

Monthly GK Digest

June 2023



Monthly Digest June -2023

Dear readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in the month of '**June-2023**'. This file is important for, **Bank, SSC, and Railway** exams.

Banking & Financial Awareness

1. **Bajaj Allianz Life** has launched an exclusive **term insurance plan for Type 2 diabetic** and pre-diabetic individual
Note: The Bajaj Allianz Life Diabetic Term Plan Sub 8 HbA1c is **first of its kind protection plan** in the Indian life insurance industry. The insurer offers a 10% premium reduction for individuals trying to achieve health goals and other health management services. The policy term ranges from five to 25 years and premiums can be paid monthly/annually.
2. **Aegon Life** provider has become **the first insurance company** to launch a policy that covers **surrogate mothers and egg donors**.
Note: Aim: To support the financial well-being of surrogate mothers and egg donors. The new cover aligns with the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 and the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021, introduced by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. It provides a three-year life cover for surrogate mothers and a **one-year cover for egg donors**
3. **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub** has partnered with **IIT Madras** Research Park and Incubation Cell to launch voice-banking solutions to eliminate language barriers.
Note: It will assist the illiterate and the visually impaired in their banking needs. Aim: To conduct the basic banking transactions through voice controls in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and English, in the initial stage. SBI, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra, and IDFC First conducted a code fest on voice banking called 'Vaultier Voice'
4. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 2.2 crore on **Indian Overseas Bank** for violating various norms.
Note: The RBI said it fined the bank under the powers **vested by the Banking Regulation Act 1949**. The RBI imposed this monetary penalty after finding contraventions of banking regulations and non-compliance with specific RBI directions related to income recognition, asset classification, provisioning, interest rates on deposits, and ATM security
5. **ICICI Bank** has committed to donating **Rs 1,200 crore towards Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), from its CSR funds**.
Note: Aim: To set up three new buildings spanning over a combined area of 7.5 lakh square feet at TMC's centers at Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra), Mullanpur (Punjab), and Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth (ICICI Foundation), the CSR arm of ICICI Bank, will implement the initiative, which is likely to be completed by 2027.
6. **SEBI** released guidelines for transactions in corporate bonds through the **Request for Quote (RFQ)** platform by stock brokers in order to increase liquidity on the platform, from **July 1, 2023**.
Note: For all the trades in a proprietary capacity, stock brokers will have to undertake at least 10% of their total secondary market trades by value in corporate bonds in that month by placing quotes through one-to-one or one-to-many mode. In April 2024, the percentage will increase to 25%
7. **Karbon Card** has launched a mobile-based **expense management card** for businesses and individuals wherein it offers its users **uncapped cashback of upto 1%**.
Note: Card ++ differentiates itself by providing interesting cashback offers, incentivizing people their spending. The unique feature adds value to the card, making it an option for users. Its features include the ability to make payments on various platforms such as Google, Amazon, Swiggy, and Ola.
8. **State Bank of India** Bengaluru Circle has launched '**Project Kuber**', which will have four Transaction Banking Hubs and One Corporate Salary Package Hub.
Note: Aim: To increase the market share in liability products of SBI. **Location: SBI Administrative Building, KG Road, and Sampige Road in Malleswaram.** Transaction Banking Hubs: It will offer services to corporate/non-corporate clients, from account opening to onboarding them on SBI's digital platforms
9. **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das** has launched a **Financial Inclusion Dashboard 'ANTARDRIHSTI'**.
Note: Aim: To provide the required insight to assess and monitor the progress of financial inclusion by capturing relevant parameters. It will enable the ability to gauge

extent of financial exclusion at granular levels across the country. Presently, the dashboard is intended for internal use in the RBI. It will further facilitate greater financial inclusion through a multi-stakeholder approach.

10. RBI has set up a committee for Review of Customer Service Standards in RBI Regulated Entities

Note: Chairman of the committee: **BP Kanungo**. The operations of accounts should not be stopped pending periodic KYC updates. The committee has also suggested measures for the benefit of pensioners. There should be a time limit for the return of property documents to borrowers after the closure of the loan account, failing which a penalty should be imposed on the lender.

11. Bank of Baroda has launched Interoperable Cardless Cash Withdrawal (ICCW) facility, in which a customer can withdraw cash using UPI from the bank's ATM.

Note: It would be the **first public sector bank** to launch this service. BoB customers as well as customers of other participating issuer banks that use BHIM UPI, Bob World UPI, or any other UPI application enabled for ICCW on their mobile phone can withdraw cash from a Bank of Baroda ATM without using their debit card.

12. BSE and NSE exchange have introduced an enhanced surveillance mechanism (ESM) for companies that have a market cap of less than ₹500 crore, which came into force on June 5.

Note: SEBI and exchanges in a joint meeting have decided to **introduce the ESM framework for "micro-small" companies**. Aim: To curb volatility in small-cap counters. The parameters for shortlisting the securities under the ESM framework include high-low price variation and close-to-close price variation.

13. According to the World Bank's latest report, 6.3% would be India's growth outlook in FY2023/24.

Note: The bank has **also raised the 2023 global growth forecast**, highlighting that the U.S. and other major economies have proven more resilient than forecast. The global Real GDP would climb 2.1% in 2023, up from a 1.7% forecast issued in January 2023 but below 3.1% (2022 growth rate).

14. Wipro has collaborated with Microsoft to launch the Wipro Industry Innovation Experience for Financial Services.

Note: It will feature a new suite of banking and financial services solutions **built on Microsoft Cloud**. Aim: To help financial services clients accelerate growth and deepen client relationships. It would bring together Microsoft Cloud capabilities with Wipro FullStride Cloud, as well as leverage Wipro's and Capco's deep domain expertise in financial services

15. Kotak Private Banking unveiled a Savings Programme named 'Réserve', curated exclusively for UHNIs and HNIs.

Note: This by-invite program extends beyond banking services, offering a range of exclusive amenities to provide clients with an unparalleled luxury banking

experience. **Aim:** To deliver a premium banking experience by offering exclusive lifestyle benefits

16. YES SECURITIES has partnered with WatchYourHealth to provide investment solutions to healthcare professionals through the 'Wellth- Where Investments and Health Unite' program.

Note: Aim: To help the healthcare community start their investment journey for successful wealth creation and achieving long-term financial goals. It will also provide **free-of-cost demat and trading accounts**, monthly stock research recommendations, and tailor-made product offerings based on needs.

17. HDFC Bank has introduced a new credit card 'Millennia', that comes with contactless technology allowing customers to 'tap and pay' via POS machine.

Note: It **offers cashback and reward points** on Amazon, Flipkart, and other e-commerce platforms. It also offers 1% cash back on offline purchases, smart EMI, and lounge access for free. It is applicable to both self-employed and salaried persons. People earning a maximum of ₹35,000 gross salary can apply for the card.

18. The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee in its second bi-monthly monetary policy FY24 has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5%.

Note: Aim: Focus remains on withdrawal of accommodation. The RBI also retained FY24 GDP growth forecast at 6.5%, while expects FY24 **CPI inflation to be at 5.1% (from 5.2%)**. Standing Deposit Facility Rate: 6.25%; Marginal Standing Facility Rate: 6.75%; Bank Rate: 6.75%; Foreign exchange reserves(as on June 2): \$595.1 billion

19. The World Bank and Bangladesh signed two financing agreements totaling USD 858 million to enhance climate-resilient agricultural growth, and improve road safety.

Note: The World Bank will provide USD 500 million to Bangladesh for Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience. USD 358 million will be provided to Bangladesh for Road Safety Project, a first dedicated road safety project in South Asia supported by the World Bank

20. SIDBI has signed an MoU with HDFC Bank for providing financial solutions to MSMEs.

Note: Under the MoU, SIDBI and HDFC Bank will work together to provide complete financial product and services to the customers under MSMEs. Aim: To facilitate providing complete financial solutions to MSMEs in a seamless manner. This arrangement will enable MSMEs to avail financial products and services of both the banks.

21. Federal Bank bank has launched a campaign named 'I am Adyar, Adyar is me'.

Note: **Aim:** To celebrate people and their culture by transforming an entire bank branch into a museum of local stories. The campaign has handpicked 40 compelling stories of individuals, which are showcased

in an exclusive exhibition at the Adyar branch of Federal Bank. This art exhibition will run for two weeks. The campaign is a first-of-its-kind micro-marketing initiative in the banking industry.

22. According to the **rating agency ICRA**, bond issuances by **banks may fall below at Rs 90,000 crore** in FY24 due to **easing liquidity conditions**.

Note: Banks issued a **record Rs 1.1 trillion bonds in FY23**. Stronger foreign institutional investor (FII)/foreign portfolio investment (FPI) inflows, as seen recently, the derecognition of the Rs 2,000 note and an anticipated dividend by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) could ease liquidity conditions in the interim.

23. According to the new rankings released by Brand Finance, **Tata Group** has retained its position as the **most valued brand in India**.

Note: With a value **growth of 10.3% in 2023** as compared to 2022. Notably, Tata Group is the only Indian brand to feature in the top 100 of the Brand Finance Global 500 2023. While Infosys retained the second spot in the rankings with a brand value of \$13 billion, followed by LIC with a value of \$9.7 billion.

24. RBI has notified **four key measures** to strengthen **1,514 Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** in the country.

Note: UCBs can now open new **branches up to 10%** of the number of branches in the previous financial year without prior approval of RBI in their approved area of operation. UCBs have to get the policy approved by their board and comply with the Financially Sound and Well Managed Norms. The **deadline to achieve PSL target of 60%** also extended to March 31, 2024.

25. According to the MyGovIndia govt data, **India** has topped the **global rankings in digital payments** for the year 2022.

Note: During the year under review, there were **5 million digital transactions** in the country. India accounted for 46% of the global real-time payments in 2022, which was more than the combined digital payments the next four top countries. This shows the robustness of India's payment ecosystem as well as the country's acceptance of the digital.

26. **State Bank of India (SBI)** has received board approval to **raise ₹50,000 crore through debt instruments**.

Note: These debt instruments could **include long-term bonds, Long Term Bonds, Basel III compliant Additional Tier 1 Bonds and Basel III compliant Tier 2 Bonds**. The resources will be raised through private placement mode to Indian and/or overseas investors during FY24, subject to the government's approval wherever required.

27. The central government and **ADB** signed a loan agreement worth **\$130 million to boost agricultural productivity and horticulture agribusinesses**.

Note: The deal aims to increase farmers' income and improve access to **irrigation in Himachal Pradesh**. The project interventions will help increase the income and resilience to the effects of climate change of at least

15,000 farm households across seven districts in the state: Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Mandi, Sirmour, Solan, and Una.

28. **Axis Bank** in partnership with **NGO Dhruvansh** has organised a lake cleaning drive, '**Cleanathon**', in **Hyderabad**.

Note: This initiative was recorded in the **Asia Book of Record** as it was the largest cleaning drive conducted across the country. In Hyderabad, over 100 volunteers participated in cleaning Mushki Cheruvu and Neknampur Lake to restore these water bodies. The campaign aligned with the United Nations' theme for World Environment Day 2023, 'Beat Plastic Pollution'.

29. **Go Digit** has received the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's **approval to commence life insurance operations**.

Note: In 2022, **HDFC Bank and Axis Bank announced that they will both acquire up to 9.94% stake each in Go Digit-Life Insurance** through the investment of ₹50-70 crore, possibly in tranches, subject to executive of certain terms and agreements. Digit Insurance already has general insurance operations through Go Digit General Insurance.

30. **Indian Overseas Bank** has launched a Unique feature named '**My Account My Name**' for IOB SB HNI and IOB SB MAX account holders.

Note: This feature **allows customers to choose any name as their account number**. The account name can only be a numeric, alphabetic, or alphanumeric combination of seven characters. For example, a customer's account number can be 'Jackson' or '1234567' or 'Jack123'.

31. **RBI** has imposed a penalty of Rs 60.20 lakh on **Bihar State Co-operative Bank Limited, Patna** for a slew of shortcomings and violations.

Note: A statutory inspection of the Patna-based bank by Nabard after FY20 revealed that it failed to put in robust software for identifying and reporting suspicious transactions and submit statutory returns within prescribed timelines. The RBI also imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 6 lakh on Jowai Cooperative Urban Bank Limited, Meghalaya.

32. **MRF** became the **first Indian stock to touch the rupee one lakh** per share mark on June 13, 2023.

Note: The stock opened at ₹99,500 on BSE against the previous close of ₹98,939.70 and touched an all-time high of ₹1,00,300 in morning trade. The stock has witnessed strong gains in the last one year. It is up 45% in the last one year against a 19% gain in the benchmark Sensex. MRF shares hit their 52-week low of ₹65,900.05 on BSE on June 17, 2022.

33. **Equitas Holdings** has surrendered its **NBFC licence** and accordingly, its **registration has been cancelled**.

Note: The RBI, in the exercise of powers conferred on it under Section 45-IA (6) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, has therefore cancelled its CoR (certificate of registration). Reason: The company does not hold public

funds. Therefore, it may have voluntarily surrendered its certificate of registration.

- 34. Hubble has joined hands with Fino Payments Bank** for introducing **India's first spending account**.

Note: Depositors can save money in the account and earn up to 10% cash back on all purchases they make from the account. They can track expenses over 50 partnered brands and potentially save up to Rs. 20,000 annually. Users earn an interest rate of 2.75% annually on their parked funds. It will be integrated with Fino Payments Bank's digital savings account.

- 35. SEBI has introduced a regulatory framework for online investment platforms** that facilitate investments in commission-free **Mutual fund** schemes.

Note: It also addresses investor concerns about associated risks and introduces a grievance redressal mechanism. Platforms providing MF investment services in direct (commission-free) plans will have to apply for an 'execution only platform' licence through Sebi or AMFI within three months of the regulation coming into force.

- 36. Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)** has launched a new **deposit scheme 'Vikas Ashadeep 400 days'**.

Note: The scheme is of a tenor of 400 days with an **interest rate of 7.5% for senior citizens** and 7% for the general public. Prospective customers of the scheme will earn higher interest for a shorter period (almost 13 months). Under the scheme, a minimum of Rs 10,000 and a maximum of Rs 2 crore can be deposited. KVGB chairman: Shreekant Bhandiwad

- 37. RING digital credit platform** has partnered with the **National Payments Corporation of India** to add its newly launched UPI plug-in functionality to RING's pre-existing suite of digital services.

Note: Aim: To help RING offer 'scan & pay' options to its existing customers and acquire new customers who use UPI as a preferred mode of payment. It will become a one-stop integrated payment and credit solution where a customer can avail credit and pay merchants across the country.

- 38. Sberbank** has launched Indian rupee accounts for individuals.

Note: Aim: To expand the range of foreign currencies available to reduce dependency on the U. S. dollar and euro. Sberbank has more than 100 million retail clients and already offers deposits in China's yuan and UAE dirhams. Rupee accounts would also be available to clients. Sberbank would also raise rates on dirham deposits by 100 basis points for a six-week period.

- 39. SBI Mutual Fund** will acquire up to 10% of the total paid-up equity share capital of ICICI Lombard General Insurance through market purchase.

Note: The approval of IRDAI is valid for one year from the date of the Irda approval letter. This approval is subject to compliance with applicable provisions of IRDAI (Registration of Indian Insurance Companies)

Regulations, 2022, Indian Insurance Companies (Foreign Investment) Rules, 2015.

- 40. Microfinance loan portfolio** increased by **22%** to Rs 3. 48 lakh crore during 2022-23.

Note: Gross loan portfolio stood at Rs 2. 85 lakh crore as on March 31, 2022. Microfinance loan disbursements during FY 2022-23 improved by 23% to Rs 2,96,423 crores compared to Rs 2,39,433 crore in the previous financial year. About 7. 17 crore loans were disbursed during FY 22-23 as against 6. 30 crore in the previous year.

- 41. According to RBI data, the outstanding portfolio under education loans** grew by **17%** at ₹96,847 crore in the year 2022-23.

Note: In the previous year, education loans were recorded at ₹82,723 crore. For the first time in five years, growth in education loans not only turned positive but also registered a 17% surge in the last financial year ended March, 2023. The NPA in education advances stood at 7. 82% of a total outstanding portfolio of ₹80,000 crore at the end of the first quarter of FY23.

- 42. Reserve Bank of India** has imposed a monetary penalty of **₹20 lakh** on Manappuram Finance.

Note: Reason: For non-compliance with certain provisions of Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC). RBI imposed this penalty as it did not classify certain gold loan accounts with overdues of more than 90 days as Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). NBFC: It is a company registered under the Companies Act 1956 engaged in the business of loans and advances, and acquisition of shares/stocks/bonds/securities issued.

