

IIFT & XAT GK COMPENDIUM 2022-23

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2022-23

Dear Future Business Leaders,

We are delighted to present to you this **IIFT & XAT (GK Compendium) 2022-23**. The purpose of this compendium is to provide relevant General Knowledge data which is very much useful for your forthcoming IIFT & XAT Examinations.

The compendium is divided in two parts:

The **Part-I** covers important static general knowledge facts from History, Geography, Polity, Science and Miscellaneous GK and the **Part-II** covers important current and business general knowledge facts.

This GK compendium covers the following IMPORTANT areas.

Part – I: Static GK Facts

1. Important Historical Facts
2. Important Geographical Facts
3. Important Demographic Facts of India – Census 2011
4. Important Facts of Indian Constitutions
5. Important Science Related Facts
6. Important Miscellaneous GK Facts

Part – II: Current and Business GK Facts

1. News Points from **15 November, 2021 to August, 2022**.
2. International and National Organizations their heads and headquarters
3. Countries and their heads of Governments
4. Banks their heads, headquarters and punch lines
5. Name of G-20 nations, Stock exchange and official currency
6. Brand and their tagline (World and Indian)
7. Important Books and Authors

We sincerely hope and believe that this compendium will add value to learning and serve the intended purpose.

All the best!!

Team CL

IIFT & XAT (GK COMPENDIUM) 2022-23

PART – 1: Static GK Facts

In this section of compendium we have compiled some very important facts from static general knowledge segments which we feel are quite relevant from **IIFT & XAT Examinations 2022-2023** perspective. This section has important selected facts from History, Geography, Indian Polity, Science and Miscellaneous GK which are taken based on the analysis of past years papers of IIFT & XAT respectively. We believe that this compilation will serve the intended purpose effectively.

1. Important Historical Facts

(A) Significant events related to Indian Freedom Movement:

Year	Important events happenings in that year
1885	Formation of Congress by A. O. Hume
1905	Partition of Bengal, launching of Swadeshi movement
1906	Formation of Muslim League by Nawab Salimullah of Dacca
1907	Surat session of Congress, where congress got split into moderates and extremists
1909	Morley-Minto Reforms, in which separate electorates for Hindus and Muslims was introduced for the first time.
1911	Capital shifted from Calcutta to New Delhi (Designed by Edwin Lutyens)
1916	Lucknow session of Congress, where the famous Lucknow pact was signed between Congress and Muslim league. Formation of home rule league by Annie Besant.
1917	Champaran Satyagraha (champaran is a place in Bihar) by Mahatma Gandhi. His first satyagraha in India.
1919	The draconian Rowlatt Acts, Jallianwala Bagh massacre at Amritsar on the orders of General O'Dyer; Montague-Chelmsford reforms.
1920	Khilafat Movement against British by Shaukat and Muhammad Ali. Launching of Non Cooperation Movement by Mahatma Gandhi.
1922	Chauri chaura, incident in Uttar Pradesh and withdrawal of NCM by Gandhi, formation of Swaraj party by Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das and N. C. Kelkar.
1927	Simon Commission came to India, which was protested by Lala Lajpat Rai. He died during a lathi charge during the protest.
1929	Passing of Purna Swaraj resolution at Lahore session of Congress under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru.
1930	Dandi March (Salt Satyagraha) by Mahatma Gandhi from Sabarmati ashram (a place in Gujarat). First round table conference in London
1935	Government of India Act
1937	Formation of Congress Ministries in provinces
1939	Outbreak of World War II, resignation of Congress ministries
1942	Quit India Movement, Wavell plan and Shimla conference. <i>Maulana Abul Kalam Azad</i> attended the conference representing Congress.
1945	Cabinet Mission Plan which envisaged forming of the interim government and to determine means of transferring power.
1946	Formation of Constituent Assembly under Rajendra Prasad (Muslim league did not participate)
1947	Mountbatten Plan (June 3 plan) and partition of India

(B) Important Governor General and Viceroys associated with British rule and related events

Name	Events associated with
Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856)	Mainly known for Doctrine of Lapse, responsible for annexing number of states on the basis of this philosophy. First train from Bombay to Thane started during his reign in 1853.
Lord Cornwallis (1786-1793)	Credited with a new revenue system under the permanent settlement of Bengal. Introduction of Civil services.
Lord Canning	The revolt of 1857. The first Viceroy of India
Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)	The subsidiary alliance system.
Lord Curzon (1899-1905)	Partition of Bengal
William Bentinck (1828-35)	Abolition of Sati and reducing the female infanticide.
Thomas B. Macaulay	His advice was instrumental in introducing English, under the leadership of William Bentinck.
Lord Hastings(1813-1823)	Associated with Ryotwari settlement.
Robert Clive	He was the first British Governor of Bengal.
Warren Hastings (1773-1785)	The first Governor-General of India; Regulating Act 1773 and Pitt's India Act of 1784 were passed during his tenure.
Lord Mountbatten	The first Governor-General of Free India.
C. Rajagopalachari	First Indian and last Governor-General of Independent India.

(C) Firsts in India

Women		
1.	First woman Prime Minister	Mrs. Indira Gandhi
2.	First woman Chief Minister of a State	Mrs. Sucheta Kriplani
3.	First woman Minister	Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
4.	First woman Central Minister	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
5.	First woman Speaker of Lok Sabha	Mrs. Meira Kumar
6.	First woman Governor of a State	Mrs. Sarojini Naidu
7.	First woman President of Indian National Congress	Annie Besant
8.	First Indian woman President of UN General Assembly	Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
9.	First Muslim woman to sit on the throne of Delhi	Razia Sultana
10.	First woman to swim across the English Channel	Miss Arti Saha (now Mrs Arti Gupta)
11.	First Indian woman to climb Mount Everest	Bachhendri Pal
12.	First woman to circumnavigate (sail round the world)	Ujwala Rai
13.	First woman IAS Officer	Anna George Malhotra
14.	First woman IPS Officer	Kiran Bedi
15.	First woman Advocate	Corknelia Sorabji
16.	First woman Judge	Justice Anna Chandy
17.	First woman Judge of a High Court	Justice Anna Chandy
18.	First woman Judge of Supreme Court	M. Fathima Beevi
19.	First woman Chief Justice of a High Court	Leila Seth
20.	First woman Doctor	Kadambini Ganguly

21.	First woman to pass MA	Chandra Mukhi Bose
22.	First woman editor of English newspaper	Dina Vakil
23.	First woman Chief Engineer	P.K.Thresia
24.	First woman to receive a Sena Madel	Constable Bimla Devi (88 BN of CRPF)-1990
25.	Youngest woman to climb Mount Everest	Dicky Dolma (19) from Manali - 1993
26.	First woman to climb mount Everest two times	Santosh Yadav (ITBP Officer) - 1993
27.	First Lady Magistrate	Omana Kunjamma
28.	First Indian woman to win Nobel Prize	Mother Teresa
29.	First to be crowned Miss India	Pramila (Esther Victoria Abraham) - 1947
30.	First Indian to be crowned Miss Universe	Sushmita Sen
31.	First Indian to be crowned Miss World	Reita Faria (1966)
32.	First woman President	Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil
33.	The first woman Speaker of a State Assembly	Shano Devi (Punjab)
Men		
1.	First Indian to swim across the English Channel	Mihir Sen
2.	First to Climb Mount Everest	Tenzing Norgay
3.	First to Climb Mount Everest without Oxygen	Phu Dorjee
4.	First Indian to join I.C.S.(ICS now is IAS)	Satyendranath Tagore
5.	First Indian to get Nobel Prize	Rabindranath Tagore
6.	First Indian in Space (first Indian cosmonaut)	Rakesh Sharma
7.	First British Governor general	Warren Hastings
8.	First Governor General of Free India	Lord Mountbatten
9.	First Viceroy of India	Lord Canning
10.	Last Governor General of Free India	C. Rajagopalachari
11.	First President of India	Dr Rajendra Prasad
12.	First Vice-President of India	Dr S. Radhakrishnan
13.	First Muslim President of India	Dr Zakir Hussain
14.	First Sikh President of India	Giani Zail Singh
15.	First Prime Minister	Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru
16.	First Speaker of Lok Sabha	Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar
17.	First Chief Justice of India	Justice H. L. Kania
18.	First President of Indian National Congress	Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee
19.	First Indian to become member of Viceroy's Executive Council	Satyendra Prasanno Sinha
20.	First Indian to become President of International Court of Justice	Dr Nagendra Singh
21.	First Emperor of Mughal Dynasty	Babur
22.	First Field Marshal	S. H. F. J. Manekshaw
23.	First Indian Commander-in-Chief of India (now Field Marshal)	Gen. K. M. Cariappa
24.	First Chief of the Army Staff (Indian)	General Maharaj Kumar Shri Rajendrasinhji
25.	First Chief of the Naval Staff (Indian)	Vice-Admiral R.D.Katari
26.	First Chief of the Air Force Staff (Indian)	Subroto Mukherjee

27.	First Indian in British Parliament	Dadabhai Naoroji
28.	First Indian recipient of Victoria Cross (highest gallantry award before independence)	Khudadad Khan
29.	First Indian to circumnavigate the globe	Lt Col K. S. Rao
30.	First Indian to reach the South Pole	Col J. K. Bajaj (1989)
31.	First Indian High Court Judge	Justice Sumboo Nath Pandit
32.	First Indian to make a solo air flight	J.R.D. Tata
33.	First Indian to visit England	Raja Rammohun Roy (1878)
34.	First Indian Member of House of Lords (British)	Lord S.P.Sinha
35.	First Bar-at-Law	J.M.Tagore
36.	First Chairman of Rajya Sabha	Dr S. Radhakrishnan (1952 - 62)
37.	First Air Marshal	Arjan Singh
38.	First Judge to face impeachment in the Lok Sabha	Justice V. Ramaswami (1993)

2. Important Geographical Facts

(A) Important facts about Planets:

As per the International Astronomical Union (IAU), the planet is a celestial body which-

1. is in orbit around the sun.
2. has sufficient mass to assume hydrostatic equilibrium (a nearly round shape) and
3. has 'cleared the neighbourhood' around its orbits.

According to the definition, there are currently eight planets and five dwarf planet in the solar system.

- (1) Mercury (Closest to the Sun and is the fastest planet to revolve around the Sun)
- (2) Venus (The Brightest and hottest planet in all)
- (3) Earth (Only known planet to possess life)
- (4) Mars (Known as the Red planet. Explored for life by astronomers now, as it is having similarities with Earth)
- (5) Jupiter (The largest planet of the solar system)
- (6) Saturn (System of rings are the characteristic feature of this planet)
- (7) Uranus
- (8) Neptune

* Please note that Pluto used to be a planet but recently has been discarded as a planet and is no longer counted as a planet.

(B) Important facts about Earth

It is the fifth largest planet in the solar system. It is the third closest planet to the sun. Its shape is oblate spheroid, like a ball which is flattened at the poles.

Important facts about Earth:

- (i) Mean distance from the Sun: 1,49,407,000 km.
- (ii) Time taken by Earth to revolve around the Sun: 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 45.51 seconds.
- (iii) Time taken by Earth for rotating on its own axis: 23 hours 56 minutes and 4.09 seconds.
- (iv) Earth is covered 70% by water and 30% by land.

Movements of Earth:

- (i) **Revolution:** The Earth revolves around the Sun in an elliptical orbit. One complete revolution is called a year and this revolution of Earth causes change of seasons.
- (ii) **Rotation:** Earth rotates on its own imaginary axis also, simultaneously revolving around the Sun. It moves from west to east. This causes day and night.

Note: Duration of days and nights is equal at the equator.

(C) Important Countries and their Parliaments

Country	Name of the Parliament
Afghanistan	Shura
Argentina	National Congress
Australia	The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Bahamas	General Assembly
Bangladesh	Jatiyo Sangsad
Bhutan	Tshogdu
Brazil	National Congress
Bulgaria	Narodno Sabranieye (National Assembly)
Myanmar	Pyithu Hluttaw
Cambodia	National Assembly
Canada	Parliament of Canada
China (Mainland)	National People's Congress
China (National)	Li fa Yuan (Legislative Yuan)
Colombia	Congress of the Republic
Cuba	National Assembly of People's Power
Denmark	Folketinget
Ethiopia	Shergo
Egypt	Consultative Council and People's Assembly
Finland	Eduskunta/Riksdagen
France	Parlement
Germany (United)	Bundestag (Lower House)
	Bundestrat (Upper House)
Greenland	Landstinget
Hungary	National Assembly
Iceland	Althingi
India	Sansad [Lok Sabha (Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House)]
Indonesia	People's Consultative Assembly and House of Representatives
Iran	Majles
Iraq	National Assembly
Israel	The Knesset
Japan	The Diet
Laos	National Assembly
Libya	General People's Congress
Maldives	Majlis
Mongolia	Great Hural
Nepal	Sansad
Netherlands, The	Staten-Generaal
New Zealand	House of Representatives
Norway	Stortinget
Papua New Guinea	National Parliament
Poland	Sejm

Country	Name of the Parliament
South Africa	House of Assembly
Spain	Cortes Generales (General Courts)
Surinam	Staten
Sweden	Riksdagen
United Kingdom (UK)	Parliament (House of Commons and House of Lords)
United States	Congress (House of Representatives and Senate)

(D) Important Geographical facts about India

➤ **India covers 2.4 per cent of the Earth's surface.**

Total land area of India is 32, 87,263 sq.km.

Distance from east to west is 2,933 km.

Distance from north to south is 3,214 km.

➤ **The total length of the coastline of the mainland, Lakshadweep Islands and Andaman and Nicobar Islands, is 7,516.6 km. The coastline of only mainland is about 6300 km.**

➤ **Major rivers of India:**

The longest Indian River is Ganga; its length is 2,640 km.

The other major rivers of India are Indus (has five major tributaries: Sutlej, Chenab, Jhelum, Ravi and Beas), Brahmaputra, Godavari, Krishna, Narmada, Tapti, Cauvery, Damodar, Mahanadi and Periyar.

Note: The world's largest delta, (in West Bengal) Sundarban, is made by Brahmaputra and Ganga.

➤ **Mountains:** They are Himalayas (**highest mountains in the world and one of the youngest mountain ranges**), Vindhyas, Satpura, Sahyadri, Aravallis (one of the oldest mountain ranges of the world), Patkai (Purvanchal or Eastern mountains) and the Eastern Ghats.

➤ **Agriculture in India:** More than 50 percent of the area of the country is under the cultivation and **about 64% of the Indian population is engaged in agriculture.**

There are two major crop seasons in India, viz.:

(i) **Rabi**

(ii) **Kharif**

Rabi: It is **sown in October or December** and **harvested in April or May**. Major crops are: **barely, wheat, peas, gram and mustard.**

Kharif: It is **sown in June or July** and **harvested in September or October**. Major crops are: **bajra, cotton, jowar, rice and jute.**

➤ **Forests:**

According to the Indian State of Forest Report (2019), the total forest and tree cover of the country is 80.73 million hectare which is 24.56 percent of the geographical area of the country.

The target as per the national forest policy is to cover 33% of area by forests.

(E) National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Biosphere Reserves of India:

(i) Important National Park / Sanctuary

Name	Location
Bandipur National Park	Border of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
Jim Corbett National Park	Nainital, Uttarakhand
Dachigam Sanctuary	Dachigam, Kashmir
Ghana Bird Sanctuary	Bharatpur, Rajasthan
Gir National Park	Junagadh, Gujarat
Kanha National Park	Madhya Pradesh

Name	Location
Kaziranga National Park	Jorhat, Assam
Periyar Sanctuary	Idukki, Kerala
Ranthambore Tiger Sanctuary	Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan
Sariska Sanctuary	Alwar, Rajasthan
Sharavathy Sanctuary	Shimoga, Karnataka
Similipal Tiger Sanctuary	Mayurbhanj, Odisha
Sonai Rupai Sanctuary	Tezpur, Assam
Sunderbans Tiger Reserve	South 24 Parganas, West Bengal
Tungabhadra Sanctuary	Bellary, Karnataka
Wild Ass Sanctuary	Little Rann of Kutch, Gujarat
Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary	Bharatpur, Rajasthan
Jaldapara Bird Sanctuary	Kuch Bihar District, West Bengal

(ii) Important Biosphere Reserves of India

S. No.	Name of the Biosphere reserve	Location	State
1	Great Rann of Kutch	Part of Kutch, Rajkot and Surendranagar District	Gujarat
2	Gulf of Mannar	Indian part of Gulf of Mannar between India and Sri Lanka	Tamil Nadu
3	Sunderbans	Part of delta of Ganges and Barahmaputra River System	West Bengal
4	Nanda Devi	Parts of Chamoli District, Pithoragarh District & Almora District	Uttarakhand
5	Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve	Part of Wynad, Nagarhole, Bandipur and Mudumalai, Nilambur, Silent Valley and Siruvani Hills	Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka
6	Dehang Debang	Part of Siang and Debang valley	Arunachal Pradesh
7	Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve	Parts of Betul District, Hoshangabad District and Chhindwara District	Madhya Pradesh
8	Simlipal	Part of Mayurbhanj district	Odisha
9	Achanakamar – Amarkantak	Part of Annupur, Dindori and Bilaspur districts	Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh
10	Manas	Part of Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup and Darrang District	Assam
11	Kanchanjunga	Parts of Kanchanjunga Hills	Sikkim
12	Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve	Neyyar, Peppara and Shenduruny Wildlife Sanctuary and their adjoining areas	Kerala
13	Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve	Southern most islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Andaman and Nicobar Islands
14	Nokrek	Part of Garo Hills	Meghalaya
15	Dibru-Saikhowa	Part of Dibrugarh District and Tinsukia District	Assam
16	Cold Desert	Pin Valley National park and surrounding; Chandratal Wildlife Sanctuary	Himachal Pradesh
17	Seshachalam Hills	Seshachalam Hill Ranger covering parts of Chittoor and Kadapa District	Andhra Pradesh

(F) Important Nuclear Power Stations

Tarapur	Maharashtra
Kalpakkam	Tamil Nadu, called Indira Gandhi Nuclear Power Station
Narora	Uttar Pradesh
Rawatbhata	Kota, Rajasthan
Kaiga	Karnataka
Kakrapara	Gujarat
Kudankulam (TN)	Under construction with the assistance of Russia.

(G) Countries, their capitals and currencies

Country	Capital	Currency
Afghanistan	Kabul	Afghani
Argentina	Buenos Aires	Peso
Australia	Canberra	Australian Dollar
Austria	Vienna	Schilling/Euro
Bangladesh	Dhaka	Taka
Belgium	Brussels	Belgian Franc
Bhutan	Thimphu	Ngultrum
Brazil	Brasilia	Cruzeiro Real
Bulgaria	Sofia	Lev
Canada	Ottawa	Canadian Dollar
Chile	Santiago	Chilean Peso
China	Beijing (Peking)	Renminbi Yuan
Colombia	Bogota	Colombian Peso
Democratic Republic of Congo,	Kinshasa	Zaire
Croatia	Zagreb	Kuna
Cuba	Havana	Cuban Peso
Cyprus	Nicosia	Cyprus Pound/Euro
Czech Republic	Prague	Koruna
Denmark	Copenhagen	Danish Krone
Egypt	Cairo	Egyptian Pound
Fiji	Suva	Fijian Dollar
Finland	Helsinki	Markka/Euro
France	Paris	French Franc/Euro
Germany	Berlin	Deutsche Mark/Euro
Greece	Athens (Athinai)	Drachma/Euro
Hungary	Budapest	Forint
India	New Delhi	Indian Rupee

Country	Capital	Currency
Indonesia	Jakarta	Indonesian Rupiah
Iran	Teheran	Iranian Rial
Iraq	Baghdad	Iraqi Dinar
Ireland	Dublin	Irish Pound/Punt/ Euro
Republic of Israel	Jerusalem	New Israeli Shekel
Italy	Rome	Italian Lira
Japan	Tokyo	Yen
Kenya	Nairobi	Kenyan Shilling
Korea, South	Seoul	Won
Libya	Tripoli	Libyan Dinar
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysian Dollar/ Ringgit
Maldives	Male	Rufiyaa
Mauritius	Port Louis	Mauritian Rupee
Myanmar (Burma)	Naypyidaw	Kyat
Nepal	Kathmandu	Nepalese Rupee
Netherlands	Amsterdam	Guilder
New Zealand	Wellington	New Zealand Dollar
Nigeria	Abuja	Naira
Norway	Oslo	Norwegian Krone
Pakistan	Islamabad	Pakistan Rupee
Peru	Lima	New Sol
Philippines	Manila	Philippine Peso
Poland	Warsaw	Zloty
Portugal	Lisbon	Escudo
Qatar	Doha	Qatar Riyal
Russia	Moscow	Rouble
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Saudi Arabian Riyal
South Africa	Cape Town (Legislative) Pretoria (Administrative) Bloemfontein (Judicial)	Rand
South Sudan	Juba	South Sudanese Pound
Spain	Madrid	Peseta
Sri Lanka	Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (since 1983); former capital, Colombo	Rupee
Sweden	Stockholm	Swedish Krona
Switzerland	Berne	Swiss Franc

Country	Capital	Currency
Syria	Damascus	Syrian Pound
Thailand	Bangkok	Baht
Turkey	Ankara	Tunisian Lira
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom (UK)	London	Pound Sterling
United States of America	Washington, DC	US Dollar
Venezuela	Caracas	Bolivar
Vietnam	Hanoi	Dong
Yugoslavia	Belgrade (Serbia)	Yugoslav Dinar
Zimbabwe	Harare	Zimbabwe Dollar

3. Important Demographic Facts of India – Census 2011

Following are few selected, important demographic facts that you should always keep on your fingertips. You can expect at least one question from them.

The 15th Indian National census was conducted in two phases, house listing and population enumeration. House listing phase began on April 1, 2010 to collect of information on all buildings. Information for National Population Register was also collected in the first phase, which will be used to issue a 12-digit unique identification number (Adhaar) to all registered Indians by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIAI). The second phase of population enumeration was conducted between 9 to 28 February 2011. Census has been conducted in India since 1872. In Census - 2011 biometric information was collected for the first time.

Shri C. Chandramouli was the Registrar General and commissioner of 2011 Indian census.

1. Absolute population of India - 121.02 crores. It comprises 62.37 crores males and 58.65 crores females.
2. Population growth during the decade remained 17.64 percent.
 - Total absolute increase in population during the decade is 18.15 crores.
 - **Sex Ratio: 940 females** per 1000 males.
 - **Child Sex Ratio: 914.**
3. Highest sex ratio – Kerela (1,084) followed by Puducherry (1,038), Tamil Nadu (995), Andhra Pradesh (992) and Chhattisgarh (991).
4. Lowest sex ratio states – Haryana, followed, Sikkim (as per census 2011)
5. Most populous state – Uttar Pradesh (166 million), followed by Maharastra (97 million) and Bihar (83 million).
6. Least populous state – Sikkim, followed by Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Goa.
7. Most populous union territory – Delhi, followed by Puducherry, Jammu and Kashmir
8. Least populous union territory – Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
9. Population density (people living in one square km) of India – 382
10. Highest population density – Bihar, followed by West Bengal, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh
11. Lowest population density – Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Mizoram
12. Literacy rate of India – 74.04% (males: 82.14%, female: 65.46%). Literacy rate of India has gone up to 74.04 percent from previous figure of 64.83 percent.
13. States with highest literacy – Kerala (93.9%), followed by Mizoram, Goa and Tripura
14. State with lowest literacy – Bihar (63.82%), followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand
15. Urbanization (% of population living in urban areas) – 27.8% (India)
16. Most urbanized state (1991 census) – Mizoram
17. Speakers of language (in descending order) – Hindi > Bengali > Telugu > Marathi > Tamil > Urdu
18. Census commissioner of India for the census 2011 is Dr. C. Chandramouli
19. The current Census commissioner of India is Vivek Joshi
20. The 2021 Census of India, also the 16th Indian Census, will be taken in 2021.

4. Important Facts of Indian Constitutions

(A) The Sources of our Constitution

The framers of the Indian Constitution referred to various provisions of the existing Constitutions of the world, weighed their merits, and applied them according to their suitability to our country. The major sources of the Constitution of India are as under:

1. **The Government of India Act, 1935**, the Centre / State List System, Federal Set-up, centre-state autonomies (federal set-up)
2. **The British Constitution**: Parliamentary Privileges, Single Citizenship, and the Rule of Law
3. **The Australian Constitution**: Concurrent List, Freedom of trade and commerce
4. **The American Constitution**: Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Judicial Review, and Impeachment of the President
5. **The Japanese Constitution**: The Procedure established by the Law
6. **The South African Constitution**: The Amendment clauses
7. **The Irish Constitution**: The Directive Principles, Nominations to Rajya Sabha (The Council of States)
8. **The USSR Constitution**: The Fundamental Duties
9. **The Canadian Constitution**: The Federal structure
10. **The German Constitution**: The Emergency Provisions

(B) A short note on the Right to Property:

There have been several amendments on this issue, viz, the 1st amendment (1951), the 4th amendment (1955), the 17th amendment (1964), the 25th amendment (1971), the 42nd amendment (1976) and the 44th amendment (1978). The effect of all these amendments on the Right to Property has been the reduction in status of this right from a FR to a **Constitutional Right**, covered under **Article 300(A)**; thus, **Article 19 (1)(f)** has accordingly been repealed. The basic objective behind the state acquiring personal properties shows its superiority over the individual's right, i.e. the **Doctrine of Eminence**. This was also necessary for the successful implementation of the Land Reforms. The **Ninth Schedule to the Constitution** has also been added for this purpose.

Remember that there is a distinction between a **Fundamental Right** and a **Constitutional Right**. Since the Right to Property is no longer a FR, the Supreme Court can no longer issue any writ on this regard; the High Courts can, however, look into these matters on the same footing as any other ordinary suit. Since this is a legal right, in the event that the Government acquires any private property, it will have to do so in accordance with the law, and it will then have to pay compensation for the same.

(C) A short note on the Right to Privacy:

The **Supreme Court (SC)** ruled that privacy is a fundamental right because it is intrinsic to the right to life. "Right to Privacy is an integral part of Right to Life and Personal Liberty guaranteed in Article 21 of the Constitution", the SC's nine-judge bench ruled unanimously. It added that the right to privacy is intrinsic to the entire fundamental rights chapter of the Constitution.

(D) The President

The President is the first citizen of India, and heads the Union. He is an integral part of the Parliament along with the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha (Parliament = President + LS + RS). In order to be **elected** as the President of India, a person must:

- (a) Be an Indian citizen;
- (b) Have completed 35 years of age;
- (c) Be qualified for election as a member of the Lok Sabha; and
- (d) Must not hold any office of profit under the Government of India / State Government/ Local Government (**Article 58**).

The President is indirectly elected by the people of India, in accordance with the system of proportional representation through the **single transferable voting system**, by an electoral college comprising of (a) elected members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and (b) the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States and those from Delhi and Puducherry (UT). The **duration** of his office is for a period of 5 years. He may seek re-election.

The President **can be removed** from office if he (a) dies, (b) resigns, (c) is removed through the process of impeachment, or (d) on the expiry of his tenure. In case of the death of the President, the Vice-President will assume the position until a new President is elected. In the case of completion of his tenure, the President can continue in office until such time as the new President takes charge. In case of his inability to exercise his duties on grounds of illness, or during his visits abroad, etc., the Vice-President discharges the functions of his office.

The Constitution has vested **wide powers** in the President, such as:

1. **Administrative Powers:** He can appoint the Prime Minister, the other Union Ministers, the Attorney General, the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts, the Governors of the States, the members of the Finance Commission, the members of the Union Public Service Commission and joint commissions for two or more States, the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners, officers for official languages and linguistic minorities, and for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes / Schedules Tribes.
2. **Legislative Powers:** He exercises these powers on ministerial advice. He can summon, prorogue and dissolve the Lok Sabha and joint parliamentary sessions. He can nominate 2 Anglo-Indians to the Lok Sabha and 12 persons to the Rajya Sabha.
3. **Judicial Powers:** He has powers to grant pardons, reprieves, respite, suspensions, remissions or commutations in respect of sentences of courts martial, punishment for an offence against the law or in even in cases of death sentence. Pardoning powers of the President are set out in **Article 72 of the Constitution**.
4. **Military Powers:** He is the supreme commander of our Armed Forces, but these functions are to be carried out according to the law. He can declare war or peace, with the consultation of Council of Minister.
5. **Diplomatic Powers:** He represents India internationally as the Head of State. He can appoint Indian representatives in foreign countries and receives foreign diplomatic representatives.
6. **Other Powers:** He has a mixture of absolute, suspensive and pocket vetoes.

(E) Vice President

The Vice President acts as the ex officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The following are a few basic facts about the Vice President that you should keep in mind:

1. He is elected by the elected members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha only.
2. He is elected through the same system as applies to the President.
3. Requisite qualifications for appointment as Vice President are the same as apply to the office of the President, except for his qualification for election to the Rajya Sabha.
4. The term of office of the Vice President is for 5 years or less. He is eligible for re-election.
5. The Vice President can be removed either by resignation addressed to the President or may be removed by resolution of the Rajya Sabha passed by a majority, and agreed to by the Lok Sabha.
6. If the post of President is vacant, the Vice President carries out all his functions and then receives the salary of the President. For that period he is not the ex officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
7. The Supreme Court is competent to deal with disputes over the election of the President and Vice President.

(F) House of the People (Lok Sabha)

- Presided over by a Speaker
He certifies a bill as a Money Bill (**Article 110**). He also presides over the joint Sessions.
- **Strength: 552** members of which-
 - (a) Not more than **530** are representatives from the States.
 - (b) Not more than **20** representatives of Union Territories.
 - (c) Not more than **2** nominated Anglo Indians
- **Term:** Normally for 5 years, but can be dissolved earlier also and can be extended during Emergency.
- **Election:** Directly elected by the people, through universal adult franchise (the voting age has been reduced from 21 to 18 years by the **61st Amendment to the Constitution in 1989**.)
- **Qualification:** For membership
 - (a) He / She must be a citizen of India.
 - (b) He / She must be not less than 25 years of age.

Additional qualifications:

- (a) He/ She should not hold any office of profit under the government.
- (b) He / She should not be of unsound mind.
- (c) He / She should not be declared insolvent.
- (d) He / She should not be disqualified under any law.

(G) Council of the States (Rajya Sabha)

- Presided over by a chairman (Vice President Acts as ex-officio chairman). RS cannot be dissolved.
- **Strength:** not more than 250 members of which-
 - (a) Not more than **238** States and Union Territories representatives.
 - (b) **12** nominated by the president.
- Term:** 6 years. It is not subject to dissolution. One-third of its members retire every second year.
- **Election:** By the elected Members of the State Legislatures.
- **Qualification:** for membership-
 - (a) He / She must be a citizen of India.
 - (b) He / She must be not less than 30 years of age.
- **Additional qualifications:** (Same as Lok Sabha)

(H) Important Articles in Indian Constitution and their areas of concern

	Articles	Area of concern
1	Article 5 –11	Citizenship
2	Article 21	Right to life
3	Article 32	Right to constitutional remedies
4	Article 44	Uniform civil code
5	Article 51A	Fundamental duties
6	Article 61	Impeachment of President
7	Article 110	Definition of money bill
8	Article 123	Ordinance making powers of President
9	Article 324	Establishment of Election Commission of India
10	Article 300A	Right to property
11	Article 280	Finance commission
12	Article 352	National emergency
13	Article 356	Emergency in states
14	Article 360	Financial emergency
15	Article 368	Amendment of Constitution
16	Article 370	Special status of Jammu and Kashmir scrapped in August 2019.

(I) List of Schedules in the Constitution of India and their areas of function

Schedule	Area of function
First	All the States and Union Territories of India
Second	Salaries and allowances of the President, Governor, Chief Justice, Judges of High Court and Supreme Court and CAG
Third	Prescriptions regarding forms of affirmations and oaths for the new entrants to the public offices
Fourth	Allocation of seats in Rajya Sabha to each Union Territory and State
Fifth	Provisions to the control of administration of scheduled areas
Sixth	Administrative provisions for tribal areas in Meghalaya, Mizoram and Assam

Schedule	Area of function
Seventh	Three lists of subjects and powers to be looked after by the State and the Union, <i>i.e.</i> : (1) Union list, containing the subjects of national importance, railway, defence, income tax, etc. (2) State list contains locally important subjects. (3) Concurrent list contains subjects under the authority of the Parliament and the State Legislature
Eighth	Deals with 18 (now 22) officially recognized regional languages by the Constitution.
Ninth	Contains acts and regulations dealing with abolition of zamindari system and land reforms of the State Legislatures. The provisions of this schedule cannot be challenged in Supreme Court.
Tenth	Contains provisions for the disqualification of members on the grounds of defection.
Eleventh	Deals with implementation of schemes needed for social justice and economic development at the rural levels.
Twelfth	Deals with municipal committees and their categorizations.

Note: Originally, there were eight schedules. Later, four more schedules were added to it, taking the total tally of schedules to twelve.

Here is a quick look at the most important Amendments to the Constitution so far. You should know this list well, since a few questions are often from this area!

(J) Important Amendments

1st Amendment (1951): Schedule IX added, in order to save land reforms laws from judicial review. A nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court has now been asked to lay down the guidelines for the inclusion of any law in this Schedule. This has been caused due to the efforts on the parts of some States to include their reservation policy implementation laws in the Schedule.

42nd Amendment (1976): This amendment was also called the “Mini Constitution”, as it is the largest amendment ever. Some of the changes it introduced are:

- The Preamble was amended to include the words ‘Secular’, ‘Socialist’ and ‘integrity’.
- ‘Fundamental Duties’ added in Article 51A.
- The new Directive Principles in Articles 39A, 43A and 48A were added.

44th Amendment (1978): The Right to Property (Article 31) was abolished from the chapter of Fundamental Rights, and included under Article 300A, to remain a constitutional right.

100th Amendment Act (2015): Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) Treaty between **India** and **Bangladesh**.

101 Amendment Act (2017): This amendment act introduced a national **Goods and Services Tax in India** from 1st July 2017.

102 Amendment Act (2018): This amendment act gives the Constitutional status to National Commission for Backward Classes 11th August 2018.

103 Amendment Act (2019): A maximum of 10% Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections of citizens of classes other than the classes mentioned in clauses (4) and (5) of Article 15, *i.e.* Classes other than socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Inserted Clause [6] under Article 15 as well as Inserted Clause [6] under Article 16.

104 Amendment Act (2019): The One Hundred and Fourth Amendment of the Constitution of India, officially known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Fourth Amendment) Act, 2019, **extends the deadline for the cessation for the reservation of seats for members from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies by a period of 10 years. The amendment does not, however, extend the period of reservation of the 2 Lok Sabha seats reserved for members of the Anglo-Indian Community** and thus the practice of nominating two members of the Anglo-Indian community by the President of India under the recommendation of the Prime Minister of India was effectively abolished.

5. Important Science Related Facts

(A) Various Important Branches of Science

Name of science	Related to
Acoustics	Sound and sound waves
Aeronautics	Activities of flying
Agronomy	Production of crops and soil management
Anatomy	Dissectional learning of animal and human body
Anthropology	Origin, cultural and physical development of man
Archaeology	Study of material remains of past as proofs
Astronautics	Space vehicles and travelling in space
Astronomy	Planets (the heavenly bodies)
Biology	Science of living organisms
Botany	Plants
Cardiology	Heart and related diseases
Ceramics	Manufacturing of clay objects
Cetology	Aquatic mammals, especially the whales
Cosmology	Universe
Cryogenics	Studying effects of low temperature
Cytology	Structure and function of cells
Dactylogy	Study of fingerprints
Dermatology	Skin
Dietetics	Diet and nutrition
Ecology	Organisms and environment relationship
Entomology	Insects
Endocrinology	Endocrine glands
Etymology	Origin and history of words
Genetics	Heredity and its laws
Geology	Earth's (chemical and physical) structure
Gerontology	Ageing process, problems and diseases
Gynaecology	Female diseases of reproductive system
Haematology	Blood and related disorders
Histology	Tissues
Immunology	Body's immune system
Morphology	External structure of living organisms
Mycology	Fungi and fungal diseases
Nephrology	Kidney
Obstetrics	Pregnancy, child birth and their follow up
Ornithology	Birds
Orthopaedics	Human skeletal system
Osteology	Study of bones
Paediatrics	Child diseases
Palaeontology	Fossils and ancient life-forms

Name of science	Related to
Pathology	Mechanisms and manifestation of diseases
Pharmacology	Drugs and their effects on the body
Physiology	Life processes of various organs of living beings
Psychiatry	Mental disorders
Semiology	Sign language and signs
Seismology	Earthquakes
Theology	Religions
Toxicology	Toxic substances and poisons
Zoology	Animal life
Zymology	Fermentation process

(B) Important Information About the Human Body

Blood: It is a red, viscous fluid which circulates in the human body. It is basically a connective tissue which is contained in the blood vessels. A healthy man possesses on an average, 5 litres of blood in the body.

Composition: It is made up of two chief constituents:

(a) **Plasma (fluid)**, constitutes the **major part** while (b) **Blood cells (solid)**, which constitutes the **minor** part.

The blood cell corpuscles are of two types: (1) **RBC** (2) **WBC**. The RBC is **red blood corpuscles** which contains a pigment called **haemoglobin** which is responsible for the red colour of the blood. **Iron is the element which is present in the haemoglobin**. The **WBC is white blood corpuscles** which are primarily responsible for **combating with the infection of the body or they fight with the foreign harmful organisms of the body**.

Blood groups: They are of four types, viz.

(i) **A-type** (ii) **B-type** (iii) **AB-type** (iv) **O-type**

AB - type is called **universal recipient** as it can receive all the four types (mentioned above) of blood and **O-type** is called as **universal donor** as it can be given to any of the four types of blood groups (mentioned above).

Bones:

- (i) There are **206 bones** in the **skeletal system of an adult**.
- (ii) The **largest bone** is **femur** present in **the thigh**.
- (iii) The **shortest bone** is the **stirrup** which is **present in the middle ear**.

Other important facts about the various organs of the human body:

- The **largest organ** of the human body is **skin**.
- Heart is responsible for regulating the circulation of blood in the body. The heartbeat of adult males is **72 beats per minute**.
- Liver is the largest gland** of the human body. It is concerned with the digestion of the food intake.
- Two kidneys are responsible for the filtering of nitrogenous waste of the body and throw it all in the form of urine.
- Pituitary gland** is called **the master gland as it** influences the growth and metabolism by controlling the other ductless glands, viz. thymus, thyroid, adrenal, prostate, pancreas and gonads.

(C) Vitamins, their Sources and Diseases Caused due to their Deficiencies

Name of the vitamin	Main source	Disease caused due to their deficiencies
Vitamin A	Milk, carrot, egg, animal fat, etc.	Night blindness
Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)	Cereals, pulses, carrots	Beriberi
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	Liver, kidney, milk	Chilosis, dermatitis
Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)	Yeast, cereals, liver	Anaemia
Niacin (Nicotinic acid)	Peas, tomato, eggs	Polyneuritis
Folic Acid	Green leafy vegetables, meat, egg	Anaemia

Name of the vitamin	Main source	Disease caused due to their deficiencies
Pantothenic Acid	Kidney, meat, yeast	Dermatitis
Vit. B12 (Cyanocobalamin)	Milk, liver, meat	Pernicious anaemia
Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid)	Lemons, milk, oranges, fresh fruits and vegetables	Scurvy, sore mouth and gums bleeding
Vitamin D (Calciferol)	Dairy products, sun rays, eggs, oily fish, milk	Many diseases of the bones, rickets in children, osteomalacia
Vitamin E (Tocopherol)	Milk, soyabeans, egg yolk	Interferes with reproduction and causes abortion and menstrual irregularities
Vitamin K (Menadione)	Fish, peas and green vegetables	Causes the delayed clotting of blood

(D) Other Diseases of the Human Body

Name of the disease	Caused by	Affected part of the human body
Anaemia	Deficiency of haemoglobin	
AIDS (acquired immuno deficiency syndrome)	Virus	Weakness in the immune system of the body
Asthma	Allergens	Lungs
Diabetes	Less production of insulin hormone which causes an increase in the sugar level of the blood	Pancreas and blood
Diphtheria	Bacteria	Throat
Glaucoma	High pressure in the eyes	Eyes
Goitre	Deficiency of iodine	Throat
Hepatitis	Virus (mainly)	Jaundice
Malaria	Plasmodium	
Polio	Virus	Legs
Rheumatism	Streptococcus bacteria in children	Joints
Tonsillitis	Bacterial and viral infection	Glands in throat
Tuberculosis	Bacteria	Lungs

6. Important Miscellaneous GK Facts

(A) United Nations

United Nations is world's largest organization which was **formed on October 24, 1945**. Since then **October 24 is celebrated as the United Nations Day**. The main objective of the United Nations is to make the world a better place to live in by maintaining peace and security all over the world. There are **193 members** at present in the UN and **South Sudan** is the last entrant. The organization is headquartered at New York and has got **five countries** as the **permanent members** in its security council. **They are China, UK, USA, Russia and France**; besides this they have 10 non-permanent members.

(1) **Structure of the Organization:** The following principle bodies of United Nations Organization.

