshya is a quality improvement initiative which aims to ensure Quality of Care during intrapartum and immediate post-partum period in Labour Room and Maternity OT. It targets all Government Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities, designated FRUs as well as high case load CHCs.
- b. Under the purview of LaQshya, one of the facility-level targets is to achieve 5% or less Surgical Site Infection Rate in Maternity OT or at least a reduction of 30% from the baseline. At the time of LaQshya certification, compliance with the above-mentioned requirement is verified by the independent empanelled NQAS assessors.
- c. The goal is to reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in the Labour room and Maternity OT and ensure respectful maternity care.
- d. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- e. At the time of LaQshya certification, compliance with the above-mentioned requirement is verified by the independent empanelled NQAS assessors.

Hence, option A is correct.

129.Which of the following national parks will host the Gaj Utsav 2023?

- A. Dudhwa National Park
- B. Valmiki National Park
- C. Kaziranga National Park
- D. Bandhavgarh National Park



Answer ||| C

Solution |||

## Gaj Utsav 2023 – Celebrating 30 Years of Project Elephant

The Gaj Utsav 2023 will be inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu on April 9 at Kaziranga National Park in Assam. This event is significant as Kaziranga is a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to the highest density of tigers in the world.

- a. This two-day event aims to promote elephant conservation, protect their habitat and corridors, and prevent human-elephant conflicts. It will also ensure the welfare of captive elephants in India.
- b. In order to conserve elephants, their habitat, and migration routes, reduce conflicts between humans and elephants, and assure the health of captive elephants in India, the government of India created Project Elephant in 1991–1992.
- c. The Wild Life Preservation Act of 1972 lists elephants as a Schedule I national heritage animal. More than 60% of the world's wild elephant population is in India. They are primarily found in the southern and north-eastern areas of India as well as the east-central and northern regions.
- d. In addition to the Gaj Utsav, India is also celebrating the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger in Mysuru, Karnataka. Starting on April 7, this event aims to showcase India's tiger conservation success globally, release the latest tiger census data, and present the government's vision for tiger conservation.
- e. Project Tiger, launched in 1973, promotes tiger conservation in India. Approximately 2.4 per cent of India's geographical area is covered by tiger reserves, which serve as repositories for biodiversity conservation, ensure regional water security and carbon sequestration, and contribute to accomplishing India's climate change mitigation targets.

Hence, option C is correct.

130. Which of the following statements about the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway link (USBRL) project is not correct?

- A. The project will provide all-weather connectivity and join Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of India.
- B. The Chenab bridge is a part of the USBRL project.
- C. The Chenab Bridge is 35 meters taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, making it the world's highest rail bridge.





D. None of the above

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

## World's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir

The 111 km stretch from Katra to Banihal is essential, and the 1.3 km long Chenab Bridge is a crucial part of this stretch. Once completed, the entire USBRL Railway project will provide all-weather connectivity and join Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of India.

- a. The Indian Railways is constructing the world's highest railway bridge in the challenging terrain of the Himalayas, which is expected to be completed in the coming months.
- b. The Chenab Bridge, an engineering marvel, is a part of the strategically important Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramullah (USBRL) railway link that will connect Jammu & Kashmir to the rest of India.
- c. The Chenab Bridge is 35 meters taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, making it the world's highest rail bridge. The 1.3 km long bridge has a design speed of 100 kmph for trains and a lifespan of 120 years.
- d. The USBRL project is expected to be completed by December 2023 or January 2024. The Vande Bharat Express train will run over the Chenab bridge, and a maintenance facility for Vande Bharat trains will be established in Badgam.
- e. The new Vande Metro, developed for short-distance inter-city travel, will also run between Jammu and Srinagar.

Hence, option D is correct.

131. When will be the International Day of Zero Waste 2023 observed?

- A. 4 April
- B. 14 April
- C. 21 April
- D. 30 March

Answer ||| D

Solution |||



## Rally for Garbage Free Cities on International Day of Zero Waste

In line with the theme for International Day of Zero Waste 2023 - 'Achieving sustainable and environmentally sound practices of minimizing and managing waste', The Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs is organizing Swachhotsav- International Day of Zero Waste: Rally for Garbage Free Cities in New Delhi.