- 43. Paytm** has introduced a UPI software development kit (SDK).

Note: Reason: For customers to make payments to online merchants without any failure of the system. UPI SDK has also assured fail-proof transactions. Paytm UPI SDK will let users pay directly from bank accounts through UPI PIN without having to jump between merchant and payment app. Along with Paytm UPI Lite, the company is enhancing two-sided payments, for both merchants and customers.

- 44. The World Bank** has approved a \$150 million loan to support the Resilient program of **Kerala**.

Note: Reason: To continue strengthening the state's preparedness against natural disasters, climate change impacts, and disease outbreaks. **Aim:** To deepen the state's resilience in critical areas of coastal erosion and water resource management. This loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a final maturity of 14 years, including a grace period of six years.

- 45. Kotak Mahindra Bank** has launched its ActivMoney feature.

Note: It is an auto sweep feature that is offered by other banks, including Axis Bank and IndusInd Bank. **Benefit:** This feature gives customers the benefit of FD like interest up to 7% per annum, and the flexibility to access their funds at any time from the linked savings account.

- It allows a savings account holder to earn higher interest as offered in FDs while retaining the liquidity offered by a saving account.
46. **SEBI** has restricted online bond platform providers from offering products other than listed debt securities on their platforms.
Note: SEBI also allowed them to offer securities such as Government Securities, Treasury Bills, listed SBGs, listed municipal debt securities, and listed securitized debt instruments on their platforms. Under the rules, Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs) need to register themselves as stock brokers in the debt segment of the stock exchange.
47. SEBI has banned **India Infoline Ltd (IIFL) Securities** from onboarding any new clients for two years.
Note: Reason: Mixing clients' funds with proprietary funds by routing transactions through common control accounts; Utilizing funds of credit balance clients for settlement obligation of debit balance clients; Utilizing funds of credit balance clients for settlement obligation of proprietary trades
48. **Union Bank of India** has launched the Union Unnati account scheme.
Note: Recently, the Union Bank of India has launched four bank account schemes targeting women, women entrepreneurs and professionals, pensioners, and cooperative housing societies. The bank has launched Union Unnati specifically designed for women entrepreneurs and professionals. This account offers free cancer care coverage and personal accident cover. Union Samridhi has targeted women. The third product is Union Samman, a savings account aimed at pensioners.
49. **Axis Bank** has launched its latest feature 'One-View', on Axis Mobile Application.
Note: It also becomes the first private sector Bank to introduce this new-age banking feature leveraging the Account Aggregator ecosystem. Aim: To create a seamless banking experience for its customers. It helps in managing finances for customers, by providing them access to multiple bank accounts on a single platform. It also enables them to track their balances and spending on a real-time basis.
50. **Lloyds Banking Group** would set up a technology center in **Hyderabad**.
Note: The group, which has brands such as Lloyds Bank, Halifax, and Bank of Scotland under its belt, is planning to expand its digital capabilities through the tech center. It won't offer banking services in the country, rather it will focus on using technology and digital data, and analytics capabilities to drive innovation and end-to-end product delivery
51. **Manipal Technologies Limited (MTL)** has partnered with **Indian Bank** to drive financial inclusion by offering customized banking products.
Note: Aim: To build a sustainable network of corporate business correspondents (CBCs). It will enhance the availability, affordability, and accessibility of financial services, particularly in underserved markets and rural areas. MTL will work closely with Indian Bank to offer tailor-made banking products in rural locations.
52. The Reserve Bank has imposed a penalty of Rs 2.5 crore on **Jammu and Kashmir Bank** for non-compliance with directions related to time-bound implementation and strengthening of SWIFT-related operational controls.
Note: A penalty of Rs 1.45 crore was also imposed on Bank of Maharashtra for non-compliance with Loans and Advances Statutory and Other Restrictions' and Advisory on Man in the Middle Attacks in ATMs'. The RBI also imposed a penalty of Rs 30 lakh on Axis Bank.
53. **World Bank** has granted its approval for a USD 255.5 million loan to enhance the quality of technical education in government-run institutions across India.
Note: This funding will support approximately 275 selected government-run technical institutions over the course of the next five years. The Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education Project will focus on improving student skills and employability through various measures.
54. **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)** launched a new close-ended plan Dhan Vridhhi.
Note: It is a non-linked, non-participating, individual, savings, single premium life plan, offering a combination of protection and savings. This plan provides financial support to the family in case of unfortunate death of the life assured during the policy term. It also provides a guaranteed lump sum amount on the date of maturity to the assured. Minimum assured sum: Rs 1,25,000
55. **Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)** has signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission (TNSRLM) to foster the growth of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the State and provide them with vital financial support.
Note: TNSRLM will facilitate eligible SHGs for credit linkage with IOB. Aim: To streamline access to financial resources for SHGs, enabling them to undertake entrepreneurial activities, expand their ventures, and contribute to the economic development of the State
56. The Asian Development Bank has signed an agreement with **Bangladesh** to provide a 400 million US dollars loan for the construction of 102 km-long dual gauge railways between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar to promote trade, investment, and tourism.
Note: Aim: To transport 2.9 million passengers annually between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar by 2024. Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway is part of the Trans-Asia Railway network, an initiative led by the UN.
57. **Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance** launched 'Nishchit Pension Plan'.
Note: It is a non-linked, non-participating individual pension plan that enables the policyholders to plan for their retirement. Under this plan, the insurer provides accrued guaranteed additions during the policy term and loyalty addition at the end of the policy term. The

- policyholders will be able to accumulate a 100% guaranteed corpus at desired retirement age.
- 58. ICICI Lombard** has launched three insurance products focusing on MSMEs — MSME Suraksha Kavach Policy, Property All Risk (PAR) Policy, and i-Select Liability.
Note: Aim: To make MSMEs more risk aware and provide them with the benefit of comprehensive coverage to safeguard their businesses. MSME Suraksha Kavach Policy protects MSMEs against loss or damage to property due to defined insured perils. PAR policy covers a range of properties against damage caused by accidents
- 59. S&P Global Ratings** has retained India's GDP growth forecast at **6%** for 2023-24.
Note: Reason: The fastest growing economy among Asia Pacific nations. In its quarterly economic update for Asia-Pacific, S&P Global Ratings forecasted the same growth for Vietnam and the Philippines alongside India. In its latest report, S&P has kept the GDP growth forecast for India unchanged for the current and the next fiscal, FY25 partly on account of domestic resilience.
- 60. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has canceled the banking license of **Mahalaxmi Cooperative Bank, Dharwad** and allowed function only as a non-banking institution.
Note: The cancellation of the license is with effect from the close of business on June 27, 2023. RBI has also been instructed to repay unpaid and unclaimed deposits of non-members held by it, whenever demanded, even after being notified as a non-banking Institution.
- 61. According to the data released by the Reserve Bank, India's Current Account Deficit (CAD)** has been narrowed to 1.3 billion dollars or 0.2% of GDP in the January-March quarter of the last fiscal.
Note: The decline was mainly due to moderation in the trade deficit and a robust increase in services exports. RBI data has shown that net services receipts increased, both sequentially and on a year-on-year basis, on the back of a rise in net earnings from computer services.
- 62. The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors** approved a total of \$391 million loan to **Assam and Tripura**.
Note: Aim: To improve access to high-quality healthcare services and to economic opportunities. Out of \$391
- million, \$251 million was approved for the Assam State Secondary Healthcare Initiative for Service Delivery Transformation (ASSIST) Project. While \$140 million was approved for the Tripura Rural Economic Growth and Service Delivery Project.
- 63. Tata AIA** has partnered with WhatsApp and PayU to make payments through Unified Payment Interfaces (UPI) for their consumers more efficient.
Note: This feature provides an instant premium payment facility through WhatsApp and UPI-enabled payment options. The company has enabled the renewal of premium collections via multiple Digital modes and enhanced its language capability to 5 Languages—English, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, and Bengali.
- 64. The World Bank** has approved **\$1.5 billion** to accelerate the development of India's low-carbon energy sector.
Note: Aim: To help India promote low-carbon energy by scaling up renewable energy, developing green hydrogen, and stimulating climate finance for low-carbon energy investments. The program will support the successful implementation of the National Green Hydrogen Mission which aims to stimulate \$100 billion in private-sector investment by 2030.
- 65. According to Bloomberg**, after the tie-up of HDFC Bank Ltd and Housing Development Finance Corp, the lender would rank at **fourth** place in equity market capitalization.
Note: It's valued at about \$172 billion. With the merger likely effective July 1, the new HDFC Bank entity will have around 120 million customers, which is greater than the population of Germany. JPMorgan Chase & Co ranked first, followed by Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd and Bank of America Corp.
- 66. ICICI Lombard General Insurance and ICICI Prudential** have jointly launched a combi product, 'iShield'.
Note: Aim: To provide customers with both health and life insurance under the "use and file" procedure. The "use and file" procedure allows an insurer to launch a product without prior approval of the regulator. A combi product offers the benefits of life insurance, along with that of general or other insurance covers.

Obituaries

- 1. Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai**, who passed away at 91, was a noted scholar in **Sanskrit**.
Note: She was an Indian Sanskrit scholar from Jammu City, J&K, and was head of the Sanskrit department at Jammu University. She was awarded the Padma Shri (India's fourth highest civilian award), a Certificate for her scholarship in Sanskrit, and President's Award for Sanskrit. She was also awarded Gold Medal by Jammu and Kashmir Government for social work and the Dogra Ratan award.
- 2. Amir Raza Husain**, who passed away at 66, was a veteran **Actor**.
Note: He was known for his large outdoor stage productions such as "The Fifty Day War" based on the Kargil War and "The Legend of Ram". He was also the Creative Director of the Stagedoor Theatre Company, established in 1974, which has presented over 91 productions and more than 1,100 performances. He was honoured with the Padma Shri (2001) by the government for his contribution to theatre.

3. **Sulochana**, who passed away at 94, was veteran **Actor (female)**.

Note: She was featured in more than 250 Hindi and 50 Marathi films. She started her career with Marathi films in the early 1940s and soon moved to Hindi films, where she portrayed several mother roles in movies like Shammi Kapoor's *Dil Dekhe Dekho*, Dilip Kumar's *Aadmi*, Dev Anand's *Jhonny Mera Naam*, Muqaddar Ka Sikandar, Himmatwala, and Andar Baahar. She was honoured with Padma Shri in 1999.

4. **Gitanjali Aiyar**, who passed away, was a veteran **Journalist**.

Note: Aiyar joined Doordarshan in 1971 and was awarded the best anchor four times. She also won the Indira Gandhi Priyadarshini Award for Outstanding Women in 1989. She was a diploma holder from the National School of Drama (NSD). She had also been a popular face in several print advertisements and even acted in Sridhar Kshirsagar's TV drama "Khandaan".

5. **Silvio Berlusconi**, who passed away at 86, was a former PM of **Italy**.

Note: Berlusconi founded Forza Italia, a center-right party, in 1994 with the aim of defeating the 'communists'. His party introduced a populist style of politics in Italy, propelling him to the upper ranks of the political establishment. He was also known as 'Il Cavaliere' (The Knight) and remained a flamboyant and influential figure in Italian politics.

6. **Cormac McCarthy** passed away at 89 in the USA, was a veteran **Novelist**.

Note: "All the Pretty Horses," "The Road" and "No Country for Old Men" were among his acclaimed books that explore a bleak world of violence and outsiders. He was awarded the National Book Award in 1992 for his

novel 'All the Pretty Horses'. He also won a Pulitzer Prize in 2007 for 'The Road'. Other novels: *Suttree*, *Blood Meridian*, *The Border Trilogy*, *No Country for Old Men*.

7. Dr. M. A. Kuttappan, who passed away, was associated with **Politics**.

Note: He began his career as a doctor at Alappuzha Medical College and Cochin Port Trust Hospital. Later he became a four-time MLA in the Kerala assembly and was a member of the AK Antony ministry in 2001 as minister for the welfare of backward classes and SC/ST. He was elected to the state assembly from Wandoor, Chelakkara, and twice from Njarakkal constituencies. Other novels: *Suttree*, *Blood Meridian*, *The Border Trilogy*, *No Country for Old Men*.

8. **Sylvester daCunha**, the man behind the iconic Amul Girl 'utterly butterly' campaign, passed away, was a veteran **Advertiser**.

Note: He conceived the 'Utterly Butterly' campaign for Amul, the brand owned by Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), in 1966. In 1969, daCunha solidified his legacy by establishing daCunha Communications. The 'Utterly Butterly' campaign for Amul had celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016.

9. Co-inventor of lithium-ion batteries, John Bannister Goodenough passed away at 101, was honoured with the Nobel Prize in **2019**.

Note: He shared the 2019 Nobel Prize with Stan Whittingham, a British-American scientist, for discovering that lithium may be held within sheets of titanium sulphide. He was also instrumental in the invention of computer RAM (Random Access Memory). He also worked at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Oxford University.

Important Days

1. **World Bicycle Day 2023** is observed every year on **3rd June**.

Note: Aim: To promote the importance of bicycles as a means of transportation, fostering sustainability, health, and well-being. The day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in April 2018 to recognize the uniqueness, versatility and sustainability of the bicycle and its positive impact on society. The initiative to establish this Day was led by Turkmenistan, with the support of numerous other countries.

2. **World Environment Day** is observed annually on **June 5** to create awareness about the protection of the environment and the earth's well-being.

Note: The theme for World Environment Day 2023 is '**Solutions to plastic pollution**', under the campaign #BeatPlasticPollution. The day is hosted by Côte d'Ivoire and supported by the Netherlands. This year marks the 50th anniversary of World Environment Day, which will focus on solutions to plastic pollution.

3. **The fifth World Food Safety Day** is celebrated on **7 June 2023** to draw attention to help prevent, detect, and manage foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, agriculture, and sustainable development.

Note: 2023 theme: **Food Standards Save Live**; The 2023 theme emphasizes that how important food standards are to protecting public health. This day was established by the WHO and FAO in 2018. On June 7, 2019, the first World Food Safety Day was observed.

4. **The International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression** was observed every year on **June 4**.

Note: Aim: To bring attention to children who experience various forms of aggression; It serves as a solemn reminder of the suffering endured by countless children globally, regardless of the specific type of abuse they endure.

5. **International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing** is celebrated on **June 5** every year.

Note: The day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 to raise awareness of the problem of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. IUU fishing is a major threat to global fish stocks and the marine environment.

6. World Milk Day is observed every year on **1st June**.

Note: This day was created in the year 2001 by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN). Aim: To promote the consumption and benefits of milk around the world. The goal of this day is to provide us with a chance to raise awareness of and support in any manner possible initiatives related to the dairy industry. For 2023, the theme for World Milk Day will focus on the importance of dairy in the reduction of carbon footprints as well as providing nutritious foods and livelihoods.

7. The Global Day of Parents is observed every year on **June 1** to recognize the critical role parents play in the lives of their children and the well-being of society as a whole.

Note: This day serves as an opportunity to honor and appreciate the dedication, love, and sacrifices of parents worldwide. The day emphasizes the importance of parental guidance in shaping the lives of children and promoting their overall well-being.

8. World Oceans Day is observed every year on **8 June** to create awareness about the significance of oceans, and importance of preserving and conserving oceanic resources.

Note: 2023 theme: **Planet Ocean: Tides are Changing;** The concept was originally proposed by Canada's International Centre for Ocean Development and the Ocean Institute of Canada at the Earth Summit in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This day was officially recognised by the United Nations in 2008.

9. World Brain Tumor Day is celebrated annually on **June 8** for creating awareness about brain tumors.

Note: Theme 2023: Protect yourself – keep away from stress; Brain tumor is characterised by abnormal growth of cells in the brain, it can be grown in any part of the brain or skull including the underside of the brain, brainstem and nasal cavity among others. Researchers have identified more than 120 types of brain tumors which are based on the brain tissue that it impacts

10. World Accreditation Day is an annual global observance held on **June 9** to recognize and promote the role of accreditation across various sectors.

Note: Aim: To raise awareness about the value and benefits of accreditation in ensuring competence, reliability, and credibility in industries such as healthcare, laboratories, certification bodies, and conformity assessment services. **2023 theme: Accreditation: Supporting the Future of Global Trade**

11. The World Day against Child Labour is observed annually on **June 12** to support the expanding anti-child labour movement.

Note: ILO declared June 12 to be the World Day Against Child Labour in 2002 to raise awareness of this problem. **"Week of Action against Child Labour" is the theme** for the 2023 World Day Against Child Labour. The ILO intends to start a week-long campaign to raise public awareness of the injustice of child labour and inspire people to take action.