- (i) **General Assembly:** It is **headquartered at New York**. Its members are all member states of the United Nations Organization (UNO).
- (ii) **Security Council:** **Headquartered at New York**, it has **five permanent members** (mentioned earlier) who enjoy veto power and 10 non-permanent elected members. The non-permanent elected members are elected by the General Assembly and retire on rotation, every two years. The main function is to look after the international peace and security.
- (iii) **The Economic and Social Council:** **Headquartered at New York**, it consists of **representatives of 54 member countries** elected by two-third majority in the General Assembly. It functions in international economic, social and culture-related matters.
- (iv) **Trusteeship Council:** **Headquartered at New York**, it looks after the interests of inhabitants of territories which are not yet fully self-governing and are governed by any administering country. The Trusteeship Council suspended its operations on 1 November 1994, a month after the independence of Palau, the last remaining United Nations trust territory.
- (v) **International Court of Justice:** **Headquartered at the Peace Palace The Hague, in Holland**, it consists of 15 judges elected by General Assembly and Security Council for a term of nine years. Its function is to give legal advice on legal matters to the bodies and special agencies of the UNO and considers the legal disputes which are brought before it. Peter Tamka is current President of International court of Justice.

Note: Four persons from India have been elected as Judges of International Court of Justice till date. They are:

- (1) Sir Benegal Rau (1950-8)
- (2) Dr. Negendra Singh (1970-80)
- (3) R. S. Pathak (1988-90)
- (4) Dalveer Bhandari (2012-2018)

(vi) **Secretariat:** It is headed by the Secretary-General who is the Chief Administrative Officer of the UNO and supervises the activities of UNO. **The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council**. The term is of five years and can be re-elected after the expiry of the term.

➤ **Secretary - General of UNO:**

(i) **First Secretary - General was Trygve Lie, from Norway.**

(ii) **At present, Antonio Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of Portugal is the Secretary-General of UN.**

➤ **Official languages of the UNO:** They are **six** in number, viz.:

- (i) **English** (ii) **Chinese** (iii) **French**
- (iv) **Spanish** (v) **Russian** (vi) **Arabic**

(B) Important Sobriquets

Distinctive Name	Country / Place
Bengal's Sorrow	Damodar river
Blue Mountains	Nilgiris
City of Arabian Nights	Baghdad
City of Palaces	Kolkata
City of Seven Hills/Eternal city	Rome

Distinctive Name	Country / Place
City of Skyscrapers /Empire city / Big Apple	New York
City of the Golden Gate	San Francisco
City of Joy	Kolkata
Commercial Capital of India	Mumbai
Dairy of Northern Europe	Denmark
Dark Continent	Africa
Forbidden City	Lhasa (Tibet)
Garden of England	Kent
Garden City of India	Bangalore
Gate of Tears	Bab-el-Mandab, Jerusalem
Gateway of India	Mumbai
Gift of the Nile	Egypt
Golden City	Johannesburg
Great White Way	Broadway (New York)
Hermit's Kingdom	Korea
Holy Land	Palestine
Island of Pearls	Bahrain
Key to the Mediterranean	Gibraltar
Land of Five Rivers	Punjab
Land of a Thousand Lakes	Finland
Land of Cakes	Scotland
Land of Kangaroos	Australia
Land of Lillies /Lady of Snow	Canada
Land of Morning Calm	Korea
Land of the Golden Fleece	Australia
Land of the Golden Pagoda	Myanmar
Land of the Midnight Sun	Norway
Land of the Rising Sun	Japan
Land of Thunderbolt	Bhutan
Land of White Elephants	Thailand
Manchester of South India	Coimbatore
Mother-in-Law of Europe	Denmark
Never, Never Land	Prairies (North America)
Pink City of India	Jaipur
Playground of Europe	Switzerland
Queen of the Arabian Sea	Cochin (India)
Roof of the World	Pamir (Tibet)
Sick Man of Europe	Turkey
Sorrow of China /Yellow river	River Hwang Ho
Spice Garden of India	Kerala
Sugar Bowl of the World	Cuba
Sugar Bowl of India	Uttar Pradesh

Distinctive Name	Country / Place
The Battlefield of Europe	Belgium
The Down Under	Australia
The Imperial City	Rome
The Promised Land	Canaan
The Saw Mill of Europe	Sweden
The Sea of Mountains	British Colombia
The Spice Island of the West	Grenada
Twin City	Budapest
Valley of Kings	Thebes
White City	Belgrade
White Man's Grave	Guinea Coast (West Africa)
Windy City	Chicago
Workshop of Europe	Belgium
World's Bread Basket	Prairies of North America

(C) Important Facts about World and India

(a) World's Largest, Longest and Highest Man-made Structures

Structure	Name	Location
Longest Rail Line	Trans-Siberian line from Moscow to Nakhodka, 9,438 kilometres long	Russia
Largest Temple (Hindu)	Angkor Vat	Cambodia
Longest Wall	The Great Wall of China	China
Longest Railway Platform	Gorakhpur (1,366.33 m)	Gorakhpur, UP
Largest Cathedral	Diocese of New York	New York
Longest Railway Bridge	Huey P. Long Bridge	Metairie, Louisiana, US
Busiest Airport	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport	Georgia, USA
Highest Road Bridge over Water	Royal Gorge	River Arkanas, Colorado
Largest Library	The Library of Congress	Capitol Hill, Washington, DC

(b) Important Natural Entities of the World

Natural Entity	Names
Largest Ocean	Pacific
Largest Gulf	Gulf of Mexico
Largest Island	Greenland (renamed Kalaatlit Nunaat)
Largest Bay	Hudson Bay, Northern Canada
Tallest Animal	Giraffe
Largest Bird	North American Ostrich
Largest Animal	Blue Whale
Largest Egg	Ostrich Egg
Smallest Bird	Bee Hummingbird
Smallest River (shortest)	Roe River in Montana
Largest Sea	South China Sea

Natural Entity	Names
Largest Delta	Sunderbans
Driest Place	Atacama Desert, Chile
Highest Waterfall	Salto Angel, Venezuela
Largest Desert on the earth	Antarctic Polar Desert
Hottest Place	Aziza, Libya
Largest Glacier	Siachen, Indo-Pak border
Coldest Place	Vostok Station (Antarctica)

(c) Important Facts of India

- **National Flag:** It was **adopted** by Constituent Assembly on July **22, 1947**. Ratio of width to length is 2 : 3 having three bands of equal width; lowest is green, middle one is white and saffron is the colour at the top. A wheel is at the centre of the flag of navy blue colour **having 24 spokes**. **Madam Bhikaji Cama was the first to unfurl the tri-colour at an international body.**
- **National Emblem:**
 - It was adopted by the Government of India on **January 26 1950**. Basically, it is **a replica of the capitol of Ashoka's pillar at Sarnath**.
 - In the state emblem, adopted by the Government of India, **only three lions are visible**, the fourth being hidden from view.
 - The wheel appears in relief in the centre of the abacus with a bull on right and a horse on left and the outlines of other wheels on extreme right and left.
 - The words **Satyameva Jayate from Mundaka Upanishad, meaning "Truth Alone Triumphs", are inscribed below the abacus in Devanagari script.**
- **National Anthem:** Composed by **Rabindranath Tagore**, have wordings: Jana Gana Mana..., in 1911. Adopted on January 24 1950, by the Constituent Assembly of India and takes about **52 seconds** to sing it completely. It was first sung on 27th Dec. 1911 at Calcutta session of Congress.
- **National Song:** Composed by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**, wordings: Vande Mataram..., **taken** from 'Anand Math', a novel by him and was adopted on **January 24 1950**.
- **National Flower** is **Lotus**.
- **National Animal** is **Tiger**.
- **National Bird** is **Peacock**.

(d) Important Boundaries and Lines of the World

- **Durand Line:** It is the line which separates Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- **MacMahon Line:** It demarcates the boundaries of China and India.
- **Radcliffe Line:** It demarcates the boundary between India and Pakistan.
- **38th Parallel:** It is the parallel separating North Korea and South Korea.
- **49th Parallel:** It is the boundary between USA and Canada.
- **Siegfried Line:** It is the line between Germany and France, from German side.
- **Maginot Line:** It is the line between Germany and France from French side.
- **17th parallel:** It is the parallel (latitude) which separated North Vietnam from South Vietnam.

(D) Important National and International Days

(i) International Days

Date	Name of the Day
January 26	International Customs Day
March 8	International Women's Day
March 15	World Consumers' Day
March 21	World Forestry Day

Date	Name of the Day
March 22	World Day for Water
March 23	World Meteorological Day
April 7	World Health Day
April 17	World Haemophilia Day
April 18	World Heritage Day
April 22	World Earth Day
May 1	International Labour Day
May 3	International Press Freedom Day
May 8	World Red Cross Day
May 24	Commonwealth Day
May 31	Anti-tobacco Day/World No Tobacco Day
June 5	World Environment Day (Theme of 2015: Seven Billion Dreams. One planet. Consume with care)
June 8	World Ocean Day (Theme of 2015: Healthy Oceans, Healthy Planet)
June 12	World Day against Child Labour
June 20	World Refugee Day (Theme of 2015: With courage let us all combine)
June 21	International Yoga Day
June 26	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
July 11	World Population Day
July 15	International Youth Skill Day
September 8	World Literacy Day
September 16	World Ozone Day
September 27	World Tourism Day
October 1	International Day for Older Persons
October 3	World Habitat Day
October 5	World Teachers Day
October 9	World Post Day
October 11	International Day of the Girl Child
October 14	World Standards Day
October 16	World Food Day
October 17	International Day for Eradication of Poverty
October 24	United Nations Day
December 1	World AIDS Day
December 3	International Day for Disabled Persons
December 7	International Civil Aviation Day
December 10	World Human Rights Day

(ii) National Days

Date	Name of the Day
January 12	National Youth Day (birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda)
January 15	Army Day
January 23	Netaji S.C. Bose's Birth Anniversary
January 24	National Day for Girl Child
January 25	National Voters Day
January 26	Republic Day
January 30	Martyr's Day (Mahatma Gandhi's death anniversary)
February 24	Central Excise Day
February 28	National Science Day
May 21	Anti-terrorism Day (Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary)
June 29	National Statistics Day
August 7	National Handloom Day
August 15	Independence Day
August 29	National Sports Day
September 5	Teachers' Day
October 2	Gandhi Jayanti/International Day for Non-Violence
October 8	Indian Air Force Day
November 14	Children's Day
November 26	National Legal Day
December 4	Navy Day
December 23	Kisan Divas (Farmers' Day-Chowdhary Charan Singh's Birthday)

(E) Sports (Miscellaneous):

In this section generally questions are asked from cups and trophies and terms associated with various sports disciplines. Here is the compilation of important sports and related facts.

(i) International Cups, trophies and associated sports disciplines

Name of the Cup/Trophy	Associated Sport
Davis Cup (Men)	Lawn tennis
Federation Cup (Women)	Lawn tennis
Weightman Cup	Lawn tennis
ATP Tournament	Lawn tennis
Wimbledon Trophy	Lawn tennis
Australian Open	Lawn tennis
US Open	Lawn tennis
French Open	Lawn tennis
Merdeka cup	Football
FIFA cup	Football

Name of the Cup/Trophy	Associated Sport
Copa America Cup	Football
Euro Cup	Football
Champions League	Football
Thomas Cup (Men)	Badminton
Uber Cup (Women)	Badminton
All England Badminton Championship	Badminton
Yonex Cup	Badminton
Walker Cup	Golf
PGA Tournament	Golf
Ryder Cup	Golf
Canada Cup	Golf
Champions Trophy	Hockey
Beighton Cup	Hockey
Sultan Azlan Shah Cup	Hockey
William Jones Cup	Basketball

(ii) National cups/trophies and associated sports disciplines

Name of the Cup/Trophy	Associated Sports
ICC Cricket World Cup	Cricket
Asia Cup	Cricket
Sharjah Cup	Cricket
Duleep Trophy	Cricket
Sheesh Mahal Trophy	Cricket
Ranji Trophy (National Title)	Cricket
Vijay Hazarey Trophy	Cricket
Irani Trophy	Cricket
Deodhar Trophy	Cricket
Vizzy Trophy	Cricket
Durand Cup	Football
Santosh Memorial Trophy	Football (School Championship)
Subroto Cup	Football
Rovers Cup	Football
Sanjay Gold Cup	Football
Durand Cup	Football
Lal Bahadur Shastri Trophy	Football
Nizam Gold Cup	Football
Dr. B.C. Roy Trophy (National Junior Championship)	Football
Rangaswami Cup (National Title)	Hockey

Name of the Cup/Trophy	Associated Sports
Lady Ratan Tata Trophy (Women's)	Hockey
Nehru Trophy	Hockey
Aga Khan Gold Cup	Hockey
Guru Nanak Championship (All - India Women)	Hockey
Dhyan Chand Trophy	Hockey
Murugappa Gold Cup	Hockey
Ezar Cup	Polo

(iii) Terms associated with various sports disciplines

Sports	Terms associated with sports disciplines
Badminton	Luv, deuce, drop, smash, double touch, let, fault
Basketball	Pivot, dribble, basket, block, held ball, free throw, holding, jump ball
Billiards	Spider, baulk, cue, scratch, cannon
Boxing	Hook, rounds, punch, jab, countdown, knock-outs, all the weights, (flyweight, middleweight, heavyweight, etc.)
Bridge	Tricks, trump, suite, little slam, rubber
Chess	Knight, king, Sicilian defence, move, gambit, checkmate, rook, stalemate, queen, bishop, pawn, castle
Cricket	Gully, hat-trick, pull, beamer, hook, googly, flick, follow-on, maiden, declare, Silly point, Leg Before Wicket (LBW), Ashes, Duck, Popping crease, Maiden over, Square leg, Amour chinaman
Golf	Tee, birdie, club, course, Iron, eagle, links, caddie, putt, hole, bogey, fore, niblic
Hockey	Centre, penalty-stroke, free-hit, foul, carry, stick, corner, dribble, trapping, short corner, tie-braker, scoop, penalty corner
Table tennis	Deuce, drop, spin, smash, let, serve
Lawn-Tennis	Grand slam, lob, ace, passing shot, top-spin, forehand, crosscourt, deuce, down the line, slice, half volley, smash
Volleyball	Heave, serve, blocking, point, doubling

Part – 2: Current and Business GK Facts

In this section of compendium we have compiled some very important facts from Current and Business news which we feel are quite relevant from **IIFT & XAT Examinations 2022-2023** perspective. We believe that this compilation will serve the intended purpose effectively.

A. National

Swachh 2021 rankings: Surat still in 2nd spot, Vijayawada follows

- Gujarat's Surat maintained its position as the second cleanest city in India with a population over 10 lakh after Madhya Pradesh's Indore in the Swachh Survekshan 2021, the Centre's annual cleanliness survey to promote sanitation in urban centres under the Swachh Bharat Mission. Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, swapped places with Navi Mumbai to move to the third spot from last year's fourth.
- Among states, Karnataka and Mizoram were the 'fastest mover states' in the rankings in the big (more than 100 Urban Local Bodies) and small (less than 100 ULBs) state category, respectively.

Swachh Survekshan (Cleanliness survey) is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in villages, cities and towns across India. It was launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aimed to make India clean and free of open defecation by 2 October 2019. The first survey was undertaken in 2016 and covered 73 cities (53 cities with a population of over a million, and all state capitals); by 2020 the survey had grown to cover 4242 cities and was said to be the largest cleanliness survey in the world. The surveys are carried out by Quality Council of India.

Union minister Piyush Goyal launches India's first Food Museum in Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur

- Union Minister for Commerce, Industry, Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal virtually launched India's first Food Museum and said measures were on to make the country go up the ladder from currently being the fifth-largest agricultural exporter in the world.

INS Karmuk takes part in Trilateral Maritime Exercise 'SITMEX'

- Indian Naval Ship INS Karmuk and an indigenously built Missile Corvette is participated in the 3rd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral two day Maritime Exercise SITMEX - 21 in Andaman Sea. Republic of Singapore Navy, RSN is being represented by RSS Tenacious, a Formidable Class Frigate and Royal Thai Navy, RTN by His Majesty's Thailand Ship HTMS Thayanchon, a Khamrosin Class Anti-submarine Patrol Craft.
- SITMEX is being conducted annually since 2019 with an aim to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between Indian Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy and Royal Thai Navy.

World's largest solar park in Bhadla, India

- World's largest solar park is being constructed in Rajasthan and is known as Bhadla Solar Park, India. Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, IIEFA, out of 10 largest parks being constructed in the world, 5 are in India. Bhadla Solar Power Plant is a 2245 Megawatts plant and situated on 14000 acres of land. Earlier China was the leading producer of solar energy but now India even though the late joiner of the race is way ahead of China.

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates "Tech NEEV/@75" as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

- Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated "Tech NEEV/@75" as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and interacted with successful start-ups including those from the tribal communities on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.
- Referring to Prime Minister's historic decision to celebrate 15th November i.e. the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda as "Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas" Dr Jitendra Singh informed that the Government will be setting up 30 Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Hubs in different parts of the country for Scheduled Tribes (STs) by end of 2022 to promote scientific talent among tribal communities and for their overall socio-economic development.

6th edition of Indo-France joint military exercise Ex SHAKTI 2021 commences at Draguignan, France

- **The Sixth Edition of Indo - France joint military exercise Ex SHAKTI 2021 has commenced at the Military School of Draguignan, France.** The training so far has **focused on aspects of joint planning, mutual understanding of conduct of operations and identification of coordination aspects required for jointly operating in a Counter-Terrorism environment under United Nations mandate.**

France is a transcontinental country spanning Western Europe and overseas regions and territories in South America and the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. France is a unitary semi-presidential republic with its capital in Paris. Euro is the official currency of France and CFP franc is the currency used in the French overseas collectivities of French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna. Greece is a country located in Southeast Europe. Athens is its largest and capital city. Euro is the official currency of it.

Home Minister Amit Shah lays foundation Stone of Rani Gaidinliu Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum in Manipur

- **Home Minister Amit Shah laid the Foundation Stone for setting up the Rani Gaidinliu Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum at Luangkao village in Manipur's Tamenglong district via video-conferencing.** The project has been **sanctioned by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs** at an estimated cost of 15 crore rupees.
- The State Cabinet had decided to set up the Museum at Luangkao Village in Tamenglong District which is the **birthplace of renowned freedom fighter Rani Gaidinliu** and decided to name the Museum as Rani Gaidinliu Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum.

Indian Navy commissioned first of four Visakhapatnam class destroyers

- **INS Visakhapatnam, a P15B stealth guided-missile destroyer was commissioned into the Indian Navy** in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh **at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.**
- The ship measures 163 metres in length, 17 metres in breadth with a displacement of 7,400 tonnes and can be regarded as one of the most potent warships to have been constructed in India. **The ship is propelled by four powerful gas turbines, in a Combined Gas and Gas (COGAG) configuration,** which is capable of achieving speeds in excess of 30 knots.

NITI Aayog launches Sustainable Development Goals Urban Index and Dashboard 2021-22; Shimla tops the Index followed by Coimbatore and Chandigarh

- **Shimla, Coimbatore and Chandigarh have topped the NITI Aayog's first Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Urban India Index,** while Dhanbad, Meerut and Itanagar are the worst performers, according to a report released by the government think tank.
- According to an official statement, **the NITI Aayog has developed the SDG Urban index and dashboard in collaboration with GIZ and BMZ under the umbrella of Indo-German Development Cooperation.** Launching the index and dashboard, **NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said,** "Cities are fast becoming engines of growth. The SDG Urban Index and dashboard, a product of innovative partnership between NITI Aayog and GIZ, will go a long way in instituting a robust SDG monitoring system in our cities, and is a milestone step in our SDG localisation journey."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 'InFinity Forum'

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'InFinity Forum', a two -day thought leadership Forum on FinTech.** The event is being **hosted by International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) under the aegis of Government of India in collaboration with GIFT City and Bloomberg in virtual mode.** **Indonesia, South Africa and the United Kingdom are partner countries in the first edition of the forum.**
- **InFinity Forum is IFSCA's flagship financial technology and global thought leadership event** where pressing problems, progressive ideas, innovative technologies from across the world gets discovered, discussed and developed into solutions.
- The agenda of the Forum will focus on **the theme of 'Beyond'; with various sub themes including FinTech beyond boundaries, with governments and businesses focussing beyond the geographical boundaries in the development of global stack to promote financial inclusiveness; FinTech beyond Finance, by having convergence with emerging areas such as SpaceTech, GreenTech and AgriTech to drive sustainable development; and FinTech Beyond Next, with focus on how Quantum Computing could impact the nature of Fintech industry in the future and promote new opportunities.**

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport to become 'Net Zero Carbon Emission' Airport by 2030

- **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport** is set to become **Net Zero Carbon Emission Airport** by **2030**. **Delhi airport** is the first airport in **Asia Pacific Region** to achieve **Level 4 Accreditation** under **ACI's Airport Carbon Accreditation**.
- **DIAL** has implemented various programmes at the airport such as use of renewable energy, development of green airport infrastructures and multiple passenger connectivity networks, energy conservation and efficiency improvements, and stakeholder partnership programs.

For first time, India records more women than men, finds latest NFHS

- **As per the fifth round of the National Family and Health Survey (NFHS)**, **India now has more women than men**. There are **1,020 women** for every **1,000 men** as per the report released by the Union health ministry.
- **In 1990** when Nobel laureate **Amartya Sen** coined the term “missing women”, there were **927 women per 1,000 men in India**. This indicates that the numbers are improving.
- According to **NFHS-3, conducted in 2005-06**, the ratio was equal, **1000: 1000**; it went down to **991:1000 in 2015-16 in NFHS-4**. This is the first time, in any NFHS or Census, that the sex ratio is skewed in favour of women.
- The government released the **factsheets of key indicators on population, reproductive and child health, family welfare, nutrition and others for India** as well as **14 states and UTs, clubbed under phase two, of the 2019-21 NFHS-5**.

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India. The NFHS is a collaborative project of the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, India; ICF, Calverton, Maryland, USA and the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India, designated IIPS as the nodal agency, responsible for providing coordination and technical guidance for the NFHS. NFHS was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with supplementary support from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The First National Family Health Survey (NFHS-1) was conducted in 1992-93.

In a first in India, house built using hemp fibre in Uttarakhand

- **An architect couple** has built a sprawling **5-room house** in **Yamkeshwar block of Pauri Garhwal district**, using **'hemcrete'** – a mixture of parts of “**bhang**” or **hemp plant**, **lime**, **wood**, **mud**, **water** and other minerals – which can be used as a green alternative to concrete. This is the first time **hemcrete** has been put to extensive use to build a house in India.

With Noida Airport, Uttar Pradesh to become First State in India with 5 International Airports

- **With the foundation-laying ceremony for the Noida International Airport**, **Uttar Pradesh** is now on its way to having **five international airports**, the highest for any state in India. In perspective, the state had **only two international airports** since **2012** when **Varanasi** got this distinction after **Lucknow**.
- **The international airport at Kushinagar** became operational after it was **inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 20, 2021**, while work on the international airport in **Ayodhya** is in full swing and air services are expected to start early next year. **The fifth international airport is to come up at Jewar near Noida in the National Capital Region (NCR)**.

Andhra Assembly withdraws resolution to abolish Legislative Council

- A day after passing a Bill to repeal two laws that were cleared last year as part of the YSRCP government's contentious move to set up three different state capitals, the **Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly** **unanimously adopted a resolution to withdraw an earlier resolution seeking abolishment of the Legislative Council**.
- The YSR Congress Party government had passed the **statutory resolution in January 2020 under Article 169(1) of the Constitution**, seeking that the Council be abolished. The **Andhra Pradesh Assembly** recently passed a resolution to abolish the state's **Legislative Council (LC)**. The bill is yet to be introduced in Parliament. **Until 2019, Jammu and Kashmir too had a legislative council** but it was dissolved once the erstwhile state was downgraded into a Union Territory.

Fourth Scorpene-class submarine 'INS Vela' commissioned into Indian Navy

- **INS Vela, the fourth Scorpene-class submarine was commissioned into the Indian Navy. P-75 project represents the growing strategic congruence between the two nations, India and France.** Designated as Yard 11878 during its construction, **INS Vela is the fourth Scorpene-class submarine built by MDL in collaboration with Naval Group of France.**
- **INS Vela would form part of the Western Naval Command's Submarine fleet and would be another potent part of its arsenal. The new Vela carries forward the legacy of her namesake, the erstwhile INS Vela which was commissioned on 31 Aug 1973 as the lead boat of Vela class submarines.** The crew of the erstwhile 'Vela', a Russian-origin Foxtrot Class Submarine, which was decommissioned in 2009, was also present. Vela has taken the 'Make in India' spirit a notch higher with indigenised battery cells.

11th edition of Exercise Ekuverin between India and Maldives conducted

- **The 11th edition of Exercise Ekuverin-21 between India and Maldives, held at Kadhdhoo Island, Maldives. Ekuverin means "Friends" in the Dhivehi language. It is an Indo - Aryan language. It is spoken in India, Lakshadweep and Maldives.**
- **The exercise enhances synergy and inter-operability between the Armed Forces of both nations in terms of understanding transnational terrorism both on land and at sea, conducting Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations and sharing best military practices and experiences.**

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the "King's Island" for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

Thrissur and Nilambur in the UNESCO Global Cities City Network

- **Kerala Local Government Minister MV Govindan has said that the government's recommendation to include the Thrissur Corporation and the Nilambur Municipality in the UNESCO Global Learning City (Global Learning City) network has been accepted.**
- **For the first time in the country, two cities in Kerala are rising to the status of global learning cities. The Central Government approved the recommendation of the State Government and recommended Thrissur and Nilambur for the Global Study City Plan.**

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples. Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. It is headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France. Audrey Azoulay is a French civil servant and politician who has been serving as the Director-General of the UNESCO since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.

Cyclone Jawad is first cyclone to hit Odisha in December in 130 years

- **Cyclone Jawad hits Odisha coast as predicted, it was the first one to do so to the state in December in India Meteorological Department (IMD)'s nearly 130 years of recorded history.** Heavy rains lashed parts of Odisha as remnants of cyclone Jawad, which has weakened into a deep depression, neared the coast, officials said.
- **The coastal state has been hit by more than 100 cyclones since 1891, when IMD started compiling cyclone data. "However, none of the cyclones hit the state in December in around 130 years".**

Saudi Arabia has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad'. The meaning 'Jawad' is liberal or merciful. The carries significance as this cyclonic storm will not be as severe as the previous ones. Cyclones are formed over the oceanic water in the tropical region.

PM Narendra Modi in Dehradun to lay foundation of Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Dehradun, Uttarakhand where he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects including the ambitious Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor worth around Rs. 18,000 crore.**

- **The corridor will also have Asia's largest wildlife elevated corridor (12 km) for unrestricted wildlife movement. Also, the 340-metre long tunnel near Dat Kaali temple, Dehradun will help reduce the impact on wildlife,** the government has stated.

CDS Gen Bipin Rawat dies in air crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu

- **Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has died in the air crash. General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident. The accident occurred happened at Nanjappanchathiram area amid heavy mist and early visuals showed the helicopter in flames. The army chief was on his way to the Defence Staff College in Wellington. The officials were travelling in an Mi-17VH chopper that took off from the Sulur IAF Station in nearby Coimbatore. According to the IAF, Group Captain Varun Singh is the sole survivor of the crash.**

The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the military head and chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Indian Armed Forces. CDS is the senior-most and highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian military, and is the principal staff officer and chief military adviser to the Minister of Defence. The Chief also heads the Department of Military Affairs. The first Chief of Defence Staff was Bipin Rawat who took office on 1 January 2020, and held it until his death in a helicopter crash on 8 December 2021. The CDS is a four-star officer selected from among the serving officers of the Indian Armed Forces. While being "first among equals" among the service chiefs, the CDS is a single-point military advisor to the defence minister. The CDS heads the Department of Military Affairs under the Ministry of Defence, as its secretary. Apart from heading the DMA, the CDS is the Permanent Chairperson of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (PC-CoSC). The position of the Chief of Defence Staff was created with the aim of improving coordination, tri-service effectiveness and overall integration of the combat capabilities of the Indian armed forces.

Haiderpur Wetland added to Ramsar site; total tally goes up to 47

- **Haiderpur Wetland of Western Uttar Pradesh has been recognized as 47th Ramsar site in the country and 10th in Uttar Pradesh and 2463rd in the world,** which has been confirmed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- **India's efforts to improve its wetlands and preserve its ecology is bearing fruits as India is now a land of 47 Ramsar sites. The latest on the list is Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur wetland. It has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.**

India's Harnaaz Sandhu wins Miss Universe 2021 crown

- **India's Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. 21-year-old Harnaaz has won the Miss Universe crown at the contest held in Eilat, Israel. Harnaaz edged out contestants from Paraguay and South Africa to bag the crown.**
- **India had earlier won the coveted crown twice with Sushmita Sen bagging the title in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000. The 21-year-old Harnaaz, hailing from Chandigarh, has now joined the league of these incredible women.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Kashi Vishwanath corridor in Varanasi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in March 2019 and the project is ready for inauguration in a record 33 months.**
- **The idea behind the Corridor was to decongest the route to the historic Shiva temple and make pathways for the comfort of pilgrims coming for darshan along with giving the temple a grand look. The Corridor connects the ancient Kashi Vishwanath Temple with the two ghats on river Ganga.**

Durga Puja in UNESCO's Intangible Heritage list

- **Durga Puja is a classic fusion of religion and culture, regarded with a lot of pride and celebrated predominantly by the Bengali community. Many regard it as an emotion more than a festival. While it is celebrated in many parts of the world, too, an official global recognition was impending. But now, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during its 16th session being held in Paris, France. The Committee commended Durga Puja for its initiatives to involve marginalized groups, and individuals as well as women in their participation in safeguarding the element.**

- **Durga Puja is a five-day festival which begins on the fifth night of the nine-day Navratri festival and ends on the tenth day, which is Dashami.** During this time, people collectively worship and invoke Goddess Durga, who is regarded as the feminine energy of the cosmos, **also known as ‘Shakti’.** Though **originating in West Bengal, which has the largest Bengali community in the country, the festival — as mentioned earlier — is celebrated in many other parts of India, and also the world.**

Chitkara University organizes world’s first AI-technology based ‘HACKDAY 2021’

- Giving a boost to technological innovation, **Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised “HACKDAY 2021” under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) ‘JAZBA’, which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).**
- **The event provided the students a platform to explore their potential as 17 teams of potential start-ups from CSE first year took part in the world’s first AI-technology based hackathon.**

India’s first food museum

- **Thanjavur now has a new site in town, India’s first food museum. Established by the Food Corporation of India,** this museum gives visitors a tour of agriculture, cuisines and food distribution systems in India.
- Using touch screens, virtual reality sets, projector screens and other interactables, visitors can journey through the **process of food cultivation in the country and better understand what goes on our plates.**

India’s first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre opened in Hyderabad

- **India’s first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad.**
- **The IAMC has come up with 25,000 sq ft temporary accommodation at VK Towers in Gachibowli, an information technology hub, Hyderabad.** The state government has announced that land for a permanent building will be allotted at **Puppalaguda in Hyderabad.**

KAPILA Campaign

- The government of India has **launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) and also to provide funding support in order to promote filing of the Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.**
- **A KAPILA portal has also been launched for this purpose. Under the initiative, activities like IP Clinic, Case Studies/ Articles regarding Innovation and Intellectual Property and online awareness programs and National Intellectual Property Literacy Week (NIPLW) have been conducted. More than 46,000 users have registered for KAPILA awareness programs.**

India to chair counter terrorism committee of UNSC in Jan 2022 after ten years

- **India will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022 after 10 years. This Committee was formed in September 2001 soon after the tragic terrorist attack of 9/11 in New York, while India had chaired this Committee in the Security Council in 2011-12.**
- The Counter-Terrorism Committee was **established by Security Council resolution 1373 adopted unanimously in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks in the US. The Committee was tasked with monitoring implementation of resolution 1373** which requested countries to implement a number of measures aimed at enhancing their legal and institutional ability to counter terrorist activities at home and around the world.

Indian Army establishes Quantum Laboratory in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh

- **The Indian Army has established the Quantum Laboratory at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE) in Mhow, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The new laboratory has been launched to advance research and training in emerging technology domains. Army Chief Gen M M Naravane was briefed on the facility during his recent visit to Mhow.**

Karnataka Becomes First Indian State to Draft Bill Protecting Cyclists, Pedestrians

- **The Karnataka Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) released an official draft Active Mobility Bill which looks into the protection of the rights of pedestrians and cyclists in urban centres all over the state. The government is preparing a first-of-its-kind bill offering protection to pedestrians and cyclists, which will also ensure their rights in all cities of Karnataka.**

Karnataka is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed **Karnataka** in 1973. The capital and largest city is Bengaluru. Basavaraj Bommai is serving as the current Chief Minister of Karnataka. Thaawarchand Gehlot is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka. Coffee production in India is dominated in the hill tracts of South Indian states, with Karnataka accounting for 71%, followed by Kerala with 21% and Tamil Nadu (5% of overall production with 8,200 tonnes).

Government of India notifies new rules for consumer commissions

- The Centre has notified rules for Consumer Protection (Jurisdiction of the District Commission, the State Commission and the National Commission) Rules, 2021.
- The revised pecuniary jurisdiction for entertaining consumer complaints shall be upto 50 lakh rupees for District Commissions, more than 50 lakh to two crore rupees for State Commissions and more than two crore rupees for National Commission.
- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 promulgates a three-tier quasi-judicial mechanism for redressal of consumer disputes namely District Commissions, State Commissions and National Commission.
- After the Act came into force, it was observed that the existing provisions relating to pecuniary jurisdiction of consumer commissions were leading to cases which could earlier be filed in National Commission to be filed in State Commissions and cases which could earlier be filed in State Commissions to be filed in District Commissions.

AIM and NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of 'Innovations for You' and 'The Ingenious Tinkerers'

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and NITI Aayog released the second edition of Innovations for You and The Ingenious Tinkerers. Innovations for You are a compendium of innovations focused on agriculture featuring 70 start-ups supported by Atal Incubation Centres of Atal Innovation Mission. The Ingenious Tinkerers is a compendium on the innovations in technology featuring 41 innovations from Atal Tinkering Lab.

Tamil Nadu unveils draft women's policy

- Mandatory martial arts training for school and college girls, 50 more person-days for all single- and women-headed households under MGNREGS and 33.3% representation in registered parties are among the provisions in the draft Tamil Nadu State New Policy for Women 2021.

Bill likely on increasing legal marriage age of women from 18 to 21 years

- According to sources the government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years, bringing it at par with that of men. The Union Cabinet had cleared a proposal to bring in uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women. The government is likely to bring a bill in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament to amend the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.
- For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid. The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively. For the new age of marriage to be implemented, these laws are expected to be amended.
- As of now, the legal age of women to get married is 18 while that for men is 21 years. The decision came a year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the government was deliberating on what should be the minimum age for marriage of women. The decision is based on the recommendation of a four-member task force led by former Samata Party chief Jaya Jaitly.

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, passed on 28 September 1929, in the Imperial Legislative Council of India, fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years. In 1949, after India's independence, it was amended to 15 for girls, and in 1978 to 18 for girls and 21 for boys. It is popularly known as the **Sharda Act**, after its sponsor Harbilas Sharda. Har Bilas Sarda (1867–1955) was an Indian academic, judge and politician. He is best known for having introduced the **Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929)**. It came into effect six months later on 1 April 1930 and applied to all of British India. It was a result of social reform movement in India. Despite strong opposition from the British authorities, the legislation was passed by the British Indian Government which had a majority of Indians. However, it lacked implementation from the British Indian government, largely due to the fear of British authorities losing support from their loyal Hindu and Muslim communalist groups.

Kerala best State on health parameters, Uttar Pradesh worst: NITI Aayog

- **Kerala remained the best-performing state in the health indicators for a fourth consecutive time**, according to an index released, **which also ranked Uttar Pradesh at the bottom of the rankings** although the state also saw the most progress.
- **“The Healthy States, Progressive India” report — compiled by the NITI Aayog, Union Health Ministry and the World Bank for a fourth edition between 2019-2020—surveyed 19 large states, eight small states and seven Union Territories. It did not include West Bengal and Ladakh due to unavailability of adequate data.**
- **Among large states, Kerala and Tamil Nadu topped the list, and Telangana emerged strong on the third position in health outcomes and incremental performance.** The state saw an improvement from the 4th position the last time — indicating that it has made strides in improving its health infrastructure by ensuring universal immunisation of children, setting up fully functional First Referral Units (FRUs) and all Primary Health Centres (PHCs) among others.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. The Planning Commission was an institution in the Government of India, which formulated India's Five-Year Plans, among other functions. After India achieved independence, a formal model of planning was adopted, and accordingly the Planning Commission, reporting directly to the Prime Minister of India, was established on 15 March 1950, with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as the Chairman. Authority for creation of the Planning Commission was not derived from the Constitution of India or statute; it is an arm of the Central Government of India. The first Five-Year Plan was launched in 1951, focusing mainly on development of the agricultural sector. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current Vice Chairman is Suman Bery and the current Chief Executive Officer is Mr Parameswaran Iyer.

AFSPA extended in Nagaland for 6 months

- **The government of India said that the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (AFSPA) extended in Nagaland for six more months with effect from December 30, 2021. The Central government declared the entire Nagaland as a “disturbed area.”**
- As per the Ministry of Home Affairs statement, **“whereas the Central Government is of the opinion that the area comprising the whole state of Nagaland is in such a disturbed and dangerous condition that use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.”**
- Now, therefore, **in exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, the Central Government hereby declares that the whole of the state of Nagaland to be ‘disturbed area’ for a period of six months with effect from December 30, 2021** for the purpose of the said Act, it further stated.

Nagaland is a state in northeastern India. It is bordered by the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south and the Sagaing Region of Myanmar to the east. Its capital city is Kohima and its largest city is Dimapur. Nagaland became the 16th state of India on 1 December 1963. It has experienced insurgency and inter-ethnic conflict since the 1950s, limiting its economic development. Neiphiu Rio is the current Chief Minister of Nagaland. The current Governor of Nagaland is Jagdish Mukhi (additional charge) from September 17, 2021.

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier begins another phase of sea trials

- **India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) Vikrant began another set of sea trials to carry out complex maneuvers in high seas ahead of its planned induction in August. The 40,000-tonne aircraft carrier, the largest and most complex warship to be built in India, successfully completed a five-day maiden sea voyage in August and underwent 10-day sea trials in October. The IAC is 262 meters long, 62 meters wide and it has a height of 59 meters. Its construction began in 2009. Basin trials were completed in November 2020, and the vessel is expected to be commissioned into the Navy by August 2022.**
- **The warship has been built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL). India currently has only one aircraft carrier – INS Vikramaditya. The Indian Navy has been focusing on significantly bolstering its overall capabilities in view of China's growing efforts to increase its military presence in the Indian Ocean Region. The Indian Ocean, considered the backyard of the Indian Navy, is critical to the country's strategic interests.**

Government says ₹8-lakh EWS cap derived after study

- **The Supreme Court wondered how the Union government came up with the ₹ 8 lakh annual income limit within just three days of introducing 10% reservation for the economically weaker sections**

(EWS) of society. The Constitution (One Hundred and Third) Amendment Act introducing EWS quota came into force on January 14, 2019. On January 17 the same year, the government released an official memorandum (OM) informing that families earning a gross annual income below ₹ 8 lakh would be identified as EWS for benefit of reservation.

- The court said this earlier position in October was quite contrary to the later conclusions of the government's own expert committee headed by former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey in December. The committee, formed by the government to review the ₹ 8 lakh limit, in its report on December 31, maintained that the ₹ 8 lakh threshold fixed to identify EWS was not a "mechanical adoption" of the OBC creamy layer cut-off.

The bill of Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 8 January 2019 as the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 2019. It was introduced by Thawar Chand Gehlot, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment. The bill sought to amend Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution. It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6). The Bill received assent from President Ram Nath Kovind on 12 January 2019. It was notified in The Gazette of India on the same date. The 103rd Amendment came into effect on 14 January 2019. The new clause (6) to Article 15 allows the government to carve reservation for the economically weaker sections of society in higher educational institutions, including private ones, whether they are aided or not by the State. Minority educational institutions are exempted. Likewise, the new clause (6) to Article 16 provides for quota for economically deprived sections in the initial appointment in government services.

India's first green hydrogen microgrid project to come up in Vizag

- The foundation stone for one of the world's largest and India's first green hydrogen microgrid project was laid at Simhadri in Andhra Pradesh. NTPC has awarded the project, a standalone fuel-cell-based micro-grid with hydrogen production using electrolyser, at Simhadri to Bloom Energy India, Bengaluru.
- This will be India's first green hydrogen-based energy storage project. The hydrogen will be produced using advanced 240 kW solid oxide electrolyser by taking input power from the nearby floating solar project. The hydrogen will be produced during day and stored at high pressure for its use by a 50 kW solid oxide fuel cell. The system will work from 5 pm to 7 am.

Green hydrogen is defined as hydrogen produced by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen using renewable electricity. This is a very different pathway compared to both grey and blue. Green hydrogen featured in a number of emissions reduction pledges at the UN Climate Conference, COP26, as a means to decarbonize heavy industry, long haul freight, shipping, and aviation. Governments and industry have both acknowledged hydrogen as an important pillar of a net zero economy. The Green Hydrogen Catapult, a United Nations initiative to bring down the cost of green hydrogen announced that it is almost doubling its goal for green electrolyzers from 25 gigawatts set last year, to 45 gigawatts by 2027.