- a. Swachhotsav - International Day of Zero Waste: Rally for Garbage Free Cities will see discussions and best practices presentations on Circularity in Garbage Free Cities, Women and Youth for GFC, Business and Tech for GFC and Fireside chat with Mayors. The event will be organized by MoHUA in collaboration with GIZ, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, UNEP.
- b. The Swachh Mashaal March will set the tone for the 'Women-led Swachhotsav', where citizens will rally for Garbage-Free Cities on 29, 30, 31st March, 2023. This will be followed by cleanliness drives at public places, open plots, water bodies, railway tracks, public toilets in every ward of a participating Urban Local Bodies (ULB). Over 2000 cities have already joined hands for the Mashaal march.
- c. The campaign aimed to recognize and celebrate the transition from women in sanitation to women-led sanitation. A series of events and activities were organized across cities to celebrate women from all walks of life, who provide leadership in making the mission of GFC a success. The 3-week campaign will culminate in a Swachhotsav event on 29th March, 2023, as a run up to the International Day of Zero Waste on 30th March, 2023.
- d. Under the campaign, the first edition of Women Icons leading Swachhata (WINS) Awards 2023 was announced to recognize high-impact women entrepreneurs or women-led enterprises working for urban swachhata.
- e. A unique peer learning initiative, Swachhata Yatra has been rolled out wherein SHG members engaged as waste entrepreneurs are getting the exciting opportunity of inter- state travel. Acting as Swachhata Doots, many of these women are first time travelers and this enriching experience is offering them a platform to see, interact and learn.

Hence, option D is correct.

132. When did India become a full member of SCO?

- A. 9 June 2017
- B. 24 September 2011
- C. 31 March 2014
- D. 1 April 2019



Answer ||| A

Solution |||

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is inter-governmental organization, the creation of which was announced in Shanghai, China on 15 June 2001 by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. Apart from Uzbekistan, the other five countries have been a part of the 'Shanghai Five' constituted in 1996 by China to address border security issues with four of its neighbours. The cooperation was renamed to Shanghai Cooperation Organization after Uzbekistan joined the organization in 2001. On 9 June 2017, India and Pakistan were inducted as full members in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. This is the first-ever expansion of the organisation since its formation in 2001.

133. In which country the meeting of National Security Advisors of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, 2023 will be held?

- A. China
- B. Uzbekistan
- C. India
- D. Russia

Answer ||| C

Solution |||

A meeting of the National Security Advisors of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) will be held in New Delhi, which is expected to have virtual participation from China and Pakistan.

134. AFINDEX-2023 is a military exercise between which two countries?

- A. India-Russia
- B. Africa-India
- C. India-Nepal
- D. None of these

Answer ||| B

Solution |||



The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of joint military exercise “The Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-2023)” culminated at Foreign Training Node, Aundh, Pune. AFINDEX-2023 was held from 16 to 29 Mar 2023. A total of 25 nations of the African continent with 124 participants and Indian troops from the SIKH, MARATHA and MAHAR Regiments participated in the multinational exercise.

135. On which river is the Polavaram Irrigation Project situated?

- A. Godavari
- B. Krishna
- C. Ganga
- D. Cauvery

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

It is an under-construction multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in the Eluru District and East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh. The project implements the Godavari-Krishna link under the Interlinking of rivers project. It envisages the transfer of 80TMC of surplus Godavari water to river Krishna which will be shared between Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

136. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is used for-

- 1) To Save energy
- 2) To Make better use of daylight

Select the correct statements using the code given below.

**Code:**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C



Solution |||

Daylight Saving Time (DST) is used to save energy and make better use of daylight. It was first used in 1908 in Thunder Bay, Canada.

137. Which company/organisation has developed a bauxite-certified reference material (CRM) named BARC B1201, in collaboration with Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC).

- A. ISRO
- B. BEL
- C. SAIL
- D. NALCO

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), the Navratna CPSE, under Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India and country's leading manufacturer and exporter of alumina and aluminium, has successfully developed a Bauxite Certified Reference Material (CRM) naming as BARC B1201 in joint collaboration with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).

138. Consider the following statements regarding the Passport Index 2023 :

- 1). India's rank dropped as compared to that in the last year.
- 2). Decline in India's mobility score, in the Index, is linked to changes in the European Union's policy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. neither 1 nor 2

Answer ||| C

Solution |||





- \* India's rank dropped in the Passport Index 2023 as compared to that in the last year.
- \* According to the index, the decline in India's mobility score is linked to changes in the European Union's policy.
- \* India's mobility score has fallen from 71 to 70, with a ranking of 144 individually.
- \* India fell six places to the 144th position in the annual passport index for 2023, from 138th a year ago.
- \* Kenya recorded the largest gain this year jumping four places in the individual ranking.
- \* Only 10 countries have seen a rise in their mobility score this year.