12. International Albinism Awareness Day is observed annually on **June 13** to ensure the inclusion of the voices of persons with albinism in all sectors of life.

Note: 2023 theme: **Inclusion is Strength; Albinism is a genetic condition that can lead to the absence of melanin production in the human body.** In 2013, the United Nations Human Rights Commission passed a resolution called Attacks and discrimination against persons with albinism.

13. World Blood Donor Day is celebrated every year on **June 14** to raise awareness for the necessity of blood donation and thank the altruistic acts of selflessness of voluntary blood donors and celebrate life and humanity.

Note: 2023 theme: **Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often;** This day was first distinguished by the WHO in 2004. At the 58th World Health Assembly (2005), it was declared an annual global event on June 14 (the birthday of Karl Landsteiner).

14. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is observed every year on **June 15** to raise awareness about the abuse experienced by older adults.

Note: 2023 theme: **Closing the Circle: Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Older Age - Policy, Law and Evidence-based Responses.** In 2006, this day was started by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA). In 2011, the United Nations adopted it as a designated day for the prevention of abuse of older people.

15. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed annually on **June 17th** to raise awareness about the threats posed by desertification and drought and promote efforts to combat these challenges.

Note: 2023 theme: **Her land. Her rights.** The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought was established in 1994 following a convention held at the United Nations General Assembly. The inaugural observance took place in 1995.

16. The International Day for Countering Hate Speech is observed on **June 18**, every year to address the pressing global problem of hate speech.

Note: This day holds great importance as it calls for collective action to counter the spread of divisive rhetoric and promote understanding, respect, and inclusivity. The Day marked by UNGA recognized the devastating consequences of hate speech and reaffirms the commitment to human rights and equality.

17. World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed every year on **June 19th** each year to raise awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD).

- Note:** 2023 theme: Building and strengthening global sickle cell communities, formalizing newborn screening, and knowing your sickle cell disease status. It is a genetic blood disorder characterized by abnormal red blood cells that take on a crescent or sickle shape. These irregularly shaped cells can cause blockages in blood vessels.
18. World Refugee Day is commemorated every year on **20th June** to serve as a reminder of the challenges faced by millions of individuals who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, persecution, or violence.
Note: 2023 theme: Hope Away from Home. This year's theme highlighted the resilience and challenges faced by refugees, who lost everything. On December 4, 2000, the United Nations General Assembly established this day through Resolution 55/76.
 19. The International Day of Yoga is observed every year on **June 21** since 2015.
Note: This year, the theme for International Yoga Day is "Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam". This year's theme highlighted beautifully encapsulates collective aspiration for "One Earth, One Family, One Future. On 11 December 2014, the UN proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131. The draft resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India.
 20. World Music Day is an annual event that is observed on **June 21** every year to celebrate the global language of music.
Note: The theme for World Music Day 2023 is "Music on the Intersections". Aim: To promote peace and bring together people of different nationalities, cultures, races and ethnicity together through the power of music. World Music Day is also known as Fête de la Musique as it has its origin in France.
 21. International Widows Day is observed annually on **June 23** to spread awareness about the plight of millions of widows facing poverty.
Note: 2023 theme: Innovation and technology for gender equality. The first-ever International Widows Day was established by The Loomba Foundation back on June 23rd, 2005. In 2010, the UNGA recognized the importance of this day and they officially adopted International Widows Day to share its importance on a global level.
 22. International Women in Engineering Day is observed every year on **June 23** for improving the participation of young girls in the field of engineering.
Note: The theme of the special day this year is 'Make Safety Seen'. In 2014, the United Kingdom officially dedicated June 23 to lead a national campaign for women in the engineering field. In 2017, UNESCO celebrated this day for the first time, to mark the vigilant efforts of women in the engineering society.
 23. The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed annually on **June 26** to spread awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse.
Note: Various campaigns, rallies, and awareness programs are held worldwide on this day. This is observed to honour Lin Zexu, who played a key role in the demolition of the opium trade in the Guangdong region of China. 2023 theme: People first: stop stigma and discrimination, strengthen prevention
 24. World MSME Day is observed on **June 27** every year to raise awareness about the importance of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in promoting inclusive and sustainable development worldwide.
Note: The Global Council for the Promotion of International Trade is celebrating the day with "Building a Stronger Future Together" theme of this year. The theme of MSME Day 2023 in India is "Future-ready MSMEs for India@100."
 25. India observed National Statistics Day on **June 29** every year, to celebrate the birth anniversary of statistician P. C. Mahalanobis.
Note: This day was first celebrated in 2007 in India. The theme of Statistics Day, 2023 is "Alignment of State Indicator Framework with National Indicator Framework for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals". Statistics Day in India is celebrated by conducting seminars, conferences, and other interactive events.
 26. International Asteroid Day is observed annually on **30 June** to raise awareness about the potential hazards posed by asteroid impacts.
Note: It also aims to educate people about the global crisis communication measures to be taken in the event of a credible near-Earth object threat. In December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution (A/RES/71/90) establishing June 30th as International Asteroid Day. World Music Day is also known as Fête de la Musique as it has its origin in France.

New Appointments

1. **Ashwani Kumar** has been appointed as **MD and CEO of UCO Bank**.
Note: He has replaced **Soma Sankara Prasad**, who superannuated on May 31, 2023. Prior to this, he served as an Executive Director at Indian Bank. He would lead the public sector bank for a period of three years from June 1, 2023. He would also be eligible for an extension of the term of office, after a review of his performance.
2. **Ajay Yadav** has been appointed as the **Managing Director of Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI)**.
Note: He is a 2005 batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre. SECI is a Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE). It was incorporated in the year 2011. It is the primary implementing agency of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for Renewable Energy

- schemes/projects towards the fulfillment of India's international commitments.
3. **INAS, P Upadhyay** assumed charge as **Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA)** on June 1, 2023.
Note: He has **replaced KSC Iyer**, who superannuated on 31 May 2023. He is an alumnus of the Naval Defence College of NDC-53. He belongs to the 1987 batch of the Indian Naval Armament Service. He joined the Naval Armament Organization of the Indian Navy in 1989. He is specialized in Missile and Torpedo Maintenance besides having vast knowledge of the disposal of ammunition.
 4. **Amarendu Prakash** has taken charge as a **Chairman of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)** on May 31, 2023.
Note: Prior to this, he was Director in charge at Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL). He is a metallurgical engineer from BIT Sindhri and joined SAIL in 1991 as a Management Trainee (Technical). He also took on additional charge as Director In-Charge of the Rourkela Steel Plant, IISCO, and Durgapur Steel Plant.
 5. **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** will be sworn in as the **President of Turkish**.
Note: Ambassador Virander Paul will be representing India at the ceremony. The inauguration ceremony in Parliament will be followed by an elaborate ceremony at Erdogan's palace in Ankara. He won the presidential run-off election by securing 52.18% of the vote, defeating his opponent Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who received 47.82% votes.
 6. **Abdulla Al Mandous** has been elected as the new **President of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** for a 4-year term from 2023 to 2027.
Note: He emerged as the official candidate of the UAE and secured 95 votes out of the representatives from WMO's 193 member states and territories. He succeeded Prof Gerhard Adrian. WMO is an authoritative body within the UN system that focuses on weather, climate, environment, etc.
 7. **Ajay Banga** has assumed charge as the **President of the World Bank**, after replacing David Malpass, who stepped down on June 1, 2023.
Note: He has been appointed as the **14th President of the World Bank** for a five-year term. In February 2023, US President Joe Biden nominated Ajay Banga to lead the World Bank. He has become the first-ever Indian-American to head the World Bank. Prior to this role, he served as Vice Chairman at General Atlantic.
 8. **TransUnion CIBIL** has appointed **V Anantharaman** as a new **non-executive chairman**.
Note: He **replaced M V Nair**, who has stepped down from his post, after eleven years. He has worked in the banking industry to lead corporate and investment banking teams in Standard Chartered Bank, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank and Bank of America. He also served on the boards of The Indian Hotels Company Limited, Axis Asset Management Company, IIFL Home Finance Ltd and Ecom Express Ltd.
 9. **Amit Agrawal** has been appointed as the new **CEO of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)**.
Note: While Subodh Kumar Singh has been appointed as director general of the National Testing Agency. Both Agrawal and Singh are Indian Administrative Service officers of the Chhattisgarh cadre. Rashmi Chowdhary, additional secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training, has been appointed as secretary in the Central Information Commission.
 10. **Nitin Agarwal** has been appointed as the new director general of the **Border Security Force (BSF)**.
Note: This appointment comes after a vacancy of over five months in the position. Presently, he is serving as the Additional DG of operations at the headquarters of the CRPF in Delhi. The additional charge of the BSF has been held by Sujoy Lal Thakosen, the Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
 11. The government of India has appointed **Pankaj Agrawal** as the new **Power Secretary**.
Note: He would **replace present Secretary Alok Kumar**, who will retire on June 30. While Rajat Mishra will be the new Fertiliser Secretary, and Chanchal Kumar to join the Civil Aviation Ministry as Secretary. Sudhanshu Pant will move from the Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry to Health Ministry. Subhas Chandra Lal Das will move to the Ministry of MSME as Secretary.
 12. **Philip Green** has been appointed as Australia's next High Commissioner to India.
Note: He would succeed incumbent Barry O'Farrell, who served as Australian high commissioner to India since 2020. Presently, he is serving as Australia's ambassador to Germany. Previously, he has also served as Australia's High Commissioner to Singapore, South Africa, and Kenya. Hilary McGeachy has been appointed as Australia's first Consul-General in Bengaluru.
 13. **Kamal Kishore Chatiwal** has assumed charge as the new managing director of Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL).
Note: He has replaced Sanjay Kumar, who has taken over as Director (Marketing) in GAIL (India) Ltd. Prior to this role, he was working as an executive director and head of zonal marketing of GAIL in Jaipur, Rajasthan. IGL is a joint venture of GAIL and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) with the Delhi government holding 5% stake.
 14. **Jane Marriott** has been appointed as the next British High Commissioner to Pakistan.
Note: She would be replacing Dr Christian Turner, who left Pakistan in January after serving as the envoy since December 2019. She also becomes the first female British envoy to Islamabad. Prior to this role, she was the high commissioner to Kenya since September 2019. She has also completed two diplomatic postings to Iraq and one to Afghanistan.
 15. **P Vasudevan** has been appointed as MD and CEO of Equitas Small Finance Bank.
Note: He has been reappointed for a period of 3 years, from July 23, 2023, to July 23, 2026. Headquarters of Equitas SFB: Chennai. After receiving license from RBI

- on 30 June 2016, Equitas Small Finance bank began banking on 5 September 2016 and with effect from 4 February 2017, Equitas became a scheduled bank.
16. **Axis Bank** has appointed **NS Vishwanathan** as the non-executive chairman for three years.
Note: His appointment will be effective from October 27, 2023, or the date of approval of his appointment by the RBI. NS Vishwanathan was a seasoned banker, who handled critical areas like regulation. He has also served as a Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India between 2016 and 2020.
 17. **Ravi Sinha** has been appointed as the new head of the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) for a tenure of two years.
Note: He would succeed Samant Goel, who completes his four-year tenure on June 30, 2023. Ravi Sinha is a 1988-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre. At present, he is serving as Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat. Earlier, Sinha served in Jammu and Kashmir, the northeast, and foreign countries.
 18. **Swaminathan Janakiraman** has been appointed as the deputy governor of Reserve Bank India for three years.
Note: He would succeed Mahesh Kumar Jain, who was serving as a deputy governor since 2018, is set to retire. Prior to this role, he held various assignments across Corporate and International Banking, Retail and Digital Banking, Finance, and Assurance functions with SBI. He also served as a Nominee Director of SBI on the Boards of Yes Bank and Jio Payments Bank.
 19. **Hasmukh Adhia** has been appointed as chairman of GIFT (Gujarat International Finance Tec) City.
Note: In addition to this role, he was also appointed as the Chairman and Director of the Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Ltd (GACL) and the Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC). He replaced Sudhir Mankad, to take the helm of GIFT City. He has also served as the Principal advisor to Narendra Modi when he was CM of Gujarat.
 20. **Umesh Kumar** was appointed the chairman of the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC), by the President of India.
Note: President Droupadi Murmu has exercised the powers conferred by Section 45(b) of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023, read with sub-section 2 of Section 84 of the Electricity Act, 2003. He served as the justice of Allahabad High Court till July 2022.
 21. Finland's parliament elected **Petteri Orpo** as prime minister at the head of a four-party coalition.
Note: Parliament voted in favor of Orpo, who won the April elections. He was formally appointed as prime minister by President Sauli Niinistö. He took over from Sanna Marin, whose Social Democrats finished third behind Orpo's National Coalition Party and the Finns Party. The new coalition is made up of the smaller Swedish People's Party and Christian Democrats.
 22. **Eddie Wu** will take over as the chief executive of the Alibaba Group.
Note: He is one of the co-founders of Alibaba, who first served it as a technology director back in 1999. While Joe Tsai will take over as chairman on September 10th, 2023. He was appointed as the company's CFO until 2013. The present CEO and Chairman Daniel Zhang is planning to step down this year.
 23. WHO has appointed Health **Dr Vanessa Kerry** as the first-ever WHO Director-General Special Envoy for Climate Change and.
Note: She is a renowned global health expert and medical doctor and CEO of Seed Global Health. She will play a pivotal role in amplifying WHO's climate and health messaging and undertake high-level advocacy. Climate change is emerging as the greatest health challenge of the 21st century, impacting various aspects of human well-being.
 24. DBS Bank India has appointed **Rajat Verma** as managing director and head of institutional banking.
Note: He will succeed Niraj Mittal, who will be taking up a new role as country head of DBS Bank in Australia. Rajat Verma was formerly with HSBC as the MD and country head of Commercial Banking in India. He will lead the growth of the institutional banking franchise for DBS Bank in India given the significantly expanded footprint of the lender.
 25. **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** has been sworn in as the PM of Greece for a second term, after winning the Prime Minister election.
Note: He took the oath of office in the presidential palace at a ceremony. In the election, he bagged 40.55% of the votes, more than twice the main opposition Syriza's 17.84%. He vowed to accelerate institutional and economic reforms. He became the PM for the first time in 2019 when his party defeated Syriza in an election.
 26. The Reserve Bank of India has given its approval to the Federal Bank for the appointment of **AP Hota** as part-time chairman, with effect from June 29, 2023, till January 14, 2026.
Note: In 2018, he was appointed as an Independent Director of Federal Bank Limited. He has also worked at RBI as a nominee director to the Board of Vijaya Bank and Andhra Bank. He was the architect of NPCI and served as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer between 2009- 2017.
 27. **Rohit Jawa** has assumed charge as the Managing Director and CEO of FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL).
Note: He has replaced Sanjiv Mehta who retired after the company's annual general meeting. Mehta handed over the baton to Jawa, who was appointed as an Additional Director and CEO-Designate from April 1, 2023. Prior to this role, Jawa was the Chief of Transformation for Unilever in London. He started his career with HUL as a management trainee in 1988.

28. **Ajay Bhatnagar** has been appointed as Special Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), effective until his superannuation on November 20, 2024.
Note: At present, he is serving as Additional Director in the agency. While Anurag and Manoj Sashidhar have been promoted to the position of Additional Director. The government has also extended the tenure of Sharad Agarwal as Joint Director.

29. Audi has appointed **Gernot Dollner** as Chairman of the Board of Management, effective September 1, 2023.
Note: He will take over Markus Duesmann. Gernot Dollner joined Volkswagen as a Ph. D. candidate in 1993 and subsequently served in a number of management roles at Porsche, including as head of Concept Development and head of the Panamera Series.

Important News – India

1. **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity)** has launched the **Electronics Repair Services Outsourcing (ERSO)** Pilot initiative.

Note: Aim: To validate certain transformational policy and process changes to make India the Repair Capital of the World. The pilot project is being conducted in Bengaluru and **will run for three months**. The government has supported this project to make India a world leader in a hitherto untapped domain.

2. **Ministry of Cooperation** will implement a pilot project of the **World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector** in at least ten selected districts.

Note: The Cabinet has approved the constitution and empowerment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee for the facilitation of the "World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector". This will be **done by the convergence of various schemes of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and Ministry of Food Processing Industries**. Ministry of Cooperation will implement a pilot project in at least ten selected districts.

3. According to the Statistics Ministry's **provisional estimate**, **India's GDP** is pegged to grow at **7.2%** during the fiscal year 2022-23.