Delhi gets first prototype of India-made electric bus

- The prototype of the first electric bus has reached the national capital, informed Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot. "Congrats Delhi! After a long wait, the prototype of DTC's first 100 per cent Electric bus has reached Delhi!," the Minister tweeted along with the pictures of the new buses.
- A prototype of electric bus made homegrown heavy commercial vehicle maker JBM Auto to be inducted in the fleet of the DTC, has arrived after a long wait and it will be soon flagged off by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Bajaj is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

India's first lithium refinery mooted in Gujarat

- In all, **39 MoUs were signed as part of the upcoming 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (VGGS)**. These included proposals to **set up the country's first lithium refinery and a research centre for nano satellites**. The MoUs also comprise initial pacts signed by educational institutions for research and training. This was the sixth in the series of MoU signing events that are being organized by the government.

Gujarat is a state on the western coast of India with a longest coastline of India 1,600 km (990 mi). Its capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. Gujarat International Finance Tec-City is a business district promoted by the Government of Gujarat through a joint venture company. GIFT City is India's first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad and international financial services centre. Acharya Devvrat is Governor of Gujarat and Bhupendra Patel is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat. Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced 10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category and followed by Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Gurugram to get India's first heli-hub with all aviation facilities

- The Haryana government has proposed to set up the first heli-hub of the country in Gurugram** designed to have many aviation facilities like heliport, hangars, repairs, and any other related services.
- Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala said this heli-hub is proposed to be the first of its kind in the country to have all the facilities at one place for helicopters.** The place where the heli-hub is proposed to be built in Gurugram would be near the metro facility along with easy connectivity to industrial areas like Noida and Bhiwadi.

Haryana is a state in India located in the northern-part of the country. It was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on a linguistic basis. The state capital is Chandigarh and the most populous city is Faridabad, which is a part of the National Capital Region. The city of Gurgaon is among India's largest financial and technology hubs. Bandaru Dattatreya is serving as the current Governor of Haryana since 2021. Manohar Lal Khattar is serving as the current Chief Minister of Haryana. According to the 2011 Census, the lowest sex ratio in India is in Haryana, where sex ratio is only 879 whereas the highest sex ratio is in Kerala (1084).

Navy submariner turns pilot, India gets its first 'flying dolphin'

- India has got its first "flying dolphin" with an ex-submariner leaving the deep seas for the blue skies. Lt Commander (retd) Vivek Chaudhary, completed his 10-year-tenure as a short service commission officer with the Indian Navy in 2017. He then joined a flying school in Chandigarh, got his commercial pilot licence (CPL) in 2020 and is now type-rated for the ATR turboprop aircraft, making him the Indian to make this transition."** The Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records have named him to be the first submariner-turned-pilot from the region.

India readies first aerosports policy, proposes an ambitious target for 2030

- The civil aviation ministry released a draft National Aerosports Policy (NASP 2022) to leverage India's 'huge' potential for air sports given its large geographical expanse, diverse topography and fair weather conditions. The draft policy, which has been on the drawing board for a year, aims to make India one of the top air sports nations by 2030. The policy covers air sports activities such as air-racing, aerobatics, aeromodelling, hang gliding, paragliding, paramotoring, vintage aircraft, ballooning, drones and skydiving.**

The Ministry of Civil Aviation of Government of India is the nodal Ministry responsible for the formulation of national policies and programmes for development and regulation of Civil Aviation and for devising and implementing schemes for the orderly growth and expansion of civil air transport. Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia serves as the Minister of Civil Aviation. He is a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha representing the State of Madhya Pradesh.

FCRA registration of Missionaries of Charity renewed, valid till 2026

- Nearly two weeks after the Union government refused to renew the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) registration of Nobel Laureate Mother Teresa-founded Missionaries of Charity (MoC), the Centre restored it. The new FCRA certificate will be valid till the end of 2026. The NGO was set up in 1950 by Mother Teresa, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 "for bringing help to suffering humanity".**

- **Aadhaar for registration:** The Act makes Aadhaar number mandatory for all office bearers, directors or key functionaries of a person receiving foreign contribution, as an identification document. **FCRA account:** The Act states that foreign contribution must be received only in an account designated by the bank as FCRA account in such branches of the State Bank of India, New Delhi.
- **Reduction in use of foreign contribution for administrative purposes:** The Act proposes that not more than 20% of the total foreign funds received could be defrayed for administrative expenses. In FCRA 2010 the limit was 50%. **Surrender of certificate:** The Act allows the central government to permit a person to surrender their registration certificate.

FCRA regulates foreign donations and ensures that such contributions do not adversely affect the internal security of the country. The Act, first enacted in 1976 was amended in the year 2010 and then 2020. Section 5 of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 gives the Union government “unchecked and unbridled powers” to declare an organisation as being one of political nature and deny it access to funds from sources abroad. FCRA is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs. To open a designated FCRA account at the SBI branch or link their existing account to it. The individuals are permitted to accept foreign contributions without permission of MHA. However, the monetary limit for acceptance of such foreign contributions shall be less than Rs. 25,000.

Kochi becomes the first city with water metro project with launch of electric boats

- Kochi, Kerala has become India's first city to have a Water Metro Project after the launch of its first boat in December 2021, namely 'Muziris,' among the 23 battery-powered electric boats being manufactured by Cochin Shipyard Limited. This launch is a part of the Rs 747-crore project which is operated by Kochi Water Metro Ltd (KWML). The boats will be called Water Metros.

Centre organised first-ever Startup India Innovation Week from Jan 10

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has organised the first-ever Startup India Innovation Week during January 10-16.
- This virtual week-long innovation celebration aims to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and is designed to showcase the spread and depth of entrepreneurship across India. Interestingly, in the startup world, 2021 has been recognised as the 'year of unicorns,' with 40+ unicorns added in the year.

World's largest Khadi flag displayed along Indo-Pak border in Rajasthan's Longewala

- The world's largest national flag, the Indian Tricolor made from Khadi, was displayed along the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan's Longewala, on the occasion of 74th Army Day. Longewala, in the western part of the desert state's Jaisalmer district was the site of the iconic Battle of Longewala in 1971, which was fought during that year's war between the two neighbors.
- The flag is 225 feet long, 150 feet wide and weighs around 1 thousand 400 kilogram, while the Ashoka Chakra in the center has a diameter of 30 feet. The 'Monumental National Flag' is a creation of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission to mark the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.

Army Day is celebrated on 15 January every year in India, in recognition of Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa's (then a Lieutenant General) taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Francis Roy Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, on 15 January 1949.

India launches first coal-to-methanol plant built by BHEL

- Union Minister for Heavy Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey dedicated India's first BHEL-built 'coal to methanol' (CTM) pilot plant to the nation here, as part of the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.
- Dr. Pandey also inaugurated an exhibition on 'Products Developed under Aatmanirbhar Bharat' organised at BHEL's Hyderabad unit. In addition, an audio-visual presentation was made on the 'Unsung Heroes of the Indian Freedom Struggle' belonging to the Telangana Region.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) is an Indian government owned engineering and manufacturing enterprise based in New Delhi, India. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Heavy Industries, Government of India. Established in 1956, BHEL is India's largest power generation equipment manufacturer.

Hyderabad first Indian city to host Formula E, an electric car championship

- **Hyderabad achieved the distinction of becoming first Indian candidate city to host Formula E world championship** and is expected to host the first race of electric cars between November this year and March 2023. The Telangana government and Formula E Association along with promoter of the event, Greenko signed a letter of intent to make Hyderabad a candidate host city for hosting Formula E race on yearly basis.
- **Hyderabad will join the elite club of Rome, Paris, London, Hong Kong, New York and Berlin. Eighteen cities around the world are hosting the race organised every year by the Federation of Internationale de Automobile.**

Hyderabad is the capital and largest city of the Indian state of Telangana and the de jure capital of Andhra Pradesh. It occupies on the Deccan Plateau along the banks of the Musi River, in the northern part of South India. **Hyderabad is situated on hilly terrain around artificial lakes, including the Hussain Sagar lake,** predating the city's founding, in the north of the city centre. **Relics of the Qutb Shahi and Nizam rules remain visible today; the Charminar has come to symbolise the city.** The formation of special economic zones and HITEC City dedicated to information technology has encouraged leading multinationals to set up operations in Hyderabad.

In a first, India rolls out electric bus to curb air pollution

- **India rolled out its first electric bus (e-bus) in the capital New Delhi.** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was present at the occasion. Kejriwal said the induction of the first electric bus of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) is an "important milestone" in Delhi's transport landscape. The Delhi government plans to induct around 300 e-buses by April 2022. Additionally, 2000 such buses will be rolled out within the next few years.

PM Narendra Modi hosted first ever India-Central Asia Summit in virtual format

- **India announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the first India-Central Asia Summit** in a virtual format on January 27 as part of the country's engagement with the extended neighbourhood. The development follows the government's decision to go ahead with Republic Day celebrations on January 26 without any foreign leader as chief guest because of a surge in Covid-19 infections.
- The Indian side had earlier **invited the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to be chief guests,** though no formal announcement was made by any of the countries. **The summit reflects New Delhi's growing engagement with the Central Asian states, part of India's "extended neighbourhood",** and is symbolic of the importance attached by leaders of India and Central Asia to a comprehensive and enduring partnership, the ministry said.

Central Asia is a region in Asia which stretches from the Caspian Sea in the west to China and Mongolia in the east, and from Afghanistan and Iran in the south to Russia in the north. The region consists of the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It is also colloquially referred to as "the stans" as the countries all have names ending with the Persian suffix "-stan", meaning "land of". **Central Asia was historically closely tied to the Silk Road trade routes,** acting as a crossroads for the movement of people, goods, and ideas between Europe and the Far East.

World's first WhatsApp-powered delivery service launched in Kerala

- **Kerala's first hyperlocal delivery startup Errando launched the world's first WhatsApp API-powered delivery service.** Customers can now use their WhatsApp to order food, stationery, medicine, grocery or avail pick and drop. "The automated reply messages will prompt and guide the customer in placing the order with a couple of messages.

WhatsApp Messenger, or simply WhatsApp, is an internationally available American freeware, cross-platform centralized instant messaging (IM) and voice-over-IP (VoIP) service owned by Meta Platforms. It allows users to send text messages and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images, documents, user locations, and other content. The client application was created by WhatsApp Inc. of Mountain View, California, which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately US\$19.3 billion. It became the world's most popular messaging application by 2015, and had more than 2 billion users worldwide by February 2020.

New Delhi: Amar Jawan Jyoti flame merged with National War Memorial flame

- **The Amar Jawan Jyoti flame at India Gate was merged with the flame at the National War Memorial in New Delhi.** The flame of the Amar Jawan Jyoti was extinguished and merged with the flame at the National War

Memorial. The ceremony was presided over by the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff. India Gate was unveiled in 1931 and it was built to honour the soldiers of British India who gave the supreme sacrifice.

- The Amar Jawan Jyoti was set up after the 1971 Indo-Pak war. After a long wait and multiple considerations, the National War Memorial was built in the India Gate complex and was inaugurated in February 2019.
- Inaugurated on January 26, 1971, by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the Amar Jawan Jyoti was constructed as a memorial for Indian soldiers who were killed in action in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. India's victory at the end of this war led to the creation of Bangladesh.
- The National War Memorial, on the other hand, was inaugurated on February 25, 2019, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The names of as many as 25,942 soldiers have been inscribed on the National War Memorial. Meanwhile, the government has decided to install a statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the India Gate to mark his 125th birth anniversary.

The India Gate (formerly known as the All India War Memorial) is a war memorial located astride the Rajpath, on the eastern edge of the "ceremonial axis" of New Delhi, formerly called Kingsway. It stands as a memorial to 90,000 soldiers of the British Indian Army who died in between 1914 and 1921 in the First World War, in France, Flanders, Mesopotamia, Persia, East Africa, Gallipoli and elsewhere in the Near and the Far East, and the Third Anglo-Afghan War. 13,300 servicemen's names, including some soldiers and officers from the United Kingdom, are inscribed on the gate. Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, the gate evokes the architectural style of the memorial arch such as the Arch of Constantine, in Rome, and is often compared to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, and the Gateway of India in Mumbai.

India's first virtual platform for spice exporters launched

- India's first virtual platform for spice exports 'Spice Xchange India' was launched. The spicexchangeindia.com, developed by the Spices Board, is a 3D virtual platform aimed at connecting India's spice exporters with buyers from around the world.

Karnataka launches India's biggest AVGC center of excellence in Bengaluru

- The State Government of Karnataka launched the AVGC center of excellence (animation, visual effects, gaming, and comics) pitching it as a pioneering high technology digital media hub. The IT/BT & Electronics department has funded the facility.
- Karnataka, which is the first in India to bring an AVGC policy in 2012, also became the first state to set up the first center of excellence in AVGC. "The state will come out with the new AVGC policy in about a year and the government will provide plots to set up a dedicated digital media entertainment area.

'First UT in India': J-K to have Good Governance Index

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the District Good Governance Index (DGGI) in Jammu and Kashmir, which is the first Union Territory to have such an index. Shah launched the index in the presence of Union minister Jitendra Singh and Jammu and Kashmir's lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha.
- The District Good Governance Index, which has been launched for 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, has been prepared by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in partnership with the Union Territory's administration and is a major reform in benchmarking good governance at the district level.

Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north, respectively. A resolution to repeal Article 370 was passed by both the houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are now equally applicable to it. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, 'Jammu and Kashmir' and 'Ladakh', with effect from 31 October 2019. The union territory

of Jammu and Kashmir is administered under the provisions of Article 239 of the Constitution of India. The Article 239A, originally formulated for the union territory of Puduchery, will also be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor.

PM Narendra Modi unveils Bose's hologram statue at India Gate

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a hologram statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at India Gate on the 125th birth anniversary of the iconic freedom fighter. A grand statue, which will be made of granite, will replace the hologram statue once it is completed.
- The government announced earlier this week that Republic Day celebrations in the country would begin on January 23 every year to incorporate the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. His birth anniversary is celebrated every year as Parakram Diwas.

Subhas Chandra Bose was an Indian nationalist whose defiant patriotism made him a hero in India, but whose attempt during World War II to rid India of British rule with the help of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan left a troubled legacy. The honorific Netaji ("Respected Leader") first applied in early 1942 to Bose in Germany by the Indian soldiers of the Indische Legion and by the German and Indian officials in the Special Bureau for India in Berlin, was later used throughout India. He rose to become Congress President in 1938. However, soon after being reelected in 1939, he was ousted from Congress leadership positions following differences with Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress high command. The Provisional Government of Free India (Arzi Hakumat-e-Azad Hind) or, more simply, Azad Hind founded on 21 October 1943, the government was inspired by the concepts of Subhas Chandra Bose who was also the leader of the government and Head of State. He died from third-degree burns received when his plane crashed in Taiwan on 18 August 1945.

India, Israel launch commemorative logo to mark 30th anniversary of diplomatic ties

- India and Israel launched a commemorative logo to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. The logo features the Star of David and the Ashoka Chakra—the two symbols that adorn the national flags of both countries— and forms the numeral 30 depicting the 30th anniversary of bilateral relations.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Naftali Bennett is an Israeli politician serving as the 13th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 13 June 2021. Isaac Herzog is serving as the current president of Israel since 7 July 2021.

Andhra Pradesh to get 13 new districts, total to be 26

- With the addition of 13 new districts, Andhra Pradesh will soon get 26 districts in total. The state government has already issued draft notifications for carving out the new districts. In his Republic Day address, Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan referred to the creation of new districts and said they would be in place by this Telugu New Year's Day Ugadi (falling on April 2). The state has 25 Lok Sabha constituencies and each is supposed to be made a revenue district. However, with its size being too large and spread over many districts, the tribal-dominated Araku Lok Sabha constituency is being split into two new districts. The two new tribal districts will be Manyam, with headquarters in Parvathipuram, and Alluri Sitarama Raju, named after the legendary Telugu freedom fighter with headquarters in Paderu.
- The other new districts are Anakapalli (out of the existing Visakhapatnam district), Konaseema and Kakinada (out of East Godavari), Eluru (out of West Godavari), NTR (out of Krishna), Bapatla and Palnadu (out of Guntur), Nandyal (out of Kurnool), Sri Satya Sai (out of Anantapuramu), Annamayya (out of Kadapa) and Sri Balaji (out of Chittoor).

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals. In November 2021, Andhra Pradesh government has withdrawn the three capitals bill in the assembly. In March 2022, Andhra Pradesh High Court in a landmark judgment declared that Amaravati is the

only capital for the state. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital.

India's first graphene innovation centre to come up in Kerala

- India's first innovation centre for graphene will be set up in Kerala by the Digital University Kerala (DUK), along with Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET) in Thrissur, for Rs 86.41 crore. This will be the first graphene Research and Development (R&D) incubation centre in the country. Tata Steel Limited is set to be the industrial partner of the centre. Graphene has anti-corrosion coatings. It is used in drug delivery, sensors, paints and solar panels.

Graphene is the strongest material in the world. Also, it is the thinnest material. Graphene has good electrical conductivity and chemical stability. It is transparent, light in weight and has a large surface area. Graphene has the ability to replace indium. It brings down the cost of Organic Light Emitting Diode. Graphene is an isotope of carbon. It has a two-dimensional honeycomb nanostructure. Graphene is addressed to as "Wonder material" for its electronic and electrical properties. Graphene is a zero gap semiconductor. This means the conduction band and the valence band are at the same energy level. For an element to conduct electricity, it should have free electrons in conduction band.

Republic Day Parade's 1st Marching Contingent World's Only Horse Cavalry Regiment

- Horse-mounted soldiers of the Indian Army's 61 Cavalry Regiment, the only active horsed cavalry unit in the world currently, was the first marching contingent at the Republic Day parade. This regiment's contingent was led by Major Mrityunjay Singh Chouhan.
- The 61 Cavalry Regiment was formed in 1953 by amalgamation of all the states' horse units. The regiment has the unique distinction of leading the last recorded cavalry charge in history when it took on the Turks at the battle of Haifa in 1918 during World War 1. The regiment has won a total of 39 battle honours till date. Its motto is "Ashva Shaki Yashobal", which means "Horse Power is Forever Supreme".

India's first Geo Park to come up in Madhya Pradesh

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has approved the setting up of the country's first geo park at Lamheta village on the banks of the Narmada River in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. Park will be constructed with an investment of Rs 35 crores, over five-acre land. The geological park will be built in Lamheta, because this place is among significant places in the world, from the geological point of view.
- In 1928, William Henry Sleeman had discovered a Dinosaur fossil from this area. UNESCO has also recognised Lamheta as a geo heritage site. Lameta Formation is also called Infratrappean Beds. It is a sedimentary geological formation found in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat. It is associated with the Deccan Traps. It is of the Maastrichtian age and is known for dinosaur fossils.

Geo park is a unified area, which advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable manner. It also promotes the economic well-being of the people living there.

World Wetlands Day: Sanctuaries in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh listed as Ramsar sites

- Ramsar sites: The Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary near Jamnagar in Gujarat and Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh have been listed as Wetlands of International Importance. With this, the total number of Ramsar sites in India goes up to 48.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It came into force for India on February 1, 1982. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. The aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits. The Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Ramsar wetlands of international importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. At present Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan and Loktak Lake, Manipur are the two Indian sites listed under it. In 1993, Chilika Lake was also listed in Montreux Record due to problem of siltation. Later in 2002, it was removed from the list as the problem of siltation was tackled by Govt. of India.

India to convert 150 villages into 'Villages of Excellence' with technical help from Israel

- The Centre has decided to convert as many as 150 villages into 'Villages of Excellence' in 12 States with technical assistance from the Israel government. Already, the Israel government has established 29 Centre of Excellence (CoEs) in 12 States, which are producing more than 25 million vegetable plants, over 3,87,000 quality fruit plants and can train more than 1.2 lakh farmers per year. The 150 villages that are located around CoEs will be converted into 'Villages of Excellence.'

4 women judges in Supreme Court against total sanctioned strength of 34 judges

- Four women are judges in the Supreme Court against the total sanctioned strength of 34 judges and 83 women are judges in high courts against the sanctioned strength of 1,098 judges, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said in the Rajya Sabha.
- The minister said the appointment of judges of the Supreme Court and high courts is made under Articles 124, 217 and 224 of the Constitution which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons.

Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. As per Article 217, the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI and the State Governor, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court. The names are recommended by the Collegium. Collegium System is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court. The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram declared as India's first OECM site

- The Aravalli Biodiversity Park was declared India's first "other effective area-based conservation measures" (OECM) site on the occasion of World Wetlands Day. "The OECM tag is given by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to areas that are not protected but support rich biodiversity.
- Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram has been notified as the first OECM site in the country. The OECM tag does not bring any legal, financial or management implications, but designates the area as a biodiversity hotspot on the international map.

Indian Railways gets more 'Kavach'

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made various new announcements in Budget 2022 for the Ministry of Railways. Sitharaman announced that 400 new Vande Bharat trains will be introduced and 100 PM Gati Shakti cargo terminals built in the next three years.
- To push 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', Sitharaman added that 2,000 km of the rail network will be brought under the indigenous world-class technology named 'Kavach'. 'Kavach' or कवच in Hindi means armour.
- Kavach is a world-class technology for safety as well as capacity augmentation. According to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, this indigenously-developed anti-collision technology is SIL4 certified. This means there is the probability of a single error in 10,000 years, the minister was quoted. 'One Station One Product' concept to help local businesses, among other announcements.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Union Budget 2022 Highlights

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman delivered the Union Budget 2022-23 to Parliament on 1st, Feb 2022. She delivered and presented her 4th Budget. The Budget presentation by FM Sitharaman began at 11:00 a.m. in Parliament. This is the second digital budget in light of the ongoing Covid-19 outbreak.**
- **According to FM's speech, India's economic growth in FY22 will be 9.2 percent, the greatest among all big economies.** India is well-positioned to face issues as a result of increased vaccinations. The following are highlights from Union Budget 2022, as well as an interpretation and discussion of it.
- **The Union Budget 2022-23 seeks to complement macro-economic level growth with a focus on micro-economic level all-inclusive welfare.** The budget aims to lay a strong foundation to steer the Indian economy towards Amrit Kaal for the next 25 years, from India at 75 years to India at 100.
- **Union Budget 2022 focusses on 4 pillars: 1. PM GatiShakti 2. Inclusive Development 3. Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action 4. Financing of Investments.**
- **The Finance Minister in the Union Budget 2022 speech informed that the Productivity Linked Incentive (PLI) in 14 sectors for achieving the vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat has received an excellent response, with the potential to create 60 lakh new jobs, and an additional production of Rs 30 lakh crore during the next 5 years.**
- **Fiscal Management**
- **Budget Estimates 2021-22: Rs. 34.83 lakh crore**
- **Revised Estimates 2021-22: Rs. 37.70 lakh crore**
- **Total expenditure in 2022-23 estimated at Rs. 39.45 lakh crore**
- **Total receipts other than borrowings in 2022-23 estimated at Rs. 22.84 lakh crore**
- **Fiscal deficit in the current year: 6.9% of GDP (against 6.8% in Budget Estimates)**
- **Fiscal deficit in 2022-23 estimated at 6.4% of GDP**

The Union Budget of India also referred to as the Annual Financial Statement in the Article 112 of the Constitution of India, is the annual budget of the Republic of India. The Government presents it on the first day of February so that it could be materialised before the beginning of new financial year in April. Until 2016 it was presented on the last working day of February by the Finance Minister in Parliament. The budget, which is presented by means of the Finance bill and the Appropriation bill has to be passed by Lok Sabha before it can come into effect on 1 April, the start of India's financial year. As of January 2021, Morarji Desai has presented 10 budgets which is the highest count followed by P Chidambaram's 9 and Pranab Mukherjee's 8. Yashwant Sinha, Yashwantrao Chavan and C.D. Deshmukh have presented 7 budgets each while Manmohan Singh and T.T. Krishnamachari have presented 6 budgets.

Surat to be the first station to be ready for India's first Bullet Train

- **Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Project: Surat to become the first station for India's upcoming Bullet Train Project.** The upcoming station in Surat will become the first station to be ready between Ahmedabad – Mumbai Bullet Train route for India's first futuristic High Speed Rail project.
- **The MAHSR corridor will cover 12 stations in total- Surat, Vadodara, Anand, Ahmedabad, Sabarmati, Bilimora, Bharuch, Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar, Vapi stations.** Once the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project is ready, the journey time between Mumbai and Ahmedabad will be 2.07 hours (limited stops), 2.58 hours (halting at stations) vis a vis existing train journey duration of seven-eight hours.

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed corridor will have a high-speed train, with financial assistance from the Japanese Government. "National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited", a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) has been formed for the implementation of this project. The Shinkansen high-speed technology will be used in this train. Shinkansen means "new trunk lines" in literal terms, which refers to the high-speed rail network in Japan. The train attains a high speed without having to compromise on comfort and safety, through the use of this technology. The Shinkansen high-speed trains of Japan are colloquially called as bullet trains for their appearance and speed. The 2009–2010 Rail Budget of India introduced the Mumbai–Ahmedabad corridor and 5 other high-speed rail corridors for a feasibility study.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated Nation 216-feet Statue of Equality in Hyderabad

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the 216 feet tall Statue of Equality in Hyderabad after taking part in the rituals at the temple premises. Clad in devotional golden attire, PM Modi sat at the prayer site and then took a tour of the temple premises where replicas of 108 Vishnu temples, including Badrinath, Ayodhya, Tirumala, have been placed. The inauguration of the Statue of Equality is a part of the 12-day Sri Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, the ongoing 1000th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramanujacharya, the official statement said.
- The 216-feet tall Statue of Equality commemorates the 11th-century Bhakti Saint Sri Ramanujacharya, who promoted the idea of equality in all aspects of living including faith, caste, and creed.
- The Statue is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals. These are gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc. It is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting positions in the world. It is mounted on a 54-feet high base building, named 'Bhadra Vedi'.

Ramanujacharya was born in 1017 in Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu; Ramanujacharya is revered as a Vedic philosopher and social reformer. He was named Lakshmana at the time of his birth. He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one. He traveled across India, advocating equality and social justice. He revived the Bhakti movement, and his preachings inspired other Bhakti schools of thought. He is famous as the chief proponent of Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedanta. It is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting position in the world. India is celebrating his 1,000th birth anniversary as the 'Festival of Equality', upholding the view that the world is one family, 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam'.

Jammu and Kashmir becomes first UT to be integrated with national single-window system

- Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory to be onboarded on the National Single Window System (NSWS), a digital platform that helps investors get government approvals for projects. Lt Governor Manoj Sinha launched the single-window portal for Jammu and Kashmir, making it the first Union territory to be integrated with the national single-window system.

Gautam Adani overtakes Mukesh Ambani as Asia's richest person

- Gautam Adani, the Indian billionaire who turned a small commodities trading business into a conglomerate spanning ports, mines and green energy, is now Asia's richest person.
- The 59-year-old mogul's net worth reached \$88.5 billion according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, eclipsing fellow countryman Mukesh Ambani's \$87.9 billion. With an almost \$12 billion jump in his personal fortune, Adani is the world's biggest wealth-gainer this year.

MP cabinet approves 108-feet tall statue of Adi Shankaracharya in Omkareshwar

- The Madhya Pradesh cabinet approved the construction of a 108-feet tall statue of the 8th century Indian philosopher Adi Shankaracharya, a museum dedicated to him and an International Advaita Vedanta Sansthan at Omkareshwar at a cost of Rs. 2,141 crore.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal, and the largest city is Indore. Madhya Pradesh is the second largest Indian state by area and the fifth largest state by population. It borders the states of Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the southeast, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west, and Rajasthan to the northwest. Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel is the current Governor of Madhya Pradesh. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, having been elected to the same position 3 times in the past, and a Member of Legislative Assembly in Madhya Pradesh from Budhni.

One Ocean Summit in France

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the high-level segment of One Ocean Summit through a video message. The Summit was also addressed by several Heads of States and Governments including Germany, United Kingdom, South Korea, Japan and Canada among others.
- One Ocean Summit is being organised by France from 9th to 11th February in Brest, in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank. The objective of the Summit is to mobilise the international community to take tangible action towards preserving and supporting healthy and sustainable ocean ecosystems. The ocean covers more than 70% of the surface of our planet, yet too often remains on the sidelines of major European and international events.

Atal Tunnel certified by World Book of Records as World's Longest Highway Tunnel

- **Atal Tunnel has officially been certified by the World Book of Records as the World's Longest Highway Tunnel** above 10 thousand Feet. **Director General of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Lieutenant General Rajeev Chaudhry received the award** for the stupendous achievement of the organization in constructing this engineering marvel **connecting Manali to the Lahaul - Spiti Valley**.
- **World Book of Records in the United Kingdom**, is an **organisation that catalogues and verifies extraordinary records across the world with authentic certification**.

Atal Tunnel (also known as Rohtang Tunnel) is a highway tunnel built under the Rohtang Pass in the eastern Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas on the Leh-Manali Highway in Himachal Pradesh, India. At a length of 9.02 km, it is the longest highway single-tube tunnel above 10,000 feet (3,048 m) in the world when completed and is named after former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee. With the existing Atal Tunnel and after the completion of under-construction Shingo La Tunnel, which is targeted to be completed by 2024, both the Leh-Manali Highway and the Nimmu-Padum-Darcha road routes will become all-weather roads.

India's score declined significantly in recent years in EUI Democracy Index

- **India is ranked 46 on the global index** with an overall score of 6.91. It has the lowest score of 5 on **political culture** and the highest score of 8.67 on **electoral process and pluralism**. It scores 6.18 on civil liberties, 7.22 on political participation.
- **Norway topped the index. The country scored 9.75.** Following Norway, New Zealand was at the second position. Finland, Sweden and Iceland were at the third, fourth and fifth position respectively. **Afghanistan scored the least with 0.32. Earlier North Korea was at the bottom most position.**
- **The report was prepared based on five parameters. They were functioning of the government, electoral process and pluralism, political participation, civil liberties and political culture.**

Union Cabinet clears setting up of G20 Secretariat

- **The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the setting up of a G20 Secretariat** which will be **responsible for implementation of overall policy decisions** and arrangements needed for steering India's upcoming G20 Presidency. **India will hold the presidency of the G20 from December 1 to November 30, 2023.**

The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU). Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers, foreign ministers and think tanks, have periodically conferred at summits ever since. It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any single nation. The G20 members are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

India to replace diesel by renewable energy in agriculture by 2024

- **Union Power Minister R K Singh has announced that India will achieve zero-diesel use in agriculture and replace fossil fuel with renewable energy by 2024.** For this, states should develop action plans to achieve the assigned targets and specific agencies dedicated to energy efficiency and conservation. **This initiative is a part of the government's commitment to increase the share of non-fossil fuels by 2030 and become a net-zero emitter by 2070.**

Construction Underway for India's first Cable-Stayed Rail Bridge in Jammu and Kashmir

- **The Indian Railways has shared new images of the country's first cable-stayed bridge on the Anji River in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district. The under-construction Anji Khad Bridge is a part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project.**
- **The under-construction Anji Khad Bridge, part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, will connect Katra and Reasi areas through rail link.** The spectacular images show the suspension pillar beside a giant steel frame. Once ready, the bridge will stand at a height of 331 metres above the river bed – higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris. **The total length of the bridge is 473.25 metres and it is supported by 96 cables.**

Road Transport and Highways Ministry plans to develop 22 Greenfield Expressways and infrastructure projects as part of PM Gati Shakti NMP

- The Road Transport and Highways Ministry had made **significant progress under the Modi government's "PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan"**, aimed at improving multi-modal connectivity as well as last mile connectivity across India. **As part of the PM Gati Shakti NMP, MoRTH plans to develop a total of 22 Greenfield Expressways, 23 other major infrastructure projects and other highway projects and also 35 Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs), as part of the Ministry's Bharatmala Pariyojana as well as other schemes.**

Recently, the government of India has launched the ambitious Gati Shakti scheme or National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity plan, with the aim of coordinated planning and execution of infrastructure projects to bring down logistics costs. To ensure integrated planning and implementation of infrastructure projects in the next four years, with focus on expediting works on the ground, saving costs and creating jobs. **The Gati Shakti scheme will subsume the Rs 110 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline that was launched in 2019.**

Asia's largest tribal fair begins in Telangana

- **Medaram Jatara is the second-largest fair of India, after the Kumbh Mela, celebrated by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana- the Koya tribe for four days. As the largest tribal fair in Asia, Medaram Jathara is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saralamma.**

India's first water taxi launched in Mumbai

- **Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Union minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbanand Sonowal, inaugurated country's first water taxi.** The Mumbai water taxi services, **which promise faster connectivity between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai,** were inaugurated virtually.

PM Modi virtually inaugurated Asia's Biggest Bio-CNG Plant in Madhya Pradesh's Indore

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated Asia's biggest Bio-CNG plant at Madhya Pradesh's Indore.** Nearly 400 buses in Indore will soon run on the Bio-CNG produced from waste at this plant situated in the Devguradia village, eight kilometres away from the city.

Latest edition of Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022

- **The latest edition of Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022 is commenced** from 25 Feb 22 in the 'City of Destiny', **Visakhapatnam.** MILAN 22 is being conducted over a duration of 9 days in two phases with the harbour phase scheduled from 25 to 28 February and Sea Phase from 01 to 04 March. **India is celebrating the 75th year of its independence in 2022,** and MILAN 22 provides an opportunity to commemorate this milestone with our friends and partners.
- **The theme of the MILAN 2022 exercise is 'Camaraderie – Cohesion – Collaboration'** which aims to project India as a responsible maritime power to the world at large. The aim of the exercise is to hone operational skills, imbibe best practices and procedures, and enable doctrinal learning in the maritime domain, through professional interaction between friendly navies.

Upper Bhadra gets national project status

- **Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bom'mai announced that the high-powered committee of the Centre gave national project status to the Upper Bhadra Project. Bommai said this is the first project in the state to get the status and this will change the irrigation scenario of central Karnataka.**

Indian, Omani air forces begin joint exercises in Jodhpur

- **Oman is one of India's strongest defence partners in the Gulf region,** and all three services have bilateral exchanges and exercises with Oman's services. **The IAF said that the bilateral exercise named Eastern Bridge – VI was held from February 21 to February 25 at Air Force Station Jodhpur. "This was the sixth edition of the exercise. It will provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces,".**

IAF will not participate in multi-nation air exercise 'Ex Cobra Warrior 22' in UK

- **The multi-nation air exercise Cobra Warrior with NATO countries Belgium, the U.K. and the U.S. along with Sweden and Saudi Arabia scheduled to be held in March, which the IAF was to join for the first time has been cancelled in the backdrop of the Ukraine crisis.**
- **Citing "recent events", the IAF said on social media it has decided not to participate in the multi-nation exercise Cobra Warrior scheduled to be hosted by the U.K., but the post was subsequently deleted.**

Diplomatic sources stated that the **U.K. has decided to cancel the exercise in view of the Russian invasion and offensive in Ukraine.**

Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway will be the first in India to have Flyovers for Animal Crossing

- **The upcoming Mumbai-Nagpur expressway, also known as Hindu Hruday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg, will be the first highway in the country to have overpasses and underpasses for wild animal movement.** A total of nine overpasses and 17 underpasses will be constructed along the expressway that is 701 Kms long.

Delhi cabinet approves India's first e-waste eco-park, film policy to boost tourism

- **Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced that Delhi will get India's first e-waste eco-park.** He also announced the framing of Delhi Film Policy 2022 to **make the city a brand for shooting locations and promoting tourism.**

India, Nepal agree to form joint task force on building hydropower project

- **India and Nepal agreed to form a joint task force on a proposal to construct a hydropower project from investments of the two neighbouring countries.** The task force will have maximum three members from both the countries. The agreement was reached at the 9th meeting of the Nepal-India Energy Secretary-Level Joint Steering Committee in Kathmandu. Issues including **existing transmission lines between the two countries, under-construction and proposed interstate transmission line, the Arun III hydropower and transmission line and interstate power trade** were discussed.

Andhra Pradesh HC scraps Andhra's three-capital plan

- **The Andhra Pradesh high court ruled that Amaravati shall be the only capital city of the state which will be developed within six months, scrapping chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's ambitious "three-capital" plan** on the ground of legislative incompetence, abuse of power and arbitrariness.
- **A three-judge bench, headed by chief justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, declared that the Reddy-led YSRCP government's proposal for multiple capitals for the state was bereft of any legal authority and smacked of "malafides", depriving 30,000 unsuspecting farmers of their livelihood and the right to live a dignified life** after they voluntarily surrendered their land for development of the capital city.
- **Through a 2020 law, the Jagan government proposed Amaravati as the legislative capital, Visakhapatnam as the executive capital and Kurnool as the judicial capital. This law was withdrawn in 2021 when the matter reached the high court, but with a rider that the government would re-legislate on establishing multiple capitals after further deliberation.**
- **Extinguishing any possibility of a future legislation on multiple capitals for the south eastern coastal state, the high court ruled: "The state legislature has no legislative competence to pass any resolution or law for change of capital or bifurcating or trifurcating the capital city."**

PM Modi participates in QUAD Leaders' virtual meeting; Focus on developments in Indo-Pacific

- **The QUAD Leaders' virtual meeting is held in March 2022. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the meeting along with US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison and Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida.**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi "emphasised the need to return to a path of dialogue and diplomacy" for a way forward in the Ukraine crisis** at a virtual meeting of the Quad leaders, a statement from his office said. In his remarks, **PM Modi also reiterated the importance of adhering to the UN Charter, international law and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.** Ukraine was one of the key issues discussed at the meeting.

IndiGo joined Operation Ganga to evacuate stranded Indian nationals in Ukraine

- **IndiGo joined Operation Ganga to evacuate stranded Indian nationals in Ukraine.** The airline will be flying on the Delhi-Istanbul-Budapest route. **The first IndiGo flight has taken off for Istanbul.**
- **Foreign Secretary Harsh V Shringla had announced the launch of Operation Ganga to evacuate stranded citizens in Ukraine** amid a worsening crisis in the country following the declaration of war by Russia.

Operation Ganga is an ongoing operation by the Government of India to provide humanitarian assistance amidst the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine to Indian citizens who have crossed over to neighboring countries. This then involves transport assistance from the neighboring countries of Romania, Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Slovakia to reach India. The Indian Air Force and multiple private airlines (Air India, IndiGo, Air India Express, SpiceJet, Vistara, AirAsia India and Go First) provided logistical support.

Indian and Japanese armies begun joint exercise in Belagavi

- The Indian and Japanese armies have started their annual Dharma Guardian exercise in Karnataka. The exercise, being conducted since 2018, will go on till March 10 at the Foreign Training Node in Belagavi, Karnataka.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro. Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan since 4 October 2021. He has also served as President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

Karnataka's first public data office

- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd inaugurated Karnataka's first public data office in Mysuru aiming to provide seamless high-speed internet connection through Wi-Fi. The high-speed but cost-effective Wi-Fi service covers the entire village of Ramanahalli, bringing the local connectivity on par with any city or town. This is part of the public Wi-Fi policy of the Government of India to provide seamless internet connection. The PDO was officially cleared by the Union Cabinet in December 2020 to the Department of Telecommunications for setting up public Wi-Fi networks by Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) so as to accelerate the penetration of broadband internet services in the rural hinterland and across the country.

In December 2020, Public Wi-Fi plan 'PM Wani' gets cabinet approval. The move is aimed at helping accelerate the uptake of broadband Internet services. It was first recommended by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in 2017. This will allow setting up of public WiFi hotspots across the country via public data offices or public data offices (PDOs). It will not require the PDOs to get a license or pay a fee. This will involve multiple players, including PDOs, Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOA), app providers, and a central registry.

Kolkata's Toretta Bazaar, called 'India's First Chinatown', among World Monuments Watch list for 2022

- While there is no dearth of heritage structures in India that are of cultural significance, there are some that need immediate attention and preservation. Among them, is the Toretta Bazaar, a neighborhood in Kolkata, which is also called the Old China Market. The place has been identified and included in the World Monuments Watch list for 2022.
- According to World Monuments Fund (WMF), this year's Watch "spotlights 25 heritage sites of extraordinary significance, facing pressing challenges, and where World Monuments Fund's partnership with local communities has the potential to make a meaningful difference".

India's first indigenous Flying Trainer HANSA-NG successfully completes sea level trials

- India's first indigenous Flying Trainer HANSA-NG designed and developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories, Bangalore, has successfully completed the sea level trials at Puducherry from 19th February to 5th March.
- The aircraft was flown to Puducherry covering 140 nautical miles in one and half hours at a cruising speed of 155 km per hour on 19th February. The objectives of sea level trials were to evaluate handling qualities, climb and cruise performance, balked landing, structural performance power plant and other systems performance. CSIR-NAL sources said that all the objectives of the sea level trials are met and aircraft has been ferried back to Bangalore after completing 18 hours flying at Puducherry.
- HANSA-NG is one of the most advanced flying trainer powered by Rotax Digital Control Engine with unique features like Just-In-Time Prepreg (JIPREG) Composite light weight Airframe, Glass Cockpit, Bubble Canopy with wide panoramic view and electrically operated flaps. HANSA-NG is designed to meet

the Indian flying club needs and it is an ideal aircraft for Commercial Pilot Licensing due to its low cost and low fuel consumption.

India slips 3 spots to rank 120 on 17 SDG goals adopted as 2030 agenda

- India has slipped three spots from last year's 117 to rank 120 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 192 United Nations member states in 2015.
- With the latest rankings, India is now behind all south Asian nations except Pakistan, which stands at 129. The south Asian countries ahead of India are Bhutan ranked 75, Sri Lanka 87, Nepal 96 and Bangladesh 109. India's overall Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) score was 66 out of 100.