139. In March 2023, ISRO successfully placed 36 satellites of OneWeb group company into their intended orbits. OneWeb is based in which of the following countries?

- A. Germany
- B. France
- C. Sweden
- D. United Kingdom

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

- \* In March 2023, ISRO successfully placed 36 satellites of OneWeb group company, based in the United Kingdom, into their intended orbits.
- \* It used its heaviest payload rocket, LVM3 for the mission from Sriharikota.
- \* After completed this launch, OneWeb completed its first generation (Gen-1) low earth orbit (LEO) constellation.

140. In March 2023, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), in India, upheld the ₹1,337 crore fine imposed on Google. The fine was completed by which of the following bodies?

- A. Enforce Directorate of India
- B. Competition Commission of India
- C. National Human Rights Commission



D. National Council of Arbitration

Answer ||| B

Solution |||

\* In 2023, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) upheld the ₹1,337 crore fine imposed on Google by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

\* The Competition Commission of India (CCI) was established in March 2009 by the Government of India under the Competition Act, 2002 for the administration, implementation, and enforcement of the Act.

\* National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 for hearing appeals against the orders of the National Company Law Tribunal(s) (NCLT), with effect from 1st June 2016.

141. In March 2023, the Government of India launched the Captive Employment initiative. The initiative addresses which of the following sections?

- A. Rural Youth of India
- B. Urban Youth of India
- C. Overseas Indians
- D. Foreigners

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* In March 2023, the Indian Union Minister for Rural Development launched the Captive Employment initiative which is a unique initiative under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY).

\* Captive Employment is a first-of-its-kind initiative aimed at addressing the vision of a dynamic and demand-based skilling ecosystem catering to the requirements of industry partners assuring sustainable placements for rural poor youth.

\* Captive Employers are the companies or industries that select rural youths, skill them, and deploy them in one of their establishments, sister concerns or subsidiaries.



142. In March 2023, Swachhotsav - 2023: Rally for Garbage Free Cities' was organized in India. In this regard, in which of the following years the Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched Star Rating Protocol to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status?

- A. 2018
- B. 2019
- C. 2021
- D. 2023

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* In March 2023, Swachhotsav - 2023: Rally for Garbage Free Cities' was organized in India.

\* In 2018, the Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched Star Rating Protocol to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status.

\* Swachhotsav campaign was a platform for over 400,000 women entrepreneurs taking up leadership role in urban sanitation.

\* The urban India has become Open Defecation Free (ODF), with all 4,715 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) completely ODF, 3,547 ULBs are ODF+ with functional and hygienic community and public toilets and 1,191 ULBs are ODF++ with complete faecal sludge management.

143. The National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), a Central Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, is organising the Urban Climate Film Festival under the CITIIS (City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain) program. The CITIIS is a joint program of which of the following?

- 1). The Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- 2). The French Development Agency (AFD)
- 3). The European Union (EU)

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only



D. All of the above

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* The National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), a Central Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, is organising the Urban Climate Film Festival under the CITIIS (City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain) program.

\* The CITIIS is a joint program of the Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the French Development Agency (AFD), the European Union (EU), and NIUA.

\* The festival aims to create wider awareness of the impact of climate change on life in cities and engage the public in the dialogue on sustainable urban development.

144. Which of the following universities has conferred Indian industrialist Naveen Jindal with a lifetime achievement award, in March 2023, for his accomplishments in industry, politics and education?

- A. The University of Texas
- B. Stanford University
- C. Columbia University
- D. Yale University

Answer ||| A

Solution |||

\* The University of Texas at Dallas has conferred Indian industrialist Naveen Jindal with a lifetime achievement award, in 2023, for his accomplishments in industry, politics and education.

\* He is the second person to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Texas at Dallas after noted Nobel Laureate Aziz Sancar.

\* An alumnus of the University of Texas at Dallas' 1992 batch, Jindal received the award in a ceremony on March 25.



## Daily Current Affairs

145. On which of the following dates, the International Day of Zero Waste is celebrated?

- A. 15 March
- B. 20 March
- C. 25 March
- D. 30 March

Answer ||| D

Solution |||

\* United Nations General Assembly acknowledged the significance of zero-waste programs and announced that March 30 would be celebrated as the International Day of Zero.

\* March 30, 2023 marked the first-ever Zero Waste Day with the objective of promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, support the societal shift towards circularity and raise awareness about how zero-waste initiatives contribute to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

\* The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on December 14, 2022, adopted a resolution at its 77th session to proclaim March 30 as the International Day of Zero Waste, to be observed annually.