Note: The data is **20 basis points higher than the government's second advance estimate of 7%**. The GDP registered a growth of 6.1% in January-March 2023. Quarterly terms in 2022-23: 13.1% growth (Q1), 6.2% (Q2), and 4.5% (Q3). In the fourth quarter, the agricultural growth was estimated at 5.5% and Manufacturing growth at 4.5 %.

4. **Union health ministry** has amended the **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2004**, to mandate the display of **anti-tobacco warnings and disclaimers on over-the-top (OTT) platforms**.

Note: India has become the first country to make it mandatory for OTT platforms. To display anti-tobacco health spots of a minimum of 30 seconds each at the beginning and middle of a program. An audio-visual disclaimer of a minimum of 20 seconds on the ill effects of tobacco use

5. The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has introduced **31** Indian standards related to Ayush.

Note: It encompassing **30 herbs and one product**, the stainless steel neti pot. BIS has established an additional department with a dedicated focus on Ayush for strengthening its standardization framework. A Working

Group on 'Traditional Medicine' established within the ISO/TC-215 'Health Informatics'. BIS also initiated efforts to formulate international standards in collaboration with ISO

6. **India** is set to remain **United Arab Emirates' (UAE) largest export destination by 2030**, according to a new report by Standard Chartered titled 'Future of Trade: New opportunities in high-growth corridors'.

Note: The report forecasts that the UAE's exports will reach **around USD 543 billion by 2030**, showcasing a robust annual growth rate of 5.5%. It also highlights that trade corridors anchored in Asia, Africa, Middle East are expected to outpace the global trade growth rate by 4%.

7. **Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** has released the **UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2023** in New Delhi.

Note: These regulations will facilitate the creation of many more quality-focused deemed to be universities in an objective and transparent manner. It will encourage universities to focus on quality and excellence and strengthen the research ecosystem and have a long-term impact in transforming the higher education landscape.

8. **MV Empress, maiden International Cruise Vessel** was flagged off from **Chennai to Sri Lanka** in Chennai on June 5, 2023.

Note: It was **built at a cost of 17.21 crore rupees**. This marks the beginning of the international cruise tourism terminal in Chennai. For this cruise service, an MoU was signed in 2022 between Chennai Port and M/S Waterways Leisure Tourism Pvt Ltd to start domestic and international cruise services.

9. **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari** has released **NHAI's first 'Sustainability Report for FY2021-22'**.

Note: This report will cover **NHAI's governance structure, stakeholders, environment, and social responsibility initiatives**. From FY2019-20 to 2021-22, direct emissions were reduced by 18.44% and 9.49% due to less fuel consumption. Green House Gas Emissions saw a decline of 9.7% in FY2020-21 and 2% in FY2021-22. Similarly in operations, energy intensity in Giga Joules/km reduced by 27% in FY2021-22

10. **NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL)** and **Uttar Pradesh Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (UPRVUNL)** signed an MoU in Lucknow.

Note: Aim: To collaborate in the development of Renewable Energy Parks and Projects. Signed by: Mohit Bhargava (CEO, NGEL) and Nidhi Kumar Narang

(Director (Finance) UPRVUNL). NTPC is India's largest Power Utility, with a total installed capacity of about 72 GW. UPRVUNL was constituted to set up and operate Power-generating stations in UP.

11. **IIT Kharagpur and HCLTech** signed an MoU for collaboration in the **field of petroleum engineering and earth sciences**.

Note: Aim: To develop innovative and sustainable solutions to address critical challenges of the petroleum industry, which include reduction of carbon footprint, and provide significant sustainable solutions towards net zero. HCLTech will provide opportunities to IIT-Kharagpur students and research scholars to undertake projects and internships at the company.

12. **NHPC Limited and Vidhyut Utpadan Company Limited (VUCL), Nepal** signed an MoU in New Delhi for the development of the **Phukot Karnali Hydro Electric Project (480MW) in Nepal**.

Note: The MoU was signed in the presence of PM Modi and Nepal PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. The project will use the flow from the Karnali River for power generation and the generated power will be fed into the integrated power system of Nepal. The installed capacity of the project shall be 480 MW.

13. **Tata Group** has signed an MoU with **Gujarat government** to set up a **first-ever lithium-ion cell manufacturing gigafactory**.

Note: This MOU is an outcome of the newly formulated Electronics Policy. Estimated initial investment: 130 billion rupees. **Production capacity: 20 GWh**. The state government is committed to increasing carbon-free, energy-efficient, and clean energy production by boosting the production of electric vehicles and reducing carbon emissions.

14. The **India-EU Connectivity Conference** is being organized in **Meghalaya** on June 1, 2023.

Note: It is jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs, EU Delegation to India, and the Asian Confluence. Aim: To explore possibilities of boosting connectivity investments in India's North Eastern States and with India's neighbours -- Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. It was inaugurated by Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma, and MoS for External Affairs Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh.

15. **India G20 - South Centre Event on International Taxation** has been concluded successfully in **Nagpur**.

Note: It was a two-day event on International Taxation was organized on the 1st and 2nd June at the National Academy of Direct Taxes, Nagpur in collaboration with South Centre, a Geneva-based intergovernmental policy research think-tank of 55 developing countries, including India. It was an initiative of the Indian Presidency to bolster capacity building for Indian tax officials.

16. **UAE** will host the **2025 World Conservation Congress (WCC)** of the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** from October 10-21, 2025.

Note: WCC: It is the world's largest and most important gathering of conservationists, and it is expected to draw

more than 10,000 delegates from over 160 countries. It is expected to bring an estimated 10,000-15,000 delegates from over 160 countries across the globe

17. The **City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain 2.0 (CITIIS 2.0)** has been approved for **Four years (2023-2027)**.

Note: Conceived by: **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** in partnership with the French Development Agency, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, the European Union (EU), and National Institute of Urban Affairs. Funding: A loan of Rs.1760 crore (EUR 200 million) from AFD and KfW and a technical assistance grant of Rs.106 cr. (EUR 12 million) from the EU.

18. **Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** has launched the **Unified Registration Portal for GOBARDhan**.

Note: Aim: One-stop repository to assess investment and participation in the Biogas/CBG sector at the pan India level and streamline the process of setting up CBG/Biogas plants. GOBARDhan refers to Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan. It is an **initiative of the Government of India**, that aims to convert waste to wealth towards promoting a circular economy.

19. **Maharashtra** government has launched **Asia's largest, ambitious and historic cluster development scheme**.

Note: This scheme was conceptualized for the collective redevelopment of unauthorized and official dangerous buildings after the collapse of the **Sairaj Building in Thane**. The redeveloped township plan includes well-equipped health, educational, sports, recreational, parking, mandi, and civic facilities. The project will be executed by the CIDCO.

20. **PM Modi** has launched **two schemes 'Amrit Dharohar' and 'MISHTI'** to revive the country's **wetlands and mangroves**.

Note: Amrit Dharohar: To ensure the conservation of the existing Ramsar sites through public participation. These sites will become the center of eco-tourism and a source of green jobs for thousands of people. MISHTI: It refers to Mangrove Initiative for Shoresline Habitats and Tangible Incomes. It will help revive and protect the mangrove ecosystem in the country

21. The **Ministry of Power and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy** joined hands to launch a **National Mission titled MAHIR**.

Note: MAHIR refers to **Mission on Advanced and High-Impact Research**. Aim: To quickly identify emerging technologies in the power sector and develop them indigenously, at scale, for deployment within and outside India. Funded by: Ministry of Power, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, and CPSEs under the two Ministries. Tenure: Five years, 2023-24 to 2027-28.

22. **Health Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** has unveiled the **5th State Food Safety Index** on the occasion of World Food Safety Day 2023.

Note: Among the larger states, **Kerala secured the top ranking, followed by Punjab and Tamil Nadu**. Smaller

states: Goa, Manipur and Sikkim; UTs: J&K, Delhi and Chandigarh; The index has evaluated the performance of states and UTs across six different aspects of food safety. He has also unveiled Rapid Food Testing Kit (RAFT) portal.

23. Union Cabinet has approved the **third revival package for BSNL with a total outlay of 89,047 crore rupees**, includes an allotment of 4G/5G spectrum through equity infusion.

Note: The authorised capital of BSNL will be increased from 1,50,000 crore rupees to 2,10,000 crore rupees. BSNL will emerge as a stable telecom service provider focused on providing connectivity to the remotest parts of India. First revival package approved in 2019, amounting to 69,000 crore rupees.

24. The union cabinet has approved the continuation of the **Central Sector Scheme of "Exploration of Coal and Lignite scheme"** with an estimated expenditure of **Rs. 2980 crore**.

Note: It has been approved with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 2980 crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26 co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission cycle. Two broad stages conducted under this scheme: (i) Promotional (Regional) Exploration (Outlay: Rs.1650 crore), (ii) Detailed Exploration in Non-Coal India Limited blocks (Outlay: Rs.1330 crore)

25. **NTPC Kanti** has launched the **Girl Empowerment Mission (GEM)-2023**, a four-week residential workshop program for 40 underprivileged rural girls.

Note: This is the first time NTPC Kanti is organizing the GEM program. The participants will receive academic training and development skill sets such as soft skills, life skill training, sports, meditation, yoga, self-defence, computer application, communication skills, and other extra-curricular activities.

26. Researchers at **IIT Mandi** have developed smart biodegradable microgels.

Note: Aim: To make agricultural practices more sustainable and minimize the adverse impact caused by the use of insecticides and agrochemicals. The research has been published in the "Carbohydrate Polymers" journal. Modern agriculture relies heavily on the application of various agrochemicals such as insecticides, herbicides, and fertilizers on crops to meet the demand for food for the growing population.

27. According to data released by the **private economic think tank CMIE**, the **unemployment rate in India fell to 7.7% in May** due to a **decline in labor participation at 441.9 million**.

Note: The unemployment rate in India **among people aged 15 years and above fell to 7.7% in May 2023**, from 8.5% in the previous month. The urban labour market recorded a fall in the number of employed as well as unemployed people. The rural labour force reduced to 299.4 million in May.

28. According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation data, the **index of industrial**

production (IIP) in India has increased to 4.2% on an annual basis in April 2023 from 1.1% in March 2023.

Note: Manufacturing sector output rose to 4.9% in April 2023 against 5.6% and Power generation declined by 1.1% in April 2023 against a growth of 11.8%. Mining output rose by 5.1% during the month under review compared to a growth of 8.4% in the year-ago period

29. The Union Government has released the **third instalment of tax devolution to State governments** amounting to **1,18,280 crore rupees**, as against the **normal monthly devolution of 59,140 crores**.

Note: One advance instalment in addition to the regular instalment due in June is being released to States. Reason: To speed up capital spending and finance their development and welfare-related expenditure. **UP received the highest share of Rs 21,218 crore and Goa the least at Rs 457 crore**

30. **Vigyan -Vidushi - 2023** has been commenced at the **Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE)**, in **Mumbai**.

Note: It is an initiative to address the gender balance in the discipline of Physics at the doctorate level. 40 women students from forty different institutes all over India have attended this program which gave them exposure to advanced physics courses. This program is an initiative of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), through its HBCSE.

31. **Microsoft and AirJaldi network signed** a three-year MoU to provide internet access **for underserved communities in 12 states**.

Note: Aim: To advance access to high-speed internet and meaningful connectivity, build solutions for broadband adoption and digital transformation. The program will expand AirJaldi Networks into three new states namely, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha, with an increase in the number of network locations from 40 to 62 in 12 states.

32. **ICAR** has signed a MoU with **Amazon Kisan to combine strengths and create synergy** between the two organizations.

Note: Aim: To guide the farmers on scientific cultivation of different crops for optimum yield and income. ICAR will provide technological backstopping to the farmers through Amazon's network. It will improve farmers' livelihood and boost crop yield. This MoU will help ensuring access to high quality fresh produce for consumers across India.

33. **Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)** and **Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU)** signed an MoU for academic and **research collaboration**.

Note: Aim: To synergise the professional capabilities towards capacity building, education, research and consulting in the domain of Internal Security, Financial Crimes, Law Enforcement, Corporate Frauds and other subject matters common to their mandate and objectives. It provides for exchange of knowledge and resources

34. Directorate General Resettlement (DGR) under the **Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare signed an MoU with Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance Company Limited to generate employment.**
Note: Aim: To bring the corporate companies and Ex-Servicemen on a common platform to generate employment opportunities for the esteemed Ex-Servicemen of the Defence Services. This partnership would bring in more visibility of our Ex-servicemen to the industry and corporates.
35. The Wholesale Price Index (Provisional) for the month of May 2023 was **(-) 3.48%.**
Note: In April 2023, it was recorded (-) 0.92%. Reason: Fall in prices of mineral oils, basic metals, food products, textiles, non-food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, and chemical & chemical products. The food index has declined to 1.59%, while fuel and power fell to 9.17%. Manufactured product prices fell 2.97% in May 2023.
36. **Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan** has flagged off the first Agri- SEZ project of Gabon from New Delhi.
Note: This project will be implemented by the AOM group with Centurion University as the technical and knowledge partner. In the first phase 30 farmers and 20 B. Sc. /M. Sc. Agri and B. Tech/M. Tech Engineering students from Gajapati district, Odisha will be traveling together as agri-technical and technical consultants for the agriculture SEZ.
37. **CBIC Chairman, Vivek Johri** has released the National Time Release Study 2023 report.
Note: Time Release Study is a performance measurement tool. Aim: To present quantitative measure of the cargo release time. Import Release Time: Arithmetic mean of the period between 'arrival of Goods' and the Customs'granting of 'Out of Charge'. Export Release Time: Arithmetic mean of the time between cargo's arrival at the port and its physical departure from the port/Customs station.
38. Google has joined hands with **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** to drive citizen awareness 'G20-Stay Safe Online' campaign on online cyber safety in the country.
Note: Aim: To foster citizen awareness about online safety and security. Google will raise awareness on the fundamentals of online safety through the 'Be Internet Awesome' programme. Both are working to enhance user awareness on cyber fraud and helping people identify common types of online scams.
39. **Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change** has released National Working Plan Code-2023 for scientific management of forests.
Note: It has evolved new approaches during the 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' organized by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) in Dehradun on 17th June 2023. It will act as a guiding principle for State Forest Departments in preparation for the working plan for different forest divisions.
40. **Department of Legal Affairs** has set up a panel to recommend reforms in the Arbitration and Conciliation Act.
Note: The committee would be led by former law secretary T K Vishwanathan. Aim: To reduce the burden on courts. Other members: Rajiv Mani (Law Ministry additional secretary), some senior advocates, representatives of private law firms, and officials of the Legislative Department, Niti Aayog, NHAI, railways, and CPWD
41. PM Narendra Modi has collaborated with **Falguni Shah** to promote the benefits of millet and its potential to alleviate world hunger.
Note: Title of the song track: Abundance in Millets. Falu was awarded the Grammy Award in 2022. The year 2023 has been designated as the 'International Year of Millets' after a proposal for it was brought forward by India and endorsed by Members of the UN's FAO Governing Bodies.
42. **Union minister of heavy industries, Mahendra Nath Pandey** has launched the "Dugdh Sanakalan Sathi Mobile App" in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand.
Note: This mobile application was developed by Rajasthan Electronics & Instruments Limited (REIL), a CPSE Mini Ratna under the Ministry of Heavy Industries. Aim: To bring about a significant transformation in the Indian dairy industry by addressing key challenges in the milk collection process.
43. Gross Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2023-24 (till now) have registered a growth of **12.73%** to 4,19,338 crore rupees.
Note: In the preceding financial year, the government recorded a growth of 3,71,982 crores rupees. Net collections are at three lakh 79 thousand 760 crores, showing a growth of 11.18%. The Gross collections include Corporation Tax at 1,87,311 crore and Personal Income Tax at two lakh 31 thousand 391 crore.
44. **Gennova Biopharmaceuticals Ltd** mRNA COVID-19 booster vaccine has received Emergency Use Authorization from the Drugs Controller General of India.
Note: The vaccine, 'GEMCOVAC-OM' is approved against the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2. GEMCOVAC-OM has demonstrated robust immune responses in phase 3 clinical trials conducted at 20 centers across 13 cities in India. Presently approved vaccines are used as precautionary/ booster doses.
45. **Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani** has donated ₹315 crores to IIT Bombay.
Note: Reason: Fostering world-class infrastructure, stimulating research in emerging areas of engineering and technology, and nurturing a deep tech startup ecosystem at IIT Bombay. An MoU was signed between Nandan Nilekani and Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director, IIT Bombay. His contribution will catalyze philanthropic