The Brundtland Commission, formerly the World Commission on Environment and Development, was a sub-organization of the United Nations (UN) that aimed to unite countries in pursuit of sustainable development. It was founded in 1983 when Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, appointed Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway, as chairperson of the commission. The Brundtland Commission officially dissolved in 1987 after releasing Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report. The document popularized the term "sustainable development" and won the Grawemeyer Award in 1991. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly (UN-GA) and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. They are included in a UN-GA Resolution called the 2030 Agenda or what is colloquially known as Agenda 2030. The SDGs were developed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda as the future global development framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals which ended in 2015. The 17 SDGs are: (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reduced Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and Production, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water, (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, (17) Partnerships for the Goals.

Meghalaya becomes ninth state to withdraw consent to CBI

- Meghalaya has withdrawn consent to the CBI, becoming the ninth state to do so in the past few years. The move comes despite the Conrad Sangma-led National People's Party being a part of the BJP's National Democratic Alliance. Barring Mizoram, all other states that have withdrawn consent to the CBI are ruled by Opposition parties.
- Earlier, besides Mizoram, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Kerala had withdrawn consent to the central probe agency. The withdrawal of consent means that the agency will not be able to investigate any case in the state without the state government's permission. Mizoram was the first state to withdraw this in 2015.

The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, governs the CBI and it is mandatory to obtain the concerned state government's consent before beginning to investigate a crime in a state. States typically give a general consent to assist the CBI in conducting a seamless investigation of cases of corruption involving central government personnel in their states. This is consent by default otherwise CBI would have to seek permission from the state government in every case, even for small tasks. It means that the CBI will not be able to file any new cases involving central government officials or private persons in the state without the permission of the state government. CBI officers who will be entering the state that has withdrawn consent will lose all powers of a police officer as soon as they enter the state unless they have received permission from the government of the state. In exercise of power conferred by Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, the state governments can withdraw the general consent accorded.

India's first open rock museum inaugurated in Hyderabad

- Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Jitendra Singh, inaugurated India's first Open Rock Museum. The museum displays around 35 different varieties of rocks from different parts of India with ages ranging from 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years. The Open Rock Museum, set up with the aim of educating and enlightening the masses about several lesser-known facts, displays around 35 different types of rocks from different parts of India with ages ranging from 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years of the Earth's history.

India-Sri Lanka maritime exercise SLINEX begins in Visakhapatnam

- The 9th edition of India – Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime Exercise named SLINEX (Sri Lanka–India Naval Exercise) is held at Visakhapatnam from 07 Mar to 10 Mar 2022. The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability and improve mutual understanding between the navies of the two neighbouring countries in the strategically significant Indian Ocean Region.

India's first 100% women-owned 'industrial park' inaugurated in Hyderabad

- India's Hyderabad city has opened the country's first 100% women-owned 'FLO Industrial Park' paving the way for female entrepreneurs to run and operate their business from this park.
- The 'FLO Industrial Park' began operations with 25 Green Projects in Hyderabad. It is promoted by FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) in partnership with the Telangana government. The commencement of operations by 25 women-owned and operated units represent 16 diverse Green Category Industries at the Park.

India's largest reclining statue of Lord Buddha to be open for devotees

- India's largest reclining statue of Lord Buddha is being built in Bodh Gaya. Built by Buddha International Welfare Mission, the statue will be 100 feet long and 30 feet high. Lord Buddha is in the sleeping posture in the statue. The construction of the giant statue started in the year 2019. It is being made with fiberglass and built by sculptors from Kolkata.
- Bodh Gaya is an important pilgrimage centre for Buddhism and is visited by devotees from all over the world. The idol of this posture of Lord Buddha is in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar where he attained his Mahaparinirvana. The giant statue of Lord Buddha will be open for devotees from February 2023.

Gautama Buddha, popularly known as the Buddha (also known as Siddhattha Gotama or Shakyamuni), was an ascetic, a religious leader and teacher who lived in ancient India (c. 6th to 5th century BCE or c. 5th to 4th century BCE). He is regarded as the founder of the world religion of Buddhism, and revered by Buddhists as an enlightened being, who rediscovered an ancient path to freedom from ignorance, craving and the cycle of rebirth and suffering. The Jataka tales are a voluminous body of literature native to India concerning the previous births of Gautama Buddha in both human and animal form.

In a first, India to get WHO traditional medicine centre in Gujarat

- The Government of India announced that the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the establishment of a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (WHO GCTM) in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- This would be the first and only global outpost Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe. This deal was done between the Government of India and the World Health Organization (WHO) by signing a Host Country agreement.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The WHO Constitution states its main objective as "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health". Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has six regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide. The WHO was established on 7 April 1948. The Director-General is Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia.

BJP retains power in UP, Uttarakhand & Manipur; emerges as single largest party in Goa

- BJP retains power in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Manipur and emerges as single largest party in Goa. 2022 Legislative Assembly elections were held in Uttar Pradesh from 10 February to 7 March 2022 in seven phases to elect all 403 members of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly. The votes were counted and the results were declared on 10 March 2022. The BJP became the first party to retain power in the state since 1985. The BJP and its allied parties won 273 out of 403 Assembly seats while the Samajwadi Party-led coalition clinched 125 seats.
- The Legislative Assembly elections were held in Punjab on 20 February 2022 to elect the 117 members of the 16th Assembly of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. The votes were counted and the results were declared on 10 March 2022. AAP won massive victory with 92 seats and AAP CM candidate Bhagwant Mann contested from Dhuri and won it.
- Legislative Assembly elections were held in Uttarakhand on 14 February 2022 to elect 70 members of the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly. The votes will be counted and the results will be declared on 10 March 2022. BJP retained the power with 47 seats.

CJI N.V Ramana lays foundation stone for Arbitration centre in Hyderabad

- **India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC)** was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad. The IAMC has come up with 25,000 sq ft temporary accommodation at VK Towers in Gachibowli, an information technology hub. **IAMC-Hyderabad is India's first arbitration centre for alternate dispute resolution.**

Arbitration is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedure in which a dispute is submitted, by agreement of the parties, to one or more arbitrators who make a binding decision on the dispute. In choosing arbitration, the parties opt for a private dispute resolution procedure instead of going to court. Conciliation is also an alternative dispute resolution instrument where parties seek to reach an amicable dispute settlement with the assistance of the conciliator, who acts as a neutral third party. It is a voluntary proceeding, where the parties involved are free to agree and attempt to resolve their dispute by conciliation.

India is the biggest importer of arms in 2017-2021

- **India may be pushing for 'atmanirbharta (indigenous development)' in defence equipment** — the central government earmarked 68 per cent of the capital budget for 2022-23 for domestic manufacturing industries — but the **India remains the largest importer of arms globally, a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** has shown. **Most of India's defence imports come from Russia.**
- **The five largest arms importers in the 2017-21 period were India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Australia, and China, while the five biggest exporters of arms in the same period were the United States, Russia, France, China, and Germany.**

Mumbai's first Climate Action Plan (MCAP) released

- **Mumbai city's first Climate Action Plan (MCAP), a policy document to adopt an evidence-based planning approach and mobilize resources to move from action planning to strategic projects was released.**
- Through the plan, the BMC also has its eyes set on **Mumbai achieving net-zero ahead of the Government of India's deadline of 2070.** Achieving a balance between the **quantity of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated and the amount removed from the atmosphere is referred to as net-zero.**

India's first 'World Peace Center' will be established in Gurugram

- **Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti organisation established by Ambassador of Peace, Eminent Jainacharya Dr Lokeshji will establish India's first World Peace Center in Gurugram, Haryana.** For this, the Haryana Government has allotted a plot to the organization in Sector 39 of Gurugram opposite Medanta Hospital and adjacent to Delhi-Jaipur Highway. **'World Peace Center' will work for the establishment of peace and harmony in the world.**
- **The voice of this centre of Gurugram will be heard all over the world by its work, including the United Nations and the World Religion Parliament. 'World Peace Center' will be a major world-class centre for personality building, where various dimensions such as Personality Development of Youth, Empowerment of Women and Sanskar Development in Children through Meditation, Yoga, Indian Culture and Jain lifestyle based scientific programs will also be conducted here.**

World Bank to Support Himachal Pradesh's Plan of making it India's First Green State

- **World Bank Vice-President for South Asia, Hartwig Schafer, concluded a two-day visit to Himachal Pradesh state with a plan to make it the first green state in India.** Schafer met with Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur to **discuss the progress Himachal Pradesh has been making towards a greener and more sustainable growth path and its vision for the future.**

Bhagwant Mann assumes office as Punjab Chief Minister

- **Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Bhagwant Mann assumed office as the 18th Chief Minister of Punjab at the state civil secretariat in Chandigarh. Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mann in the swearing-in ceremony that took place at Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of legendary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh in Punjab's Shaheed Bhagat Singh (SBS) Nagar district.**

Punjab is a state in northern India. The state is bordered by the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh to the north and northeast, Haryana to the south and southeast, and Rajasthan to the southwest; by the Indian union territories of Chandigarh to the east and Jammu and Kashmir to the north. It shares an international border by Punjab, a province of Pakistan to the west. The state capital is Chandigarh, a union territory and also the capital of the neighbouring state of Haryana. The five tributary rivers of the Indus River from which the region took its name are the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum rivers (in order from east to west). After the partition of India in 1947, only 3 of the 5 rivers, the Sutlej, Ravi and Beas rivers flows in Indian Punjab, while other two rivers became part of Punjab, Pakistan.

Pramod Sawant sworn in as CM of Goa

- **Pramod Sawant was sworn in as Goa's chief minister for a second straight term**, which comes 18 days after the poll results were announced in the coastal state. **In Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami gets to play a second innings.** Of the five states, the BJP won four - Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Uttarakhand, apart from Goa. The AAP, which won Punjab with a landslide majority, had taken a swipe at the BJP over the delay.

The Annexation of Goa was the process in which the Republic of India annexed the former Portuguese Indian territories of Goa, Daman and Diu, starting with the armed action carried out by the Indian Armed Forces in December 1961. In India, this action is referred to as the "Liberation of Goa". In Portugal, it is referred to as the "Invasion of Goa". The "armed action" was code named Operation Vijay (meaning "Victory") by the Indian Armed Forces. It involved air, sea and land strikes for over 36 hours, and was a decisive victory for India, ending 451 years of rule by Portugal over its remaining exclaves in India. Following the end of Portuguese rule in 1961, Goa was placed under military administration headed by Kunhiraman Palat Candeth as Lieutenant Governor. December 19 is observed as Goa Liberation Day to commemorate the role of India's armed forces in liberating Goa from Portuguese rule.

3rd edition of India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise begins in Yangiariq

- **The 3rd edition of joint training exercise between Indian and Uzbekistan armies, EX-DUSTLIK is being conducted at Yangiariq, Uzbekistan.** The Indian contingent which comprises of platoon strength of Grenadiers Regiment, departed for the exercise area to join the Uzbekistan Army contingent represented by troops of the North Western Military District.
- **The last edition of DUSTLIK was conducted in Ranikhet, Uttarakhand.** The joint exercise would **focus on counter terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain under a United Nations Mandate.** The training schedule will focus primarily on sharing of tactical level drills and learning of best practices from each other.

Dhami sworn in as Uttarakhand CM for his second term

- **Puskar Singh Dhami was sworn in as Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, for the second time** in eight months, during a ceremony at Parade Ground here in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Among the cabinet ministers who took oath were three new inductees – Chandan Ramdas (Bageshwar MLA), Premchand Agarwal (Rishikesh MLA) and Saurabh Bahuguna (Sitarganj MLA). Agarwal, who was the speaker in the previous legislative assembly, took oath in Sanskrit. Besides Dhami, eight other cabinet ministers were also **administered the oath by Uttarakhand governor Lt Gen (retd) Gurmit Singh** at the event.

Indian Coast Guard's fifth offshore patrol vessel Saksham commissioned in Goa

- **Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) fifth offshore patrol vessel 'Saksham' was commissioned in Goa.** "The 105-meter offshore patrol vessel [OPV] has been **designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited** and is fitted with advanced technology, navigation and communication equipment, sensors, and machinery.
- **Goa Shipyard Limited designed and built the 105-meter OPV**, which is equipped with advanced technology, navigation and communication systems, sensors, and machinery. **The ship will be based in Kochi once it joins the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) force.** Ship will be **used extensively for surveillance in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and other missions mandated by the Coast Guard charter.**

Tamil Nadu: GI tag for handmade Narasingapettai nagaswaram

- **The Narasingapettai Nagaswaram has earned the Geographical Indication (GI) tag under 'musical instruments of class 15'.** The unique feature of the nagaswaram is its production process - it is handmade in Narasingapettai village in Thanjavur, unlike the other machine-made ones.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin." The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

Uttarakhand Cabinet decides to form committee on implementation of Uniform Civil Code

- **Uttarakhand cabinet led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami decided to form a committee of experts on the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code in the state. Dhami said after the meeting that Uttarakhand will be the first state to implement such a code, but quickly added that "perhaps it is already in force in Goa".**
- **Goa has been following the Portuguese Civil Code, 1867 which is also called Uniform Civil Code. Post its liberation from the Portuguese rule, the code is survived by virtue of Section 5(1) of the Goa, Daman and Diu Administration Act, 1962.**

Article 44 of the Constitution says that there should be a Uniform Civil Code. According to this article, "The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India". Since the Directive Principles are only guidelines, it is not mandatory to use them. Whereas the founders of the Constitution in Article 44 in Part IV dealing with the Directive Principles of State Policy had hoped and expected that the State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territories of India, till date no action has been taken in this regard.

Yogi Adityanath takes oath as UP CM for second term

- **Yogi Adityanath was sworn in as the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh for the second consecutive term. This was followed by the oath taking of deputy CMs Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak.**
- **50 other Ministers in the new cabinet also took oath on the day which includes, 16 other cabinet ministers, 14 state ministers with independent charge and 20 ministers of state. Many of Yogi's former cabinet colleagues could not manage to get ministerial berths this time.**

All five nominees of AAP from Punjab elected unopposed to Rajya Sabha

- **All the nominees of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) from Punjab have been elected unopposed to Rajya Sabha. The nominees include IIT Delhi Professor Sandeep Kumar Pathak, Raghav Chadha, the founder of Lovely Professional University Ashok Mittal, Industrialist Sanjeev Arora and cricketer Harbhajan Singh.**
- **The five Rajyasabha members from Punjab Sukhdev Singh, Partap Singh Bajwa, Shwait Malik, Naresh Gujral and Shamsher Singh Dullu are retiring on 9th April this year.**

The Rajya Sabha, constitutionally the Council of States (informally known as the House of Elders), is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of India. As of March 2022 it has a maximum membership of 245, of which 233 are elected by the legislatures of the states and union territories using single transferable votes through Open Ballot while the President can appoint 12 members for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social services. The potential seating capacity of the Rajya Sabha is 250 (238 elected, 12 appointed), according to article 80 of the Indian Constitution. Members sit for staggered terms lasting six years, with about a third of the 233 designates up for election every two years, in even-numbered years. The Rajya Sabha meets in continuous sessions, and unlike the Lok Sabha, being the lower house of the Parliament, the Rajya Sabha is not subjected to dissolution. However, the Rajya Sabha, like the Lok Sabha can be prorogued by the President.

Meghalaya root bridges in UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites

- **Living Root Bridges, found in over 70 villages in Meghalaya highlighting the socio-cultural, social and botanical links among people and nature, have been included in the tentative list of World Heritage Sites of the UNESCO.**

- Villagers grow the living root-bridges by training the ‘*ficus elastica*’ tree on both sides of water bodies over a period of about 10 to 15 years where the roots form the bridge. At present, there are about 100 known living root bridges spread across 72 villages in the state.
- **Living Root Bridges of Meghalaya** which highlight the socio-cultural, social and botanical links among people and nature are well deserving of the tag of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Lepakshi Nandi, Veerabhadra temple on UNESCO World Heritage tentative list

- The Sri Veerabhadra Swamy temple and the Monolithic Bull (Nandi) at Lepakshi in Anantapur district known for the Vijayanagara sculpture and painting art tradition have found a place on the tentative list of the World Heritage Committee and the same was published on the UNESCO World Heritage Convention website.
- The famous Veerabhadra Swamy temple at Lepakshi, about 100 kms north of Bengaluru, along with the iconic Nandi statue is added to UNESCO’s tentative list of world heritage sites in India for 2022. The inclusion on the list is a step closer to the monument of cultural, historical and architectural significance being declared a part of world heritage.
- A world heritage status for the temple complex has been a long-pending demand which was renewed last year when the Ramappa temple in neighbouring Telangana was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In a first, India to have a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Gujarat’s Jamnagar

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the government of India signed an agreement on 25 March, 2022, to establish a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine at Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- This would be the first and only global outposted Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe. This global knowledge centre for traditional medicine aims to harness the potential of traditional medicine from around the world through modern science and technology to improve people’s and the planet’s health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The WHO Constitution states its main objective as “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has six regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide. **The WHO was established on 7 April 1948. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is an Ethiopian, public health researcher, and official who has been Director-General of the World Health Organization since 2017.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in BIMSTEC summit

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 5th BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit hosted in virtual mode by Sri Lanka, the current chair of BIMSTEC.
- Prior to the 5th BIMSTEC Summit, preparatory meetings at the Senior Official and Foreign Minister levels were held in Colombo on 28-29 March in the hybrid mode. The Summit’s theme “Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People” captures the main current priorities of member states, and the efforts by BIMSTEC to develop cooperation activities that support member state’s programmes to deal with the economic and development consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion (2021). **The BIMSTEC member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand–** are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. **Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors.** A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018), also referred to as the mini SAARC. Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. **The permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.**

President Kovind launches Jal Shakti Abhiyan-Catch the Rain 2022 to ensure water security

- President Ram Nath Kovind launched the Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain 2022, heralding a new era of ensuring water security in the country. This year’s focus of the campaign is **springshed development, catchment area augmentation and gender-mainstreaming**. The government is taking effective all-out efforts to ensure water security and conservation of water bodies across the country.

- To transform Jal Andolan into a Jan Andolan, Jal Shakti Abhiyan and Jal Jeevan Mission were launched in 2019 in which several recharge structures were made and crores of people joined-in. **On 22nd March 2022, the Prime Minister of India launched the “Catch the Rain, where it falls, when it falls” campaign.** I am happy to launch the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2022 for the period 29 March, 2022 to 30 November, 2022.
- **World Water Day is observed on March 22** to raise awareness about the importance of water and educate people to conserve it. **The theme of World Water Day this year is “Groundwater, making the invisible visible”.**

India crosses milestone of 50,000 ODF Plus villages

- **India has crossed a milestone of 50 thousand open defecation-free (ODF) Plus villages. Among the top performing States are Telangana with 13 thousand 960 ODF Plus villages followed by Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh.**
- **Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen Phase-II was launched in February 2020** with the aim to ensure that all villages in the country can **declare themselves as ODF Plus by the end of 2024.**

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, or Clean India Mission is a country-wide campaign initiated by the Government of India in 2014 to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management. It is a restructured version of the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan launched in 2009 that failed to achieve its intended targets. Phase 1 of the Swachh Bharat Mission lasted till October 2019. Phase 2 is being implemented between 2020–21 and 2024–25 to help cement the work of Phase 1. Initiated by the Government of India, the mission aimed to achieve an “open-defecation free” (ODF) India by 2 October 2019, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi through construction of toilets. The mission is aimed at progressing towards target 6.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals Number 6 established by the United Nations in 2015.

Nitin Gadkari rides hydrogen-powered car to Parliament, first of its kind in India

- **Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari arrived at Parliament in a green hydrogen-powered car.** The minister travelled from his residence to Parliament in this car. It is the **first of its kind in India, and Gadkari hailed it as the future of India. Mirai is one of the few Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEVs) in the world and only runs on hydrogen generated electricity.**
- **The company claimed that Toyota Mirai is powered by a hydrogen fuel cell battery pack and capable of providing a range up to 650 km in a single charge, with a refuelling time of five minutes. This could bring down the cost of travel to just Rs 2 per km. In Japanese, the word ‘Mirai’ means ‘future’.**

20th bilateral Naval Exercise between Indian, French Navies - VARUNA being conducted in Arabian Sea till 3rd April

- **The 20th edition of the bilateral Naval Exercise between Indian and French Navies - VARUNA is being conducted in the Arabian Sea till 3rd of April. These units will endeavour to enhance and hone their operational skills in maritime theatre, augment inter-operability to undertake maritime security operations and demonstrate their commitment to promote peace, security and stability in the region as an integrated force.**
- **The exercise has been a principal driver for operational level interactions between the two navies and has underscored the shared commitment of both nations to security, safety and freedom of the global maritime commons. The Bilateral Naval Exercises between the two Navies were initiated in 1993.**

France is a transcontinental country spanning Western Europe and overseas regions and territories in the Americas and the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. Emmanuel Macron is serving as the President of France. Paris is the capital city and Euro is its official currency along with CFP franc for its overseas collectivities.

Maharashtra to be 1st state to launch criminals’ biometric database

- **A digital fingerprint and iris scanning system to aid police investigations with a database of 6.5 lakh people with crime records launched by Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray. “Called automated multimodal biometric identification system (AMBIS), it is a different kind of data digitization.**
- **Termed as an automated multimodal biometric identification system (AMBIS), the information on the criminals’ biometric database has been validated by the bureau of fingerprint experts. This digitisation of data will help the law enforcing agencies to track criminals at a fast speed.**

In a first, India opens up central government procurement market to UAE

- In a major shift in its trade policy stance, **India has opened up its central government procurement market to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under the free trade agreement (FTA) signed.**
- This will give national treatment status to UAE companies, on a par with Indian companies, while bidding for central government tenders. **The India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), set to come into force on May 1,** includes a chapter on government procurement, granting UAE-based companies treatment on par with domestic companies. **This is the first instance of India including government procurement in a Free Trade Agreement (FTA).**

India's first Integrated Smart City launched in Tamil Nadu with over 150 world-class amenities

- **A real estate developer- G Square, launched Tamil Nadu's first Integrated Smart City in Coimbatore spread across 120.7 acres. It is a first-of-its-kind project in India with over 150 world-class amenities, including a helipad and a 50,000 sq. ft clubhouse. Coimbatore's Smart City would help the firm promote projects on plots through its new project G Square City.**

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. Ravindra Narayana Ravi is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu. M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Kanyakumari (also known as Cape Comorin) is a town in Kanyakumari District in the state of Tamil Nadu in India. Cape Comorin is the southern tip of Indian subcontinent. The southernmost town in mainland India, it is sometimes referred to as 'The Land's End'.

Maiden edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22)

- **The maiden edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22) was conducted at Goa and in Arabian Sea from 26 – 30 Mar 22.**
- **The aim of the exercise was to enhance interoperability in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations among member navies.** The exercise witnessed participation of 15 out of the 25 member nations of IONS.

India and Australia sign Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement to double bilateral trade in 5 years

- **The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement was signed.** The agreement was signed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Trade, Tourism and Investment Minister of Australia Dan Tehan in a virtual ceremony in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison.
- **Sealing a pact that their leaders hailed as a "watershed moment" and "one of the biggest economic doors there is to open in the world", India and Australia signed an Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA) which is set to provide zero-duty access to 96 per cent of India's exports to Australia** including shipments from key sectors such as engineering goods, gems and jewellery, textiles, apparel and leather.

AUKUS to deepen cooperation on hypersonics, electronic warfare capabilities

- In a step that enhances their security commitments and visibility in the Indo-Pacific, **with a clear eye on the challenge posed by China's military assertiveness and technological advances, leaders of Australia, United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS) have declared that they are commencing "new trilateral cooperation on hypersonics, counter-hypersonics, and electronic warfare capabilities".** This initiative, announced in September 2021, had led to the emergence of AUKUS.
- **US President Joe Biden, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and the Australian PM Scott Morrison spoke to assess the progress under AUKUS.** According to a statement issued by the leaders, **the three countries reiterated their commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine,** and commitment to an "international system that respects human rights, the rule of law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes free from coercion".

AUKUS is a trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, announced on 15 September 2021 for the Indo-Pacific region. Under the pact, the US and the UK will help Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines. The pact also includes cooperation on “cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies and additional undersea capabilities”. The pact will focus on military capability, separating it from the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing alliance that also includes New Zealand and Canada. On 17 September 2021, France, which is an ally of the three countries, recalled its ambassadors from Australia and the US; French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called the pact a “stab in the back” following Australia’s cancellation of a French–Australian submarine deal worth ₹56 billion (A\$90 billion) without notice, ending efforts to develop a deeper strategic partnership between France and Australia.

Govt says forthcoming census is to be first digital Census

- The government said the **forthcoming census is to be the first digital Census and there is a provision for self-enumeration.** The Census 2021 and related field activities have been postponed until further orders due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

The decennial Census of India has been conducted 15 times, as of 2011. While it has been undertaken every 10 years, beginning in 1872 under British Viceroy Lord Mayo, the first complete census was taken in 1881. Post 1949, it has been conducted by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. All the censuses since 1951 were conducted under the 1948 Census of India Act. The last census was held in 2011, whilst the next was to be held in 2021. But it has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PM Modi, Nepal PM Deuba flag off India-Nepal rail link, launched Nepalese RuPay

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepal counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba met in New Delhi. They jointly flagged off the first passenger train service between the two neighboring nations.**
- **The launch of the much-awaited 35-km long cross-border railway link will connect Jaynagar in Bihar with Kurtha in Nepal.** Both counterparts also launched the RuPay digital payment application for Nepal.
- **The Jaynagar–Kurtha cross-border railway link, according to a Kathmandu Post report, will be the first modern railway service in Nepal.** The DEMU train will operate with five coaches. The Konkan Rail Corporation Limited has provided two sets of 1600 HP DEMU passenger rakes.
- **The DEMU rakes have 2AC coaches. The rakes were handed over to Nepal in 2020. The rail service between Jayanagar and Bijalpura in Nepal was introduced in 1937 during British rule. It was, however, suspended in 2001 after floods in Nepal.**
- **They also inaugurated the Solu Corridor 132 KV Power Transmission Line and Substation in Nepal built under Govt of India’s Line of Credit. Deuba and PM Modi met at the Hyderabad House, before which Deuba paid his tributes to father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat.**
- **Nepal shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states – Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.** Land-locked Nepal relies heavily on India for the transportation of goods and services. Nepal’s access to the sea is through India, and it imports a predominant proportion of its requirements from and through India.
- **The India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 forms the bedrock of the special relations between the two countries.**

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. Nepal has a diverse geography, including fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world’s ten tallest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth. Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, with Nepali as the official language. Kathmandu is the nation’s capital and the largest city. The name “Nepal” is first recorded in texts from the Vedic period of the Indian subcontinent, the era in ancient Nepal when Hinduism was founded, the predominant religion of the country. The Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, affirms Nepal as a secular federal parliamentary republic divided into seven provinces. Sher Bahadur Deuba is serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since 13 July 2021. Bidya Devi Bhandari is serving as the second president of Nepal, in office since 28 October 2015. She is the first woman to hold the office in the country. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

Underwater metro tunnel in Kolkata – India's first - to be ready in 2023

- The construction of India's first underwater tunnel in Kolkata under the Hooghly River for establishing metro connectivity between Howrah and Kolkata is underway and will be made fully functional by 2023.
- Of the 16.6-km-long east-west stretch, 520 metres will be under the river bed. The tunnel corridor is built 33 meters below the riverbed and will connect Kolkata to Howrah. The Kolkata East-West Metro line is being constructed by Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRCL) and is the underwater tunnel that will go beneath the Hooghly River.

Foreign Secy Harsh Vardhan Shringla to be G20 coordinator

- Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla will be appointed as coordinator for the G20 summit, which will be hosted by India in 2023. Shringla, who retires on April 30, will take charge of his new role as G20 coordinator on May 1.
- This is a newly created role for organising the summit, which will include both substantive aspects as well as logistics. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will remain the G20 sherpa.

IIT-Kharagpur among the top universities in the world: QS World University Rankings 2022

- IIT-Kharagpur has been named as one of the top universities of the world for the study of several subjects in the domain of engineering, according to the latest edition of QS World University Ranking. In the QS ranking IIT Kharagpur has been ranked among India's top three domestically.
- The institute ranked 37th in 2022 an improvement from its 44th position in 2021 in mineral and mining engineering and 80th in 2022 from 90th in 2021 in electrical and electronic engineering globally. In engineering and technology, which are the domains of the pioneering institute, it ranked 101st in the world and third in India, as per the 12th QS World University Rankings by Subject 2022 announced on April 6, it said.

Delhi becomes first state to include and incentivise e-cycles

- Delhi Government in a significant decision has announced to include e-cycles in its ambitious Electric Vehicle(EV) Policy. Delhi has now become the first state in the country to incentivize e-cycles under its EV policy.

Hyderabad wins 'Tree City of the World' tag yet again

- In a major green achievement, Hyderabad, for the second consecutive year, has been recognised as the 'Tree City of the World' by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations.
- Hyderabad was the only city in India to be recognised as a 'Tree City of the World' last year but this year, Mumbai too joined the list. They are now listed with 136 other cities from 21 countries recognised by the FAO across the world.

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurates Gujarat's first Indo-Pak border viewing point at Nadabet

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated viewing point at the India-Pakistan International Border at Nadabet in the Banaskantha district of Gujarat. The Seema Darshan Project is aimed at increasing tourist footfalls in the region. It is being developed in line with Wagah-Attari border; however, there will be no military drill as such between the troops of India and Pakistan. The viewing point, which will be the first in the state, will be developed as a major tourist attraction, officials said. Shah inaugurated Nadabet Indo-Pak border viewing point.

PMs' museum inaugurated on April 14

- The Prime Ministers' museum at Teen Murti Bhawan inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the birth anniversary of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on April 14. The new museum, spread over 10,491 square metres, is equipped with latest technologies such as holograms, augmented reality, interactive kiosks and screens, kinetic sculptures, and smartphone applications. "The Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya was inaugurated which is also the day of the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar (the chief architect of the Indian constitution).
- The Teen Murti Bhavan (formerly known as Flagstaff House) is the former residence in New Delhi of the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. He stayed there for 16 years until his death on 27 May 1964. It was designed by Robert Tor Russell, the British architect of Connaught Place.

Narendra Damodardas Modi is serving as the 14th and current Prime Minister of India since 2014. Modi was the **Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014** and is the **Member of Parliament from Varanasi**. He is the **first prime minister to have been born after India's independence in 1947** and the **second prime minister not belonging to the Indian National Congress to have won two consecutive majorities in the Lok Sabha**, or lower house of Indian of parliament. He is also the **longest serving prime minister from a non-Congress party**.

Rajnath Singh arrives in Washington to attend India-US 2+2 dialogue

- Recently, the fourth '2+2' dialogue between India and the United States took place in Washington DC, US. India's External Affairs and Defence Ministers meet with their American counterparts. This meeting was held on the sidelines of a virtual meeting between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the US.
- The US is India's oldest and most important 2+2 talks partner. The first 2+2 dialogue between the two countries was held during the Trump Administration in 2018. India and the US have signed a troika of "foundational pacts" for deep military cooperation: Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) after the first 2+2 dialogue in 2018, Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020.

2+2 Ministerial is the highest-level institutional mechanism between the two countries. It is a format of dialogue where the defence/foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country. India has 2+2 dialogues with four key strategic partners: the US, Australia, Japan, and Russia. Besides Russia, the other three countries are also India's partners in the Quad.

India's first bullet train to be operational in 2027

- India's first bullet train will be operational in 2027 and trials will begin in 2026, National High Speed Rail Corridor (NHSRCL) chairman and managing director Satish Agnihotri said that the country's first bullet train station in Surat will be inaugurated by 2023.

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed corridor will have a high-speed train, with financial assistance from the Japanese Government. "National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited", a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) has been formed for the implementation of this project. The Shinkansen high-speed technology will be used in this train. Shinkansen means "new trunk lines" in literal terms, which refers to the high-speed rail network in Japan. The Shinkansen high-speed trains of Japan are colloquially called as bullet trains for their appearance and speed. The 2009-2010 Rail Budget of India introduced the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor and 5 other high-speed rail corridors for a feasibility study.

Cabinet approves continuation of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan till 2025-26

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved continuation of the revamped Centrally-sponsored scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan from the first of this month to 31st of March 2026. The decision will help 2.78 lakh rural local bodies to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.
- This will promote equity and inclusiveness along with social justice and economic development. It will also help in achieving improved service delivery and transparency. The total outlay for this scheme is five thousand nine hundred 11 crore rupees with Central share of three thousand seven hundred crore rupees and State share will be two thousand two hundred eleven crore rupees.

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme was first approved by the Cabinet in 2018 for implementation from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The implementing agency is Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The scheme is now **co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission period**. The scheme is aimed to develop governance capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

Vagsheer, sixth submarine under Scorpene project launched on Apr 20

- The Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL) launched 'Vagsheer', the sixth submarine under the P75 Scorpene project, on April 20. Sea trials for 'Vagir', the fifth submarine of Project 75, started in February 2022. INS Vagsheer is the last of the Scorpene Class Submarines of Project-75. These submarines are being constructed at Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, under the collaboration with Naval Group, France.

- **Vagsheer is the last submarine of the P75 Scorpene project. The INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj and INS Vela have already been commissioned while sea trials of the Vagir are underway. With the launch of INS Vagsheer in Mumbai, India has successfully further cemented its position as a submarine building nation which is in tune with PM Modi's initiative of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India.**

The number 75 in Project 75 refers to such unique identifier which was assigned to a programme for series production of submarines in India. Based on the specifications drawn for Project 75, the Scorpene class submarine from France, chosen under the project. It is being constructed at the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. In a series production of the warship construction project, all ships/submarines of the series have common design characteristics and capabilities. Under this project, the Indian Navy intends to acquire six conventional, diesel-electric attack submarines, which will also feature advanced capabilities - including air-independent propulsion (AIP), ISR, special operations forces (SOF), anti-ship warfare (AShW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), land-attack capabilities and other features.

Chief Justice of India NV Ramana visits Attari border, first CJI to do so

- **Chief Justice of India NV Ramana visited the Attari-Wagah border, becoming the first Chief Justice of India to visit this India-Pakistan international border near Amritsar. CJI Ramana, along with his family, watched the famous beating the retreat ceremony at the Attari-Wagah border and was seen cheering for India. The CJI had also visited the Border Security Force museum and Zero-point.**

India gets elected to four UN ECOSOC bodies

- **India has been elected to four key bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council, including the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the UN System established by the UN Charter in 1945. It consists of 54 members of the United Nations elected by the General Assembly.**
- **“India gets elected to 4 @UN ECOSOC Bodies: Commission for Social Development, Committee on NGOs, Commission on Science & Technology for Development and Ambassador Preeti Saran gets re-elected to Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,”. In 2018, she was first elected to the Asia Pacific seat on the UN's Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. On 1st January 2019, her first four-year term began.**

BRO to construct world's highest tunnel at Shinku La Pass to connect Himachal to Ladakh

- **BRO Director General Lieutenant General Rajeev Chaudhary announced that the Border Roads Organisation will build the world's highest tunnel at Shinku La Pass, at 16,580 feet, to connect Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. He said this while opening the strategically crucial Himachal to Zaskar Road at Shinku La Pass, where more than a half-dozen vehicles crossed from the Zaskar side towards Manali. This tunnel, to be completed by 2025, will change the economy of Zaskar Valley.**
- **The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) would begin construction of the tunnel connecting Himachal Pradesh and the Zaskar Valley in Ladakh by July this year. He stated that the Centre has already established BRO's 'Mission Yojak' to carry out this ambitious project.**

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is a road construction executive force in India that provides support to and is now a part of the Indian Armed Forces. The BRO was formed on 7 May 1960 to secure India's borders and develop infrastructure in remote areas of the north and north-east states of the country. BRO develops and maintains road networks in India's border areas and friendly neighboring countries. BRO set a Guinness World Record in November 2021 for the “highest altitude road” at Umling La. BRO has been instrumental in constructing some of the great Engineering Marvels like Atal Tunnel, Atal setu, Col Chewang Rinchen Setu to name a few. In a bid to boost border connectivity, BRO has been entirely brought under the Ministry of Defence in 2015.

India's first-ever radio channel for the visually impaired, named 'Radio Aksh' has been launched in Nagpur

- **India's first-ever radio channel for the visually impaired, named 'Radio Aksh' has been launched in Nagpur, with the Blind Relief Association Nagpur and Samdrushti Kshamata Vikas Avam Anusandhan Mandal (Saksham) serving as the pioneers of the concept that will help the visually-impaired gain seamless access to education resources and audiobooks.**

India's first Skill India International Centre launched in Bhubaneswar

- **Union skill development and entrepreneurship minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched the India's first Skill India International Centre in Bhubaneswar.** The centre will train Indian youth as per international standards with an aim to enhance overseas opportunities for the skilled workforce as per demand of international employers in countries such as Canada, Australia and the Gulf region.
- **The centre is set up in collaboration between the Skill Development Institute (SDI), Bhubaneswar and NSDC International (NSDCI),** a subsidiary of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the Union ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship.

PM Narendra Modi unveils 108-ft statue of Lord Hanuman, says 2 more to come

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 108-foot statue of Lord Hanuman in Gujarat's Morbi district.** The statue is the **second of the four statues** that are being set up in four directions across the country.

PM Narendra Modi lays foundation stone of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine - GCTM in Jamnagar, Gujarat

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine - GCTM in Jamnagar, Gujarat.** Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and **Director-General of World Health Organization Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus** were also present on this occasion.
- **Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bhutan Lotay Tshering and Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba** conveyed their greetings for **WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine -GCTM** through video message.

Rajasthan becomes first State to get L-root server

- **Rajasthan has become the first State in the country to get the L-root server,** which will enable the State government to provide its flagship digital services and enforce e-governance with seamless internet connectivity. The new facility will strengthen internet infrastructure and help improve security and resilience of internet-based operations.

Rajasthan is a state in northern India. It is the **largest Indian state by area** and the seventh largest by population. It is on India's northwestern side, where it comprises most of the wide and **inhospitable Thar Desert (also known as the Great Indian Desert)** and shares a border with the Pakistani provinces of Punjab to the northwest and Sindh to the west, along the Sutlej-Indus River valley. **Kalraj Mishra is serving as the Governor of Rajasthan.**

400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur celebrated at Red Fort

- **The government of India celebrated the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur** with a two-day event at Red Fort. Addressing an event from the Red Fort to mark the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the government is making efforts to connect pilgrimages of Sikh tradition.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth of ten Gurus who founded the Sikh religion and the leader of Sikhs from 1665 until his beheading in 1675. After the execution of Tegh Bahadur by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, a number of Sikh temples were built in his and his associates' memory. The Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, was built over where he was beheaded.

India's first portable solar rooftop system unveiled in Gandhinagar

- **The first portable solar rooftop system in India has been inaugurated at Swaminarayan Akshardham temple complex in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.** The 10 Photovoltaic PV Port system has been **manufactured by New Delhi-based Servotech Power Systems Ltd and designed by the German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).** The systems have been installed under the initiative of the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy to develop renewable energy cities across India.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated seventh edition of Raisina Dialogue

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the seventh edition of Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi.** **President of the European Union Ursula Von Der Leyen** is the **chief guest at the Dialogue.** Several former Prime Ministers of different countries and other dignitaries also participated in this virtual event. The three-day Dialogue is **based on the theme - Terranova, impassioned, impatient, and imperiled.**

- There are six broad thematic pillars of the Dialogue including Rethinking Democracy, End of Multilateralism, Water Caucuses, and Achieving Green Transitions.
- The Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community. Every year, global leaders in policy, business, media, and civil society are hosted in New Delhi to discuss cooperation on a wide range of pertinent international policy matters. The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.

Palli enters history as India's first 'carbon neutral panchayat', Prime Minister inaugurates 500 KV solar plant

- The nondescript hamlet of Palli in Jammu and Kashmir's border district of Samba entered into the 'modern history' of India as country's first "carbon neutral panchayat" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicating to the nation 500 KV solar plant, installed in a record time of nearly three weeks. In all 1,500 solar panels put up on the total area of 6,408 square metres will provide clean electricity to 340 houses in the model panchayat under the central government's 'Gram Urja Swaraj' programme.

Government of India sets target to eliminate Malaria from the country by 2030

- Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya has said that the government is working on a comprehensive plan towards the elimination of Malaria and Tuberculosis from the country. He said the government has set a target of eliminating Malaria from the country by 2030 and making the country TB free by 2025.

J&K: India's first cable-stayed bridge- Anji Khad Bridge to be complete by Dec 2022

- India's first cable-stayed bridge- Anji Khad Bridge will be complete by December this year in Reasi district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Anji Khad Bridge is situated over the Anji River. It will connect the Katra-Reasi section at the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla route. The 272-kilometer long Udhampur-Baramulla Railway Line will be a game-changer for the Union Territory and 80 percent of the work on the project has been completed. The world's most advanced technologies are being used for the planning and construction of the Kashmir Railway Project.

Nitish Kumar opens India's first Greenfield grain-based ethanol plant

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar opened the country's first Greenfield grain-based ethanol plant in Purnea and said ethanol production will help reduce the cost of petrol and generate employment.
- The Rs 105-crore plant by Eastern India Biofuels Pvt Ltd is the first one developed since the Centre gave a go-ahead to Bihar's ethanol production and promotion policy-2021.