- contributions toward advancing research and development at universities in India.
46. The Indian cabinet has granted approval for **Micron Technology** to proceed with its \$2.7 billion plan for a semiconductor testing and packaging unit.
Note: It has also sanctioned production-linked incentives worth 110 billion rupees for the plant in Gujarat. The necessary approval stems from the significant size of the incentive package. Micron Technology's venture coincides with the White House's efforts to encourage U.S. chip companies to invest in India.
47. India will host the 2025 International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) Annual Conference in **Kochi, Kerala**.
Note: Theme: Next Generation Administrative Reforms – Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile. The hosting decision has been conveyed to the IIAS's Council of Administration via video conference. IIAS was established in 1930; HQ: Brussels. Aim: To elaborate the public administration solutions to the policy challenges of the day
48. The two-day conference of Science-20 under G-20 is being organized in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.
Note: The theme of the conference is "Connecting Science to Society and Culture". The conference will be chaired by Professor Ashutosh Sharma, President of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA). The conference will be attended by representatives of G-20 countries, invited states and international organisations.
49. The concluding G20 Tourism Working Group meeting along with the Tourism Ministerial Meeting started in **Goa**.
Note: Union Minister For Culture, G Kishan Reddy has addressed the first session of "Making Cruise Tourism a Model for Sustainable and Responsible Travel". The minister highlighted that India is one of the potential cruise tourism destinations with many of its best tourist destinations yet to be disclosed to the world.
50. **Tata Steel Limited** and Germany's SMS group have signed an MoU to collaborate on the decarbonization of steel making process. **Note:** Under this MoU, the companies shall undertake further technical discussions and initiate actions for conducting Joint Industrial Demonstration of the EASyMelt technology (developed by SMS group). The demonstration will be executed at 'E' Blast Furnace in Tata Steel's Jamshedpur plant with an objective to reduce CO₂ emission.
51. **NITI Aayog** and the United Nations, India has signed the Government of India - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation (GoI-UNSDC) Framework 2023-2027.
Note: This framework represents the UN development system's collective offer to the Government of India, in line with the national vision for development, for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, promoting gender equality, youth empowerment and human rights.
52. **Intel** has signed an agreement with the German government for investing more than 30 billion euros in a chip manufacturing site in Magdeburg, Germany.
Note: An agreement was signed between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger. Intel has acquired the land for two semiconductor facilities in Magdeburg in eastern Germany in November 2022 and is expected to start production in four or five years.
53. **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has joined hands with India's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).
Note: Reason: To empower women to make well-informed career choices in the field of entrepreneurship. The partnership will provide support for women looking to start and expand their own enterprises, particularly in sectors such as the care economy, digital economy, electric mobility, waste management, food packaging, and more
54. The Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission unanimously elected **India** as chair of the Standing Committee on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for the biennium 2023-24.
Note: The APPPC Workshop on Systems Approach for the management of fruit flies on mango has been scheduled from 19-23 June 2023 in Navi Mumbai. The Minister of State for Agriculture, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje inaugurated the workshop.
55. Agriculture Minister, **Narendra Singh Tomar** has unveiled a new feature on the PM-Kisan mobile app.
Note: Farmers can be registered by scanning their faces without a one-time password or fingerprint, by using the "face authentication" feature on the mobile application. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN), eligible farmers are provided with a financial benefit of Rs 6,000 per year in three equal installments of Rs 2,000 each every four months.
56. **IFFCO** has started exporting the world's first Nano urea invented and manufactured indigenously in India to the US.
Note: An agreement to export Nano urea was signed between IFFCO and Kapoor Enterprises Inc of California. The nano urea is a revolution in the agriculture sector as it has the potential to reduce storage space and money. A 500 ml bottle of IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid has the capacity to replace at least one bag of conventional Urea.
57. The first hydrogen-powered trains in India are expected to start from the Jind district of **Haryana** by the end of this year, 2023.
Note: The officials informed that the plant development has entered the final phase and hydrogen will be produced from water. The Hydrogen fuel-based train of eight bogies will be environment-friendly. Presently, trains are being run on diesel and electricity. The officials claimed that hydrogen-powered trains are running only in Germany.

- 58. REC Limited** has decided to extend financial assistance of Rs. 3,045 crores to Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL).
Note: Reason: For establishment and development of Metro Lines under the Phase-II project of Bangalore Metro. The Phase-II project of Namma Metro will enhance connectivity and ease traffic in the densely populated city of Bengaluru. REC is a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Union Ministry of Power.
- 59.** The Finance Ministry has approved an investment of worth Rs 56,415 crore in **16** states as part of the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme.
Note: Aim: To boost capital spending by states. The Departments of Expenditure has approved investment projects in several sectors including health, education, roads, and railways among others. It has also included the state share of two projects - Jal Jeevan Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
- 60.** Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Parshottam Rupala today launched **NANDI (NOC Approvals for New Drugs & Inoculation System)**.
Note: This portal has been developed to pave the way to a resilient Animal Health Sector in India by streamlining and digitizing the regulatory approval process. Aim: To speed up the process to assess and examine the safety, efficacy, and essentiality of veterinary product proposals received in the Department
- 61. Bangalore International Airport Limited** has created a personalised digital travel buddy named BLR Pulse to cater to the needs of flyers.
Note: It is an omnichannel platform, developed in collaboration with GrayMatter Software Services. It will allow passengers to navigate within the terminal buildings and provide essential information about the airport in real-time. The interactive chatbot feature in the app will enable a self-sufficient mode of finding answers.
- 62.** Union Minister for Fisheries, **Parshottam Rupala** has launched the Report Fish Disease App.
Note: The app has been developed by ICAR-NBFGR under the National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases (NSPAAD). It is funded under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana. This app will help the farmers to report the incidences of diseases in finfish and shrimps on their farms with field-level officers and fish health experts.
- 63. 8th** edition of the world's largest urban swachhata survey, Swachh Survekshan 2023 – Mera Shehar, Meri Pehchan has been started.
Note: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the Field Assessment for Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2023. Swachh Survekshan 2023 indicators focus on parameters pertaining to segregated door-to-door waste collection, zero waste events, Divyang-friendly toilets, improved plastic waste management, and cleaning backlanes.
- 64.** The Centre government has extended the timeline for the disbursement of loans for the completion of ethanol projects up to **30 September 2023** in respect of all the schemes notified during 2018-2021.
Note: Aim: To boost the agricultural economy, reduce fossil fuel dependency, save foreign exchange, and cut air pollution. The decision has been taken under the 'scheme for extending financial assistance to sugar mills for augmentation of ethanol production capacity'.
- 65.** The CCEA has approved the fair and remunerative price of **Rs 315 per quintal** per quintal for sugarcane farmers for the season 2023-24.
Note: It will be applicable for the purchase of sugarcane from farmers by sugar mills from Oct 1, 2023. It will be applicable for a basic recovery rate of 10.25%. A premium of Rs. 3.07 per quintal will be provided for every 0.1% increase in recovery above 10.25%. Conversely, the FRP will be reduced by Rs 3.07 per quintal for every 0.1% decrease in recovery.
- 66.** The Centre has provided financial incentives of 66,000 crore rupees to **12** states to accelerate power sector reforms.
Note: These states include Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Manipur and Andhra Pradesh. The primary objectives of granting financial incentives for undertaking power sector reforms are to improve operational and economic efficiency within the sector and promote a sustained increase in paid electricity consumption.
- 67.** The Union Cabinet approved the introduction of the **National Research Foundation (NRF) Bill, 2023**, in parliament.
Note: Aim: To pave the way to establish NRF that will seed, grow and promote research and development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will be the administrative Department of NRF.
- 68. InterGlobe Aviation Ltd (Indigo)** has become India's leading airline to cross ₹1 trillion in market capitalization.
Note: The stock hit a 52-week high of ₹2,634.25 on the BSE, with a market value of ₹1.01 trillion. Shares of IndiGo settled 3.55% higher at ₹2,619.85 apiece on the BSE, compared to the previous close of ₹2,529.95. IndiGo placed an order for 500 Airbus A320 Family aircraft in the largest order in the history of commercial aviation.
- 69. Union Minister of Mines Pralhad Joshi** has unveiled India's first-ever report on Critical Minerals for India.
Note: The report identifies 30 critical minerals essential for sectors including defense, agriculture, and telecom. This list marks a milestone in India's pursuit of self-reliance and security in mineral resources, aligning with

the vision of achieving 'Net Zero' targets. Aim: To guide policy formulation, strategic planning, and investment decisions in this sector

- 70. Meta** declared a fresh Mixed Reality program in India that has an award of \$250,000 for homegrown new companies and developers to construct applications and experiences.

Note: They can assemble applications utilizing the expansive scope of machine perception, and AI capabilities for the Meta Quest Platform and Metaverse. Aim: To foster innovation and establish a national XR technology ecosystem. A selected group of 5 Indian developers and new companies will get a monetary grant

- 71. PM Modi** will inaugurate the **17th** edition of the Indian Cooperative Congress (ICC) on July 1st, 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.

Note: The two days Indian Cooperative Congress would be organized by the National Cooperative Union of India. Theme 2023: Amrit Kaal: Prosperity through Cooperation for a Vibrant India. Chaired by: HM Amit Shah. Aim: To discuss various trends in the cooperative movement, to showcase the best practices being adopted by the successful cooperatives

- 72. Indian Railways** has signed an MoU with the United States Agency for International Development/India (USAID/India) for collaboration on Renewable energy and Energy Efficiency.

Note: It was signed in the presence of the Chairman of the Railway Board, Anil Kumar Lahoti. As Indian Railways is proactively working towards the achievement of Net Zero Carbon Emission by 2030. As part of its commitment to reduce carbon footprints, Indian Railways is taking several initiatives.

- 73. India and UAE** formally inked an agreement on the sidelines of the 141st/142nd sessions of the World Customs Organization's Customs Co-operation Council meeting held in Brussels.

Note: Both countries have signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Authorized Economic Operators. Aim: To promote greater trade facilitation and ease of doing business. The agreement establishes a framework that enables the recognition of Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) from both countries.

- 74. India** has signed the Artemis Accords with the USA with the ultimate goal of expanding space exploration to Mars and beyond.

Note: Artemis Accord is a US-led effort to send humans to the moon again by 2025. Aim: To build a permanent presence in lunar orbit and on the surface after the Apollo missions ended. It will boost the cooperation between the two nations and explore the domain beyond the boundaries of Earth. India has become the 27th signatory of the Artemis Accords.

- 75. Infosys** has bagged a \$454-million deal for the digital transformation of Denmark's Danske Bank.

Note: The deal is for a period of five years, which could be ramped up to \$900 million and also renewed for up to another three years. The collaboration with Infosys would help achieve its strategic priorities regarding customer experience and operational excellence. Infosys was selected to help with the bank's technology transformation, optimize access to talent and capabilities.

- 76. Ministry of Agriculture** has signed an MOU with Pixxel Space India Pvt Limited to develop various geospatial solutions pro bono for the Indian Agriculture Ecosystem, with the help of Pixxel's hyperspectral dataset.

Note: This project focuses on leveraging sample hyperspectral data from Pixxel's pathfinder satellites. It will develop analytics models focused on crop mapping, crop stage discrimination, crop health monitoring, and soil organic carbon assessments.

- 77. The Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank** signed an MoU for the disbursement of financial assistance to veteran artists under the "Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists".

Note: Ministry of Culture has administered a Scheme under which financial assistance of Rs. 6000 per month is provided to artists and scholars above 60 years. Eligibility: Contributed in their specialized fields of performing arts and culture in their active age or are still contributing

- 78. The Central government** has allocated **₹145 crore** for the construction of a Unity Mall in Dimapur, Nagaland.

Note: Aim: For promoting and showcasing the state's One District One Product offerings. The allocation is part of the Union Budget 2023-24, which has earmarked ₹5,000 crore for the establishment of Unity Malls. The announcement was made during an ODOP Sampark event, which was organized by the DPIIT, Invest India, and the Department of Industries and Commerce, Nagaland.

Important News – State

- 1. Maharashtra** government has signed an MoU with **Bajaj Finserv** to invest 5,000 crore rupees in Pune which is expected to **create 40,000 jobs**.

Note: The MoU was signed by **Harshdeep Kamble (Industry Secretary, Maharashtra)** and **S Sreenivasan (Chief Financial Officer, Bajaj Finserv)**. The development will have a positive impact as it will create new jobs and business opportunities for partners,

vendors, suppliers, and contractors in and around Pune, as well as globally.

- 2. Union MoS Jitendra Singh** has inaugurated a **two-day lavender festival** in **Bhaderwah, Jammu & Kashmir**.

Note: He also highlighted that **Bhaderwah has emerged as the Lavender capital of India** and agri StartUp destination. CSIR, Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu had organized the event as part of its

'One Week One Lab Campaign'. The CSIR-Aroma Mission is a flagship project of CSIR under which Lavender cultivation is being promoted in the temperate regions of J&K

3. **Kerala government launched the KFON.**

Note: KFON: Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON).

Aim: To ensure internet facilities for all at affordable rates in the State. This project will bridge the digital divide in the society. During the first phase of the KFON initiative, Internet facilities will be provided to thirty thousand government institutions and fourteen thousand houses in the State.

4. **MP government has launched Chief Minister's Learn and Earn scheme** to teach employable skills to the youth.

Note: The youth will also be **given an allowance of Rs 8,000 to 10,000**. 703 work areas have been identified for training. At least one lakh youth would be trained. The registration of establishments providing training to youth will start on June 7. The registration of youth willing to learn work will start on 15th June. The youth will start working from 1st August.

5. **Uttar Pradesh has launched the Nand Baba Milk Mission scheme** at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore.

Note: Aim: To provide **milk producers the facility of selling their milk at a reasonable price** in villages through dairy cooperative societies. Under this mission, it is proposed to form a Dairy farmer producer organization (Dairy FPO) in order to facilitate the sale of milk in producers' villages itself. UP is a leading state in the field of milk development and milk production.

6. **Madhya Pradesh has launched 'Ladli Bahna' scheme** to make women financially independent.

Note: In this scheme, each woman **will be given 1000 rupees per month**. MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan has deposited the first month's amount of this scheme in the bank accounts of about 1.25 crore women at a State-level function in Jabalpur. The State government has also issued a phone number 181 for the help of women. Ladli Bahna Army also formed for women empowerment and security.

7. The **central government** has agreed to **sanction Rs 12,911 crore** to **Andhra Pradesh** for completing the first phase of **Polavaram Project**.

Note: The sanctioned amount of Rs 12,911 crore also **includes Rs 2,000 crore for the construction of the diaphragm wall**, which was washed away due to flood. Polavaram Project is an under construction multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Andhra Pradesh.

8. **Haryana CM Manohar Lal** has launched an **integrated Water Resources Action Plan-2023-25** under Amrit Jal Kranti in **Chandigarh**.

Note: A two-day water conservation seminar was **organized in Panchkula** in April, 2023, in which many departments of Haryana, including experts from India and abroad doing research on water conservation

participated. Several initiatives like Mera Pani-Meri Virasat Yojana, have been taken towards water conservation which have drawn significant results.

9. **Kerala** has launched a new scheme to **reward for reporting illegal waste dumping on roads**.

Note: This scheme is a **part of the 'Malinya Muktham Nava Keralam' campaign** to make the state garbage-free. Under this scheme, citizens would report about the littering/dumping (solid and liquid waste) in public spaces, private property and water bodies. The person who informs authorities of such violations will be given Rs 2,500 (maximum) or 25% of the fine imposed.

10. **Uttar Pradesh** has decided to **gift GI-tagged Gulabi meenakari** handicrafts for the visiting delegates from G20 nations.

Note: A group of more than 100 trained artisans were mobilized to fulfil the order of Gulabi meenakari peacocks for the G20 delegates. **Gulabi meenakari** is one of the rarest crafts in India that is practised in the by lanes of Varanasi, near Gai Ghat. The GI certification and ODOP initiative have got new recognition all over the world.

11. **Karnataka** has rolled out its first of the five poll guarantees, the **'Shakti' scheme**.

Note: Aim: To offer **free travel to women and transgender** people in government-run buses in the state. The scheme was launched by Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, deputy CM DK Shivakumar and transport minister Ramalinga Reddy. They have also issued smart cards to five beneficiaries at an event on the steps of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru.

12. **Haryana** launched a monthly pension of ₹ 10,000 for the Padma awardees from the state.

Note: Besides the monthly pension, a free travel facility in the 'Volvo bus' service of the state government for Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awardees from Haryana. The state government is also giving the benefit of health insurance up to ₹ 5 lakh to families with an annual income of up to ₹ 1. 80 lakh.

13. **Madhya Pradesh** will get its seventh tiger reserve with the notification of Nauradehi and Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuaries as a combined protected area.

Note: Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary: It is the largest wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh and acts as a corridor for Panna Tiger Reserve and Satpura Tiger Reserve. Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuary: It is located in the Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh and hosts 18 species of mammals.

14. **Assam** launched a web portal for cattle transportation.

Note: Aim: To prevent the illegal transportation of cattle. From now, Livestock farmers and cattle traders can obtain permits required for inter-state transportation of cattle through the website ahvd-cattletrans. assam. gov. in . This system is prepared under the Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 2021.

- 15. Telangana** would release the Kharif installment of financial assistance to farmers under the Rythu Bandhu scheme from June 26, 2023.
Note: He directed State's FM Harish Rao to take steps to deposit the Rythu Bandhu funds to the farmers in their respective bank accounts. The Podu land farmers will also be considered for the Rythu Bandhu assistance. In Rabi season 2022-23, over 70 lakh farmers received Rythu Bandhu assistance.
- 16. Karnataka** has launched a free power scheme named 'Gruha Jyothi scheme' for providing free electricity up to 200 units a month.
Note: Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah also stated that the scheme also extends to tenants living on rent if their electricity consumption matches the scheme's criteria. The beneficiaries will get a 'zero bill' starting August 1 if usage is within their entitlement. The Gruha Jyothi scheme is part of the Congress government's five poll promises.
- 17. Jharkhand** launched the panchayat-level drugs shop scheme to make essential medicines available in remote areas.
Note: The scheme was inaugurated in Chatra district by handing over licenses to three persons for operating the medicine shops in panchayats. A total of 15 people have been selected for licenses in the district so far. The programs like 'Sarkar Aapke Dwar' will be restarted to establish a "real connection with people".
- 18. Karnataka** has decided to give cash instead of rice till rice is procured.
Note: It was one of the guarantees of the Siddaramaiah govt was to provide 10 kg of rice free to every member of a BPL household. The government has decided to pay beneficiaries cash at the rate of ₹34 per kilo, for the additional 5kg of the foodgrain promised under the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme. The disbursement of money will start on July 1.
- 19. Surat** has set a Guinness World Record with over 1.53 lakh people participating in a yoga event at one place on the International Day of Yoga (IDY), organized on 21st June.
Note: Guinness officials handed over the certificate to chief minister Bhupendra Patel at the venue. Two 4km-long stretches of roads, each around 300 meters wide, connecting the Y junction were covered with carpet for participants. The participants were divided into groups of 1,000 each.
- 20. Himachal Pradesh** will collaborate with National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) to set up a state-of-the-art milk processing plant at Dagwar in Kangra district.
Note: The dairy development board's assistance would be taken for its operation and marketing. The Dagwar plant's capacity would range from 1 lakh to 3 lakh liters, in which high-quality milk products would also be prepared.
- 21. Union Home Minister Amit Shah** has laid the foundation stone of Balidaan Stambh' at Pratap Park, near the Lal Chowk city centre the commercial hub of **Srinagar city**.
Note: Home Minister has laid the foundation stone in the presence of Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The memorial, a project under the Srinagar Smart City, is a tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the nation.
- 22. Paytm Payment Services Limited** signed an MoU with Arunachal Pradesh Innovation and Investment Park to create a startup ecosystem for the youth.
Note: Under an MoU, Paytm Incubation Centre will provide its product to early-stage startups at a discounted price. It also offers free credits through the Paytm Startup toolkit to aid youths' business ventures in their early growth stage. This will nurture the startup ecosystem in the state and motivate young entrepreneurs.
- 23. Uttar Pradesh** state Police Department launched 'Operation Conviction' to combat criminals and mafias in the state.
Note: The initiative will expedite the prosecution of cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, cow slaughter, religious conversion, and murder. It ensures the immediate arrest of criminals, the collection of strong evidence against them, quality investigation, and effective representation of cases in courts.
- 24. Seven** products of Uttar Pradesh have been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.
Note: Seven products are: Amroha Dholak, Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastashlip, Mainpuri Tarkashi, Sambhal Horn Craft, Baghpat Home Furnishings, Barabanki Handloom Product, and Kalpi Handmade Paper. The Amroha Dholak is a musical instrument made of natural wood. Mango, jackfruit, and teakwood are preferred for making the dholak.
- 25. Gujarat** signed an MoU with the US-based computer storage chip maker Micron for setting up a \$2.75 billion semiconductor assembly.
Note: It will be the first semiconductor manufacturing facility in India and will be manufactured within 18 months. Micron will receive 50% fiscal support for the total project cost from the Indian government and incentives representing 20% of the total project cost from the Gujarat government.

Important News- World

1. According to a report released by 'fDi Markets', **India** has emerged as a **key source country for FDI in Dubai**, one of the wealthiest of the seven emirates in UAE.
Note: The **top sectors by FDI projects from India into Dubai in 2022** were software & IT services (32%), business services (19%), consumer products, real estate, and financial services. The top sectors by FDI capital from India into Dubai in 2022 were consumer products (28%).
2. According to the **UN's Hunger Hotspots – FAO-WFP early warnings** on acute food insecurity report, along with **Afghanistan and Myanmar, Pakistan** is listed in the hunger hotspots in the world.
Note: Globally Hunger is set to worsen in 18 'hotspots' comprising a total of 22 countries. Highest Concern Nations: Afghanistan, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen. **Very High Concern Nations: Pakistan, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, and Syria**
3. **Bangladesh** named the **cyclone 'Biparjoy'**, that would be intensified into a very severe storm as it moved nearly northwards with a speed of 2 kmph in the last 6 hours.
Note: The **cyclonic storms in the Bay of Bengal** and the Arabian Sea have been intensifying rapidly and retaining their intensity for a longer duration due to climate change. The name Biparjoy was given to the cyclone by Bangladesh, which means "Disaster" in Bengali.
4. According to the **report titled "GCC 4.0 – India Redefining the Globalization Blueprint", released by NASSCOM – Zinnov**, India's Global Capability Centre (GCC) ecosystem will expand with **over 1,900 GCCs and a market size of \$60 billion by 2025**.
Note: As of FY23, India is home to 1,580 unique GCCs, with several global MNCs opting to establish their first global center outside of their headquarters in India. The GCC market size in FY 23 was \$46 billion.
5. According to the **'The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2023'**, **Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore** has emerged as **India's highest-placed university**.
Note: The university is ranked at **52nd rank globally** out of 1,591 universities. Topped by: Western Sydney University followed by the University of Manchester (UK), Queen's University (Canada), Universiti Sains Malaysia, and the University of Tasmania. Amrita Vishwa stood out for its efforts toward meeting the UNSDGs.
6. **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)** has released its annual compendium, titled **'State of India's Environment 2023'**.
Note: It is based on four parameters i.e. environment, agriculture, public health, and infrastructure. Telangana was ranked at the top in terms of overall environmental performance and in terms of increasing forest cover. In agriculture, **MP takes the top slot and Delhi leads in public health**. Gujarat leads the rankings in public infrastructure.
7. **MoS for Education and External Affairs Rajkumar Ranjan Singh** released the **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) Rankings 2023** on June 5, 2023.
Note: **IIT Madras** has emerged as the top college under the overall category for the fifth consecutive year and the best engineering institute for the eighth consecutive year. Research category: IISc Bengaluru has earned the top spot. Agriculture and Allied Sectors: IARI, New Delhi. Medical category: AIIMS Delhi
8. According to a report titled **'The e-Conomy of a Billion Connected Indians' published by Google, Temasek and Bain & Company**, India's internet economy is expected to grow six-fold to \$1 trillion by **2030** from \$175 billion in 2022.
Note: The contribution of the Internet economy to India's technology sector would expand, from 48% to 62% in 2030. The report emphasizes that the growth will be spearheaded by the B2C e-commerce segment, followed by B2B, and SaaS providers.
9. According to **Mercer's Cost of Living survey 2023**, **Mumbai** has ranked the most **expensive city** in India for expatriates.
Note: **After Mumbai, cities like New Delhi and Bengaluru** fall on the second and third place in the most expensive list for ex-pats list in India. In the global ranking, Mumbai has been positioned at 147, New Delhi (169), Chennai (184), Bengaluru (189), and Pune (213). Hong Kong and Singapore are the most expensive cities for international employees this year.
10. According to a report, **Up to 2.3 billion people around the world are still using polluting fuels to cook and 675 million don't have electricity**.
Note: **Report by: IEA, International Renewable Energy Agency, U.N. Statistics Division, World Bank, and WHO**. The report also highlighted that 1.9 billion won't have clean cooking opportunities by 2030. The global access to electricity increased from 84% in 2010 to 91% (2021), but the pace of growth slowed in 2019-2021.
11. **India and Serbia** have agreed to set a **target for bilateral trade from the present 320 million euros to one billion euros by the end of the decade**.
Note: **Indian President** is on a three-day State visit to Serbia from the 7th to the 9th of June. President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic also promised simplification of the issue of Visa to Indians and also hoped that direct flights between the two countries will begin soon.
12. **World Health Organisation (WHO)** report has highlighted **significant impacts of 'Har Ghar Jal' Programme on public health and economic savings**.
Note: The **report on 'Har Ghar Jal'** estimates that ensuring safely managed drinking water for all households in the country. The 'Har Ghar Jal' report focuses on diarrheal diseases as they contribute significantly to the overall disease burden related to water, sanitation, and hygiene issues.

13. Britain and the United States have backed a new "**Atlantic Declaration**".

Note: Aim: Greater cooperation on pressing economic challenges in areas like clean energy, critical minerals and artificial intelligence. The joint declaration described the partnership covering the broad spectrum of the two countries' economic, technological, commercial and trade relations. They will strengthen their supply chains, develop technologies of the future and invest in one another's industries.

14. WHO and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria signed a new Strategic Framework.

Note: Reason: For Collaboration to build stronger and more resilient health systems and maximize collaboration and impact in support of country, regional and global responses to major communicable diseases. The new five-year framework builds on the previous agreement signed in 2018. It aligns with the **2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy and the WHO General Programme of Work**.

15. Microsoft has launched a new '**voice chat**' feature to its **AI-powered Bing Chat on the desktop**.

Note: Aim: It will help users to talk to the AI chatbot by clicking on the microphone icon in the Bing Chat box. Currently, the voice chat feature supports five languages- English, Japanese, French, German, and Mandarin. More languages will be added soon. Bing Chat supports text-to-speech answers, which will respond to your questions in its own voice.

16. According to the Global Slavery Index 2023, Switzerland has the **lowest prevalence of modern slavery**.

Note: Produced by: ILO, Walk Free, and International Organisation for Migration. Walk Free has reported that 49.6 million people are living in modern slavery, out of which, India is home to 11 million. Countries with the highest prevalence: North Korea, Eritrea, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. Countries with the lowest prevalence: Switzerland, Norway, and Germany.

17. India has drafted resolution to establish a memorial wall in the UN headquarters to honor fallen peacekeepers .

Note: The UNGA has adopted a draft resolution to establish a memorial wall in the UN headquarters to honor fallen peacekeepers. Ruchira Kamboj (India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador) has introduced the draft resolution titled 'Memorial wall for fallen United Nations peacekeepers. 'The resolution was submitted by 18 countries including Bangladesh, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Rwanda, and the US.

18. Embassy of India in Kuwait in association with the United Nations (UN) Habitat Office in Kuwait, has organized a Beach Cleaning Event.

Note: Aim: To promote environmental awareness and community participation. This part was organized as part of the Mission LiFE (Lifestyle For Environment) initiative of the Government of India, that aims to bring

individual behaviors to the forefront of global climate action by promoting a circular economy and mindful utilization.

19. According to a new report, Glaciers in Asia's Hindu Kush Himalaya could lose up to **75%** of their volume by the end of the century.

Note: Reason: Global warming, is causing dangerous flooding and water shortages for the 240 million people who live in the mountainous region. The international scientist team found that ice loss on the peaks of Everest and K2 is speeding up. In 2010, the glaciers shed as much as 65% of ice, which was faster than they had in the preceding decade.

20. UN has adopted the first-ever treaty to protect marine life on the high seas, approved by delegates from the 193 member nations.

Note: The treaty will create a new body to manage the conservation of ocean life and establish marine protected areas on the high seas. It also establishes ground rules for conducting environmental impact assessments for commercial activities in the oceans. The new treaty is under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, came into force in 1994.

21. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report, the number of refugees globally stood at **35.3 million** by the end of 2022.

Note: It also shows an increase in the number of more than 8 million from the year before. Around 52% of all refugees came from Syria, Ukraine, and Afghanistan. According to international law, refugees are people who are forced to flee their home countries to escape persecution or a serious threat to their life or freedom.

22. According to the 2023 Forbes' -The Global 2000, India's largest power generation company, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has climbed 52 positions to secure the 433rd rank in the list.

Note: In the 2022 ranking, the company was on 485th rank. The climb of 52 positions has demonstrated the NTPC's emergence as a strong force in the global market. 'The Global 2000' List recognizes the world's largest companies based on sales, profits, assets, and market value.

23. According to a report by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the growth in demand for oil in India will overtake that in China by **2027**.

Note: 'Oil 2023', the multilateral agency's outlook highlighted that China's demand will fall consistently from 2024 after a massive rise this year. The United States, China, and India are the world's three largest oil consumers in that order. IEA also raised its forecast for world oil growth demand to 2.4 million barrels per day in 2023.

24. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) released the Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) 2023, which covered 85% of the global population.

Note: The index has revealed that close to 9 out of 10 men and women hold fundamental biases against

- women. Nearly 90% of people still hold at least one bias against women. This index has tracked people's attitudes towards women in four dimensions i. e. political, educational, economic and physical integrity.
25. As per Hurun India's 2022 Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 list, **Reliance Industries Ltd** is the most valuable private company in India, with a whopping value of Rs 16.4 lakh crore.
Note: TCS with Rs 11.8 lakh crore ranked second in India, followed by HDFC Bank with Rs 9.4 lakh crore. The value of Reliance decreased by 5.1% in the last six months, while the total value of TCS increased marginally by 0.7% and HDFC Bank increased by 12.9%. Countries with the lowest prevalence: Switzerland, Norway, and Germany.
 26. According to a Gender Gap Index 2023, released by World Economic Forum, India ranked at **127**.
Note: The report reflects an improvement of 1.4% points. India's neighboring countries rank: Bangladesh (59), Bhutan (103), China (107), and Pakistan (142). For the 14th year running, Iceland (91.2%) takes the top position. While Norway ranked 2nd, followed by Finland, and Sweden.
 27. According to the Global Liveability Index 2023 published by the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), **Vienna in Austria** has topped the ranking of the most liveable cities.
Note: While Copenhagen in Denmark placed second on the list, followed by Melbourne and Sydney. Damascus in Syria and Tripoli in Libya remained at the bottom of the liveability index. From India, New Delhi and Mumbai are at 141st position and Chennai at 144th.
 28. Forbes has ranked **Tata Group's brand custodian Harish Bhat** as among the top ten most influential Chief Marketing Officers (CMO) for the second consecutive year.
Note: Last year, he was in the ninth position. William White, CMO of Walmart has topped the Forbes list of most influential CMOs 2023. While Ashimta Dubey, chief digital and marketing officer at L'Oreal, is ranked 21 and Infosys chief marketing officer Sumit Virmani is at 41.
 29. According to the Global competitiveness index 2023, published by International Institute for Management Development (IMD), India ranked **40**.
Note: Denmark, Ireland, and Switzerland took the top three places. Switzerland ranked fourth, followed by the Netherlands, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Sweden, the USA, and UAE. The report uses a combination of surveys, statistical data, and trends to benchmark competitiveness around the world.
 30. According to the 20th QS World University Rankings 2023, **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay** has climbed 23 positions to secure the 149th rank globally.
Note: While in the overall ranking, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States topped the rankings for the twelfth consecutive year. UK's Cambridge University ranked second followed by Oxford University. India is the seventh most represented country globally, with 45 universities ranked.
 31. India bagged **67th** position globally in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) energy transition index.
Note: WEF informed that India is the only major economy whose energy transition accelerated across all dimensions. Top 5: Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Switzerland. The global energy transition has plateaued amid the global energy crisis and geopolitical volatilities, but India is among the countries that have made significant improvements.
 32. **INDUS X (India-United States Defence Acceleration Ecosystem)** was launched at an event in Washington DC, USA on 21st June 2023.
Note: The INDUS X event was co-organised by Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the Ministry of Defence, and the US Department of Defence (DoD) and hosted by US-India Business Council (USIBC). Joint Secretary (Defence Industries Promotion), MoD, Anurag Bajpai led the Indian delegation in the two-day INDUS-X event.
 33. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** met with Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Amazon CEO Andrew Jassy, and Boeing CEO David Calhoun in Washington DC.
Note: After the meeting, it was informed that Google is investing 10 billion dollars in India's digitization fund and will open Google's global fintech operation centre in GIFT City, Gujarat. While Amazon CEO Andrew Jassy has already invested 11 billion dollars and with an intention to invest another 15 billion dollars.
 34. **Germany** Parliament has approved a new immigration law designed to attract skilled workers to the country.
Note: Reason: The nation is suffering from an unprecedented labour shortage. The law was initiated by the governing center-left coalition of the Social Democrats, the liberal Free Democrats, and the Greens. The law includes a points-based system that lowers entry hurdles for work visa applicants according to their professional qualifications, age, and language skills.
 35. A US\$5 billion 'smart' city named Arkadag was inaugurated in **Turkmenistan**.
Note: Turkmenistan President, Serdar Berdimukhamedov has unveiled the city around 30km southwest of the capital, Ashgabat. The new city is built in the foothills of the picturesque Kopet-Dag mountains and named after Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov. He ruled the country between 2006 and 2022 and now carries the title Hero Arkadag (Protector).