Bihar is a state in eastern India. It is the third-largest state by population and twelfth-largest by territory. Bihar borders Uttar Pradesh to its west, Nepal to the north, the northern part of West Bengal to the east, and with Jharkhand to the south. On 15 November 2000, southern Bihar was ceded to form the new state of Jharkhand. Phagu Chauhan is the current Governor of Bihar.

World Press Freedom Index: India slides down to 150th position from 142nd out of 180 countries

- In the 2022 edition of the Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, India fell to the 150th position, its lowest ever, out of 180 countries. In the last edition, India was ranked eight positions higher, at 142. The ranking is based on a country's performance in five broad categories: political context, legal framework, economic context, sociocultural context and safety of journalists. Of the five, India's ranking was lowest in the safety of journalists category (163) and best in the legal framework category (120). Countries ranked lower than India include Sudan (151), Russia (155), Pakistan (157), Bangladesh (162) and China (175).
- The chart shows India's rankings across various categories in 2022. India ranked best in the legal framework category and worst in the safety of journalists category. The definition of each category is expanded in the bottom. The chart shows India's rank in the Press Freedom Index. While India has ranked consistently low over the past few years, its rank in 2022 plunged to the lowest the country has ever seen.
- According to the World Press Freedom Index 2022, Norway (1st), Denmark (2nd), Sweden (3rd) Estonia (4th), and Finland (5th) grabbed the top five positions. North Korea, on the other hand, remained at the bottom of Reporters Without Borders' list of 180 countries and territories.

India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement comes into force

- **India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) enforced w.e.f May 1st, 2022.** The historic India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) which was **signed between the two nations on 18 February 2022, officially entered into force from May 1st, 2022.** The India-UAE CEPA is the first of the major bilateral trade pacts that India has been negotiating to kickstart international trade in the post-COVID-19 scenario.

PM Narendra Modi participates in Second India-Nordic Summit at Copenhagen in Denmark

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the Second India-Nordic Summit at Copenhagen in Denmark.** The Prime Ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway have also participated in the summit.
- The summit provided an **opportunity to review the progress of the India-Nordic relations** since the **first India-Nordic Summit, which was held in 2018 in Stockholm.** During the Summit, the Prime Ministers pledged to continue to deepen cooperation and focused their discussions on key issues related to international peace and security. Discussions were also held on multilateral cooperation in post-pandemic economic recovery, climate change, sustainable development, innovation, digitalization and green and clean growth.

The **Nordic countries** are a geographical and cultural region in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic. It includes the **sovereign states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden;** the **autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands and Greenland;** and the **autonomous region of Åland.** The Nordic countries have much in common in their way of life, history, religion and social structure.

Indian PM visits Denmark amid Russia tensions

- **Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on a historical two-day state visit to Denmark,** during which **Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen** said she would bring up the importance of India's potential role in helping the situation in Ukraine.
- **Modi travelled to Copenhagen as part of a three-country European tour to Germany, Denmark and France.** Meetings were dedicated to relations between Denmark and India. **Modi held talks with Frederiksen, representatives of the Danish business community and Margrethe II, Queen of Denmark.**

Denmark is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. It is the **most populous and politically central constituent of the Kingdom of Denmark,** a constitutionally unitary state that includes the **autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands and Greenland in the North Atlantic Ocean.** The **krone** is the official currency of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, introduced on 1 January 1875. **Copenhagen** is the capital city of Denmark.

India reiterates its commitment to environmental and climate causes and to fulfill its commitment at COP-26 to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070

- **India reiterated its commitment to environmental and climate causes** and pointed out that the government has **launched National Hydrogen Energy Mission to fulfill India's commitment at COP-26 of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.**
- On the 2nd day of his visit to Germany, **Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh** held a delegation level talks with his German counterpart **Ms. Steffi Lemke, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection in Berlin** as part of the India-Germany Inter Governmental Commission.

The Prime Minister of India at the COP-26 Glasgow summit presented five nectar elements, Panchamrit, to deal with climate change: 1. India will reach its **non-fossil installed electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030.** 2. India will **meet 50% of its electricity requirements from renewable energy by 2030.** 3. India will **reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now onwards till 2030.** 4. **By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by less than 45%.** 5. **By the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net-zero.**

India's 'first' tribal health observatory to come up in Odisha

- **Odisha is set to come up with India's "only" observatory that will establish a repository on the health of the tribal population in the state.** The Tribal Health Observatory (TriHOb) is the "first in the country",

and designed to be an effective, evidence-based and a policy-oriented centre. **The ST and SC Development Department and the RMRC, a regional institution of the Indian Council of Medical Research, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard.**

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Ganeshi Lal is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

IRCTC to run its first Bharat Gaurav Tourist train on June 21; Nepal's Janakpur in itinerary

- **IRCTC will run its first Bharat Gaurav Tourist train on June 21, which would include a stop at Nepal's Janakpur. This train will run on the Ramayana Circuit identified under Swadesh Darshan scheme covering prominent places associated with life of Lord Shri Rama, including the Ram Janaki temple in Janakpur located in Nepal.**
- **The proposed 18-day Bharat Gaurav Tourist train tour has its first stop at Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Rama, where tourists will visit Shri Ram Janmabhumi temple and Hanuman temple and additionally Bharat Mandir at Nandigram, dedicated to Lord Ram's younger brother Bharat. Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train is the Union government's initiative "Dekho Apna Desh" to promote domestic tourism.**

Save Soil' campaign: Sadhguru addressed leaders from 195 nations at UNCCD

- **Sadhguru, the founder of Isha Foundation addressed political leaders from 195 countries at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on May 9 and 10 to raise awareness towards saving soil.**
- **The spiritual leader, who is currently on a 100-day lone motorcycle journey through Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East as part of the 'Save Soil' initiative, is the keynote speaker for the 15th session of the Conference of Parties (COP15) at UNCCD. The theme for the session is "Land. Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity".**

Jagadish "Jaggi" Vasudev better known as Sadhguru is an Indian yoga guru and proponent of spirituality. He has been teaching yoga in southern India since 1982. In 1992, he established the Isha Foundation near Coimbatore, which operates an ashram and yoga centre that carry out educational activities. In 2017, he received the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, for his contributions to social welfare.

Delimitation panel proposes reservation for Kashmiri migrants, PoK displaced

- **The Delimitation Commission entrusted with the task of redrawing boundaries for the assembly and parliamentary constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir completed the delimitation process. The panel was headed by former Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, and comprised chief election commissioner Sushil Chandra, state election commissioner KK Sharma as ex-officio members. The delimitation order issued by the Delimitation Commission has laid following provisions.**
- **Of the 90 Assembly constituencies, 43 will be part of the Jammu region and the remaining 47 will be part of the Kashmir region. As per the new delimitation order, Jammu and Kashmir will have five parliamentary constituencies namely Baramulla, Srinagar, Anantnag-Rajouri, Udhampur and Jammu. All the Lok Sabha seats have equal number of assembly constituencies, i.e 18 seats each. Out of the 90 seats, seven constituencies have been reserved for scheduled castes and nine for the scheduled tribes.**
- **The delimitation commission said that the delegations of Kashmiri migrants represented before the Commission that they were persecuted and forced to live in exile as refugees in their own country for the last three decades. As a result, the delimitation commission has recommended provision of at least two members including a woman from the community of Kashmiri migrants in the assembly having powers at par with the nominated members of the Puducherry assembly.**

Jammu and Kashmir is a region administered by India as a union territory and consists of the southern portion of the larger Kashmir region, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and between India and China since 1962. The region of Jammu and Kashmir is separated by the Line of Control from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and north, respectively. A resolution to repeal Article 370 was passed by both the houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. All provisions of the Indian Constitution are now equally applicable to it. Provisions for the formation of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir were contained within the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was passed by both houses of the Parliament of India in August 2019. The act re-constituted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, 'Jammu and Kashmir' and 'Ladakh', with effect from 31 October 2019. The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is administered under the provisions of Article 239 of the Constitution of India. The Article 239A, originally formulated for the union territory of Puduchery, will also be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Girish Chandra Murmu was the first Lieutenant Governor.

Lokpal to get permanent office at World Trade Centre in Delhi

- Four years after the India's first anti-corruption ombudsman to investigate complaints against public functionaries, including the Prime Minister, was appointed and almost a decade after the Act was passed by Parliament, the Lokpal of India will finally move into a swanky office at World Trade Centre in south Delhi's Nauroji Nagar.
- The Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, which was passed in 2013 to investigate charges of corruption against certain types of public workers, were made five years later. Anyone who is or has been Prime Minister, a Minister in the Union government, or a Member of Parliament, as well as officers of the Union government in Groups A, B, C, and D, can be investigated by the Lokpal.

Lokpal ("defender of people" or "People's Friend") is an anti-corruption authority or body of ombudsman who represents the public interest in the Republic of India. The Lokpal has jurisdiction over central government to inquire into allegations of corruption against its public functionaries and for matters connected to corruption. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act was passed in 2013 with amendments in parliament, following the Jan Lokpal movement led by Anna Hazare in 2011. The Lokpal is responsible for enquiring into corruption charges at the national level while the Lokayukta performs the same function at the state level. The age of Lokpal (chairperson or member) on the date of assuming office as the chairperson or a member should not be less than 45 years. It consists of a chairperson and eight members. The current and first Chairperson of Lokpal is Pinaki Chandra Ghose.

Rajasthan tops in country in budget allocation of workers under MGNREGA

- Rajasthan tops in the country in the allocation of budget for labourers under the MGNREGA scheme and even the payment rate for them has increased rapidly, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said. The state also ranks first in the country in the number of families completing 100 days of work and the creation of man-days under the Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Scheme.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 or NREGA later renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act or MGNREGA in 2009, is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'. This act was passed in 23 August 2005 under the UPA government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to at least one member of every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Women are guaranteed one third of the jobs made available under the MGNREGA. Another aim of MGNREGA is to create durable assets (such as roads, canals, ponds and wells). Employment is to be provided within 5 km of an applicant's residence, and minimum wages are to be paid. If work is not provided within 15 days of applying, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance.

India unanimously elected as new Chair of Association of Asian Election Authorities for 2022-2024

- India has been unanimously elected as the new Chair of the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA) for 2022-2024 at the recently held meeting of the Executive Board and General Assembly in Manila, Philippines. Commission on Elections, Manila was the current chair of AAEA. The new member of the Executive Board now includes Russia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Taiwan and the Philippines.

- **The Election Commission of India's three-member delegation headed by Deputy Election Commissioner Nitesh Vyas**, along with CEO Manipur Rajesh Agrawal and CEO Rajasthan Praveen Gupta, attended the Executive Board meeting in Manila.

India is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by area, the second-most populous country after China, and the most populous democracy in the world. The seven countries that share international borders with India are Bangladesh China, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan. It shares maritime borders with Sri Lanka Maldives and Indonesia. India shares its longest border with Bangladesh which is 4156 km. India has 15106.7 km long land borders which run through 18 states and 92 districts including the union territories. The coastline of India is 7516.6 km long which brushes approximately 13 states and union territories. Among the states, Gujarat has the longest coastline and among the UTs, Andaman and Nicobar Islands has the longest coastline.

India's first Amrit Sarovar opened to public in Uttar Pradesh

- **Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi inaugurated the country's first 'Amrit Sarovar'** in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh. Naqvi said the splendid *sarovar* had been **inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and guided by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.**

Rajiv Kumar takes over as 25th chief election commissioner of India

- **Rajiv Kumar took over as the new chief election commissioner, a day after his predecessor Sushil Chandra retired. The first major task for Kumar, who will remain in this post till February 2025,** will be to **hold the elections of the President and the Vice President, slated for July-August.** The 2024 Lok Sabha polls, several assembly elections and Rajya Sabha elections will also be conducted under the watch of Kumar.
- **Kumar will hold the post from May 15, 2022 to February 18, 2025.** Kumar's 65th birthday is on February 19, 2025. **According to the constitution, the term of election commissioners is six years or till the age of 65 years, whichever comes first. Rajiv Kumar, a 1984 batch officer of the Indian Administrative Service, has held many important responsibilities in his long administrative career.**

The Chief Election Commissioner of India heads the Election Commission of India, a body constitutionally empowered to conduct free and fair elections to the national and state legislatures and of President and Vice-President. This power of the Election Commission of India is derived from the Article 324 of the Constitution of India. Chief Election Commissioner of India is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service and mostly from the Indian Administrative Service. It is very difficult to remove the authority of the Chief Election Commissioner once appointed by the president, as two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha need to present and vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions. Today, the Election Commission has been functioning as a multi-member body consisting of three election commissioners. The chief election commissioner and the two other election commissioners have equal powers and receive equal salary, allowances and other perquisites, which are similar to those of a judge of the Supreme Court. In case of difference of opinion amongst the Chief Election Commissioner and/or two other selection commissioners, the matter is decided by the Commission by majority.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates India's first 5G testbed

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the country's first 5G testbed** to enable startups and industry players to test and validate their products locally and reduce dependence on foreign facilities. The testbed has been **set up at a cost of around Rs. 220 crore.**
- The Prime Minister said the 5G testbed is an **important step for self-reliance in the direction of critical and modern technologies.** The 5G testbed has been **developed as a multi-institute collaborative project by eight institutes led by IIT Madras.** The other institutes that participated in the project are IIT Delhi, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Bombay, IIT Kanpur, IISc Bangalore, Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER) and Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology (CEWiT).

5G is the 5th generation mobile network. It is a new global wireless standard after 1G, 2G, 3G, and 4G networks. It enables a new kind of network that is designed to connect virtually everyone and everything together including machines, objects, and devices. Internet speeds in the high-band spectrum of 5G has been tested to be as high as 20 Gbps (gigabits per second), while, in most cases, the maximum internet data speed in 4G has been recorded at 1 Gbps. **Operate in the millimeter wave spectrum (30-300 GHz)** which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds. **Operate in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high frequency spectrum.** **Reduced latency will support new applications that leverage the power of 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence.** Increased capacity on 5G networks can minimize the impact of load spikes, like those that take place during sporting events and news events.

Manik Saha, Rajya Sabha MP is the new Tripura CM, replaces Biplab Deb

- **Rajya Sabha MP Manik Saha is the new Chief Minister of Tripura, replacing Biplab Deb who resigned after four years in office.** The elections to the 60-member Tripura Assembly will be held next year. **The BJP had come to power in 2018 by ending the 25-year-long rule of CPM-led Left Front government in the state.** This time, it is facing a challenge from the Trinamool Congress which had gained the third largest vote share in the civic polls held last year.

Tripura is a state in northeastern India. The third-smallest state in the country. Manik Saha is serving as the current Chief Minister of Tripura. **In April 2022, Saha was elected as Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha.** **Satyadev Narayan Arya is the current Governor of Tripura.**

Union Cabinet approves Amendments to National Policy on Biofuels-2018

- **Union Cabinet has approved the Amendments to the National Policy on Biofuels -2018.** The amendments are intended to allow more feedstocks for the production of biofuels, advance the ethanol blending target of 20 percent blending of ethanol in petrol and promote the production of biofuels in the country.
- The following are the **main amendments approved to the National Policy on Biofuels: to allow more feedstocks for production of biofuels, to advance the ethanol blending target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol to ESY 2025-26 from 2030,** to promote the production of biofuels in the country, under the Make in India program, by units located in Special Economic Zones (SEZ)/ Export Oriented Units (EoUs), to add new members to the NBCC.

PM Narendra Modi attended Quad summit in Tokyo

- **The Quadrilateral alliance is a “Force for Good,”** said Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his opening remarks at the Quad summit in Tokyo. The event witnessed the launch of several initiatives including a maritime project that will allow tracking of “dark shipping” across the Indo-Pacific region.
- “Our confidence and determination are strengthening the democratic forces. Our cooperation at the level of Quad is **aimed at an inclusive Indo-Pacific region.** We increased cooperation during the COVID-19 regarding vaccine delivery, climate action, supply chain resilience, disaster response,” said Mr Modi.
- **The summit among the leaders of Australia, India, Japan and the United States took place exactly three months after Russia launched the invasion of Ukraine** which has sent shockwaves across the geopolitical system affecting energy, and food markets. Mr Modi however remained silent about the Ukraine crisis in his opening remarks.

Vinai Kumar Saxena sworn in as Delhi Lieutenant Governor

- **Vinai Kumar Saxena is the first L-G of Delhi from a non-bureaucratic background.** Saxena worked in the private sector for three decades before heading the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) of the Central government for six years. On May 23, Saxena, **the chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Commission, was appointed Delhi’s new Lieutenant Governor after Anil Bajjal resigned from the position.**

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, **Delhi city proper’s population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai.** Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

In a first, Chhattisgarh recognises CFR rights of village inside national park

- **The Chhattisgarh government recognised, for the first time, the community forest resource (CFR) rights of a village located inside a national park. Chhattisgarh is only the second state to have recognised CFR rights inside a national park.**

Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 10 Chhattisgarhi and 6 Gondi speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. It is a land locked state of India. The capital city is Raipur. Anusuiya Uikey is present Governor of Chhattisgarh. Bhupesh Baghel is serving as the third and current Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.

Uttarakhand forms panel to implement Uniform Civil Code

- **The Uttarakhand government has formed an expert committee headed by a retired Supreme Court judge for implementing Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and to check all the relevant laws that control personal matters for those living in Uttarakhand.**
- **A five-member committee will be headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Desai, who currently heads the Delimitation Commission of India. Other members of the committee are: retired Delhi High Court judge Pramod Kohli, social activist Manu Gaur, retired IAS officer Shatrughan Singh, and Doon University Vice-Chancellor Surekha Dangwal.**

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Mr Pushkar Singh Dhami is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand since March 10, 2021. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.

India's first semi-high speed freight train likely to run by December

- **India's first semi-high speed freight train is likely to hit the tracks by December. Replicating the concept of Vande Bharat trains, the 16-coach 'Gati Shakti' train can clock 160 kmph and will be manufactured at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai.**
- **The Indian Railways has identified 74 new 'Gati-Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) locations across the country, with 20 of them in the South Indian states under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious 'Gati-Shakti Multi Model Cargo Terminal' policy. The policy was launched in 2021 in order to boost investment in the development of additional terminals for handling rail cargos.**

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Ashwini Vaishnaw is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Year-long celebrations of 250th Birth Anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to begin

- **Under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the ministry of culture held the inaugural ceremony to commemorate the yearlong celebrations of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's 250th birth anniversary, in Kolkata, during which his statue was also virtually unveiled at the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation at Salt Lake and Science City Auditorium in Kolkata.**
- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy is known for setting up the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, a reformist movement of Hindu religion that aimed at fighting social evils that were prevalent in the society, such as superstitious practices, customs such as Sati, child marriage, the rigidity of the caste system and its excesses, and sought property inheritance rights for women. As a result of his hard work in fighting Sati, the governor of the Bengal Presidency, Lord William Bentinck, formally banned the practice on December 4, in the year 1829.**

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born on 22 May 1772 in an orthodox Brahman family at Radhanagar in Bengal. From 1803 to 1814, he worked for East India Company as the personal diwan first of Woodforde and then of Digby. In 1814, he resigned from his job and moved to Calcutta in order to devote his life to religious, social and political reforms. It is because of his contributions in Social, Religious, Political, Economical and educational spheres that Raja Ram Mihan Roy is known as the 'Father of Modern India' and Father of Indian Renaissance'. In November 1830, he sailed for England to be present there to counteract the possible nullification of the Act banning Sati. Ram Mohan Roy was given the title of 'Raja' by the titular Mughal Emperor of Delhi, Akbar II whose grievances the former was to present before the British king. In his address, entitled 'Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India,' Tagore referred to Ram Mohan as 'a luminous star in the firmament of Indian history'. He founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1815, the Calcutta Unitarian Association in 1821, and the Brahmo Sabha in 1828 which later became the Brahmo Samaj. It split into two in 1866, namely Brahmo Samaj of India led by Keshub Chandra Sen and Adi Brahmo Samaj led by Debendranath Tagore.

Dr. Jitendra Singh Inaugurates India's 'First Lavender Festival' In Bhaderwah

- Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has **inaugurated the country's first 'Lavendar festival' at Jammu's Bhaderwah** where the cultivation of lavender has transformed the economy of the mountainous area. Bhaderwah in the Doda district is the birthplace of India's purple revolution. **The minister described Bhaderwah in the Doda district as the birthplace of India's purple revolution.** Lavender has changed the fortunes of farmers in Jammu and Kashmir under the 'Aroma Mission or Purple Revolution', an initiative of the Central government towards transforming the lives of UT's farmers' community.

Sikkim recognized as world's first organic state by 'world book of records London'

- **The Northeast state of Sikkim in India has been recognised as the "world's first organic state". Sikkim was bestowed with this recognition by the "World Book of Records London".** This recognition by the "World Book of Records London" emphasises the fact that **Sikkim has become the first state in the world to implement 100 percent organic policy.** World Book of Records London is an organization that catalogs and verifies extraordinary records across the globe.

According to FSSAI,'organic farming' is a system of farm design and management to create an ecosystem of agriculture production without the use of synthetic external inputs such as chemical fertilisers, pesticides and synthetic hormones or genetically modified organisms. Organic farm produce means the produce obtained from organic agriculture, while organic food means food products that have been produced in accordance with specified standards for organic production. Zero budget natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices.

India's first Vertical Lift Sea Bridge

- **The construction of the new Pamban Bridge, a Railways' engineering marvel, will be completed by December with an estimated cost of Rs. 560 crore. The two-km long bridge is India's first vertical lift Sea Bridge** which would open upwards to let big ships pass through. It is being **developed by the Railway Vikas Nigam Limited.**

Old Pamban Bridge is a railway bridge which connects the town of Mandapam in mainland India with Pamban Island, and Rameswaram. Opened on 24 February 1914, it was India's first sea bridge, and was the longest sea bridge in India until the opening of the Bandra-Worli Sea Link in 2010.

India-Bangladesh train services resume after two years

- **Passenger train services — Maitree Express and Bandhan Express — between Bangladesh and India resumed, two years after it was paused due to the outbreak of coronavirus.** The Maitree Express train service between Dhaka and Kolkata resumed from Dhaka Cantonment Railway station.
- Meanwhile, another train service, **Bandhan Express, which runs between on Bangladesh's southwestern Khulna and Kolkata route reached Bangladesh,** resuming its service after two years of halt. **The new service will also boost tourism in northern West Bengal as many travellers from Bangladesh show a keen interest in exploring the Darjeeling Hills and the forests and tea gardens of Dooars in the foothills.**

India launches second indigenous survey ship INS Nirdeshak

- **INS Nirdeshak, the second of the four survey vessels built by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd, was launched in Kattupalli near Chennai. The first ship INS Sandhayak was launched in Kolkata on December 5 last year.**

- The ship was launched by Sarbani Dasgupta, wife of Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command. **INS Nirdeshak derives its name from a past survey ship of the same name, which was built by the GRSE in 1983 and served in the Indian Navy before being decommissioned in 2014. The naval ship has been named after erstwhile Nirdeshak, which was an Indian Naval Survey ship that was decommissioned in December 2014 after 32 years of glorious service.**

INS Vikrant (IAC-I) is the first aircraft carrier built in India and the first Vikrant-class aircraft carrier built by Cochin Shipyard (CSL) in Kochi, Kerala for the Indian Navy. The motto of the ship is 'Jayema Sam Yudhi Sprdhah' which is taken from Rig Veda and is translated as "I defeat those who fight against me". The carrier is 262 m long, 62 m at the widest part and with a depth of 30 m minus the superstructure. There are 14 decks in all, including five in the superstructure.

North India's first biotech park inaugurated in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua

- **Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha and Union minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated the north India's first Industrial Biotech Park constructed at Ghatti near Kathua. On the occasion, the Lt Governor said that the Industrial Biotech Park at Kathua will transform the economy and enable scientists to tackle challenges of climate change.**

Save Soil Movement: Gujarat becomes first Indian state to sign MoU with Sadhguru's Isha foundation

- **The Government of Gujarat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Isha Outreach to conserve soil in the state making Gujarat the first Indian state to officially join the Global Movement to Save Soil. The MOU was signed in the presence of Gujarat Chief Minister Shri. Bhupendrabhai Patel and Sadhguru, founder - Isha Foundation.**
- **Sadhguru launched the Movement to Save Soil in March this year to prevent a phenomenon that UN agencies are referring to as 'soil extinction' – the death of fertile soils worldwide posing an existential threat to the human race. Sadhguru is currently on a 100-day, 30,000-km lone motorcycle journey across Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East to build consensus for urgent policy-driven action globally to prevent soil extinction.**

Supreme Court says eco-sensitive cases of 1 km a must in protected areas

- **The Supreme Court directed that all national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the country which fall under protected forest must earmark a minimum distance of one-kilometre (1 km) as eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) where prohibited activities specified by the Centre, including mining and establishment of any new permanent structure will not be permitted. In the present order, the Court dealt with applications by private miners and states for prescribing ESZ surrounding wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, an issue pending in Court since 2003. Besides, the Court order also dealt with the issue of mining in and around the Jamua Ramgarh wildlife sanctuary, situated in Rajasthan.**

In simplest terms, protected areas are regions or zones of land or sea which are given certain levels of protection for conservation of biodiversity and socio-environmental values. In these areas, human intervention and exploitation of resources is limited. Protected Areas are the principal mechanism of conservation of biodiversity on Earth and serves as the most important units for in-situ biodiversity conservation. There are several kinds of protected areas, which vary by level of protection. Examples include national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, marine protected areas, community reserves etc.

Agri-land price index launched, a first of its kind in India

- **A first of its kind agri-land price index that will serve as a reliable source and benchmarking land prices in rural and semi-urban areas was launched. Developed by the Mishra Centre for Financial Markets and Economy at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A) along with SFarmsIndia, a private firm dealing in land prices, the IIMA-SFarmsIndia Agri Land Price Index (ISALPI) is claimed to help and signal potential conversion of agriculture land into real estate.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Iconic Week Celebrations of Finance, Corporate Affairs ministries; also launched Jan Samarth Portal

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Iconic Week Celebrations of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in New Delhi. As part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' (AKAM), the "iconic week" is being celebrated from June 6 to June 11, 2022.**

- **PM Modi, along with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, has also launched the national portal for credit-linked government schemes - Jan Samarth Portal. The e-portal is a one-stop digital portal linking government credit schemes that directly connect beneficiaries to lenders. It's a first-of-its-kind platform which directly connects beneficiaries to lenders. The main purpose of Jan Samarth portal is to encourage inclusive growth and development of various sectors by guiding and providing them with the right type of government benefits through simple and easy digital processes.**

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) is a flagship initiative of the Central and State Governments, launched to commemorate 75 years of India's independence. The objective of the program is to recreate and renew the patriotic fervor of the independence movement, recall the contribution of India's freedom fighters, and create a vision for India@2047. The celebrations and initiatives will end on August 15, 2023.

Maharashtra overtook Uttar Pradesh to re-emerge as top sugar producer

- After a five-year gap, **Maharashtra has overtaken Uttar Pradesh (UP) to regain its position as India's top sugar producer. The first is the bountiful rainfall Maharashtra has been receiving since the 2019 southwest monsoon season (June-September).**

Brazil is the largest producer of sugarcane in the world. India is the second largest producer of sugarcane. These two countries will respectively account for about 21% and 18% of the world's total sugar output by 2030.

PM Narendra Modi launches Global initiative 'Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) Movement

- **Global initiative "Lifestyle for Environment Movement" was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of "World Environment Day" on June 5, 2022. Launching a global initiative Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE) Movement, on the occasion of World Environment Day through video conferencing, Mr Modi said, the vision of LiFE is to live a lifestyle that is in tune with our planet and does not harm it and those who live such a lifestyle are called Pro-Planet People. Mission LiFE borrows from the past, operates in the present and focuses on the future.**
- **The launch initiated 'LiFE Global Call for Papers' inviting ideas and suggestions from academics, universities and research institutions etc to influence and persuade individuals, communities and organisations across the world to adopt an environment-conscious lifestyle.**
- **The idea of LiFE was introduced by the Prime Minister during the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties COP-26 in Glasgow last year. The idea promotes an environment conscious lifestyle that focuses on mindful and deliberate utilisation instead of mindless and destructive consumption.**

The World Environment Day is observed on June 5 every year. It is observed by United Nations' principal vehicle to encourage awareness and action for protecting environment. It was first observed in 1973. This platform is used for raising awareness on environmental issues like marine pollution, global warming, overpopulation, wildlife crime and sustainable development. World Environment Day 2022 is hosted by Sweden. "Only One Earth" is the campaign slogan, with the focus on "Living Sustainably in Harmony with Nature".

Yasin Malik gets life imprisonment for terror funding

- **Special court sentenced Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik to life imprisonment in a terror funding case. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) court charged him to life term under Section 17 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Section 121 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and also imposed a fine of Rs. 10 lakh.**

Indore secures first place in Smart City ranking

- **India's cleanest city Indore, in a new All India Smart City ranking issued by the central government, adjusted at the first position for its securing 89.24% marks. "Indore Smart City Developed Limited has secured first place in the overall ranking of the works being done in different categories in all the smart cities of the country.**
- **Indore has secured first place among all smart cities of the country by securing 124.94 out of 140 marks in the overall ranking". Surat (Gujarat) and Udaipur (Rajasthan) have respectively secured the second and third position in the ranking.**

For the fifth time in a row, Indore has topped the Government of India's annual cleanliness survey Swachh Survekshan 2021 becoming the cleanest city in the country. The following positions, second and third, were claimed by Surat and Vijaywada respectively in the category of cities with over 10 lakh population.

Ramkrishna Mukkavilli becomes first Indian to be recognised as Global SDG pioneer by UNGC

- **Ramkrishna Mukkavilli** has become the first Indian to be recognised as the Global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Pioneer for water stewardship by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). It is for the first time that an Indian has been recognised for the position. For the first time in the world, an Indian has been recognized by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) as a Global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Pioneer for Water Stewardship from India.

Himachal Pradesh becomes the first Indian state to approve a policy for drones

- In a major step forward, the Himachal Pradesh government gave nod to a drone policy as it seeks to enable the use of drones and similar technology for different public services in the hill state.
- The ‘Himachal Pradesh Drone Policy 2022’ was approved by the chief minister Jai Ram Thakur, who said, “The policy envisions creating a holistic drone ecosystem built upon the foundation of Governance and Reforms Using Drones (GARUD).”
- With this new drone policy, Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in the country to formally acknowledge the public use of drones. Himachal’s drone policy mainly focuses on creating drone-enabled technology, creation of manpower through the establishment of training schools, startup and innovation schemes, and more.

Himachal Pradesh (“Province of the Snow-laden Mountains”) is a state in the northern part of India. Situated in the Western Himalayas, it is one of the eleven mountain states and is characterized by an extreme landscape featuring several peaks and extensive river systems. Himachal Pradesh is the northernmost state of India and shares borders with the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to the north, and the states of Punjab to the west, Haryana to the southwest, Uttarakhand to the southeast and a very narrow border with Uttar Pradesh to the South. The state also shares an international border to the east with the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. Himachal Pradesh is also known as ‘Dev Bhoomi’ or ‘Land of God’ and ‘Veer Bhoomi’ which means ‘Land of Braves’. Shimla is the capital of Himachal Pradesh. In 1864, Shimla was declared as the summer capital of British India. Dharamshala is the winter capital city. Jai Ram Thakur currently serves as the Chief Minister of the state and Rajendra Arlekar is the current Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia announces first ever National Air Sports Policy 2022

- Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia announced first-ever National Air Sports Policy-2022 in New Delhi. Union Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched a national aero sports policy, which established a four-tier governance structure to promote 11 disciplines including ballooning, para gliding and aerobatics. “Multiple locations for air sports will be established across the country,” the Minister said. The objective of this policy is to include India among the top air sporting nations by 2030. It is also aimed at providing a safe, affordable and sustainable air sports ecosystem in the country.
- The government has identified 11 sports — aerobatics, aero modelling and rocketry, ballooning, amateur-built and experimental aircraft, drones, gliding and power gliding, hand gliding and power hand gliding, parachuting, paragliding and paramotoring, powered aircraft and rotor aircraft — under the policy. “In many States, a lot of small companies are involved in the 11 air sports mentioned in the policy. Currently, Indian air sports industry has a revenue of Rs. 80-100 crore and we want this industry to reach a revenue of Rs.10, 000 crore,” he said. In the governance structure, Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI) will be the apex governing body.

Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia serves as the Minister of Civil Aviation, a position his father held from 1991 to 1993. He is a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha representing the State of Madhya Pradesh. He is a former member of the Indian National Congress and presently a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

41 Universities from India in 2023 QS World Rankings List

- The QS World University Rankings 2023 was released by QS Quacquarelli Symonds, global higher education think-tank and compilers of the world’s most-consulted university rankings portfolio. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is the top university in the world for the 11th consecutive year.
- Just like last year, the top-100 list doesn’t feature any Indian university, and this is for the sixth year straight that IISc Bengaluru (Rank 155), IIT Bombay (Rank 172) and IIT Delhi (Rank 174) are the

only three Indian universities that bagged a spot amongst the top 200. IIT Bombay saw a big dip from Rank 117 last year to Rank 172 this year.

India, Israel, US, UAE are I2U2, summit

- US President Joe Biden will host a virtual summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Israel Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during his visit to West Asia from July 13 to 16. The new grouping will be called “I2U2” — “I” for India and Israel and “U” for the US and UAE.
- “The visit will also focus on Israel’s increasing integration into the region, both through the Abraham Accords with UAE, Morocco and Bahrain; through deepening ties between Israel, Jordan and Egypt; and also an entirely new grouping of partners including Israel, India, UAE and the United States — what we call I2U2.” This is a great achievement which tells the geopolitical changes that happen in the region. This will not only revitalize and re-energize the system of alliances and partnerships around the world, but also stitch together partnerships that did not exist previously or were not utilized to their full extent.

The Abraham Accord between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain is mediated by the USA. It is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years. There were the only two peace deals between Israel and the Arab States in more than a quarter of a century. Egypt was the first Arab State to sign a peace deal with Israel in 1979. Jordan signed a peace pact in 1994. The Abraham Accords also open the door for Muslims around the world to visit the historic sites in Israel and to peacefully pray at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the third holiest site in Islam. In the Islamic tradition, the Kaaba in Mecca is considered the holiest site, followed by the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina, and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

PM inaugurates ‘Kranti Gatha’ a newly created Gallery of Indian Revolutionaries inside an underground British - era bunker at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated ‘Kranti Gatha’ a newly created Gallery of Indian Revolutionaries inside the underground British - era bunker at Raj Bhavan Mumbai. The Gallery of Indian Revolutionaries has been created in the bunker that was discovered below Raj Bhavan in 2016.
- It is a tribute to the known and unknown revolutionaries of the Indian freedom movement. The Gallery of Revolutionaries has been created under the guidance of historian and writer Dr. Vikram Sampath with assistance from the South Central Zonal Cultural Centre, Nagpur. It is being dedicated in the year when India is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- The ‘Kranti Gatha’ gallery also commemorates many revolutionaries from Maharashtra from the First War of Independence in 1857 to the Naval uprising in Mumbai in 1946. In this Vasudev Balwant Phadke, Chaphekar brothers, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Veer Savarkar, Babarao Savarkar, Krantiguru Lahuji Salve, Anant Laxman Kanhere, Rajguru, Madam Bhikaji Cama feature prominently.

Centre clears AGNIPATH Scheme to recruit youth in Armed Forces for a period of four years

- The Centre cleared the AGNIPATH Scheme for recruitment of youth in the Armed Forces. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, the youth selected under this scheme will be known as Agniveers. He said, the Agniveers will be getting attractive monthly package with Risk and Hardship allowances as applicable in the three services. Aspirants between the ages of 17.5 years and 21 years will be eligible to apply. The scheme is only applicable to personnel below officer ranks. Later, the government extended the upper age limit to 23 years for recruitment in 2022.
- Mr Singh said Agniveers will be also paid one-time Seva Nidhi package upon completion of engagement period of four years. The AGNIPATH Scheme cleared by Cabinet Committee on Security allows patriotic and motivated youth to serve in the Armed Forces for a period of four years. Over forty six thousand Agniveers to be recruited this year. This is a major defence policy reform introduced by the Government to usher in a new era in the Human Resource policy of the three services. The policy, which comes into immediate effect, will govern the enrollment for the three services.
- Recruits will get starting salary of Rs 30,000, along with additional benefits which will go up to Rs 40,000 by the end of the four-year service. During this period, 30 per cent of their salary will be set aside under a Seva Nidhi programme, and the government will contribute an equal amount every month, and it will also accrue interest. At the end of the four-year period, each soldier will get Rs 11.71 lakh as a lump sum amount, which will be tax-free. For 25% of soldiers, who are re-selected, the

initial four-year period will not be considered for retirement benefits. Of the total annual recruits, **only 25 per cent will be allowed to continue for another 15 years under permanent commission.** They will also get a **INR 48 lakh life insurance cover** for the four years. **In case of death, the payout will be over INR 1 crore, including pay for the unserved tenure.**

India jumps 6 places to 37th rank on IMD's World Competitiveness Index; Denmark tops the chart

- **India has witnessed the sharpest rise among the Asian economies, with a six-position jump from 43rd to 37th rank on the annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development,** largely due to gains in economic performance.
- **Denmark has moved to the top of the 63-nation list from the third position last year,** while Switzerland slipped from the top ranking to the second position and Singapore regained the third spot from fifth. Others in the top 10 include Sweden at the fourth position, followed by Hong Kong SAR (5th), the Netherlands (6th), Taiwan (7th), Finland (8th), Norway (9th), and the USA (10th).

India's first Dark Sky Reserve to soon come up in Ladakh

- **A part of Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary at Hanle in Ladakh is all set to become India's first Dark Sky Reserve.** The site will also **promote astronomy-tourism, giving a boost to local tourism through science.** Being a cold desert region, **Ladakh holds great potential for undertaking uninterrupted astronomical observations.**

PM Narendra Modi attended the 14th BRICS Summit hosted by China

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 14th BRICS Summit hosted by China.** The Summit was held in virtual format under the **theme of Foster High-quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in a New Era for Global Development.**
- This summit hosted by China reiterated their willingness to **work with China on Covid research, vaccines etc, a contrast to critical views of China at other western-led groupings.** The leaders held discussions on **Counter-terrorism, trade, health, traditional medicine, environment, science, technology & innovation, agriculture, technical and vocational education & training.**

Rajasthan Becomes First Indian State to Launch Astro-Tourism

- **Rajasthan has become the first state to launch the night sky Astro tourism,** which will be organised in all its 33 districts. Rajasthan's capital Jaipur has four venues for stargazing, which are Jantar Mantar, Amber Fort, University of Maharaja and Jawahar Kala Kendra. **'Night Sky Tourism Project' was introduced by Rajasthan's Department of Art and Culture.**

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar visited to Kigali in Rwanda to attend 26th (CHOGM)

- **External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar visited to Kigali in Rwanda to attend the 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).** He led the Indian delegation to the CHOGM, which had earlier been postponed twice due to Covid-19 pandemic. **The theme of the summit is - Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming.** During the meeting, the leaders of the Commonwealth Member States are scheduled to deliberate on issues of global challenges like climate change, food security and health issues.

The Commonwealth of Nations, simply referred to as the Commonwealth, is a political association of 56 member states, the vast majority of which are former territories of the British Empire. The chief institutions of the organisation are the Commonwealth Secretariat, which focuses on intergovernmental aspects, and the Commonwealth Foundation, which focuses on non-governmental relations amongst member states. The current Commonwealth of Nations was formally constituted by the London Declaration in 1949, which modernised the community and established the member states as "free and equal". The head of the Commonwealth is currently Queen Elizabeth II; the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting appointed Charles, Prince of Wales, to be her designated successor, although the position is not hereditary. The Baroness Scotland of Asthal is serving as the sixth secretary-general of the Commonwealth of Nations. The nations which weren't part of British rule have an ambassador while countries which used to be British colonies are the ones where the high commission is appointed. Ambassador is the head of embassy while high commissioner is the head of high commission.

Retired IAS officer Parameswaran Iyer is the new CEO of NITI Aayog

- **Retired IAS officer** and former Drinking Water and Sanitation Secretary **Parameswaran Iyer** has been appointed as the new **Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog**. Mr Iyer succeeded **Amitabh Kant** who is completed tenure on 30th of June 2022.

India's largest floating solar power project commissioned

- **India's largest floating solar power project is now fully operational**. **NTPC declared commercial operation** of the final part **capacity of 20 MW out of 100 MW Ramagundam Floating Solar PV Project at Ramagundam, Telangana**. With the operationalisation of the 100-MW Solar PV Project at Ramagundam, the total commercial operation of floating solar capacity in the Southern Region rose to 217 MW. Earlier, **NTPC declared commercial operation of 92 MW Floating Solar at Kayamkulam in Kerala and 25 MW Floating Solar at Simhadri in Andhra Pradesh**.

Centre amends FCRA allowing Indians to receive up to Rs ten lakh without informing Authorities

- **Union Home Ministry has amended the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)** giving certain relaxations such as allowing relatives to send more money to India freely. **The amended rule now allows relatives to send 10 lakh rupees without informing the government**. If the amount exceeds, the individuals will now have three months to **inform the government against 30-days earlier**.
- The new rules, **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2022**, were **notified by the home ministry** through a gazette notification on Friday night. **"In the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011, in rule 6, — for the words "one lakh rupees", the words "ten lakh rupees" shall be substituted; and for the words "thirty days", the words "three months" shall be substituted,"** the notification said.