Honor & Awards

1. **AIIMS Nagpur** has become the first of all AIIMS to receive **National Accreditation Board for Hospitals(NABH)** accreditation.
Note: The NABH accreditation is a globally recognized standard for healthcare quality. It assesses the performance of hospitals in various areas including patient care, safety, and organizational efficiency. AIIMS Nagpur achieved this accreditation by demonstrating its commitment to excellence in all areas.
2. **Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) Undertaking** was honored with the prestigious '**Climate And Health**' award at the **UITP Awards 2023, Barcelona**.
Note: Additionally, BEST Undertaking was recognized as one of the top three finalists in the 'Public And Urban Transport Strategy' category. UITP Awards are highly sought-after prizes in the field of public transport. Recently, the **BEST was also awarded for 'Smart Mobility' category by FICCI**.
3. **Suriname President, Chandrikapersad Santokhi** has conferred **Suriname's highest civilian honor, The Grand Order of the Chain of Yellow Star, to President of India Droupadi Murmu**.
Note: She is the **first Indian** to receive this award. During her visit to Suriname, both countries signed MoUs in the fields of health, agriculture, and capacity building. These MoUs include a Joint Work Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors for the **period of 2023-2027**.
4. **Jagdish Bakan** has won the **2023 Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management from UNESCO**.
Note: The 2017 batch officer of the IFS is currently the **director of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve**. The USD 12,000 award is given in memory of Dr. Michel Batisse for outstanding achievement in the management of biosphere reserves. He will receive the award from Unesco in Paris on June 14, 2023.
5. **Author Paterson Joseph** was conferred with the **2023 Royal Society of Literature Christopher Bland Prize** for his debut novel '**The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho**'.
Note: This book is a historical fiction novel that tells the story of Charles Ignatius Sancho, who was the first Black man to vote in England RSL Christopher Bland Prize: It is an annual award that is awarded to a debut writer for their work of fiction or non-fiction. **Cash Prize: £10,000**
6. **Rebels Against the Raj: Western Fighters for India's Freedom** has won the **£5,000 Elizabeth Longford Prize 2023** for Historical Biography.
Note: This book was **authored by Ramachandra Guha**. This book tells the story of seven foreigners (4 British, 2 American, and 1 Iris) who joined India's freedom struggle. The list includes Annie Besant, B.G. Horniman, Philip Spratt, Richard Ralph Keithahn, Samuel Stokes, Madeline Slade, and Catherine Mary Heilemann. Prize money: £5,000
7. **Geological Survey of India Training Institute** has been awarded accreditation as '**Athi Uttam**' by the **National Accreditation Board of Education and Training (NABET)**.
Note: The assessment was made on the basis of the inspection of all standard operating procedures and methodologies. The team of the Capacity Building Commission (CBC), NABET, and Quality Control of India conducted the on-site assessment. **GSITI was established in 1976** and its headquarters located in Hyderabad.
8. **EPFO** will gain access to professional guidelines, expert knowledge, services, and support from the **International Social Security Association (ISSA)**.
Note: The move comes after the central board of trustees of EPFO gave its approval to change its membership status with ISSA from associate member to affiliate member now. The organization became an **associate member in 1962**. Other than EPFO, the **Coal Mines Provident Fund Organisation is the only ISSA affiliate member from India**.
9. **RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das** was honored with the title of '**Governor of the Year 2023**' by Central Banking in London.
Note: Reason: For his role in managing inflation and handling India's banking system during crises like the COVID pandemic and global turmoils. He is the second RBI governor after Raghuram Rajan, who was honored with this title in 2015. While the National Bank of Ukraine was presented with the 2023 Central Bank of the Year.
10. **Kiya. ai** has unveiled its version of the metaverse called **Bharatmeta** at the prestigious VivaTech event held in Paris 2023.
Note: The demonstration took place at the India Pavilion during the event '**VivaTech**'. VivaTech is recognized as Europe's largest annual technology and startup gathering. Bharatmeta offers practical use cases for banking, commerce, culture, and collaboration within the metaverse.
11. **Arundhati Roy** has been awarded the 45th European Essay Prize for lifetime achievement on the occasion of the French translation of her latest essay, '**Azadi**'.
Note: The French translation '**Liberte, fascisme, fiction**' appeared in the leading French publishing group, Gallimard. The award ceremony will take place on September 12 at the Lausanne Palace. At the award ceremony, Arundhati Roy will discuss the environment and globalization, caste and language.
12. **Gita Press, Gorakhpur** has been selected for the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2021 in recognition of its outstanding contribution to social, economic, and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods.
Note: The award given by the Ministry of Culture, the Gandhi Peace Prize carries an amount of one crore rupees, a citation, and a plaque. Gita Press was

established in 1923, having published over 41 crore books in 14 languages.

13. **British-American author, Salman Rushdie** has been selected for the prestigious German Peace Prize 2023 for his literary work and his resolve and positive attitude in the face of constant danger.

Note: He would receive the award in Frankfurt on October 22, 2023. Cash prize: €25,000 (\$27,300). This prize was established in 1950 to recognize a personality committed to serving international understanding between nations and cultures through their work.

14. **Acharya N. Gopi** has been selected for the first-ever Prof. Kothapalli Jayashankar Award, instituted by Bharat Jagruthi.

Note: The award would be presented to Acharya Gopi at an event to be organized at Telangana Saraswatha Parishath in Abids on June 21. The award has been instituted for honoring the *littérateurs* every year. Acharya Gopi has penned 56 books including 26 compilations of poems, 7 compilations of essays, 5 translations, and 3 research books.

15. **IndiGo** has won a top award as the Best Low-Cost Airline in India and South Asia at the prestigious 2023 Skytrax World Airline Awards.

Note: It is the thirteenth time that IndiGo has won this award as the Best Low-Cost Airline in India and South Asia. Recently, IndiGo has placed a firm order for 500 Airbus A320 Family aircraft, which will provide IndiGo with a further steady stream of deliveries between 2030 and 2035.

16. **Priya A S** has been named the prestigious (Kendra) Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2023.

Note: She was awarded for children's literature in Malayalam for her 2018 novel *Perumazhayathe Kunjithalukal*. She won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Children's Literature for the same novel in 2020. The book was featured in the Sammanapothi

series by Poorna Books. Bal Sahitya Puraskar consists of a cash prize of Rs 50,000 and an engraved copper plaque.

17. Egypt President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has conferred the 'Order of the Nile' to **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.

Note: The 'Order of the Nile' was instituted in 1915, which is conferred upon heads of state, crown princes, and vice presidents who offer Egypt or humanity invaluable services. Over the last 9 years, PM Modi has received many international awards and this is the 13th highest state honour conferred upon PM Modi.

18. **Shankar Mahadevan** was conferred with an honorary doctorate by Birmingham City University (BCU) in London, England.

Note: Reason: To celebrate his contribution to music and the arts. He was honoured by the BCU Vice-Chancellor Professor Philip Plowden at the ceremony. He was accompanied by fellow musicians Zakir Hussain and John McLaughlin at the ceremony.

19. **Dr. K. Venugopal** has been selected for an award instituted by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) to commemorate National Doctors' Day on July 1.

Note: He was selected under the category of community service. He will receive the award at a function to be held at IMA headquarters in New Delhi on July 1. Indian Medical Association was formed in 1928 & is headquartered in New Delhi.

20. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak honored **Rajindar Singh Dhatt** with a Points of Light award on June 28th, 2023.

Note: He was recognized for his service and work running the 'Undivided Indian Ex-Servicemen's Association'. The Points of Light award recognize outstanding people whose service is making a difference in their communities and whose stories can inspire others towards innovative solutions to social challenges in their own communities and beyond.

Sports News

1. **Indian Hockey Team defeated Pakistan** in the final of the **Men's Junior Asia Cup 2023**, held at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex Stadium in Salalah, Oman.

Note: This was **India's fourth title at Men's Junior Asia Cup**, after winning in 2004, 2008, and 2015. With this title win, India has become the most successful country in the history of the Men's Junior Asia Cup. While Pakistan is the second-most successful team in the tournament with three titles.

2. Indian cyclist **Esow Alben** has bagged the **bronze medal** in the **elite men's keirin event** at a **UCI Class 1 Event-Finale Bahnen-Tournee 2023** cycling competition in Germany.

Note: He has also listed himself in being the first cyclist from India to participate in the UCI Champions League. Alben was also the first Indian who won a medal in a cycling world championship. Apart from Alben, Indian

cyclist Ronaldo Singh Laitonjam finished 10th in the men's sprint event at Germany meet.

3. **Third khelo India University** games has been concluded at IIT BHU campus in **Varanasi**.

Note: **Punjab University, Chandigarh** regain **champions crown** as **Guru Nanak Dev University** fall short despite Fencing sweep on final day, after a gap of one edition of the Khelo India University Games. PUC finished with an overall tally of 69 medals including 26 gold, 17 silver and 26 bronze medals. As many as 131 of the 203 Universities who finally participated at the Games.

4. Indian sprinter, **Amlan Borgohain** has bagged **two gold medals** in the **men's 100 and 200-meter races** category at the Flanders Cup 2023 athletics in Merksem, Belgium.

Note: He clocked 10.70 seconds to emerge as the fastest man of the meet. He holds the 100-meter national record of 10.25 seconds and holds 20.96 seconds in the 200-meter. Meanwhile, Sapna Kumari finished behind Belgium's Amber Vanden Bosch in the women's 100m hurdles after clocking 14.10.

5. **Indian shooters Abhinav Shaw and Gautami Bhanot** have bagged gold in the final of **10 meter Air Rifle Mixed Team** event at the ISSF World Cup Junior 2023 in Suhl, Germany.

Note: The **Indian team of Shaw and Bhanot** registered a 17-7 win over the French pairing of Oceanne Mueller and Romain Aufrere in the gold medal match. With this, India now has two gold medals, one silver, and one bronze from the World Cup after two days of competition.

6. India won **three medals (including two gold)** at the **2023 Asian Under 20 Athletics Championships campaign**, which is being held in **Yecheon, South Korea**.

Note: **Rezoana Mallick Heena and Bharatpreet Singh** kicked off clinched gold medals in women's 400-meter race and men's discus throw respectively. Henna clocked 53.31 seconds to take the top position on the podium. Antima Pal won the third medal for India, a bronze, in the women's 5,000-meter race.

7. **Max Verstappen (Red Bull Driver)** has clinched the pole position at the **Spanish Grand Prix 2023** extending his lead in the Formula One championship by 53 points.

Note: Red Bull's dominance continued as they celebrated their **seventh consecutive triumph** of the season. While Mercedes driver, Lewis Hamilton (seven-time world champion) has secured the second spot for Mercedes, followed by George Russell (Mercedes driver).

8. **GM Aravindh Chithambaram (India)** won the **23rd Dubai Open 2023** for the second consecutive year, at the 23rd edition of the Dubai Chess Open, organized by Dubai Chess & Culture Club.

Note: A total of 172 participants (in category A) from more than 46 different countries participated in this tournament. A total of 9 rounds were played in Swiss format. He became one of only two players to win back-to-back championships in the history of the Dubai Open Chess Tournament.

9. **Siddharth Choudhary** has clinched the **gold medal** in the men's shot put with a personal **best throw of 19.52 metres** at the **Under 20 Asian Athletics Championships in Yecheon, South Korea**.

Note: Three other players Sharuk Khan (3000-metre steeplechase), Shivam Lohakare (Javelin), and Susmita (Long Jump) have also clinched the silver medals in their respective events. While Shakeel (800 metres) and the mixed relay team won the bronze medal.

10. Union Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur send off **198 special athletes** to the **Special Olympics World Summer Games 2023** to be held in Berlin.

Note: The Government spent 450 crore rupees in the current Olympic cycle on training, equipment, and facilities. It will provide more assistance if needed to ensure India makes a new record in the Paris Olympics 2024. India has given the best-ever performance at the last Olympics with improvements in facilities.

11. **Japan's Tokito Oda** has **defeated top-ranked Alfie Hewett** from Britain 6-1, 6-4 to win the **2023 French Open wheelchair Men's singles title**.

Note: With this win, he also become the sport's youngest Grand Slam champion. While Diede de Groot from Netherlands has secured the 2023 French Open – Wheelchair women's singles. Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid (Britain) won the Men's Double title, and Yui Kamiji and Kgothatso Montjane won the Women's Double title.

12. **Indian Women's hockey team** defeated Republic of Korea to win the **Women's Junior Asia Cup 2023 title** in Kakamigahara, Japan.

Note: This is the **first time** India have won the **Women's Junior Asia Cup**. Recently, India had secured a spot in the FIH Women's Junior World Cup 2023 in Chile. Japan beat China 2-1 to become the third team to qualify for the World Cup scheduled this year. For India, Annu and Neelam were on target while Seoyeon Park scored the solitary goal for Korea.

13. **India defeated Argentina** 2-1 in its **final FIH Pro League 2022-23** match in Eindhoven, the Netherlands.

Note: **Akashdeep Singh and Sukhjeet Singh** scored goals for India while Lucas Toscani netted the only goal for Argentina. India consolidated their position atop the FIH Pro League standings with 30 points from 16 matches. Argentina is fifth with 13 points from 14 matches. The Indian men's hockey team finished in fourth place in their debut FIH Pro League campaign back in 2020-21.

14. The **World Cup Squash championship** is being organized in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.

Note: It was formally inaugurated by the State Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Udhayanidhi Stalin. On the first day, India will play against Hongkong and China in the pool B matches and in another match Japan will play against South Africa. Each match will be played to the best of five games, each to seven points with a total of 11 points in general.

15. **Uruguay** beat Italy 1-0 to win its **first FIFA U-20 World Cup 2023**.

Note: The Celeste's victory ends a streak of four consecutive wins of European teams in the tournament. Luciano Rodríguez scored the winning goal in the 86th minute with a header from close range, giving Uruguay a much-deserved victory after an entire match of dominance against Italy. Earlier, debutant Israel beat South Korea 3-1 to secure third place in the same stadium in La Plata.

16. **Murali Sreeshankar** has secured a **third place**, with a jump of 8.09m, in the **2023 Diamond League Meet at Paris, France**.

- Note:** With this, he also became the **only third Indian to finish in the top three of a Diamond League** after Neeraj Chopra (Javelin thrower) and Vikas Gowda (former discus thrower). Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece secured Gold with a jump of 8.13m and Simon Ehammer of Switzerland won silver with a jump of 8.11m.
17. The Asia Cup 2023 will take place in Pakistan and **Sri Lanka** between August 31 and September 17, 2023.
Note: Earlier, the tournament was originally meant to be held entirely in Pakistan. Recently, the Asian Cricket Council has approved the hybrid model, in which four of the 13 matches will be played in Pakistan and the remaining nine in Sri Lanka. In Pakistan, matches will be held in Lahore while the games to be played in Sri Lanka will be held in Kandy andallekele.
18. **Egypt** has retained the World Squash Championship, after beating Malaysia by 2-1 in the final.
Note: Malaysia won the silver, and third place (bronze) was shared jointly by hosts India and Japan. India was defeated by Malaysia 3-0 in the semi-final. The championship was held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu with eight countries as participants and was held from June 13 to 17. Egypt won the World Cup when it was last held here in 2011.
19. The inaugural edition of India's first-ever Women's Kabaddi League (WKL) has been commenced in **Dubai**.
Note: It marks the first time that women kabaddi players from across India have been given the opportunity to exhibit their skills and prowess on a global stage. This league consists of eight teams, featuring a total of 96 players, each representing Indian states. The victorious team will be awarded a prize of approximately half a million dirhams (1 crore INR).
20. Chief Minister of Goa, Dr Pramod Sawant has launched the mascot named 'Moga' for the upcoming **37th** edition of the National Games at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Taleigao.
Note: The event was organized by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Sports Authority of Goa. The ceremony was attended by the Sports Minister of Goa, Govind Gaude, President of the Indian Olympic Association, Dr. P. T Usha, and Olympic medalist MC Mary Kom.
21. **Indian** men's senior football team has clinched the Intercontinental Cup 2023 after defeating Lebanon in Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneshwar, Odisha.
Note: This is India's second title in the tournament, following their win in the inaugural edition in 2018. The first half was goalless while in the second half, the hosts made it 1-0 in the 46th minute with Indian captain Sunil Chhetri's goal. Lallianzuala Chhangte netted the second goal in the 65th -minute, making it 2-0.
22. **C. A. Bhavani Devi** has secured the bronze medal at Asian Fencing Championships 2023 held in China.
Note: In the quarterfinal, she created history by defeating reigning World Champion Misaki Emura and secured India its first-ever medal at the event. She stunned the world number one 15-10 to enter the women's sabre semifinal. However, Bhavani lost to Uzbekistan's Zaynab Dayibekova in the semifinals by 15-14, securing a bronze medal.
23. **India** U-23 women's team won the 2023 Women's Emerging Asia Cup T20 title after defeating Bangladesh in the final held at the Mission Round Ground in Hong Kong.
Note: India has scored 127 for the loss of seven wickets in 20 overs. India's Kanika Ahuja was named the Player of the Match, who stayed not out on 30 off 23 with four fours in the final. While India's Shreyanka Patil was named the Player of the Series, as she was the highest-wicket taker.
24. **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath** has unveiled the first ticket for the first race of MotoGP 2023, to be hosted by Uttar Pradesh.
Note: For the first time, the motorbike race is being held in India. The event is scheduled to be held at the Buddha International Circuit in Greater Noida from September 22 to 24, 2023. The event would firmly establish 'Brand Uttar Pradesh' at the global level. This is the first time the event is being held outside Europe.
25. **Cristiano Ronaldo** has received the Guinness World Record Award certificate to become the first men's player to make 200 international appearances.
Note: He celebrated the milestone by scoring the winning goal in the 89th minute as Portugal beat Iceland in European Championship qualifying. He received a Guinness World Records certificate before the game. The closest to Ronaldo's tally is Bader Al-Mutawa, who was capped by Kuwait on 196 occasions.
26. **Diksha Dagar** has secured her second Ladies European Tour (LET) at the Tipsport Czech Ladies Open 2023.
Note: In the final, she defeated Trichat Cheenglab of Thailand. She hails from Jhajjar in Haryana. In 2019, she won her first LET title at the South African Women's Open, held in Cape Town. After Aditi Ashok, Diksha Dagar is the only other Indian woman golfer to have won two or more LET titles.
27. Wanindu Hasaranga has achieved a remarkable feat in cricket by becoming the first spinner and second overall player in history to take three consecutive 5-wicket hauls in the One Day Internationals (ODIs). He belongs to **Sri Lanka**.
Note: It was achieved, when Sri Lanka bundled out Ireland at 192 to secure the Super Six spot in ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 Qualifiers match. He has placed himself equal to the legendary Pakistani bowler Waqar Younis.
28. **Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee**, Indian women's doubles pair won the 2023 World Table Tennis (WTT) Contender tournament in Tunis.
Note: The Indian pair won the title after beating the Japanese pair of Miyuu Kihara and Miwa Harimoto. The pair also became the first Indians to win a Contender title this year. Meanwhile, the Indian mixed doubles pair

as well as the men's doubles duo had lost their respective semifinal matches.

29. The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) has confirmed that the 2023 U-17 World Cup will be hosted by **Indonesia**.

Note: Initially, the host of the youngest World Cup event was Peru. This announcement was made after the FIFA Council meeting in Zurich, Switzerland. FIFA also announced Colombia as the host of the 2024 U-20 Women's World Cup and Dominica as the host of the U-17 Women's World Cup. FIFA President: Gianni Infantino

30. Indian woman cricketer, **Jhulan Goswami** has joined England women's team captain Heather Knight and Eoin Morgan to become a member of the MCC World Cricket Committee (WCC).

Note: This committee is an independent body that consists of current and former international cricketers, umpires, and officials from various countries. Jhulan Goswami retired from international cricket in 2022. She was made an Honorary Life Member of MCC in April 2023.

31. **India** has finished its Special Olympics World Games 2023 campaign by winning 202 medals (76 gold, 75 silver, and 51 bronze).

Note: Indian athletes notched six medals from the track events (2 gold, 3 silver, and 1 bronze). Aanchal Goyal (400m, Level B Female) and Ravimathi Arumugam (400m, Level C Female) blew away their competition to take the top of the podium. Saket Kundu, who grabbed a silver medal in the mini javelin Level B, also won a bronze in the Level B 400m.

Books and Authors

1. **Abhay K** has authored the book titled '**Nalanda**'.

Note: The book will be published by **Penguin Random House India**. The book delves into the history of the ancient seat of learning in Bihar. It is his highly anticipated book which is set to take readers on an enlightening journey through time and history. The book is scheduled to release in October next year in 2024 from the Vintage imprint.

2. The book titled, '**The Power of One Thought: Master Your Mind, Master Your Life**' is authored by **BK Shivani**.

Note: The book published by **HarperCollins India**. This book will bring the perfect thought booster, an empowering book that is an essential guide to unleashing the power of the mind, where it all begins from, to make that dream life happen. Brahma Kumari (BK) Sister Shivani, a Rajyog Meditation practitioner for over 25 years has become a household name for her refreshing and pragmatic take on life.

3. **KK Gopalakrishnan** authored the book titled '**Kathakali Dance Theatre: A Visual Narrative of Sacred Indian Mime**'.

Note: The book offers a behind-the-scenes look into the world of Kathakali, focusing on the green room, artists' struggles, and the unique bonds forged during long make-up hours.

4. The new graphic novel for young readers titled '**Ajay to Yogi Adityanath**', was authored by **Shantanu Gupta**.

Note: More than 5,000 children from over 51 schools across different districts of Uttar Pradesh participated in the launch ceremony. Prior to this, author Shantanu Gupta has written two bestseller titles on Yogi Adityanath- The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh and The Monk Who Became Chief Minister.

5. The book titled, '**The Snow Forest**', will be released in February 2024, is authored by **Elizabeth Gilbert**.

Note: This book is published by Bloomsbury. The novel, "The Snow Forest", is inspired by the true story of the family of religious hermits discovered in Siberia in 1978 who had escaped early 20th century Russia for a life in one of the most inhospitable and uninhabited places on earth. He has also authored 'Eat, Pray, Love'.

6. **Satish Chandra** has penned a book titled '**A Life Well Spent – Four Decades in the Indian Foreign Service**'.

Note: It chronicles his extensive career in the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) from 1965 to 2005. The book was published by the Rupa Publications. The book delves into his journey from being an IFS probationer to assuming the role of Deputy National Security Advisor, providing valuable perspectives on Indian diplomacy and tracing the development of the National Security Council (NSC) framework.

7. **David Hardiman** is the author of the book '**Non-Cooperation in India: Non-Violent Strategy and Protest**'.

Note: It is published by Westland Books. The non-cooperation movement by the Indian National Congress (INC) was the first mass movement organized nationwide during India's struggle for freedom, which was organized and led by Gandhi Ji. The book is comprising seven chapters and is a detailed account of India's first mass movement.

8. A book titled '**The New New-Delhi Book Club**', authored by **Radhika Swarup**.

Note: The book will be published by Westland Books publishing house. The book is an interconnected collection of short stories, showing both the hopes and fears of life during the pandemic. Her debut novel, "Where the River Parts", was longlisted by the Author & Club for the best first novel award. Her last novel 'Civil Lines' was out in 2021.

Science and Defence

1. **Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)** has joined a global research group in the development of an algorithm along the lines of **ChatGPT for genetics**.
Note: This algorithm uses genome sequencing data instead of human language to predict disease-causing genetic mutations in patients. The group has generated a huge catalogue of genomic information for primates that have been ever produced.
2. India successfully launched the **Medium-Range Ballistic Missile, Agni-1 from the APJ Abdul Kalam Islands**, which is located in **Odisha**.
Note: It was carried out by the **Strategic Forces Command**, which is responsible for the management and administration of the country's tactical and nuclear assets. Agenda: To validate all operational and technical parameters of the missile. **Agni series of missiles includes Agni-1(700km), Agni-2 (2000), Agni-3 (3000), Agni-4 (4000), and Agni-5 (5000)**
3. **Indian Navy** has undertaken several green initiatives and shared some of the noteworthy initiatives towards a '**Clean and Green Navy**'.
Note: It employs a number of ships, submarines, and aircraft that have high energy intensity, thus increased energy efficiency is paramount in every operation. It has commissioned solar power with a cumulative capacity of 15.87 MW, with the objective of fulfilling the government's 'Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission'.
4. The **Indian Navy** and **DRDO** have successfully engaged and destroyed an **underwater target using 'Varunastra' Heavy Weight Torpedo (HWT)**.
Note: It is a significant milestone in the Indian Navy and DRDO for accurate delivery of ordnance on target in the underwater domain. The Indian Navy and Naval Science and Technology Laboratory (NSTL) of **DRDO developed 'Varunastra'**, an advanced Heavy Weight anti-submarine torpedo.
5. **GalaxEye** is building the **world's first multi-sensor earth observation satellite**, is an incubated space-tech startup of **IIT-Madras**.
Note: It will launch its **first satellite 'Drishti Mission' in 2024**. It is being built with the help of a visible spectrum camera providing synchronised imaging that can take multiple images at the same time. GalaxEye is working on deploying a satellite constellation to provide the comprehensive imagery dataset from space.
6. **Tata Elxsi** has partnered with the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** for the upcoming **Gaganyaan Mission**.
Note: It has designed and developed the **crew module recovery models (CMRM)** for the recovery team training of the space mission. ISRO's Gaganyaan project envisions a demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching the crew into a 400-kilometer orbit for a three-day mission and safely bringing them to Earth by landing in Indian sea waters.
7. **DRDO** has successfully flight-tested **New Generation Ballistic Missile 'Agni Prime'** was successfully from **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha** on June 07, 2023.
Note: Aim: To validate the accuracy and reliability of the system. During the flight test, all objectives were successfully demonstrated. This was the first pre-induction night launch conducted by the users after three successful developmental trials of the missile.
8. The **Ministry of Defence** informed that **first India-France-UAE Maritime Partnership Exercise** has started in **Gulf of Oman**.
Note: It involves the **Indian Navy frigate, INS Tarkash, the French Navy ship Surcouf** along with Rafale fighter jets, and UAE Navy maritime patrol aircraft. The two-day exercise involves a wide range of naval operations, including helicopter cross-deck landing operations, advanced air defense exercises, and boarding operations.
9. The **Indian Army** has sealed a deal **Astromech Pvt Ltd** to procure the indigenously-developed "tactical LAN radio".
Note: Tactical LAN radio: It is a state-of-the-art high-bandwidth backhaul wireless radio equipment for the provisioning of reliable communication. It is the second contract that the Army has firmed up under the **framework of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)**. iDEX was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018.
10. 12th edition of a **joint military exercise** between the **Indian Army & the Maldives National Defence Force, 'Ex Ekuverin'** is being commenced at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand.
Note: Ekuverin meaning 'Friends', is a bilateral annual exercise conducted alternatively in India and Maldives. Aim: To enhance the interoperability in Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism Operations under the UN mandate. The 11th edition of the exercise was held in Maldives in 2021.
11. **IIT Madras** researchers have recently developed a low-cost mobile air pollution monitoring framework.
Note: The pollution sensors mounted on public vehicles can dynamically monitor the air quality of an extended area at high spatial and temporal resolution. Traditionally, ambient air quality is measured in monitoring stations and reported by the Air Quality Index (AQI). Since these stations are at fixed locations, they only measure the air quality of a small geographic area.
12. **Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)** researchers have devised a mathematical model on contract farming to predict farmers' delivery of commodities using a decision-theoretic framework based on the 'Prospect Theory'.
Note: Prospect Theory is a psychology theory that describes how people make decisions when presented with alternatives that involve risk, probability, and

- uncertainty. It was introduced by two psychologists, Daniel Kahneman, and Amos Tversky.
13. Ministry of Defence (MoD) has inked a contract with **ICOMM Tele Limited, Hyderabad** for the procurement of 1,035 numbers of 5/7.5 Ton Radio Relay Communication equipment containers.
Note: The value of the contract under Buy (Indian) Category is nearly Rs 500 crore. The delivery of the containers is scheduled to commence from the current Financial Year 2023-24. Aim: To boost the indigenous manufacturing of defence equipment and incentivize the private sector
 14. The Defence Ministry has approved the deal for acquiring the Predator (MQ-9 Reaper) drones from **America**.
Note: The final decision would be taken by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS). The deal for the Predator drones was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council meeting. The DAC is the highest body in the Defence Ministry to take decisions on acquisitions. All high value acquisitions are given final approval by the CCS.
 15. **INS 'Vagir'** has embarked on an operational visit to Colombo from 19-22 June 2023 to commemorate the 9th edition of the International Day of Yoga and aligns with the theme of 'Global Ocean Ring'.
Note: During the visit, the Commanding Officer of the Indian Naval submarine would meet Rear Admiral Suresh De Silva, the Commander of the Western Naval Area. INS 'Vagir' will also be visited by the visitors and school children to explore the submarine firsthand.
 16. India will gift Missile Corvette INS Kirpan to **Vietnam** as a friendly gesture and to expand military ties between the nations.
Note: INS Kirpan is a Khukri-class warship commissioned in 1991. The announcement was made during a meeting between Rajnath Singh (India's defence minister) and General Phan Van Gang (Vietnamese defence minister). The Vietnamese defence minister is on a visit to enhance the military ties, with maritime security and defence industrial cooperation.
 17. The Indian Army Contingent has participated in the multinational peacekeeping Joint Exercise Ex Khaan Quest 2023, organized in **Mongolia**.
Note: This exercise was participated by Military contingents and observers from over 20 countries. A contingent from the Garhwal Rifles represented the Indian Army. Aim: To enhance the interoperability of the participating nations, sharing experience, and training uniformed personnel for the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.
 18. **Mahindra Defence Systems (MDS)** has started delivering Armado to the Indian armed forces.
Note: It is an Armoured Light Specialist Vehicle, which is designed by and developed by Mahindra. It has been designed keeping in mind a variety of roles the armed forces may use it for. It gets ballistic protection up to B7, Stanag Level II. It can be utilised in counter-terrorist operations by facilitating patrolling in conflict-hit areas.
 19. **IIT Kanpur** has successfully conducted a test flight for cloud seeding.
Note: The project was initiated at IIT Kanpur a few years ago and is headed by Prof. Manindra Agrawal from the Computer Science and Engineering Department. The experiment was conducted with due approval from the DGCA. Cloud seeding involves the utilization of various chemical agents such as silver iodide, dry ice, common salt, and other elements with the aim of enhancing the probability of precipitation.
 20. US-based GE Aerospace has signed a memorandum of understanding with **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited** to produce fighter jet engines for the Indian Air Force.
Note: Aerospace's F414 engines will be co-produced in India to power the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft Mk2. The development comes amid Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the US. It is part of an effort to improve defense- and technology-sharing between the India and US.
 21. Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Integrated Simulator Complex (ISC) 'Dhruv' in **Kochi, Kerala**.
Note: The ISC 'Dhruv' hosts modern state-of-the-art indigenously-built simulators which will significantly enhance practical training in the Indian Navy. These simulators are envisaged to give real-time experience in navigation, fleet operations, and Naval tactics. These simulators will also be utilized for training of personnel from friendly countries.
 22. The Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out **Exercise Ranvijay** in UB Hills and Central Air Command Area of Responsibility from June 16-23.
Note: The focus was on Integrated operations while optimally exploiting the electronic warfare capabilities. The exercise was carried out from different air bases of the command headquartered in Prayagraj. Different IAF commands have been carrying out wargames and aerial drills to enhance jointness with the other two services
 23. India and **Philippines** decided to collaborate in the defense sector, with a particular focus on the maritime domain at Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation.
Note: Both will develop their ties through different initiatives including official-level interactions, the resident Defense Attaché office in Manila, and the consideration of a concessional Line of Credit. The bilateral ties will strengthen the partnership between the two countries in various fields.

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