PM Narendra Modi attended G7 Summit in Germany

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi met his counterparts from the UK, Japan and Italy** and exchanged views on a range of issues with them on the sidelines of the **G7 Summit in Elmau, Germany**. **Prime Minister Modi also met President of Senegal Macky Sall, Director-General of the World Health Organization Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** and held fruitful discussions with **Director-General of the World Trade Organization Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**.
- Recently, at the 48th G7 Summit, Indian Prime Minister invited the G7 Nations to **tap into the huge market for clean energy technologies emerging in the country**. Germany holds the presidency of the G7 in 2022. The German Presidency has invited Argentina, India, Indonesia, Senegal and South Africa to the G7 Summit.
- Besides India, countries such as Indonesia, South Africa, Argentina and Senegal have been invited to the **summit of the group of seven of the world's advanced economies**, in an effort to strengthen international collaboration on these important issues.

PM Narendra Modi participated in the 125th birth anniversary of Alluri Seetharama Raju

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the year-long 125th birth anniversary celebration of the legendary freedom fighter, Alluri Sitarama Raju, in Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh**. As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Government is committed to giving due recognition to the contribution of freedom fighters and making people across the country aware of them. The government has planned a series of initiatives as part of the year-long celebration. **Prime Minister unveiled the statue of Seetharama Raju on the occasion**. **Alluri Seetharama Raju was an Indian revolutionary who waged an armed campaign against British colonial rule in India**.
- **The birthplace of Alluri Sitarama Raju at Pandrangi in Vizianagaram district and Chintapalli Police Station (to mark 100 years of Rampa Rebellion - the attack on this police station marked the beginning of Rampa Rebellion) will be restored**. Government has also approved the construction of Alluri Dhyana Mandir at Mogallu with a statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju in Dhyana Mudra, depicting the life story of the freedom fighter through mural paintings and AI-enabled interactive system.

Indian origin T Raja Kumar takes over as President of FATF

- **Indian origin T Raja Kumar has taken over as President of Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, the world's anti-terrorism financing agency. Raja Kumar will **focus on enhancing the effectiveness of global anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures**, improving asset recovery and other initiatives.

- He has more than 35 years of **leadership and operational experience in Singapore's home ministry and police force. Raja Kumar succeeds Dr Marcus Pleyer as the chief of the FATF** and will serve a two-year-term. FATF is a global watchdog tasked with combatting money laundering and terrorist financing.

The **Financial Action Task Force** is an **intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 in Paris** on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing. The mandate of the organisation was expanded in 2001 to include terrorist financing following the September 11 terror attacks. The FATF holds three Plenary meetings in the course of each of its 12-month rotating presidencies. It currently has 39 members, including two regional organisations — the European Commission and the Gulf Cooperation Council. India is a member of the FATF consultations and its Asia Pacific Group.

4 Indian cities among top 20 sustainable cities in Asia Pacific

- **Four Indian cities—Bengaluru, Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai—made it to the list of top 20 sustainable cities**, as per the **Asia Pacific Sustainability Index 2021**. Global property consultant, Knight Frank's APAC Sustainably Led Cities Index rated 36 cities based on urbanisation pressure, climate risk, carbon emissions and government initiatives.
- **Index has been topped by Singapore**. It is followed by **Sydney, Wellington, Perth, and Melbourne**. These are the top five green-rated cities in commercial real estate in Asia-Pacific region.

Our Common Future, also known as the **Brundtland Report**, was published on **October 1987** by the **United Nations through the Oxford University Press**. This publication was in recognition of **Gro Harlem Brundtland's, former Norwegian Prime Minister**, role as Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Its targets were **multilateralism and interdependence of nations in the search for a sustainable development path**. The modern concept of sustainable development is derived mostly from the **1987 Brundtland Report**. The report sought to recapture the spirit of the Stockholm Conference which had introduced environmental concerns to the formal political development sphere. Our Common Future placed environmental issues firmly on the political agenda; it aimed to discuss the environment and development as one single issue.

Jharkhand's first fossil park opens doors for visitors

- The **Jharkhand state's first ever fossil park** was recently inaugurated by its Chief Minister, Hemant Soren. The **95-acre park** that has been **built to preserve the Jurassic-era fossils**. Set on **Rajmahal hills in Sahebganj**, this fossil park in Mandro Block has been **built at a cost of INR 10.79 crore**, which apart from generating employment for locals, will also promote eco-tourism. **Several plant and animal fossils of the Jurassic-era have been discovered on Rajmahal hills, which are estimated to be 200 -145 million years' old.**

Jharkhand (meaning 'the land of forests') is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. **The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital. Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Ramesh Bais is serving as the current Governor of Jharkhand. The state was formed on 15 November 2000, from the territory that had previously been part of Bihar.**

PM Modi unveils bronze statue of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju at Bhimavaram

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the year-long 125th birth anniversary celebration of the legendary freedom fighter, Alluri Sitarama Raju, in Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh.** As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Government is committed to giving due recognition to the contribution of freedom fighters and making people across the country aware of them. The government has planned a series of initiatives as part of the year-long celebration.
- **The birthplace of Alluri Sitarama Raju at Pandrangi in Vizianagaram district and Chintapalli Police Station (to mark 100 years of Rampa Rebellion - the attack on this police station marked the beginning of Rampa Rebellion) will be restored.** Born on **4th July 1897**, Alluri Sitarama Raju is remembered for his fight against the British, in order to safeguard the interests of the tribal communities in the Eastern Ghats region. He had led the Rampa rebellion, which was launched in 1922. **'Rampa Kranti' for country's independence has also completed 100 years.** He was nicknamed **"Manyam Veerudu" (Hero of the Jungle)** by local villagers for his heroic exploits.

Single-use plastic ban in India kicks in

- The single-use plastic ban, which has come into effect from July 1, 2022, mandates that disposable plastics that are used only once before they are thrown away or recycled, like earbuds, cigarette packs, sweet boxes, candy and ice cream sticks, PVC banners under 100 microns, be done away with. To implement the ban in a phased manner, state governments, will initiate an enforcement campaign and close down units engaging in the production, distribution, stocking, and sale of such items, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022.
- The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of notified single-use plastic, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022. Those found violating the ban can be penalised under the Environment Protection Act 1986 – which allows for imprisonment up to 5 years, or a penalty up to Rs 1 lakh, or both. The ban will be monitored by the CPCB from the Centre, and by the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) that will report to the Centre regularly.
- The Environment Ministry had already banned polythene bags under 75 microns in September 2021, expanding the limit from the earlier 50 microns. From December 2022, the ban will be extended to polythene bags under 120 micron. According to the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, there is also a complete ban on sachets using plastic material for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala.

India's journey towards energy independence by 2047

- Green Hydrogen will provide momentum to country's journey towards energy independence by 2047. India has a huge edge in green hydrogen production, owing to its favourable geographic conditions and presence of abundant natural elements. Green hydrogen must be pushed as an alternative source of energy as country is spending 12 lakh crore rupees to import energy.
- According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), hydrogen will make up 12% of the energy mix by 2050. The agency also suggested that about 66% of this hydrogen used must come from water instead of natural gas. Recently, IRENA has released the 'World Energy Transitions Outlook' Report. India's highest energy capacity came from thermal energy. Close to 70 percent of the country's electricity generation was from thermal power plants.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh invites French aircraft engine maker SAFRAN for codeveloped & coproductive project in line of 'Make in India', Make for the World'

- A high-level delegation of French Aircraft Engine Maker Safran Group led by its CEO Olivier Andries called on Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi. Safran is one of the leading original equipment manufacturers of advanced aircraft engines for civil and fighter jets.
- The CEO also briefed Rajnath Singh of their plan to inaugurate Safran Aircraft Engines and Safran Electrical & Power India Private Limited in Hyderabad and Safran-HAL Aircraft Engines as a joint venture in Bengaluru.

PT Usha, Ilaiyaraaja among 4 nominated to Rajya Sabha

- Legendary music director Ilaiyaraaja, celebrated athlete PT Usha, film screenwriter V Vijayendra Prasad and spiritual leader Veerendra Heggade were nominated to Rajya Sabha. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated V. Vijayendra Prasad, Veerendra Heggade, Ilaiyaraaja and PT Usha for being nominated to the Rajya Sabha.
- The nominations — done by the President on the advice of the Union Cabinet — are seen to be in line with the Bharatiya Janata Party's concerted effort to expand its footprint in the Southern region as all four nominees are from as many Southern states. While PT Usha is from Kerala, Ilaiyaraaja is from Tamil Nadu, Heggade from Karnataka and Prasad from Andhra Pradesh.

The President nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha on the advice of the cabinet who have special knowledge or practical experience in art, literature, science and social service. The nominated members have a six-year term. At present, there are five nominated members in the Rajya Sabha of which four have joined the BJP. They are lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani, who was nominated in April this year; Ram Shakal, who was nominated in 2019; Rakesh Sinha and Sonal Mansingh, who were nominated in 2018; and former chief justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, who was nominated in March, 2020.

Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state in the country to have 13 expressways

- **Uttar Pradesh** has become the first state in the country to have 13 expressways. Of the total 13 expressways of 3200 km, work is going on seven, while six expressways are operational.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the 296 km long **Bundelkhand Expressway** on July 16 and through this **Bundelkhand** will be directly connected to **Delhi**. The government of double engine has fulfilled the decades-old demand of the people of NCR and western UP. **Delhi-Meerut Expressway** is an example of this. Also, the foundation stone of the 594 km long **Ganga Expressway** has been laid by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed **Uttar Pradesh** in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being **Lucknow**. On 9 November 2000, a new state, **Uttarakhand**, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the **Ganges** and **Yamuna**, join at **Allahabad** and flow further east as **Ganges**. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, **Lok Sabha** and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, **Rajya Sabha**. **Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel** is serving as the current Governor of **Uttar Pradesh**. She also served as Governor of **Madhya Pradesh**. She has served as the first female Chief Minister of **Gujarat**. **Yogi Adityanath** is serving as the current Chief Minister of **Uttar Pradesh**.

India becomes 68th country to join Interpol's child sexual abuse database

- **India** joined the **Interpol's international child sexual exploitation (ICSE) database** which will allow it to draw links between victims, abusers and crime scene using audio-visual data. "The ICSE database uses video & image comparison to analyse child sexual abuse material and make connections between victims, abusers and places," it said. An intelligence and investigative tool, the database allows specialized investigators to share information on cases of child sexual abuse.
- **The CBI, which is India's nodal agency for Interpol matters**, joined the database making India the 68th country to connect to it. **Detectives in all 68 countries can exchange information and notes with their colleagues across the world.**

The International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO), commonly known as **Interpol** is an international organization that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control. Headquartered in **Lyon, France**, it is the world's largest international police organization, with seven regional bureaus worldwide and a National Central Bureau in all 195 member states. Interpol was conceived during the first International Criminal Police Congress in 1914, which brought officials from 24 countries to discuss cooperation in law enforcement. It was founded in **September 1923** as the **International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC)**, adopting many of its current duties throughout the 1930s. After coming under **Nazi control in 1938**, the agency was effectively moribund until the end of **World War II**. Interpol provides investigative support, expertise, and training to law enforcement worldwide, focusing on three major areas of transnational crime: terrorism, cybercrime, and organized crime. **The Secretariat is led by the Secretary-General, currently Jürgen Stock.**

PM Narendra Modi unveils National Emblem cast on the roof of New Parliament Building

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** unveiled the **National Emblem** cast on the roof of the **New Parliament Building**. The National Emblem is made of bronze with a total weight of 9500 kilograms and is 6.5 meters in height.
- It has been cast at the top of the **Central Foyer of New Parliament Building**. A supporting structure of steel weighing around 6500 kilograms has also been constructed to support the Emblem. The concept sketch and process of casting the National Emblem on the roof of New Parliament Building has gone through eight different stages of preparation from clay modeling and computer graphics to bronze casting and polishing.

The State Emblem of India is the national emblem of the Republic of India and is used by the union government, many state governments, and other government agencies. The emblem is an adaptation of the **Lion Capital of Ashoka**, an ancient sculpture dating back to 280 BCE during the **Maurya Empire**. The statue is a three dimensional emblem showing four lions. It became the emblem of the **Dominion of India** in **December 1947**, and later the emblem of the **Republic of India**.

Central Vista Redevelopment Project refers to the ongoing redevelopment to revamp the Central Vista, India's central administrative area located near Raisina Hill, New Delhi. The area was originally designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker during British colonial rule and was retained by Government of India after independence. The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs proposed a Central Vista redevelopment project in 2019. **The project intends to construct a triangular-shaped Parliament building next to the existing one, construction of Common Central Secretariat, revamp of the 3 kilometres long Rajpath from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate.** It also includes the conversion of North and South Blocks into museums and the development of Central Vista Avenue. To accommodate the offices of various ministries, 87 storied buildings will be built for the common Central Secretariat.

Ministry of Defence sets target of 1.75 lakh crores rupees of defence production by 2025

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has said that his Ministry has **set a target of one lakh 75 thousand crore rupees of defence production by 2025**, which includes the export of 35 thousand crore rupees.
- The Defence Public Sector Undertakings, DPSUs, will play **a major role in achieving this goal with a contribution of 70 to 80 per cent.** Mr. Singh exhorted the Non-Official Directors (NODs) of DPSUs to ensure smooth implementation of various initiatives taken **by the government towards achieving 'Aatmanirbharta in Defence'.**

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. **A military department was created by the supreme government of the British East India Company at Kolkata in the year 1776. Rajnath Singh is currently serving as the Defence Minister of India. He has been Member of parliament, Lok Sabha two times from Lucknow (Lok Sabha constituency) and once from Ghaziabad (Lok Sabha constituency).**

Assam, Arunachal CMs sign pact to resolve border dispute

- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** and his Arunachal Pradesh counterpart **Pema Khandu** signed an agreement to end border issues between the two states and decided to "restrict" the number of disputed villages to 86 instead of 123.
- **Chief Ministers of the two North-eastern neighbours met at Namsai in Arunachal Pradesh and signed the agreement. The two states share an 804.1 km-long border.** The grievance of Arunachal Pradesh which was **made a union territory in 1972** is that several forested tracts in the plains that had traditionally belonged to hill tribal chiefs and communities were unilaterally transferred to Assam.

Assam is a state in northeastern India, south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. **Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk.** The state was the **first site for oil drilling in Asia.** **Largest tea producing state in India is Assam.**

Arunachal Pradesh ("land of dawn-lit mountains") is a state in Northeast India. It **borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south. It shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east, and a disputed border with China in the north at the McMahon Line.** Itanagar is the state capital of Arunachal Pradesh. **B. D. Mishra is a former brigadier of the Indian Army. He is the present governor.**

Ahmedabad and Kerala on TIME magazine's list of World's Greatest Places of 2022

- **Ahmedabad and Kerala** have been named by TIME magazine among the 50 extraordinary destinations to explore in its list of the **World's Greatest Places of 2022.** These are two major tourist destinations in India. **Besides Ahmedabad and Kerala, other cities which made to the list of top 50 include Seoul, Buahan in Bali, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, and many more. Ahmedabad has now been included in the list of 'World's 50 Greatest Places of 2022' by Time Magazine.**
- **It described Ahmedabad as India's first UNESCO World Heritage City, and a city which "boasts both ancient landmarks and contemporary innovations that make it a Mecca for cultural tourism, from the serene Gandhi Ashram that sits on 36 acres on the banks of the Sabarmati River to Navratri, a vibrant nine-day celebration billed as the longest dance festival in the world."**

Varanasi to be the first city in SCO to be granted the rotating title of 'Cultural and Tourism capital of SCO' in September when India assumes SCO Presidency

- **Varanasi will be the first city in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) region to be granted the rotating title of 'Cultural & Tourism capital of SCO' under a new mechanism during India's SCO Presidency from September 2022 to September 2023.**
- **India will take over as SCO chair from Uzbekistan** at the Samarkand summit in September this year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has proposed many initiatives in the realm of culture for SCO including SCO Food Festival and SCO Film Festival. Uzbekistan has made huge investment in preparing the venue for the SCO Summit in Samarkand which will be **later used as 'SCO Park'**. **The Beijing-headquartered Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is an eight-member economic and security alliance comprising China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.**

Rajnath Singh launches indigenously built Y- 3023 Dunagiri, Project 17A frigate to strengthen country's maritime security

- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh said the security challenges in the Indian Ocean region and Indo-Pacific are constantly increasing. **In order to achieve the Prime Minister's Vision of 'SAGAR', that is 'Security and Growth for All in the Region' and to protect, preserve and promote India's National Maritime Interests**, Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and other organisations have to increase the infrastructure and assets so that the country stay ahead of the curve in dealing with these challenges.
- Raksha Mantri said this while **launching Y- 3023 Dunagiri, Project 17A frigate built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders Limited (GRSE) in Kolkata**. P17A Frigates are follow-on class of the P17 (Shivalik Class) Frigates with improved stealth features, advanced weapons and sensors and platform management systems. Seven P17A Frigates are under various stages of construction at Mazagaon Dock Limited (MDL) and GRSE.

The Sagarmala Programme was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2015 which aims at holistic port infrastructure development along the 7,516-km long coastline through modernisation, mechanisation and computerisation. Sagarmala could boost India's merchandise exports to USD 110 billion by 2025.

INS Sindhudhvaj decommissioned after 35 years of glorious service to nation

- **The Submarine, INS Sindhudhvaj bid adieu to Indian Navy serving for a glorious period of 35 years.** The submarine crest depicts a gray colour nurse shark and the name means flag bearer at sea. Sindhudhvaj, as the name suggests, was the **flag bearer of indigenisation and Indian Navy's efforts towards achieving Atmanirbharta in the Russian built Sindhughosh class submarines** throughout her journey in the navy.
- She had many **a firsts to her credit including operationalisation of the indigenised sonar USHUS, Indigenised Satellite Communication systems Rukmani and MSS, Inertial Navigation System and Indigenised Torpedo Fire Control System.**
- **Commissioned into the Navy in 1987, Sindhudhvaj, was one of the 10 Kilo-class submarines India acquired from Russia between 1986 and 2000.** It was the only submarine to be awarded the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) rolling trophy for Innovation by PM Modi.

HM Amit Shah meeting with all CMs, LGs of UTs on Har Ghar Tiranga Programme

- Home Minister Amit Shah held a meeting with **all the Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors and Administrators of Union Territories on the Har Ghar Tiranga Programme.** To further strengthen the feeling of patriotism among the countrymen, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a unique campaign in the form of 'Har Ghar Tiranga' program.**
- Mr Shah said, in this campaign, **more than one hundred crore people will be connected across the country who will unfurl the Tricolor** at their homes from 13th to 15th August. The Home Minister said, it will **connect the young generation with the development and security of the country for many years to come.** He urged everyone to participate in this campaign.
- The Ministry also urged political parties, government institutions, NGOs and cooperatives urged **to make "Prabhat Pheris" successful, adding that when children, the elderly, youth and teenagers together sing praise to Mother India and take out "Prabhat Pheris" in villages with the tricolour in hand, then the "Har Ghar Tiranga" programme will be successful on its own.**

The Indian National Flag represents India's long struggle for freedom. It signifies the status of India as an independent republic. The flag came into being in its present form at the meeting of Constitutional Assembly on 22 July 1947. Since then it has served as the National Flag of the Dominion of India from 15 August 1947 to 26 January 1950 and, thereafter, as the national flag of the Republic of India. The Indian National Flag was designed by Pingali Venkayya and contains three equal strips of saffron, white and green. The national flag is popularly known as Tiranga, which means "three colours" or "tricoloured". Saffron: Saffron is a symbol of courage and sacrifice. **White:** The white colour represents honesty, peace, and purity. It highlights the importance of maintaining peace in the country. **Green:** The green colour represents faith and chivalry. It is a symbol of prosperity, vibrancy, and life. **The Ashoka Chakra or the Dharma Chakra (Wheel of Law) has 24 spokes and appears on a number of edicts of Ashoka.**

CM Yogi Adityanath to inaugurate world's first Vulture conservation centre in UP's Gorakhpur

- In a major step to check the dwindling population of vultures, the Uttar Pradesh government is constructing the world's first Vulture conservation and breeding centre in Gorakhpur. It will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on September 3.

Kerala launches own Internet service

- Raising the slogan of 'Internet a basic right', Kerala took a big leap in communication technology and e-governance by launching K FON- Kerala Fibre Optical Network recently. With approval from the Centre, Kerala has become a pioneering state in establishing state-owned internet service provider network. A partnered venture with Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) and Kerala State Information Technology (KSIT) Infrastructure Ltd, K FON is envisaged to connect 30,000 government offices, including schools and hospitals with a fibre route length of 35,000 kms.

Rajasthan launches India's first Digital Lok Adalat

- India's First AI-powered, end-to-end digital Lok Adalat was launched by Chairman, NALSA. The digital Lok Adalat by Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority (RSLSA 22) was designed and developed by its technology partner Jupitice Justice Technologies.

Consumer Affairs Department launches its new mascot, Jagriti

- The Department of Consumer Affairs launched a mascot, 'Jagriti', to "empower consumers and generate awareness of their rights". 'Jagriti' would be projected as an empowered consumer, who spreads awareness regarding consumer rights and addresses solutions to the issues they face. The mascot would be showcased with the tagline "Jago Grahak Jago" in all its media campaigns.

Droupadi Murmu elected as the 15th President of India; the first tribal woman and the youngest President to hold the post

- Droupadi Murmu has been elected as the 15th President of India. Ms Murmu bagged 64 per cent of the votes in the poll and opposition Candidate Yashwant Sinha got 36 per cent. Of the four thousand seven hundred 54 valid electors, Ms Murmu got votes of two thousand 824 lawmakers including 540 MPs and the value of the vote is Six lakh 76 thousand 803.
- Mr Sinha got the votes of One thousand eight hundred 77 lawmakers including 208 MPs and the value of the vote is three lakh 80 thousand 177. Ms Murmu is the first tribal woman and the second woman to hold the position of President of India.

The President of India is the head of the Indian state and is also the first citizen of India. Article 52 of the Indian Constitution mentions that there shall be a President of India. Article 54 mentions that there shall be an election for the President of India. The President of India is elected indirectly by the single-transferable voting system. The President is elected by an electoral college consisting of elected representatives of the government that form the government after being elected in the state assembly and national elections. The nominated members of both the houses and state legislatures are not allowed to vote in the presidential election. Hence the electoral college of the presidential election consists of: Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and Legislative Assemblies of the states and Legislative Assemblies of the Union Territories of Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry (Since 1992 through 70th Constitutional Amendment Act). Article 55 states the manner of the election of the President. It states that: The president is elected indirectly by an electoral college. The election shall be done by a secret ballot. The election shall be held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means

of a single transferable vote. The value of the vote of each MP and MLA differs in accordance with the number of members in their legislative body. The nomination of a candidate for election to the office of the president must be subscribed by at least 50 electors as proposers and 50 electors as seconders. Each candidate has to make a security deposit of ₹15,000 (US\$210) in the Reserve Bank of India. The security deposit is liable to be forfeited in case the candidate fails to secure one-sixth of the votes polled.

Droupadi Murmu sworn-in as 15th President of India at Central Hall of Parliament

- Chief Justice of India, Justice N V Ramana administered the oath of office to Ms Murmu at the Central Hall of Parliament. The swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Droupadi Murmu was held at the Central Hall of Parliament. President of India is the commander-in-chief of the Indian Armed Forces.
- She takes oath as the 15th President of India. Ms Murmu is the first tribal who will hold the country's top constitutional post. Droupadi Murmu, the NDA's presidential candidate, was elected President, defeating Opposition nominee Yashwant Sinha.
- The office of president was created when India officially became a republic on 26 January 1950 after gaining independence on 15th August 1947, when its constitution came into force. Rajendra Prasad served as the first president of Republic of India from 1950 to 1962.

Droupadi Murmu is serving as the 15th and current President of India since 25 July 2022. She is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). She is the first person belonging to the indigenous, scheduled tribe community (Santal) to be elected as the President of India. Prior to her presidency she served as the ninth Governor of Jharkhand between 2015 and 2021, and held various portfolios in the cabinet of Government of Odisha between 2000 to 2004. Before entering politics, she worked as a clerk in the State Irrigation and Power Department from 1979 to 1983, and then as a teacher in Rairangpur until 1997. She is the youngest and first individual born after India's independence in 1947 to have been elected president. Murmu is only the second woman after Pratibha Patil to serve as the President of India.

Karnataka, Manipur and Chandigarh tops India Innovation Index 2021

- Karnataka, Manipur and Chandigarh topped the third edition of NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index, which ranks the states and the union territories on their innovation performance. NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery released the India Innovation Index 2021 in presence of apex public policy think tank member Dr VK Saraswat, CEO Parameswaran Iyer and senior adviser Neeraj Sinha.
- Karnataka topped in the 'Major States' category and Manipur emerged as a winner in the 'North East and Hill States' category. Chandigarh was the top performer in the 'Union Territories and City States' category.
- According to the report, Karnataka's high score can be attributed to its peak performance in attracting FDI and a large number of venture capital deals. While Chandigarh topped the knowledge worker pillar, Delhi topped the business environment and investment pillars.
- Prepared by NITI Aayog and the Institute for Competitiveness, the India Innovation Index is a "comprehensive tool for the evaluation and development of the country's innovation ecosystem." In the third edition, the number of indicators has increased from 36 (in the India Innovation Index 2020) to 66.

India, Namibia sign MoU for establishing cheetah into historical range in India

- On July 20, 2022, India and Namibia inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to reintroduction cheetahs in historical range in India. 8 Cheetahs (4 males and 4 females) are likely to reach India, in August 2022. They will be reintroduced in Kuno National Park of Madhya Pradesh. India has planned to introduce 8 to 10 cheetahs each year. In next five years, a total 50 cheetahs will be relocated to India from Namibia, South Africa and other African countries.

The cheetah is scientifically known as *Acinonyx jubatus*. The large cat is native to Africa and central Iran. It is the fastest land animal, running at the speed of 80 to 128 km/h. They can be found in variety of habitats like savannahs of Serengeti, arid mountain ranges of Sahara and hilly desert terrain of Iran. In the IUCN Red list, Cheetah is listed in Vulnerable category.

Namibia is a country in Southern Africa. Windhoek is the capital city of Namibia. The Namibian dollar has been the currency of Namibia since 1993. Hage Gottfried Geingob is the current President of Namibia.

India has 19 types of wetlands whereas Gujarat has the maximum area followed by Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal

- **India's Ramsar wetlands are spread over 11,000 sq km — around 10% of the total wetland area in the country — across 18 States. No other South Asian country has as many sites though this has much to do with India's geographical breadth and tropical diversity.**
- **The United Kingdom (175) and Mexico (142) — smaller countries than India — have the maximum Ramsar sites whereas Bolivia spans the largest area with 148,000 sq km under the Convention protection. Being designated a Ramsar site does not necessarily invite extra international funds but that States — and the Centre — must ensure that these tracts of land are conserved and spared from man-made encroachment. Acquiring this label also helps with a locale's tourism potential and its international visibility. Until 1981, India had 41 Ramsar sites though the last decade has seen the sharpest rise —13 — in designating new sites.**

Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh is the first Har Ghar Jal Certified District

- **Burhanpur also known as the 'Darwaza of Dakhin' in Madhya Pradesh becomes the first 'Har Ghar Jal' certified district in the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people of Burhanpur, a Madhya Pradesh district, for becoming the first 'Har Ghar Jal' (water connection to every house) certified district in the country. From just 37 per cent of households in August 2019 to 100 per cent in less than three years under Jal Jeevan Mission, Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh has become the first Har Ghar Jal certified district in the country.**

Deloitte India to help Uttar Pradesh achieve USD 1 trillion target

- **Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved a proposal to appoint Deloitte India as the consultant to work with the government for making UP a USD 1 trillion economy. To take the state's economy to USD 1 trillion, the government is preparing sector-wise plans in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal to make India a USD 5 trillion economy. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that UP will have a crucial role to play in this scheme and therefore should work towards improving its own economy to at least USD 1 trillion.**
- **UP's GSDP in 2020-21, in nominal terms, was Rs 17.2 trillion, roughly the same level as in 2019-20. According to the fresh request for proposal (RFP) document, the selected consultant will have to critically analyse the macro and micro-economic sectoral data around GSDP, trade, investment, expenditure, savings, workforce participation, inflation, import & export, etc to identify the strengths and weaknesses of UP's economy.**

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited commonly referred to as Deloitte, is an international professional services network headquartered in London, United Kingdom. Deloitte is the largest professional services network by revenue and number of professionals in the world and is considered one of the Big Four accounting firms along with EY, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers. The firm was founded by William Welch Deloitte in London in 1845.

Jawaharlal Nehru Port becomes first 100 per cent Landlord Major Port of India having all berths being operated on PPP model

- **Jawaharlal Nehru Port has become the first 100 per cent Landlord Major Port of India having all berths being operated on PPP model. Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said, this project will improve the utilization in crane and berth productivity of the terminal.**

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) or JLN Port, also known as Nhava Sheva Port, is the second largest container port in India after Mundra Port. Located in Navi Mumbai's Raigad district, this port on the Arabian Sea is accessed via Thane Creek. It's a nodal city of Navi Mumbai. Its common name derives from the names of Nhava and Sheva villages that are situated here. This port is also the terminal of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor. The port was established on 26 May 1989.

India's first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 'Vikrant' built by Cochin Shipyard handed over to Navy

- **Maritime history was created with the Indian Navy taking delivery of the prestigious Indigenous Aircraft Carrier Vikrant, built by the Cochin Shipyard. With the delivery of the IAC, India joined a select group of nations having the niche capability to indigenously design and build an Aircraft Carrier. The 262-meter-long aircraft carrier is the largest ever warship to be built in the country.**
- **The vessel, which has a displacement of 45,000 tonnes, has been built at an overall cost of close to 20,000 crore rupees. The IAC is capable of operating 30 aircraft comprising MIG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31,**

and MH-60R multi-role helicopters, in addition to indigenously manufactured Advanced Light Helicopters and Light Combat Aircraft.

- **The name of India's first Aircraft Carrier was also INS Vikrant which played a vital role in the 1971 war.** The Aircraft Carrier was **decommissioned on 31st January 1997**, after 36 years of glorious service to the Navy. The reincarnation of Vikrant is a true testimony to the country's zeal and fervor in pursuing capability build-up towards enhanced maritime security.

EAM S Jaishankar visited Uzbekistan to attend SCO FM's meet

- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar was on a two day visit to Uzbekistan to take part in the meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers.** The meeting **discussed preparations for the upcoming Meeting of the Council of Heads of State on 15th and 16th September 2022 in Samarkand.** They reviewed ongoing cooperation in expansion of the SCO Organisation and exchange ideas on regional and global developments of common concern.
- Meanwhile, **Jaishankar shared the table with his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto at the SCO Foreign Ministers meeting. This is the first time, Bhutto met EAM Jaishankar face to face after the formation of the new coalition government of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) in Islamabad, led by Shehbaz Sharif.**
- **Jaishankar is participated at the invitation of the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Vladimir Norov to take part in the meeting, said MEA in a release. Uzbekistan took over the chairmanship of the organization from Tajikistan on September 17, 2021. India will hold the SCO summit next year.**
- **This year, Uzbekistan is chairing the SCO meeting and the organizer of all the events pertaining to the two-decade-old grouping that includes Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and 4 central Asian countries — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. SCO has four observer states, namely Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia. It has six dialogue partners, namely Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, and Sri Lanka.**

Bengaluru becomes first Indian city to tie up with Google for traffic management

- **Bengaluru becomes first Indian city to tie up with Google for traffic management. Bengaluru Traffic Police will use Google AI to optimise signals at crucial junctions to efficiently manage traffic in the Silicon Valley of India. Bengaluru Traffic Police will use Google AI to improve traffic management system.**

Bangalore officially known as Bengaluru is the capital and the largest city of the Indian state of Karnataka. Bangalore is widely regarded as the “Silicon Valley of India” (or “IT capital of India”) because of its role as the nation's leading information technology (IT) exporter.

Gujarat announces Semiconductor Policy to attract new investments

- **The Gujarat Government announced a dedicated policy to attract new investment in the semiconductor sector by offering incentives and subsidies to start operations in the State. The Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel announced the Gujarat Semiconductor Policy, it will remain in force until 2027.** The dedicate policy is likely to attract new investment in the semiconductor sector by offering incentives and subsidies to start operations in the state.
- **Under the policy, the state government will set up ‘Dholera Semicon City’ near Ahmedabad where eligible projects will be given subsidy for setting up manufacturing units. Gujarat has now become the first state in the country to have a dedicated policy for the semiconductor and display production sector, the minister claimed. “The policy has been designed in line with the Centre's India Semiconductor Mission.**

Gujarat is a state on the western coast of India with a longest coastline of India 1,600 km (990 mi). Its capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. Gujarat International Finance Tec-City is a business district promoted by the Government of Gujarat through a joint venture company. GIFT City is India's first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad and international financial services centre. Acharya Devvrat is Governor of Gujarat and Bhupendra Patel is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat. Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced 10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category and followed by Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

India adds 10 new wetlands to the Ramsar sites list

- The Union environment ministry announced that **India has added 10 more wetlands, taking the total Ramsar sites to 64. The new sites include six wetlands from Tamil Nadu and one each from Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.** “Absolutely thrilled to inform that **10 more Indian wetlands have got Ramsar recognition as wetlands of international importance. So far, 64 wetlands covering an area of 12,50,361 ha have been designated as Ramsar Sites of International Importance from India.**
- **The new Indian wetlands, which have bagged the coveted tag, are Tamil Nadu’s Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary, Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary, Vellode Bird Sanctuary, Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve, and Vembannur Wetland Complex. Further, Karnataka’s Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Goa’s Nanda Lake, Madhya Pradesh’s Sirpur Wetland and Odisha’s Satkosia Gorge. Last month (July 2022), India designated five new wetlands of international importance – the Karikili Bird Sanctuary, Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest and Pichavaram Mangrove in Tamil Nadu; Pala wetland in Mizoram and Sakhya Sagar in Madhya Pradesh.**

Chabahar Day conference begins in Mumbai

- **Union Shipping Minister Sarbanand Sonowal and Minister of State for Shipping Shripad Naik inaugurated the Chabahar Day conference in Mumbai.** Dignitaries from Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan were present on the occasion.
- **The Chabahar port is a key pillar of India’s Indo-Pacific vision to connect with Eurasia with Indian Ocean Region.** The port will also be **part of the International North South Transport Corridor network connecting India.** Deputy Head of Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization, Jalil Eslami said that **Chabahar port plays an important role in economic development of India and Iran.** This trade route will open new avenues for India and Eurasian countries. Iran has given special incentives to increase trade cooperation activities between India and Iran through Chabahar port.
- **31 July was designated Chabahar Day in Mumbai** by the Ministry of Port, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW) **to commemorate the Chabahar – Link to International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) – Connecting Central Asian Markets.**

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran’s only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths. It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar. In December 2018, India took over the operations of the Port. It was being operated by India Ports Global Private Limited (IPGPL). India’s first shipment of wheat to Afghanistan was sent through Chabahar Port. India began building a railway line between Chabahar port and Zahedan as part of the North-South Transport Corridor. In 2016, India signed a historic deal to develop the strategic port of Chabahar in Iran and agreed on a three-nation pact to build a transport-and-trade corridor through Afghanistan that could help halve the time and cost of doing business with Central Asia and Europe. The Chabahar port is considered a gateway to golden opportunities for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with central Asian countries. It will make way for India to bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan using a sea-land route. At present; Pakistan does not allow India to transport its territory to Afghanistan. It will provide India with an alternative and reliable access route into Afghanistan and also a reliable and more direct sea-route access into the Central Asian region.

Royal Army of Oman Contingent for Joint Military Exercise AL NAJAH-IV arrive in India

- **The fourth Edition of India Oman Joint Military Exercise AL NAJAH-IV between contingents of Indian Army and the Royal Army of Oman is scheduled to take place at the Foreign Training Node of Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan. The Indian Army is represented by troops from the 18 MECHANISED INFANTRY Battalion.**

Oman is an Arabian country located in southwestern Asia. Muscat is the nation’s capital and largest city. The Omani rial is the currency of Oman. Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said is the Crown Prince of Oman. Haitham bin Tariq Al Said is Sultan of Oman.

3rd edition of Vietnam-India Bilateral Army exercise to begin tomorrow at Chandimandir

- **The 3rd Edition of Vietnam-India Bilateral Army Exercise “Ex VINBAX2022” will begin at Chandimandir.** It will continue till 20th August. The exercise is a sequel to a previously conducted bilateral exercise in Vietnam in 2019 and a major milestone in strengthening the bilateral relations between India and Vietnam.

- **India and Vietnam share a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and defence cooperation** is a key pillar of this partnership. **Vietnam is an important partner in India's Act East policy** and the **Indo-Pacific vision**. The theme of **Ex VINBAX - 2022** is the employment and deployment of an **Engineer Company** and a **Medical Team** as part of the **United Nations Contingent for Peace Keeping Operations**.

IAF to participate in multilateral exercise 'Pitch Black' in Australia

- **Ex Pitch Black** a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise was hosted by **Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)** from 24 Jul 18 to 18 Aug 18 in **Darwin, Australia**. **Indian Air Force** had earlier participated in the exercise as **observers** and **this was for the first time that IAF participated with air assets in the Exercise Pitch Black (PB-18)**.

The Parliament passed the Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022

- **Recently, Parliament passed the Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022**. It is an **important step forward in India's engagement with the gigantic continent which began way back in February 1956**. The Parliament has passed the **Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022** with the Rajya Sabha approving it. The Bill was passed by the Upper House negating the amendments moved by Left MPs. The Lok Sabha has already cleared the Bill. **The Bill seeks to give effect to the Antarctic Treaty, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty**.

Antarctica Treaty covers the area south of 60°S latitude. Its objective is to **demilitarize Antarctica; use for peaceful purposes & resolve disputes**. Signed in 1959 by 12 countries: **Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, USSR, the UK and the USA**, and came into force in 1961. **India signed the Antarctic Treaty in 1983**. **Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR): Set up in 1980 for the protection and preservation of the Antarctic**. **Madrid Protocol: Designates Antarctica as a "natural reserve, devoted to peace and science" (Signed by India)**. **Antarctica is the world's southernmost and fifth-largest continent that has the geographic South Pole**. The continent is divided into **East Antarctica (which is largely composed of a high ice-covered plateau)** and **West Antarctica (which is largely an ice sheet covering an archipelago of mountainous islands)**.

Suresh N Patel sworn in as Central Vigilance Commissioner

- **Suresh N. Patel** was sworn in as the **Central Vigilance Commissioner**. He made and **subscribed the oath of his office before President Droupadi Murmu** at a ceremony held at **Rashtrapati Bhavan**.
- **Mr. Patel, who has been working as the acting Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) since June this year, was sworn in as the chief of the probity watchdog Central Vigilance Commission** by President Droupadi Murmu at **Rashtrapati Bhavan**.
- **Mr. Patel, former managing director and chief executive officer of Andhra Bank, was in April 2020 appointed as the vigilance commissioner**. Former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer **Sanjay Kothari** had completed his term as the CVC on June 24 last year. **The Central Vigilance Commission is headed by a Central Vigilance Commissioner and it can have two vigilance commissioners**.

Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is an **apex Indian governmental body created in 1964 to address governmental corruption**. In 2003, the Parliament enacted a law conferring statutory status on the CVC. It has the **status of an autonomous body, free of control from any executive authority, charged with monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government of India**, advising various authorities in central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing and reforming their vigilance work. It was **set up by the Government of India Resolution on 11 February 1964, on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by K. Santhanam, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance**. The **Annual Report of the CVC** not only gives the details of the work done by it but also brings out the system failures which leads to corruption in various Departments/Organisations, system improvements, various preventive measures and cases in which the commission's advises were ignored etc.

Indigenous Automatic Train Protection System 'Kavach' to be progressively taken up to cover entire network of Railways

- **Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav** has said that the **indigenous Automatic Train Protection System, Kavach, developed by the Indian Railways along with three other firms, will be progressively taken up to cover the entire network of Indian Railways**. The Union Minister said **Kavach** has been deployed on **1,445 route kilometres of South Central Railway on Bidar-Parbhani and Manmad-Parbhani-Guntakal sections**.

- The Railways has also taken up the **deployment of Kavach on approximately 3,000 route kms of Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah corridors**, for which tenders are under evaluation. He said, more than **35,000 route kms on High Density Network or Highly Utilized Network routes** have been included in the works programme of the last two years.

Union Cabinet approves India's updated NDC to be communicated to UNFCCC

- The Union Cabinet has **approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)** to be communicated to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**. The updated NDC seeks to enhance India's contributions towards the achievement of the strengthening of the **global response to the threat of climate change**, as agreed under the Paris Agreement.
- Such action will also **help India usher in low emissions growth pathways**. It will **protect the interests of the country and safeguard its future development needs based on the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC**. India at the **26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the UNFCCC** held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, expressed to intensify its climate action by presenting to the world **five nectar elements (Panchamrit) of India's climate action**. This update to India's existing NDC translates the 'Panchamrit' announced at COP 26 into enhanced climate targets.

The Prime Minister of India at the COP-26 Glasgow summit presented five nectar elements, Panchamrit, to deal with climate change: 1. India will reach its **non-fossil installed electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030**. 2. India will **meet 50% of its electricity requirements from renewable energy by 2030**. 3. India will **reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now onwards till 2030**. 4. **By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by less than 45%**. 5. **By the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net-zero.**

Jaishankar visits Cambodia to attend India-ASEAN ministerial meet

- **External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar began his two-day visit to Cambodia to take part in the India-ASEAN ministerial meeting.** On the first day of his tour, **Jaishankar visited the 12th-century Angkor Wat temples**, who's restoration work is being done by the Archaeological Survey of India.
- **India and the 10-nation grouping ASEAN have "strong convergence" on Indo-Pacific, combating the threat of terrorism and the developments in Ukraine and Myanmar**, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said. Mr. Jaishankar made the comments after attending an **India-ASEAN ministerial meeting in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh**. The external affairs minister also said that **India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) also have similar views on connectivity projects, dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and issues relating to cyber security.**

Angkor Wat ("Temple City") is a temple complex in Cambodia and is the largest religious monument in the world. Breaking from Shaiva tradition (sect of hinduism) of previous kings, Angkor Wat was dedicated to Vishnu (one of the principal deities of hinduism) for the Khmer Empire. It was built by the Khmer King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century in Yasodharapura, the capital of the Khmer Empire, as his state temple and eventual mausoleum.

CJI Ramana names Justice U.U. Lalit as successor

- **Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana recommended to the government the name of Justice Uday Umesh Lalit as his successor and the 49th Chief Justice of India.** Chief Justice Ramana is retiring on August 26, 2022.
- **Justice Lalit is the senior most judge in the Supreme Court now.** The 'Memorandum of Procedure of Appointment of Supreme Court Judges' says **"appointment to the office of the Chief Justice of India should be of the senior most Judge of the Supreme Court considered fit to hold the office"**.

UNESCO tag for British-era astronomical lab turns focus on Aryabhata trail in Bihar

- Days after the **astronomical observatory at the LS College in Bihar's Muzaffarpur was included in UNESCO list of Important Endangered Heritage Observatories of the World**, there is a growing chorus among heritage enthusiasts to **conserve and revive Taregana, a settlement 30 kilometres south of the state capital where Aryabhata, the ancient astronomer and mathematician, is believed to have set up his observatory.**

NDA candidate Jagdeep Dhankhar wins V-P election with 528 votes

- **Former Governor of West Bengal and NDA's pick Jagdeep Dhankhar defeated Opposition nominee Margaret Alva to become the 14th Vice-President of India. Of the 725 votes polled, Dhankhar clinched 528 votes, Alva got 182 while 15 were found to be invalid. As the term of incumbent M Venkaiah Naidu ends on August 10, members of both Houses of Parliament voted to elect the next Vice-President who will take oath of office on August 11.**
- **Jagdeep Dhankhar is the second leader from Rajasthan after Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to get elected the vice-president of India. Earlier, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat held the office as the 11th vice-president from August 2002 to July 2007. Villages of both Shekhawat and Dhankhar are in Shekhawati region, which comprises Sikar, Jhunjhunu and nearby areas.**

The Vice President of India is elected by an electoral college through the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. The voting is held by secret ballot. The electoral college in the vice presidential election comprises a total of 788 members of both Houses of Parliament. Since all the electors are members of both Houses of Parliament, the value of the vote of each MP would be the same — one, the Election Commission (EC) has said. The term of incumbent M Venkaiah Naidu ends on August 10. The vice president is also the chairperson of the Rajya Sabha. There is no concept of open voting in this election and showing the ballot to anyone under any circumstances in the case of presidential and vice-presidential elections is totally prohibited, the EC has cautioned, adding that parties cannot issue whips to its MPs in the matter of voting.

Chenab Railway Bridge in J&K nears completion with golden joint

- **Decked with the national flag, the 'Golden Joint' of the Chenab Railway Bridge was launched thereby inaugurating the World's highest railway bridge. To commemorate 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the world's highest bridge in Reasi district of J&K was decked up with the Tricolour by the workers on this occasion.**
- **The project is part of the ambitious 272-km long railway line from Udhampur to Baramulla joining Jammu with the Kashmir valley as an all-weather highspeed alternative, named the 'Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link Project'. The bridge has so far gobbled up around 30,350 tonnes of steel, comprising 10,620 tonnes to build the gigantic arch and 14,500 tonnes for the bridge deck, and stands majestically near the Kauri village upstream of Salal Dam. The Chenab Bridge will become the world's highest single-arch railway bridge after completion. Around 30,350 MT of steel has been used to construct the 1,315m-long Chenab Railway Bridge.**

The Chenab River is a major river that flows in India and Pakistan, and is one of the 5 major rivers of the Punjab region. It is formed by the union of two headwaters, Chandra and Bhaga, which rise in the upper Himalayas in the Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh, India. The waters of the Chenab were allocated to Pakistan under the terms of the Indus Waters Treaty. Indus River System is a Himalayan river system and is one of the largest river basins in the world. The Indus River is also known as Sindhu. Its left-bank tributary in Ladakh is the Zaskar River, and its left-bank tributary in the plains is the Panjnad River which is formed by the successive confluences of the five Punjab rivers, namely the Chenab, Jhelum, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers. River Ganga with a length of 2525 km is the longest river of India as it flows entirely through the mainland. The Nile is the longest river in Africa and has historically been considered the longest river in the world, though this has been contested by research suggesting that the Amazon River is slightly longer. The Amazon River in South America is the largest river by discharge volume of water in the world.

India, U.S. Armies commence Special Forces exercise

- **The 13th Edition of the Indo-US Joint Special Forces exercise "Ex Vajra Prahar 2022" commenced at the Special Forces Training School (SFTS), Bakloh in Himachal Pradesh. The US contingent is represented by personnel from the 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) and Special Tactics Squadron (STS) of the US Special Forces while the Indian Army contingent is formed by drawing Special Forces personnel under the aegis of SFTS. In addition to this exercise, the India-U.S. Army exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' is scheduled to be held in high altitude area in Uttarakhand which falls in the Central sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).**

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. Sam Manekshaw was the first field marshal of India, and was conferred the rank on 1 January 1973. The second was Kodandera M. Cariappa, who was conferred the rank on 15 January 1986. The Indian Army was formed in 1895 alongside the long established presidency armies of the East India Company, which too were absorbed into it in 1903. General Manoj Pande is an Indian Army General serving as the 29th and the current Chief of the Army Staff. He is the first officer from the Corps of Engineers to become the Army Chief.

‘Badhe Chalo’ Movement under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav begins

- ‘Badhe Chalo’ Movement under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav has begun. With an objective to instill a deeper sense of patriotism among the youth, the Ministry of Culture, has decided to create a youth centric activation for greater outreach of Amrit Mahotsav named ‘Badhe Chalo’. To connect and to bring the youth and people of the country at one platform, Badhe Chalo movement will feature Flash Dances across 75 cities, where dancers will perform on a specially created ‘Youth Anthem’. Through these Flash Dances the Ministry of Culture aims at spreading the message and spirit of the Amrit Mahotsav in an entertaining and enthusiastic manner. The energetic foot-tapping anthem has been specially written and composed on the theme of ‘Badhe Chalo’ and it encourages everyone to come forward and hoist a Tiranga in their homes.

Independence Day is celebrated annually on 15 August as a public holiday in India commemorating the nation’s independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947, the day when the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, which transferred legislative sovereignty to the Indian Constituent Assembly, came into effect. India retained King George VI as head of state until its transition to a republic, when the Constitution of India came into effect on 26 January 1950 (celebrated as Indian Republic Day) and replaced the dominion prefix, Dominion of India, with the enactment of the sovereign law Constitution of India. India attained independence following the independence movement noted for largely non-violent resistance and civil disobedience. Independence coincided with the partition of India, in which British India was divided along religious lines into the Dominions of India and Pakistan; the partition was accompanied by violent riots and mass casualties, and the displacement of nearly 15 million people due to religious violence. On 15 August 1947, the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort in Delhi. The first governor-general of Bengal was Warren Hastings, the first official governor-general of British India was Lord William Bentinck, and the first governor-general of the Dominion of India was Lord Mountbatten. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari was the last Governor-General of India, as India became a republic in 1950. He was also the first Indian-born governor-general.

Jagdeep Dhankhar sworn in as 14th Vice President of India

- Former West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar was sworn in as 14th Vice President of India. President Droupadi Murmu administered him the oath of office. During Vice Presidential poll, Jagdeep Dhankhar as NDA candidate defeated Opposition candidate Margaret Alva by 346 votes to become the 14th Vice President of India.
- Jagdeep Dhankhar received 528 votes against opposition candidate Margaret Alva who got 182 votes. Dhankhar took over from outgoing vice president M Venkaiah Naidu. Dhankhar secured 74.36 per cent. He has the highest winning margin in the last six vice presidential elections held since 1997. With Jagdeep Dhankhar’s election as Vice-President, the presiding officers of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will be from Rajasthan

The Vice President of India is the second highest constitutional office in the government of India after the President. In accordance with Article 63 of the Constitution of India, the Vice President discharges the functions of the President when a contingency arises due to the resignation, removal, death, impeachment or the inability of the president to discharge their functions. The Vice President of India, which is the second-highest constitutional post in the country, is elected through an electoral college consisting of members of the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha. The Vice President is also the ex officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The first Vice President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, took oath at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13 May 1952. He later served as the President.

Nitish Kumar takes oath as Bihar CM for 8th time

- Nitish Kumar was sworn in as Bihar's Chief Minister a day after quitting – ostensibly over a row with coalition partner BJP – and will now govern in alliance with his former rivals in RJD and Congress. Nitish Kumar takes oath as Bihar CM for 8th time. Tejashwi Yadav took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister. His deputy and RJD's leader Tejashwi Yadav was the only other minister sworn in by Governor Phagu Chauhan.

Bihar is a state in eastern India. It is the third-largest state by population and twelfth-largest by territory. Bihar borders Uttar Pradesh to its west, Nepal to the north, the northern part of West Bengal to the east, and with Jharkhand to the south. On 15 November 2000, southern Bihar was ceded to form the new state of Jharkhand. Patna is historically known as Pataliputra, is the capital and largest city of the state of Bihar in India. Vikramashila was one of the three most important Buddhist monasteries in India during the Pala Empire, along with Nalanda and Odantapuri. Nalanda was a renowned Buddhist monastic university in ancient Magadha (modern-day Bihar), India. Considered by historians to be the world's very first residential university, and among the greatest centers of learning in the ancient world, it was located near the city of Rajagriha (now Rajgir).

Justice U.U. Lalit appointed 49th Chief Justice of India

- Justice Uday Umesh Lalit was appointed as the 49th Chief Justice of India after President Droupadi Murmu signed his warrant of appointment. He will assume charge on August 27 after incumbent N.V. Ramana demits office the day before.
- “In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, judge of the Supreme Court, to be the Chief Justice of India with effect from 27 August, 2022,”. Justice Lalit will have a brief tenure of less than three months. He will turn 65 on November 8 when he demits office.

The chief justice of India is the chief justice of the Supreme Court of India as well as the highest-ranking officer of the Indian federal judiciary. The Constitution of India grants power to the president of India to appoint, in consultation with the outgoing chief justice, the next chief justice, who will serve until they reach the age of sixty-five or are removed by impeachment. As per convention, the name suggested by the incumbent chief justice is almost always the next senior most judge in the Supreme Court. However this convention has been broken twice. In 1973, Justice A. N. Ray was appointed superseding 3 senior judges. Also, in 1977 Justice Mirza Hameedullah Beg was appointed as the chief justice superseding Justice Hans Raj Khanna. As head of the Supreme Court, the chief justice is responsible for the allocation of cases and appointment of constitutional benches which deal with important matters of law. In accordance with Article 145 of the Constitution of India and the Supreme Court Rules of Procedure of 1966, the chief justice allocates all work to the other judges who are bound to refer the matter back to them (for re-allocation) in any case where they require it to be looked into by a larger bench of more judges. On the administrative side, the chief justice carries out functions of maintenance of the roster, appointment of court officials and general and miscellaneous matters relating to the supervision and functioning of the Supreme Court. Sir Hiralal Jekisundas Kania was the first Chief Justice of India. He served as the Chief Justice of India from 1950 to 1951.

PM Narendra Modi dedicated 2nd Generation Ethanol Plant to nation at Panipat in Haryana

- On the occasion of World Biofuel Day on August 10, 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the 2nd generation (2G) ethanol plant set up at the Indian Oil Corporation's Panipat refinery in Haryana. It is part of a long series of steps taken by the government over the years to boost production and usage of biofuels in the country. It is in line with the Prime Minister's constant endeavour to transform the energy sector into being more affordable, accessible, efficient and sustainable.

The Union Cabinet has advanced the target for achieving 20% ethanol blending in petrol by five years. Biofuels are a class of renewable energy derived from living materials. The National Biofuel Policy, introduced in 2018 was aimed at reducing dependence on imports by encouraging fuel blending. The policy categorises biofuels as Basic Biofuels- First Generation (1G) bioethanol & biodiesel, Advanced Biofuels- Second Generation (2G) ethanol, municipal solid waste to drop-in fuels and Third Generation (3G) biofuels- Bio-CNG.

Eleven more wetlands of India added to the list of Ramsar sites

- **India has added 11 more wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites to make total 75 Ramsar sites** covering an area of 13 lakh 26 thousand 677 Hectare in the country in the **75th year of Independence**. The 11 new sites include, **four in Tamil Nadu, three in Odisha, two in Jammu and Kashmir and one each in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra**.
- Designation of these sites would help in conservation and management of wetlands and wise use of their resources. **India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971. India signed it on 1st February 1982.**
- **Maharashtra's Thane Creek was designated as a Ramsar site**, a wetland of international significance. This is **the first time a wetland in India located within an urban metropolis has received such a designation**. During 1982 to 2013, a total of 26 sites were added to the list of Ramsar sites, however, during 2014 to 2022, the country has added 49 new wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites. During this year itself, a total of 28 sites have been declared as Ramsar sites. Based on the date of designation mentioned on Ramsar Certificate, the number is 19 for 2022 and 14 for 2021. **Tamil Nadu has maximum number of Ramsar sites** which is 14, followed by Uttar Pradesh which has 10 numbers of Ramsar sites.
- The latest additions are **Tampara Lake, Hirakud Reservoir and Ansupa Lake in Odisha; Yashwant Sagar in Madhya Pradesh; Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary, Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex, Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary and Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu; Thane Creek in Maharashtra; and Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve and Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve in Jammu and Kashmir.**

A Ramsar site is a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, which is also known as the 'Convention on Wetlands' — an intergovernmental environmental treaty established by UNESCO in 1971, and named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed that year. Ramsar recognition is the identification of wetlands around the world, which are of international importance, especially if they provide habitat to waterfowl (about 180 species of birds). **Sundarbans in West Bengal is the largest Ramsar site in India. Montreux Record under the Ramsar Convention is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List. Currently, two wetlands of India are in Montreux record: Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Loktak Lake (Manipur). Chilika Lake (Odisha) was placed in the record but was later removed from it.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi sets 'Panch Pran' target for next 25 years

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed India from the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi on the occasion of the country's 76th Independence Day. On 15 August 2022, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the country from the ramparts of the Red Fort, he laid the foundation of the next 25 years.**
- The sky was overcast with a slight nip in the air. Wearing a tricolour turban, **PM Modi asked people to focus on 'Panchpran', or five promises. First, to move forward with bigger resolves and the resolve of a developed India. Second, to erase all traces of servitude. Third, to be proud of India's legacy. Fourth, to focus on India's unity, which is its strength. And fifth, to fulfil the duties of citizens with honesty.** But what is the ground situation like? A comparison with the developed countries shows that the government has a long road ahead if it wants to turn India into a developed economy within the next 25 years.
- According to the PM Modi, **when the nation celebrates 100 years of independence in 2047, these five resolutions (Panch Pran) will be important for a developed country. The prime minister's vision of "Vishwaguru India" is also one of these five resolutions (Panch Pran).** On reaching 100 years of independence, PM Modi wants to transform India into the **"Vishwaguru."**

The song Vande Mataram, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji, was a source of inspiration to the people in their struggle for freedom. It has an equal status with Jana-gana-mana. The poem was first sung by Rabindranath Tagore in the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress. On 24 January 1950, the Constituent Assembly of India has adopted “Vande Mataram” as national song. “Jana Gana Mana” is the national anthem of the Republic of India. It was originally composed as Bharoto Bhagyo Bidhata in Bengali by polymath Rabindranath Tagore. The first stanza of the song Bharoto Bhagyo Bidhata was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India as the National Anthem on 24 January 1950. A formal rendition of the national anthem takes approximately 52 seconds. It was first publicly sung on 27 December 1911 at the Calcutta (now Kolkata) Session of the Indian National Congress. “Sare Jahan se Accha” formally known as “Taranah-e-Hindi” is an Urdu language patriotic song for children written by poet Muhammad Iqbal in the ghazal style of Urdu poetry. The poem was published in the weekly journal Ittehad on 16 August 1904.

J-K: World's highest, Chenab Railway Bridge inaugurated

- **The golden joint of the world's highest Chenab railway bridge was inaugurated.** For the first time ever since independence, Srinagar will be linked to the rest of India after the overarch deck on the world's highest single-arch railway bridge over Chenab River will be launched.

Goa becomes first state to provide tap water connections to all rural homes

- **Goa became the first state to get certified under 'Har Ghar Jal' with 100% coverage.** All 2.63 lakh households in both districts of the state have now been provided potable tap water connections, at a cost of over Rs 200 crore in the past three years. **Among UTs, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu has taken the lead and completed certification** with potable tap water connectivity to all 85,156 rural households. In June, **Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** wrote to Sawant expressing happiness on the state's annual action plan to provide 100 per cent tap water connections in rural areas by 2021.
- **Haryana, Telangana, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Puducherry have reported 100% coverage, but are yet to be certified.** While other states such as Punjab (99.9%), Gujarat (97%), Bihar (95.49%), Himachal Pradesh (94.85%) are also inching closer to the target. However, the work is yet to gain momentum in 13 big states, including Uttar Pradesh, which accounts for 95% of the residual work.

Jal Jeevan Mission launched in 2019, it envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024. JJM looks to create a jan andolan for water, thereby making it everyone's priority. It comes under Jal Shakti Ministry. The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and states is 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States, 50:50 for other states, and 100% for Union Territories. In the Budget 2021-22, Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) has been announced under the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps in all statutory towns in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal- 6.

Jharkhand is the first state to implement blockchain in the country which is being used to track seed distribution

- In a significant development that would revolutionize agriculture in the country, **the Directorate of Agriculture, Jharkhand, and global blockchain technology company, SettleMint, India jointly announced the successful launch of seed distribution to farmers based on blockchain technology.**
- In the two years of operations in India, SettleMint has made significant progress and has taken rapid strides towards the enablement of blockchain adaption in India. **The successful implementation of blockchain based seed distribution to farmers in Jharkhand is a testimony to that effect. “Jharkhand is 1st state to implement blockchain in the country which is being used to track seed distribution.**

India's first government-owned online taxi service 'Kerala Savaari' launched in Kerala

- The Kerala government is ready to compete in the online taxi service sector where only multinational companies reign. **Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the 'Kerala Savaari', the country's first government-owned online auto-taxi service in Thiruvananthapuram.**
- **“Kerala Savaari is a project thought and implemented by the Labour department to ensure a non-exploited source of income for motor workers at a time when the neo-liberalization policies are affecting our traditional labour sectors and workers very negatively.”**

Kerala is a state on the southwestern, Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956 following the States Reorganisation Act by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91% in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, 77 years; and the highest sex ratio, 1,084 women per 1,000 men. Arif Mohammad Khan is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as “God’s own country” and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India. Pinarayi Vijayan is the current Chief Minister of Kerala, in office since 25 May 2016. As per the census 2011, Haryana has the lowest child sex ratio i.e.834 per thousand males. Kerala is the largest producer of the rubber in the India.

Asia’s largest Compressed Biogas plant in Sangrur starts commercial production

- **Asia’s largest Compressed Biogas (CBG) plant in the Sangrur district of Punjab has now started commercial production. There is a huge potential for CBG projects based on agro-waste in Punjab, the minister said, adding that Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) is setting up a project of capacity 100 KL 2G ethanol per day based on paddy straw and other agro-residue in Bathinda district. The plant has now started commercial production of CBG, which is being supplied to the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) outlet.**

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh unveils India’s first truly indigenously developed Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus developed by KPIT-CSIR in Pune

- **Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched India’s first truly indigenously developed Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus developed by KPIT-CSIR in Pune. Dr Jitendra Singh told the gathering that Prime Minister Modi’s Hydrogen Vision is important for India to ensure Atma Nirbhar means of affordable and accessible clean energy, meeting climate change goals, and creating new entrepreneurs and jobs.**

India nominates GARBA to be inscribed on UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage list

- **India has nominated the dance form Garba to be inscribed on UNESCO’s intangible cultural heritage list. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Director Eric Falt said that after the inclusion of ‘Durga Puja’ on the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage representative last year, India has now nominated ‘Garba’ for 2022.**
- **India was elected by UNESCO to serve on the distinguished Intergovernmental Committee of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in July. India garnered a whopping 110 votes from 155 State Parties that finalised its selection.**
- **Durga Puja is the 14th Indian event on the list, the others include Yoga, Vedic Chanting, Buddhist Chanting in Ladakh, Chau Dance, Ramlila, Navroz, Kumbh Mela and others. Eric Falt, Director of UNESCO in New Delhi, Tim Curtis, Secretary, Intangible Heritage Section of UNESCO and Lily Pandeya, Joint Secretary in Ministry of Culture attended the inauguration ceremony of the ‘Capacity Building Workshop’ by the Ministry of Culture, on ICH at National Museum in New Delhi.**

Chandigarh International Airport to be named after Shaheed Bhagat Singh

- **Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann announced that Chandigarh International airport will be named after Indian revolutionary Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Both the states, Punjab and Haryana, have agreed to name the airport after the revolutionary freedom fighter. The two neighbouring states share Chandigarh, an Union Territory, as their joint capital.**

Bhagat Singh was born into a Sikh family in 1907 in Lyallpur District, present-day Pakistan. Initially, he supported Mahatma Gandhi and the Non-Cooperation Movement. However, when Gandhi withdrew the movement in the wake of the Chauri Chaura incident, Bhagat Singh turned to revolutionary nationalism. In 1926, he founded the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. This organisation aimed to encourage revolution against British rule by rallying the peasants and workers. Singh served as the organisation’s secretary. In 1928, he established the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) along with Sukhdev, Chandrashekhar Azad and others. On 8th April 1929, Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb in the Central Assembly at Delhi, from the Visitors’ Gallery. Bhagat Singh was arrested and charged in the Saunders murder case, along with Rajguru, Sukhdev and others. The trio was ordered to be hanged on 24 March 1931 but the sentence was carried out a day earlier at the Lahore Jail. 23rd March is observed as ‘Martyrs’ Day’ or ‘Shaheed Diwas’ or ‘Sarvodaya Day’ in honour of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2023 to be held at Indore in January next year

- **The 17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2023 will be held at Indore in January next year. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that Secretary, Consular, Passport and Visa Division, Ausaf Sayeed**

and Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Iqbal Singh Bains **signed a Memorandum of Understanding for hosting the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas**. On the occasion, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was also present.

- **Since 2015, its format has been revised to celebrate the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) once every two years** and to hold theme-based Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Conferences during the intervening period with participation from overseas diaspora experts, policymakers, and stakeholders. **The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held during 21–23 January 2019 at Varanasi, India. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated every year on 9th January to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. It also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9th January 1915.**

India's first observatory to monitor space activity to come up in Uttarakhand

- **India's first commercial space situational awareness observatory, to track objects as small as 10 cm in size orbiting the earth, will be set up in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand by Digantara, a Bengaluru-based space sector start-up.**
- **The space situational awareness (SSA) observatory will help India track any activity in space including that of space debris and military satellites hovering over the region. Currently, the United States is a dominant player in monitoring space debris with observatories in multiple locations and commercial companies providing additional inputs from across the world.**
- **'Project NETRA' will be an early warning system in space to detect space debris and other hazards to Indian satellites. Once operational, it will give India its own capability in Space Situational Awareness (SSA) like the other space powers. Under this project, a space debris tracking radar with a range of 1,500 km and an optical telescope will be inducted.**

Space debris consists of spent rocket stages, dead satellites, fragments of space objects resulting from Anti-satellite (ASAT) System (ASAT). Hurtling at an average speed of 27,000 kmph in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), these objects pose a very real threat as collisions involving even centimetre-sized fragments can be lethal to satellites. This free floating space debris is a potential hazard for operational satellites and colliding with them can leave the satellites dysfunctional. If there is too much space junk in orbit, it could result in a chain reaction where more and more objects will collide and create new space junk in the process, to the point where Earth's orbit becomes unusable – a Domino Effect. Space Situational Awareness (SSA) refers to keeping track of objects in orbit and predicting where they will be at any given time. It involves monitoring the movement of all objects — natural (meteors) and man-made (satellites) — and tracking space weather.

Haridwar declared best aspirational district in India: NITI Aayog

- **The NITI Aayog has declared holy city of Haridwar in Uttarakhand as the best aspirational district on five parameters, thereby providing an additional allocation of three crore rupees. "The Haridwar district has been allocated to union commerce and industries minister Piyush Goyal who has been taking active interest in making it the No. 1 aspirational district in the country.**
- **As per the aspirational districts scheme norms, the districts are supposed to prepare a plan of action in consultation with the state and central Prabhari Officers and send the same to NITI Aayog for final approval of the Empowered Committee of Secretaries constituted for the programme.**

Aspirational Districts Programme was launched in 2018 which aims to transform districts that have shown relatively lesser progress in key social areas. Aspirational Districts are those districts in India that are affected by poor socio-economic indicators. ADP is based on 49 indicators from the 5 identified thematic areas, which focuses closely on improving people's Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure. It focuses on the strength of each district, identifying low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement and measuring progress by ranking districts on a monthly basis. Districts are prodded and encouraged to first catch up with the best district within their state, and subsequently aspire to become one of the best in the country, by competing with, and learning from others in the spirit of competitive & cooperative federalism. The Government is committed to raising the living standards of its citizens and ensuring inclusive growth for all – "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas aur Sabka Vishwas".

India will assume for the first time the Group of 20 (G20) year-long presidency from December 1, 2022 to November 30, 2023

- **India will assume for the first time the Group of 20 (G20) year-long presidency from December 1, 2022 to November 30, 2023**, culminating with the G20 Summit in India in 2023. **India has joined the G20 Troika which consists of Indonesia, Italy, and India - the current, previous and incoming G20 Presidencies, respectively.**
- **Indonesia has assumed the G20 Presidency and will convene various G20 meetings throughout the year culminating with the G20 Leaders' Summit on 30-31 October 2022 under the overall theme of "Recover Together Recover Stronger". As a Troika-member, India will work closely with Indonesia and Italy to ensure consistency and continuity of the G20's agenda.**
- **The subsequent months will witness India hosting over 200 meetings with hundreds of ministers, officials, diplomats, businessmen, non-governmental organisations, working groups, and engagement groups of the G20 composed of 19 powerful economies and the European Union (EU).**

The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union (EU). Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers, foreign ministers and think tanks, have periodically conferred at summits ever since. It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any single nation. The G20 members are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.

Ahmedabad gets first statue of erstwhile queen Ahilyabai Holkar

- **Ahmedabad has got its first statue of Indore's erstwhile queen Ahilyabai Holkar.** The statue was inaugurated by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel in Vatva area, in the presence of Union Minister of State for Law and Justice S P Singh Baghel, **as part of the "resolutions of August 15 for preserving heritage"** on the occasion of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The first statute of Ahilyabai in Gujarat was installed in Somnath. This is the **second statue in the state, but the first one in the city.**

Government awards GI tag to Mithila Makhana for 'farmer's profit'

- **The government has awarded Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Mithila Makhana**, a move which is expected to **help growers get the maximum price for their premium produce.** "Mithila Makhana registered with GI Tag, farmers will get profit and it will be easier to earn. **Due to Geographical Indication Tag to Mithila Makhana in the festive season, people outside Bihar will be able to use this auspicious material with reverence"**.
- Interestingly, **Mithila Makhana** — which, as indicated by its name, is cultivated in the Mithila region of Bihar and some parts of Nepal — is the **fifth product from Bihar which has received the GI tag.** Prior to this, **Bhagalpur's Jardalu Mango, Katarni Dhaan (rice), Nawada's Maghai Paan and Muzaffarpur's Shahi Litchi** have been recognised.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin." The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

B. International

Kamala Harris becomes first woman to get US presidential powers briefly as Joe Biden undergoes medical

- **President Joe Biden transfers power briefly to Vice President Kamala Harris while he is under anesthesia for a routine colonoscopy for one hour and 25 minutes, making her the first woman to hold presidential power in US history.**
- **On November 19, 2021, Kamala Harris served as acting president from 10:10 to 11:35 am EST, while President Biden underwent a colonoscopy. She became the first woman, and the third person overall, to assume the powers and duties of the U.S. presidency under Section 3 of the Twenty-fifth Amendment.**

Kamala Devi Harris is an American politician and attorney who is the 49th and current vice president of the United States. She is the first female vice president and the highest-ranking female official in U.S. history, as well as the first African American and first Asian American vice president. A member of the Democratic Party, she served as the attorney general of California from 2011 to 2017 and as a United States senator representing California from 2017 to 2021. Harris became vice president upon being inaugurated in January 2021 alongside President Joe Biden, having defeated the incumbent president, Donald Trump, and vice president, Mike Pence, in the 2020 election.

The United States of America (U.S.A. or USA), commonly known as the United States (U.S. or US) or America, is a country primarily located in North America. It consists of 50 states, a federal district. It is the world's third-largest country by both land and total area. The national capital is Washington, D.C., and the most populous city and financial center is New York City. Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. is the 46th and current President of the United States. A member of the Democratic Party, he previously served as the 47th vice president from 2009 to 2017 under Barack Obama and represented Delaware in the United States Senate from 1973 to 2009. Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris defeated incumbent president Donald Trump and vice president Mike Pence in the 2020 presidential election. He is the oldest president and the first to have a female vice president. The United States dollar is the official currency of the United States and several other countries.

World's First Electric Autonomous Cargo Ship launched in Norway

- **Zero emissions and, soon, zero crew: the world's first fully electric autonomous cargo vessel was unveiled in Norway, a small but promising step toward reducing the maritime industry's climate footprint. The maritime sector, which is responsible for almost three percent of all man-made emissions, aims to reduce its emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 and 50 per cent by 2050.**

Barbados establishes world's first metaverse embassy

- **A virtual city hall, where citizens can meet avatars of public officials and file complaints, will be set up in 2023, it said in a statement. Barbados will open what it says will be the world's first metaverse embassy in the virtual reality platform Decentraland, with embassies on other platforms also planned.**
- **The Metaverse is a term used to describe a virtual space within digital environments such as online games, social media, and virtual reality. It is a combination of the prefix "meta", meaning beyond, and stem "universe".**

Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies, in the Caribbean region of the Americas, and the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands. Bridgetown is the capital and largest city of Barbados. The Dollar has been the currency of Barbados since 1935.

UNESCO member states adopt the first global agreement on artificial intelligence ethics

- **UNESCO has adopted the world's first international ethics guidelines for artificial intelligence, which prohibit the use of the technology for "social scoring" and mass surveillance.**
- **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) director-general, Audrey Azoulay, presented the world's first global standard on artificial intelligence (AI). AI technologies are delivering remarkable results in highly specialized fields such as cancer screening and building inclusive environments for people with disabilities. They also help combat global problems like climate change and world hunger, and help reduce poverty by optimizing economic aid.**

El Salvador Plans World's First Bitcoin City

- **El Salvador plans to build the world's first "Bitcoin City", funded initially by bitcoin-backed bonds,** President Nayib Bukele said doubling down on his bet to harness the crypto currency to fuel investment in the Central American country.
- **El Salvador in September became the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender.** Bitcoin City will **not levy any taxes except for value-added tax (VAT)**. One half of this VAT levied will be **used to fund the bonds issued to build the city and the next half would be used to pay for services such as garbage collection.**

El Salvador is a country in Central America. El Salvador's capital and largest city is San Salvador. The currency is United States dollar. Nayib Bukele is the current President of it.

Sudan's military reinstates ousted civilian PM Hamdok

- **Sudan's ousted Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok has been reinstated following last month's coup when he was put under house arrest.** Under the agreement, the reinstated prime minister will lead a cabinet of technocrats until elections are held. But it is unclear how much power the new civilian government will have, as it will be subject to military oversight.
- **General Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan is a Sudanese politician and Sudanese Army general who is the de facto head of state of Sudan as the Commander-In-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces after leading a coup d'état in October 2021 that deposed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.**

Sudan is a country in Northeast Africa. It borders the countries of Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, South Sudan, and the Red Sea. Its capital is Khartoum. The Sudanese pound is the basic unit of the Republic of the Sudan.

Kuwait reappoints Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid as Prime Minister

- **Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Khalid has been reappointed Prime Minister and tasked with forming a cabinet that would be the Gulf OPEC oil producer's third this year in a domestic political standoff.**
- **Sheikh Sabah, Prime Minister since late 2019, was reappointed by an emiri order issued by Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah.** The government had resigned on Nov. 8 in the standoff with the elected parliament. **Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmed al-Sabah temporarily handed over some of his main constitutional duties to the crown prince,** his designated successor, including naming the prime minister and swearing in the cabinet.

Kuwait is a country in Western Asia. It is situated in the northern edge of Eastern Arabia at the tip of the Persian Gulf, bordering Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. Kuwait also shares maritime borders with Iran. Most of the country's population resides in the urban agglomeration of the capital city Kuwait City. As of 2021, Kuwait has a population of 4.67 million people where 1.45 million are Kuwaitis and 3.2 million are foreign nationals. The Kuwaiti dinar is the currency of Kuwait. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait. Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Emir of Kuwait.

Magdalena Andersson becomes Sweden's first female Prime Minister

- **Sweden's parliament approved Magdalena Andersson as the country's first female prime minister,** tapping the finance minister who recently became the new leader of the Social Democratic party. **Andersson was tapped to replace Stefan Lofven as party leader and prime minister,** roles he relinquished earlier this year. Under the Swedish Constitution, prime ministers can be named and govern as long as a parliamentary majority a minimum of 175 lawmakers is not against them

Sweden is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. The Nordic countries, or the Nordics, or Norden (literally "the North"), are a geographical and cultural region in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic, which includes the sovereign states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the autonomous countries of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (both part of the Kingdom of Denmark). The capital city is Stockholm. The krona is the official currency of Sweden. Stefan Lofven has been Prime Minister of Sweden since October 2014.

Germany to get its first woman foreign minister

- **Green party co-leader Annalena Baerbock** has become Germany's first woman foreign minister, as the country's incoming coalition government takes shape. She has taken on the role in early December **once the new government – made up of the Social Democrats (SPD), the liberal FDP and the Greens – is formally installed.** Baerbock has signalled a more assertive stance on **China and Russia, putting respect for human rights and the rule of law at the centre of German diplomacy.**

New Zealand becomes first country in the world to legalise drug checking

- **New Zealand made drug checking permanent by enacting a bill allowing a pilot programme** providing harm reduction services at festivals to continue and extend its operations.
- **New Zealand is the first country to make drug checks explicit and, as a result, easier.** The pilot programme, which was approved in December 2020, was set to expire in December 2021.

India, Sri Lanka and Maldives hold maritime exercises

- **A two-day trilateral maritime drill conducted by the coast guards of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives to bolster security in the Indian Ocean,** enhance mutual operational capability and exercise interoperability between these three countries culminated in the Maldives.
- **The 15th edition of the trilateral engagement termed 'Dosti' is conducted biennially, and 2021 marks 30 years since these maritime drills were first introduced.** "The aim of India-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral exercise 'Dosti' is to **further fortify the friendship, enhance mutual operational capability,** and exercise interoperability and to build cooperation between the Coast Guards of Maldives, India and Sri Lanka,".

World's first floating city to set Sail in South Korea by 2025

- **South Korea is soon going to get the world's first floating city, to deal with the problem of floods due to rising sea levels. The floating city project is a joint effort by the UN Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) and OCEANIX.** The city will be **built off the coast of Busan in South Korea** and is likely to be **completed by 2025.**
- **An MoU was signed between the UN-Habitat, Republic of Korea, and Oceanix to build a full-fledged floating city near the banks of Busan** that can **withstand floods, tsunamis, and level 5 hurricanes.**

South Korea, officially the Republic of Korea (ROK), is a country in East Asia, constituting the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and sharing a land border with North Korea. South Seoul is the Capital of South Korea. Moon Jae-in is the current President of South Korea. Kim Boo-kyum is currently the Prime Minister.

Japan to get world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle

- **Japan to get world's first operational dual-mode bus and rail vehicle.** The vehicles will **run on a 50-kilometer course connecting the town of Kaiyo in Tokushima Prefecture and the city of Muroto in Kochi Prefecture,** of which 10 km will be on a railway track.
- **Asa Seaside Railway Corp. in Tokushima Prefecture** said it will **roll out the DMV** on Dec. 25, having cleared safety checks by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro. Fumio Kishida is the current Prime Minister of Japan since 4 October 2021. He has also served as President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 29 September 2021.

Caribbean island Barbados becomes newest republic cut links with the Queen

- **At midnight, the Caribbean island Barbados has become the world's newest republic and in doing so removes the Queen as its head of state.**
- Republicanism has been rumbling for some time in Barbados. **Prime Minister Mia Mottley described it as a chance for the island to assert itself** and show greater self-confidence. She said it was time to fully leave our colonial past.

Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies, in the Caribbean region of the Americas, and the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands. Bridgetown is the capital and largest city of Barbados. The Dollar has been the currency of Barbados since 1935.

The world's most expensive city for first time

- **Tel Aviv is now the world's most expensive city to live in**, according to a survey published. **The Israeli city has climbed five rungs to bag the top spot for the first time** due to the strength of the national currency, **the shekel as well as soaring inflation**, according to Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- **The Worldwide Cost of Living Index is compiled by comparing prices in US dollars** for goods and services in 173 cities. **After Tel Aviv, Paris and Singapore came joint second**, followed by Switzerland's Zurich, and Hong Kong. New York ranked sixth and Geneva seventh.

Olaf Scholz sworn in as Germany's new Chancellor

- **In Germany, Social Democratic Party of Germany leader Olaf Scholz has been nominated as the country's next Chancellor by Parliament bringing the curtain down on Angela Merkel's 16-year reign.**
- **Olaf Scholz has cleared the final hurdle on his path to majority after Green Party members approved their coalition deal with his Social Democrats, SPD, and the Free Democrats, FDP.**
- **Olaf Scholz has been sworn in as Germany's new chancellor, bringing to an end Angela Merkel's historic 16 years as leader.** He was voted in by the German parliament, **where his three-party coalition has a substantial majority, and given a standing ovation.**
- **The German parliament, the Bundestag, backed his appointment by 395 votes to 303, and he was then formally appointed as the ninth federal chancellor by President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.**

Germany is a country in Central Europe. It is the second-most populous country in Europe after Russia, and the most populous member state of the European Union. The nation's capital and largest city is Berlin, and its financial centre is Frankfurt; the largest urban area is the Ruhr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving as the President of Germany since 19 March 2017. Euro is the official currency of it.

Forbes feature Sitharaman in 100 most powerful women list; Nykaa's Falguni Nayar makes debut

- **For the third time in a row, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman made it Forbes' 100 most powerful women in the world.** This year, **she is ranked at number 37**, up from last year when she was placed at 41.
- **She is also two spots ahead of her American counterpart Janet Yellen.** Every year, **the American business magazine releases a list of 100 powerful women of the world.** This year, **the 18th annual list of power women included 40 CEOs, the most since 2015**, who, according to the magazine, **"oversee a record \$3.3 trillion in revenue."** The list also included 19 world leaders, an immunologist.

Forbes is an American business magazine owned by Integrated Whale Media Investments and the Forbes family. Published eight times a year, it features articles on finance, industry, investing, and marketing topics. Forbes also reports on related subjects such as technology, communications, science, politics, and law. Its headquarters is located in Jersey City, New Jersey. Primary competitors in the national business magazine category include Fortune and Bloomberg BusinessWeek. The magazine is well known for its lists and rankings, including of the richest Americans (the Forbes 400), of the America's Wealthiest Celebrities, of the world's top companies (the Forbes Global 2000), Forbes list of The World's Most Powerful People, and The World's Billionaires. The motto of Forbes magazine is "Change the World". Its chair and editor-in-chief is Steve Forbes, and its CEO is Mike Federle.

Dubai becomes first paperless government in the world

- **The Emirate of Dubai has achieved its objectives of the Dubai Paperless Strategy, launched in 2018, to establish itself as a leading digital capital and become the world's first paperless government.**
- **The Crown Prince stated the next stage will be marked by advanced strategies to create and enhance digital life in Dubai over the next five decades.**

Dubai is the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the capital of the Emirate of Dubai. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), its Minister of Defence, and ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.

SAARC Charter Day observed

- **The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter Day is observed every year on 8th December. On this day in 1985, SAARC Charter was adopted in Dhaka, during the first summit of the group. This year marks the 37th Anniversary of the regional group.**
- **As mentioned in its charter, the prime focus of SAARC is to work collectively to promote the welfare of people in the region and to improve their standard of living through social progress and economic development.**

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of states in South Asia. Its member states are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAARC comprises 3% of the world's area, 21% of the world's population and 4.21% (US\$3.67 trillion) of the global economy, as of 2019. SAARC was founded in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Tesla's Elon Musk Named Time Magazine's Person Of The Year

- **Time magazine named Tesla founder and space entrepreneur Elon Musk as its person of the year, capping a roller-coaster 2021 for the technology magnate. Time first presented its Person of the Year award in 1927.**
- **The brash South African-born 50-year-old Elon Musk, who is also the founder and CEO space exploration company SpaceX, recently passed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos as the world's wealthiest person as the rising price of Tesla pushed his net worth to around \$300 billion. He owns about 17% of Elon Musk's stock, which sold for almost \$1,000 each.**

Person of the Year (called Man of the Year or Woman of the Year until 1999) is an annual issue of the United States news magazine and website *Time* featuring a person, a group, an idea, or an object that "for better or for worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year". Time also runs an annual reader's poll that has no effect on the selection, which is made solely by the magazine's editors.

New Caledonia rejects independence from France in third referendum

- **An independence referendum was held in New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific, on 12 December 2021. The poll was the third and final to be held under the terms of the Noumea Accord, following votes in 2018 and 2020, in which independence was rejected by 56.7% and 53.3% respectively. Voters overwhelmingly rejected independence, with 96.50% voting against independence and 3.50% for independence.**

US, Australia, Japan to fund undersea cable in Pacific

- **The United States, Australia and Japan have said they will jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable to boost internet access in three tiny Pacific countries, as the Western allies seek to counter rising Chinese influence in the region.**
- **The three Western allies would develop the cable to provide faster internet to Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia. The development of the undersea cable is the latest funding commitment from the Western allies in the telecommunications sector of the Pacific.**

Navies of India and Russia conduct passing exercise in Arabian Sea

- **Indian Navy and Russian Navy undertook PASSEX exercises at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea. The Indian Navy's indigenously designed and built guided-missile destroyer, INS Kochi, took part in the exercise. Russian Federation Navy was represented by RFS Admiral Tributs.**

Haitian Soup Finds a Place on UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List

- **The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup – Haiti's national symbol of freedom from slavery – to its intangible heritage list, saying the soup is "so much more than just a dish".**
- **UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee decided to put Joumou on its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The dish, also known as giraumon soup, is made of pumpkin, vegetables, plantains, meat, pasta and spices.**

- **Soup joumou** is a mildly spicy soup native to Haitian cuisine. The soup is traditionally cooked with pumpkin winter squash.

Reporters Without Borders release damning report on Chinese regime's repression against journalism; India ranks 142 out of 180 countries

- Since President Xi Jinping came to power in early 2013, a wave of arrests unprecedented since the end of the Maoist era has hit journalists and political commentators across China, abruptly ending a decade of experimentation with pluralism and debate in Chinese media, **said a major report released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF).**
- **The 2021 RSF World Press Freedom Index ranks the People's Republic of China 177 out of 180 countries, only two spots above North Korea, with at least 127 journalists and press defenders under detention. India ranks 142 and Pakistan 145 while North Korea and Eritrea are ranked 179 and 180.**

Austria ruling party picks Nehammer for chancellor

- After 24 hours of political turmoil, **Austria's ruling People's Party has chosen Interior Minister Karl Nehammer to take over as leader of both party and country. Mr Nehammer will be the party's third choice of chancellor in weeks, after Sebastian Kurz stood down in October. Mr Kurz is under investigation after he was implicated in a corruption scandal.** The change at the top marks an end to the whirlwind career of Sebastian Kurz, who was just 31 when he became Austrian chancellor in 2017.

Austria is a landlocked East Alpine country in the southern part of Central Europe. It is composed of nine federated states, one of which is Vienna, Austria's capital and largest city. Alexander Van der Bellen is the current President of Austria. Karl Nehammer is serving as Chancellor of Austria since 6 December 2021. Euro is the official currency of it.

Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, is elected Chile's youngest president

- **Chileans elected Gabriel Boric as their next president, entrusting the young leftist lawmaker with helping to shape the future of a nation that has been roiled by protests and is now drafting a new constitution.**
- **At 35, Boric will be the nation's youngest leader** and by far its most liberal since President Salvador Allende, who died by suicide during the 1973 military coup that ushered in a brutal 17-year dictatorship.

Chile is a country in western South America. It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The country's capital and largest city is Santiago, and its national language is Spanish. The peso is the currency of Chile.

Johnson appoints foreign secretary Liz Truss as Brexit negotiator

- **British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the appointment of Britain's foreign secretary to become the country's lead negotiator with the European Union, after long-time ally David Frost resigned after a week political upheaval in the Conservative Party.**
- **Liz Truss will have ministerial responsibility with the EU and will lead negotiations to resolve problems arising from provisions of the Brexit agreement covering trade with Northern Ireland.**

Brexit ("British exit") was the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU) at 23:00 GMT on 31 January 2020. The UK is the first and so far only member state to have left the EU, after 47 years of having been a part of the union — the EU and its predecessor the European Communities (EC), which included the European Economic Community — since 1 January 1973. Following Brexit, EU law and the Court of Justice of the European Union no longer have primacy over British laws, except in select areas in relation to Northern Ireland. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 retains relevant EU law as domestic law, which the UK can now amend or repeal. Under the terms of the Brexit withdrawal agreement, Northern Ireland continues to participate in the European Single Market in relation to goods, and to be a *de facto* member of the EU Customs Union.

Somalia's President suspends Prime Minister pending investigation

- **Somalia's President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed said he had suspended the Prime Minister's powers, escalating a destabilising dispute in the Horn of Africa country. The president, who had suspended Prime Minister Mohammed Hussein Roble before over an earlier confrontation, he had taken the action pending an investigation of accusations, that the prime minister had acquired land fraudulently.**

The 'India Out' campaign in the Maldives

- Over the last three years since Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was elected to office, an 'India Out' [#IndiaOut] campaign has cropped up every now and then within the Indian Ocean island nation, mostly on social media.
- The campaign is led by government critics who accuse the Solih government of "allowing Indian boots on the ground", and thereby "compromising the sovereignty" of the island nation. The ruling administration has denied there is any Indian military presence in the country, or a threat to Maldives's sovereignty.

UAE issues first civil marriage license for non-Muslim couple

- The UAE issued its first civil marriage license for a non-Muslim couple, as the Gulf country seeks to keep its edge over regional competitors. The United Arab Emirates – where foreigners make up 90 percent of the approximately 10-million population – has been amending its laws to present itself as a modernising force in a largely conservative region. Civil marriage in the Middle East, the birthplace of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, is uncommon and usually conducted under a religious authority

Germany shuts down three of its six nuclear power plants

- Germany has shut down three of its six nuclear power plants, as part of the country's phase-out of nuclear energy and turned its focus to renewables. The government decided to speed up the phasing out of nuclear power following Japan's Fukushima reactor meltdown in 2011 when an earthquake and tsunami destroyed the coastal plant in the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986.

India, Iran and Uzbekistan to develop transport corridor centred round Chabahar port

- India, Iran and Uzbekistan discussed the further development of the transit and transportation corridor centred around the Iranian port of Chabahar during a trilateral meeting on the joint use of the port on the Gulf of Oman. "The participants underlined the important role played by Chabahar Port during humanitarian crises as well as in enhancing regional connectivity".
- India developed the Shahid Beheshti terminal of Chabahar as part of its efforts to access Afghanistan while bypassing the territory of Pakistan. The US granted the port a special waiver from sanctions imposed on Iran in view of its strategic importance in shipping supplies to Afghanistan.

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran's only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths. It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar which is developed by China. Afghanistan, Iran and India signed a tripartite agreement on developing Chabahar port and setting up a trilateral transport and transit corridor in 2016. It is a key part of India's plans to enhance connectivity to Afghanistan and the Central Asian states.

Australia's Aspen Island to be renamed on platinum jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II

- Australia will rename Aspen Island in Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin as part of June 2022 national and community events to celebrate 70th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the British throne, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said.
- On 6 February 2022, Elizabeth II will have reigned for 70 years. In her Christmas message, the Queen said she looked forward becoming the first British monarch to celebrate a platinum jubilee - 70 years on the throne - in 2022.

Sudan: PM Abdalla Hamdok announces resignation amid political deadlock

- Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok has announced his resignation amid political deadlock following a military coup that derailed the country's fragile transition to democracy. Hamdok, who signed a political agreement with the military in November, said a roundtable discussion is needed to reach a new deal.

Sudan is a country in Northeast Africa. It borders the countries of Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, South Sudan, and the Red Sea. Its capital is Khartoum. The Sudanese pound is the basic unit of the Republic of the Sudan. General Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan is a Sudanese Army general who is the de facto head of state of Sudan as the Commander-In-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces after leading a coup d'état in October 2021 that deposed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

Russia-led military alliance to send peacekeeping forces to Kazakhstan

- **Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)**, a Russia-led military alliance that it will **dispatch peacekeeping forces to Kazakhstan** after the country's President asked for help in **controlling protests that escalated into violence**.
- **The protests in the Central Asian nation were first sparked by rising fuel prices**, but have broadened to include other political grievances. The Kazakh Interior Ministry said eight police officers and national guard members were killed in the unrest and more than 300 were injured.
- **Prime Minister Askar Mamin resigned amid the protest. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev claimed the unrest was the work of foreign-trained terrorist gangs. He has imposed a nationwide state of emergency that includes an overnight curfew and a ban on mass gatherings** and has vowed a tough response to the protests.
- **President Tokayev said he had sought help from the CSTO - a Moscow-based alliance of six former Soviet countries, to help stabilise the country.** Hours later, the CSTO's council approved sending an unspecified number of peacekeepers.

Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) is an **intergovernmental military alliance (six countries)** that came into effect in 2002. It is an intergovernmental military alliance that was signed on 15th May 1992. In 1992, six post-Soviet states belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States—Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—signed the Collective Security Treaty. It started **storming into Kazakhstan to curb the protests which threatened the very existence of the regime that has ruled the Central Asian country since it became an independent republic in 1991.** The headquarters is located in the Russian capital of Moscow. It is to strengthen peace, international and regional security including cybersecurity and stability, the protection on a collective basis of the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member states.

Kazakhstan is a country in Central Asia, it has borders with Russia in the north, China in the east, and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan in the south. The capital is Nur-Sultan, formerly known as Astana. Kazakhstan is the world's largest landlocked country, and the ninth-largest in the world. Kassym-Jomart Kemeluly Tokayev has been serving as the President of Kazakhstan since 20 March 2019. The tenge is the currency of Kazakhstan.

Myanmar court sentences Aung San Suu Kyi to 4 more years in prison

- **Former State Counsellor of Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi was sentenced to four more years in prison.** She was handed over the **punishment in a case related to possession of unlicensed Walkie-talkie. The court handed over a sentence of 2 years for breaching the export import law** for possessing the handheld walkie-talkie and one year for having a set of signal jammers. The two sentences will run concurrently.
- **Earlier, she had received a four year jail sentence for inciting people against the military government and breaching the coronavirus rules.** The sentence was later reduced by two years. **If found guilty of all the charges, she could be sentenced to more than 100 years in prison.**
- The cases are among about a dozen brought against the 76-year-old **Nobel Peace Prize laureate since the army seized power last February 2021, ousting her elected government and arresting top members of her National League for Democracy party.**
- **Suu Kyi's party won a landslide victory in a 2020 general election, but the military claimed there was widespread electoral fraud, an assertion that independent poll watchers doubt. The military-installed government has not allowed any outside party to meet with Suu Kyi since it seized power, despite international pressure for talks including her that could ease the country's violent political crisis.**
- The **State Administration Council** is the **current executive body governing Myanmar following the Myanmar coup d'état in February 2021.** The council was formed on 2 February 2021, and has 16 members. **Myint Swe** is a Burmese politician, **currently serving as the acting president of Myanmar.**

Aung San Suu Kyi is a Myanmar politician, diplomat, author, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1991). She is the leader of the National League for Democracy and the first and served as State Counsellor of Myanmar (equivalent to a prime minister) and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2016 to 2021. She is also the first woman to serve as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Myanmar's capital city is Naypyidaw and kyat is the currency of Myanmar. Sittwe Port is a deep-water port constructed by India in 2016 at Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State in Myanmar, on the Bay of Bengal. Situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River, the USD 120 Million port is being financed by India as a part of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, collaboration between India and Myanmar. Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea.

The World's Largest Carbon Capturing Plant started operating in Iceland

- **The world's largest plant that sucks carbon dioxide directly from the air and deposits it underground is due to start operating, the company behind the nascent green technology said. Swiss start-up Climeworks AG, which specialises in capturing carbon dioxide directly from the air, has partnered with Icelandic carbon storage firm Carbfix to develop a plant that sucks out up to 4,000 tons of CO₂ per year.**

A greenhouse gas (GHG or GhG) is a gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range, causing the greenhouse effect. The primary greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere are water vapor (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and ozone (O₃). Without greenhouse gases, the average temperature of Earth's surface would be about -18 °C (0 °F), rather than the present average of 15 °C (59 °F). "Global warming is a gradual increase in the earth's temperature generally due to the greenhouse effect caused by increased levels of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, CFCs, and other pollutants.

OPEC votes to appoint Kuwaiti candidate as new secretary general

- **The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) voted to appoint Kuwaiti candidate Haitham al-Ghais as its new secretary general. He will take up the role from Aug. 1 2022, for a period of three years. Al-Ghais will replace Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, the Nigerian who has held the post since 2016.**

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the Baghdad Conference in 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. It aims to manage the supply of oil in an effort to set the price of oil in the world market, in order to avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies of both producing and purchasing countries. It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. OPEC membership is open to any country that is a substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization. OPEC has a total of 13 Member Countries viz. Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola and Venezuela are members of OPEC. Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries Plus is a loosely affiliated entity consisting of the OPEC members and 10 of the world's major non-OPEC oil-exporting nations which are: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

Alikhan Smailov named Kazakhstan's Prime Minister

- **Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev nominated Alikhan Smailov for Prime Minister and the lower house of parliament swiftly voted him. Alikhan Smailov served as the first Deputy Prime Minister in the previous cabinet which Mr. Tokayev dismissed last week amid violent unrest in the oil-rich Central Asian nation.**
- **From 2020, Tokayev had endured the economic downturn and troubles caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and War in Afghanistan and has sought to solve Kazakhstan's rising inflation, fears of domestic terrorism, illegal migration, drug trafficking, nuclear energy development as well as COVID-19 vaccination rollout. In 2022, he sacked the entirety of the Kazakh cabinet following the ongoing Kazakh protests that started on the 2nd of January.**

PM Imran Khan launches Pakistan's first-ever National Security Policy

- **Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan launched the country's first-ever National Security Policy, which articulates a citizen-centric framework, placing economic security at its core, unlike the**

previous one-dimensional security policy where the focus was on the military. The powerful army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 70 plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in the matters of security and foreign policy. It is a **100-page document**.

- **The five-year-policy document covering a period between 2022-26, is being propped up by the Khan government as the country's first-ever strategy paper of its kind that spells out the national security vision and guidelines for the attainment of those goals.**
- **The main themes of the National Security Policy are national cohesion, securing an economic future, defence and territorial integrity, internal security, foreign policy in a changing world and human security.**

Turkmenistan plan to close its 'Gateway to Hell'

- **Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has ordered experts to find a way to extinguish a fire in a huge natural gas crater, the Darvaza gas crater also known as the 'Gateway to Hell'. The "Gates of Hell" is located roughly 260 kilometers (160 miles) north of the Turkmen capital, Ashgabat. The site is 60 meters (190 feet) wide and 20 meters (70 feet) at its depth. Mystery surrounds the Darvaza crater's creation in the Karakum Desert. Many believe it formed when a Soviet drilling operation went wrong in 1971.**

Turkmenistan also known as Turkmenia, is a landlocked country in Central Asia, bordered by Kazakhstan to the northwest, Uzbekistan to the north, east and northeast, Afghanistan to the southeast, Iran to the south and southwest and the Caspian Sea to the west. Ashgabat is the capital and largest city of the country. The manat is the currency of Turkmenistan.

Indonesia passes law to relocate capital to remote Borneo

- **Mr. Jokowi, as the president is known, first announced the plan in 2019, but progress was delayed by the pandemic. Indonesia's parliament has approved a bill to relocate the nation's capital from Jakarta to a jungled area of Kalimantan on Borneo Island.**
- **The new state capital law, which provides a legal framework for President Joko Widodo's ambitious \$32 billion mega project, stipulates how development of the capital will be funded and governed. The new centre will be called "Nusantara", a Javanese name for the Indonesian archipelago chosen by the president.**

Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It consists of over 17,000 islands, including Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, and parts of Borneo and New Guinea. Indonesia is the world's largest island country and the 14th-largest country by area. With about 270 million people, Indonesia is the world's fourth-most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world's most populous island, is home to more than half of the country's population. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia.

Roberta Metsola becomes EU Parliament's new president

- **EU lawmakers have chosen centre-right Maltese lawmaker Roberta Metsola, as only the third woman to head the European Parliament, despite controversy over her anti-abortion stance.**
- **Metsola - a member of the largest bloc, the European People's Party won a large majority with 458 votes to become the third woman to head the chamber after a deal between the leading political groupings.**

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 member states which use the euro currency. The union and EU citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original member states of what came to be known as the European Communities were the Inner Six: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council.

Barbados: PM Mottley hails landslide victory in first general election

- **Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley celebrated a landslide victory in the Caribbean nation's first general election** since it became a republic last year by **removing Britain's queen as sovereign head of state**.
- Mottley called the snap election in December, saying it would **help promote unity as the government battled the coronavirus pandemic, which has heavily affected the tourism-focused economy**.

Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies, in the Caribbean region of the Americas, and the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands. Bridgetown is the capital and largest city of Barbados. The Dollar has been the currency of Barbados since 1935.

World's first 'winery airline' launched in New Zealand

- **New Zealand wine company, Invivo has launched the "world's first winery airline."** This development has come despite the heated debate about alcohol, and flying in the past few years, with some airlines banning booze onboard flights.

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. New Zealand's capital city is Wellington, and its most populous city is Auckland. Jacinda Ardern is the current Prime Minister of New Zealand and leader of the Labour Party since 2017. The New Zealand dollar is the official currency and legal tender of New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Niue, the Ross Dependency, Tokelau, and a British territory, the Pitcairn Islands.

Chile president-elect Gabriel Boric unveils women-majority cabinet

- **In Chile, left-wing president-elect, Gabriel Boric has announced his first cabinet giving a majority of the posts to women.** Fourteen of the 24 new ministers announced are women, **including Defence Minister Maya Fernandez, a granddaughter of socialist President Salvador Allende, who was overthrown by a military coup in 1973.** Gabriel Boric said that the government is formed with people who are prepared, with knowledge, with experience, and committed to the agenda of changes that the country needs.

Chile is a country in western South America. It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The country's capital and largest city is Santiago, and its national language is Spanish. The peso is the currency of Chile.

Pakistan swears in Ayesha Malik as first woman Supreme Court judge

- **Pakistan swore in Ayesha Malik as its first female Supreme Court judge a landmark occasion** in a nation where activists say the law is often wielded against women.
- **Ayesha Malik was educated at Harvard University** and served as a high court judge in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore for the past two decades. Malik attended a ceremony in the capital Islamabad where she now sits on the bench alongside 16 male colleagues at Pakistan's highest court.

Germany to host G7 finance meeting May 18-20

- **Germany will host the main finance meeting of its presidency of the Group of Seven economic powers** from May 18-20. Finance ministers and central bankers from the **G7 nations – the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada – would join the meeting in Koenigswinter, near Bonn.**

The Group of Seven (G7) is an intergovernmental organization consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The heads of government of the member states, as well as the representatives of the European Union, meet at the annual G7 Summit. The Group of Eight (G8) was an inter-governmental political forum from 1997 until 2014. It had formed from incorporating the country of Russia into the Group of Seven, or G7, and returned to its previous name after Russia was disinvited in 2014. The forum originated with a 1975 summit hosted by France that brought together representatives of six governments: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, thus leading to the name Group of Six or G6. The summit came to be known as the Group of Seven, in 1976 with the addition of Canada. Russia was added to the political forum from 1997, which the following year became known as the G8. In March 2014, Russia was suspended indefinitely following the annexation of Crimea, whereupon the political forum name reverted to G7.

Honduras gets its first woman President

- **Leftist Xiomara Castro was sworn in as the first woman President of Honduras**, vowing to reform the crime-and poverty-stricken nation into a “socialist and democratic state.” Ms. Castro took the oath at a massive ceremony attended by international dignitaries after an embarrassing week of fighting within her party that challenged her authority.

Honduras is a country in Central America. The republic of Honduras is bordered to the west by Guatemala, to the southwest by El Salvador, to the southeast by Nicaragua, to the south by the Pacific Ocean at the Gulf of Fonseca, and to the north by the Gulf of Honduras, a large inlet of the Caribbean Sea. **Its capital and largest city is Tegucigalpa. The lempira is the currency of Honduras.**

Burkina Faso coup: New leader Damiba gives first speech

- **The new military leader of Burkina Faso has promised a return to the normal constitutional order “when the conditions are right”.** Lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Damiba led a mutiny that ousted President Roch Kaboré. He blamed the president for **failing to contain violence by Islamist militants.** He made his first national speech since taking power on the eve of an emergency summit of West African leaders, called in response to the coup.

Corruption index: India cleanest in South Asia, Pakistan slides steeply

- **The 2021 Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International places India 85th on a list of 180 countries, one position above last year** not much has changed about **how corrupt India is perceived to be in a decade.**
- The latest Transparency International Corruption Perception Index for 2021, said **India was among 86% of the 180 countries the index covers that have made little to no progress since 2012. Topping the index this year are Denmark, Finland and New Zealand, all tied with scores of 88.**
- **With a score of 40, India ranks 85th. Its rank is a significant jump over the 94th place it was in back in 2012, but the score is only a minor improvement over the 36 it had then.** Compared to its neighbours, though, it fares far better.
- **But the stagnation is worrying, the report said, and listed India as a “country to watch”.** “There are concerns over the country’s democratic status, as fundamental freedoms and institutional checks and balances decay. Journalists and activists are particularly at risk and have been victims of attacks by the police, political militants, criminal gangs, and corrupt local officials,” the report said.
- **Pakistan slipped 16 places to 140 in the list of 180 countries.** This is Pakistan’s worst drop in these rankings since 2010. In 2010, the Islamic nation had registered its worst performance and was relegated to 146th rank. The pandemic, the report added, offered an excuse for Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Singapore governments to “tighten control and weaken accountability”.
- **Afghanistan was ranked as one of the most corrupt finishing 174th in the list** with a score of 16 along with North Korea and Yemen. **Somalia and Syria were ranked at the bottom finishing 178 in the 180-nation list with South Sudan finishing last at 180 scoring 11 points.**

Transparency International is an international non-governmental organisation founded in 1993 based in Berlin, Germany. It is a nonprofit purpose is to take action to combat global Corruption with civil societal anti-corruption measures and to prevent criminal activities arising from corruption. Its most notable publications include the **Global Corruption Barometer and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI).** **The CPI, which measures how corrupt a country’s public sector is perceived to be by its experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of zero to 100 where zero is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.**

World’s first hydrogen-powered hydrofoil to be made in Dubai

- **The Jet ‘flying boat’ will use cutting-edge technology to travel across water at 40 knots. The Jet, the world’s first hydrogen-powered hydrofoil, is to be manufactured in Dubai** as the emirate continues to attract innovative technology companies.
- **The Jet ZeroEmission, a Switzerland-based start-up, signed an agreement with the UAE’s Zenith Marine Services and Dwyn to manufacture and operate** what it says is the first clean energy, hydrogen-powered “flying boat”, the Dubai Media Office said.

Dubai is the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the capital of the Emirate of Dubai. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), its Minister of Defence, and ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.

Joe Biden names Qatar major non-NATO ally as energy crisis looms

- **US President Joe Biden designated Qatar a major non-NATO ally, a largely symbolic honour but one that was meant to convey his administration's gratitude for the tiny Persian Gulf nation's assistance with evacuations from Afghanistan and in ending last year's Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.**

Qatar is a country in Western Asia. It occupies the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, and shares its sole land border with neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Council monarchy Saudi Arabia to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the Persian Gulf. The capital is Doha, home to over 80% of the nation's population. The Qatari riyal is the currency of the State of Qatar. Khalid bin Khalifa is the current Prime Minister of Qatar. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is the Emir of Qatar.

India, Nepal sign MoU to construct bridge over Mahakali river

- **India and Nepal signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the construction of a motorable bridge with the Indian grant assistance over the Mahakali River connecting Dharchula in Uttarakhand with Darchula in Nepal.**
- **The bridge will enhance cross-border connectivity between the Sudurpaschim province of Nepal and Uttarakhand across the Mahakali River where close people-to-people links exist between communities on both sides of the border.**

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. Nepal has a diverse geography, including fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth. Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, with Nepali as the official language. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the largest city. The name "Nepal" is first recorded in texts from the Vedic period of the Indian subcontinent, the era in ancient Nepal when Hinduism was founded, the predominant religion of the country. The Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, affirms Nepal as a secular federal parliamentary republic divided into seven provinces. Sher Bahadur Deuba is serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal since 13 July 2021. Bidya Devi Bhandari is serving as the second president of Nepal, in office since 28 October 2015. She is the first woman to hold the office in the country. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

India inks interim agreement with SKAO

- **India inked an interim agreement confirming its commitment to work on the mega science project — Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) — proposed to be the world's largest radio telescope. The agreement will be valid for one year.**

SKAO is a new intergovernmental organisation dedicated to radio astronomy and is headquartered in the UK. At the moment, organisations from ten countries are a part of the SKAO. These include Australia, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK. Radio telescope, astronomical instrument consisting of a radio receiver and an antenna system that is used to detect radio-frequency radiation between wavelengths of about 10 metres (30 megahertz [MHz]) and 1 mm (300 gigahertz [GHz]) emitted by extraterrestrial sources, such as stars, galaxies, and quasars. Unlike optical telescopes, radio telescopes can detect invisible gas and, therefore, they can reveal areas of space that may be obscured by cosmic dust.

Peru President sacks PM Hector Valer Pinto accused of domestic violence

- **Peruvian President Pedro Castillo dumped his prime minister just three days after appointing him, amid outrage over revelations he was accused of domestic violence in 2016.**
- **"I have decided to recompose the cabinet," the president said, meaning Prime Minister Hector Valer Pinto is out. The leftist Castillo announced the change in a brief television address in which he did not mention Valer Pinto by name.**

Peru is a country in western South America. Its capital and largest city is Lima. The sol is the currency of Peru. Anibal Torres Vasquez is the current Prime Minister of Peru.

Africa Union summit: Leaders complain about ‘wave of coups’

- **African leaders gathered at the 35th African Union Summit** over the weekend, have **complained about the ‘wave’ of military coups** and attempted putsches on the continent, **after the organization suspended four nations for unconstitutional regime changes** in the last year.
- **The number of coups in Africa had been falling, with the spread of elections and peaceful transfers of power.** Two of the countries where the army has **seized power recently - Burkina Faso and Mali** - have been **struggling to contain Islamist insurgencies.**
- Last week, **there was an attempted coup in Guinea-Bissau**, which the **president blamed on drug-trafficking gangs.** The country lies on a major transit point between **cocaine-producing countries in Latin America and markets in Europe.**

The African Union (AU) is a continental union consisting of 55 member states located on the continent of Africa. The AU was announced in the Sirte Declaration in Sirte, Libya, on 9 September 1999, calling for the establishment of the African Union. The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and launched on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. The intention of the AU was to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), established on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa by 32 signatory governments; the OAU was disbanded on 9 July 2002. The most important decisions of the AU are made by the Assembly of the African Union, a semi-annual meeting of the heads of state and government of its member states. The AU's secretariat, the African Union Commission, is based in Addis Ababa. The largest city in the AU is Lagos, Nigeria, while the largest urban agglomeration is Cairo, Egypt. Moussa Faki Mahamat is a Chadian politician and diplomat who has been the elected Chairperson of the African Union Commission since 14 March 2017.

Australia hosts first Quad Foreign Ministers' Meet

- **Australia hosted India, Japan and the United States for the fourth Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Melbourne** and the top diplomats are seeking to bolster cooperation in areas **including economy, security, coronavirus pandemic and free and open Indo-Pacific.**
- **The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is a partnership of Australia, India, Japan and the US,** each of whom shares **a commitment to openness and transparency and challenges posed by China and the situation in Ukraine. This is the first time Quad Foreign Ministers are meeting since the two Quad Summits last year.**

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), colloquially the Quad or QUAD, is a strategic security dialogue between the United States, India, Japan and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries. The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with the support of U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, Australian Prime Minister John Howard, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The dialogue was paralleled by joint military exercises of an unprecedented scale, titled Exercise Malabar. The diplomatic and military arrangement was widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power, and the Chinese government responded to the Quadrilateral dialogue by issuing formal diplomatic protests to its members, calling it “Asian NATO”.

Ceylon Cinnamon clinches country's first GI status

- **Marking a milestone, Ceylon Cinnamon had received the country's first-ever Geographical Indication (GI) certification and status from the European Union (EU) Commission. Sri Lanka's quest for GI status for Ceylon Cinnamon received much needed technical assistance from the UNIDO, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) while some financial assistance was granted by the Common Fund for Commodities, based in the Netherlands.**

Israel becomes first-ever country to allow drone flights in civilian airspace

- **Israel becomes the first-ever country to allow drones in civilian airspace.** Referring to this, the **Israel's Ministry of Transport and Road Safety recently announced the country's first certification for unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAVs) to operate in civilian airspace.**

German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier re-elected for another term

- **German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier was re-elected for a second term of five years by a special parliamentary assembly.** Steinmeier had been endorsed by most mainstream political parties ahead of the election for the largely ceremonial head of state. The president was elected with a big majority by a special assembly made up of the members of parliament's lower house and representatives of Germany's 16 states.

Germany is a country in Central Europe. It is the second-most populous country in Europe after Russia, and the most populous member state of the European Union. The nation's capital and largest city is Berlin, and its financial centre is Frankfurt; the largest urban area is the Ruhr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving as the President of Germany since 19 March 2017. Euro is the official currency of it.

India set to sign CEPA trade pact with UAE

- **India and the United Arab Emirates have signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). It is a kind of free trade pact which covers negotiation on the trade in services and investment, and other areas of economic partnership. It may even consider negotiation on areas such as trade facilitation and customs cooperation, competition, and Intellectual Property Rights. Partnership agreements or cooperation agreements are more comprehensive than Free Trade Agreements.**
- **CEPA also looks into the regulatory aspect of trade and encompasses an agreement covering the regulatory issues. As per the CEPA signed between India and the UAE: 90% of India's exports will have duty-free access to the Emirates. It covers goods, services and digital trade.**

Nepal to adopt India's Unified Payments Interface as payments platform in the Himalayan nation

- **Nepal will become the first country outside of India to adopt Unified Payments Interface or UPI as the payments platform in the Himalayan nation. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India. Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is a payment app to make simple, easy and quick transactions using the UPI.**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the BHIM UPI App on the 31st December 2016 and urged people to make digital payments a habit to transform the country into a cashless economy. The platform has seen an increase in popularity especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an advanced version of Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)-round-the-clock funds transfer service to make cashless payments faster, easier and smoother. UPI is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood. UPI is currently the biggest among the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) operated systems including National Automated Clearing House (NACH), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS), Aadhaar enabled Payment System (AePS), Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), RuPay etc. The top UPI apps today include PhonePe, Paytm, Google Pay, Amazon Pay and BHIM, the latter being the Government offering. As part of an agreement, India's UPI will be linked to Singapore's PayNow. NPCI launched UPI with 21 member banks in 2016.

Putin signs a decree recognizing independence of breakaway Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin has recognized the independence of two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine. He made the announcement in a televised speech to the nation. The Russian leader signed a decree recognizing the self-proclaimed "Donetsk People's Republic" (DPR) and the "Luhansk People's Republic" (LPR) as independent. Putin also ordered deployment of troops to two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine after recognising them as independent.**
- **NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg joined in the international condemnation of the move, saying "this further undermines Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, erodes efforts towards a resolution of the conflict, and violates the Minsk Agreements, to which Russia is a party," he added. The Minsk agreements were a series of international agreements which sought to end the war in the Donbas region of Ukraine. The first, known as the Minsk Protocol, was drafted in 2014 by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, consisting of Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with mediation by the leaders of France and Germany in the so-called Normandy Format. After extensive talks in Minsk, Belarus, the agreement was signed on 5 September 2014 by representatives of the Trilateral Contact Group and, without recognition of their status, by the then-leaders of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and Luhansk People's Republic (LPR).**

Russia launches special military operation on Ukraine's eastern Donbas region

- **Russia has launched a special military operation in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region. Russian forces entered Ukrainian territory from Crimea. Ballistic missile attacks were also launched on a number of Ukrainian cities.**

- India has called for an immediate de-escalation of tensions between Russia and Ukraine. **India's Permanent Representative to UN, TS Tirumurti cautioned that the situation is in danger of spiraling into a major crisis.** Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres made a direct appeal to President Putin to stop Russian troops from attacking Ukraine.

Russia or the Russian Federation is a transcontinental country spanning Eastern Europe and Northern Asia. It is the largest country in the world; covering over 17,125,191 square kilometres (6,612,073 sq mi), consisting of more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area, extending to eleven time zones, and has bordering sixteen sovereign nations, the most of any country in the world. Vladimir Putin is serving as the current President of Russia since 2012, previously being in the office from 1999 until 2008. He was also Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012. Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation. Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020.

Canada approves world's first plant-based COVID-19 vaccine

- **The Canadian government approved the use of Covifenz, the world's first plant-based COVID-19 vaccine, jointly developed by Medicago Inc., a biopharma company owned by Mitsubishi Chemical and Philip Morris, situated in Quebec City, and GlaxoSmithKline Plc.**
- **Not only is the vaccine the first authorized coronavirus jab developed by a Canadian-based firm, but it is also the first to use a plant-based protein technology.** As of now, the vaccine has been cleared for use for people aged 18 to 64. Health Canada states that the vaccine's effectiveness has not yet been confirmed for those younger than 18 and older than 64 years.

Canada is a country in North America. Its ten provinces and three territories extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific and northward into the Arctic Ocean, covering 9.98 million square kilometres (3.85 million square miles), making it the world's second-largest country by total area. Its southern and western border with the United States, stretching 8,891 kilometres (5,525 mi), is the world's longest bi-national land border. Canada's capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. The Canadian dollar is the currency of Canada. Justin Trudeau is current Prime Minister of Canada since November 2015. Mary Simon has served as the 30th governor general of Canada since July 26, 2021.

European Parliament votes in favor of Ukraine's application for EU membership

- **The European Parliament voted in favor of making Ukraine a member of the European Union.** European Parliament is one of the European Union's legislative branches. A total of 637 parliament members voted in favour of Ukraine joining the bloc, 13 voted against and 26 abstained.
- **European Parliament will work with Ukraine towards making it a member of the grouping.** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has filed an application to join the EU a day after he urged for fast-tracking admittance due to the Russian invasion. Being a member of the European Union, which has 27 members at present, would allow Ukrainians to move freely between the 27 countries.
- **The European Parliament's vote does not immediately make Ukraine an EU member.** According to the EU's website, **the criteria include a free-market economy, a stable democracy, the rule of law, and the acceptance of all EU legislation, including of the euro currency.** After the application gets approved by the European Council, the country must agree on a framework for negotiations.

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. A monetary union was established in 1999, coming into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 member states which use the euro currency. The union and EU citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993. The EU traces its origins to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), established, respectively, by the 1951 Treaty of Paris and 1957 Treaty of Rome. The original member states of what came to be known as the European Communities were the Inner Six: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany. The United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU on 31 January 2020. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician and physician who has been President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019. Charles Michel is a Belgian politician serving as President of the European Council.

Montreux Convention and can Turkey use it to block Russian warships

- According to the 1936 Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits, often referred to simply as the Montreux Convention, Turkey has control over both the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits. In the event of a war, the pact gives Ankara the right to regulate the transit of naval warships and to block the straits to warships belonging to the countries involved in the conflict.
- Turkey is set to implement an international convention on naval passage through two of its strategic straits, which would allow them to limit the movement of Russian warships between the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea. The situation in Ukraine had become a war, a declaration that authorises Ankara to activate the Montreux Convention and ban Russian war vessels from entering the Black Sea through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits.

EU bans seven Russian banks from SWIFT

- The European Union has banned seven Russian banks from the Society for worldwide interbank financial telecommunication (SWIFT) global system that underpins cross-border payments. But it spared two financial institutions in Russia because they are key to transactions for EU energy imports.
- The SWIFT system stands for the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication and is a secure platform for financial institutions to exchange information about global monetary transactions such as money transfers.

Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

- Nine days into its destructive military operation, Russia captured Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power plant. The Zaporizhzhia NPP is located in the city of Enerhodar, on the banks of the Dnieper River, just 200 kilometers from the conflicted Donbas region where Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces have been fighting. It is also 550 km south-east of the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv.

Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It is the second-largest country by area in Europe after Russia, which it borders to the east and north-east. Ukraine also shares borders with Belarus to the north; Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west; Romania and Moldova to the south; and has a coastline along the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. With a population of 43 million, Ukraine is the eighth-most populous country in Europe. The nation's capital and largest city is Kyiv. The hryvnia, hryvna, or sometimes gryvnya, has been the national currency of Ukraine since 2 September 1996. Volodymyr Zelenskyy is a Ukrainian politician, former actor and comedian, who is the sixth and current President of Ukraine.

India, Bangladesh, and Nepal finalise MoU for implementation of BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement

- Bangladesh, India, and Nepal held a meeting to discuss the passenger and Cargo protocols to operationalize the BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA). The two-day meeting held in Delhi concluded.
- Bhutan participated in the meeting as an observer. This is the first meeting of the group since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The last meeting was held in February 2020 in New Delhi.

The Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative is a subregional architecture of countries in Eastern South Asia, a subregion of South Asia. It meets through official representation of member states to formulate, implement and review quadrilateral agreements across areas such as water resources management, connectivity of power, transport, and infrastructure. India proposed a SAARC Motor Vehicle Agreement during the 18th SAARC summit in Kathmandu in November 2014. Due to objections from Pakistan, an agreement could not be reached. India instead pursued a similar motor vehicle agreement with the BBIN. The BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) was signed on 15 June 2015 at the BBIN transport ministers meeting in Thimpu, Bhutan. The agreement will permit the member states to ply their vehicles in each other's territory for transportation of cargo and passengers, including third country transport and personal vehicles.

Conservative candidate Yoon Suk-yeol elected as new President of South Korea

- In South Korea, opposition candidate Yoon Suk Yeol, a conservative former top prosecutor has been elected as country's new President. Yoon Suk Yeol defeated his ruling liberal party opponent Lee Jae-myung in one of the country's most closely fought presidential elections held. With more than 99 percent of the ballots counted, People Power Party candidate Yoon won 48.6 percent of the votes, narrowly edging his rival Lee Jae-myung of Democratic Party, who garnered 47.8 percent.

South Korea is a country in East Asia, constituting the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and sharing a land border with North Korea. Its western border is formed by the Yellow Sea, while its eastern border is defined by the Sea of Japan. The South Korean won is the official currency of South Korea. Yoon Suk-yeol is the current President of South Korea. 38th parallel, popular name given to latitude 38° N that in East Asia roughly demarcates North Korea and South Korea.

Investments via UAE to face more scrutiny after FATF grey list inclusion

- **The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become the latest addition to the grey list put out by the Financial Action Task Force, a global financial crime watchdog. The country's inclusion may reduce its attractiveness as an investment hub for foreign inflows into India and raise the level of scrutiny by India's financial regulators.**
- **The UAE has become a popular destination for companies and wealthy individuals seeking tax avoidance and is facing greater scrutiny amid global efforts to counter Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to reports.**

The Financial Action Task Force is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 in Paris on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing. The mandate of the organisation was expanded in 2001 to include terrorist financing following the September 11 terror attacks. The FATF holds three Plenary meetings in the course of each of its 12-month rotating presidencies. It currently has 39 members, including two regional organisations — the European Commission and the Gulf Cooperation Council. India is a member of the FATF consultations and its Asia Pacific Group.

Ex-student protest leader becomes Chile's youngest president

- **Left-leaning former student leader Gabriel Boric vowed to improve the lives of all Chileans and attack deep inequality that has sparked massive protests, hours after being inaugurated as the youngest President in the country's history. Boric was only 4 years old when democracy returned to the South American nation following a 17-year military dictatorship that both bloodied and set the groundwork for modern Chile.**

Indonesia's Merapi volcano unleashes lava

- **Indonesia's Mount Merapi volcano spewed avalanches of hot clouds in eruptions that forced about 250 residents to flee to temporary shelters and left ash blanketing nearby villages and towns.**

Parliament elects Hungary's first ever woman president

- **The Hungarian parliament elected Katalin Novak, a close ally of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, as the EU member's first ever woman President. Novak, who most recently served as a minister for family policy, portrayed her election as a victory for women.**

Hungary is a landlocked country in Central Europe. Budapest is the country's capital and largest city; it is bordered by Slovakia to the north, Ukraine to the northeast, Romania to the east and southeast, Serbia to the south, Croatia and Slovenia to the southwest and Austria to the west. The forint is the currency of Hungary.

Indian judge at ICJ votes to seek end of Russia war on Ukraine

- **Justice Dalveer Bhandari, whose election to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was hailed as a major diplomatic victory by the government, has voted with 12 other judges including those from US, France and Germany at the global court which asked Russia to suspend its invasion of Ukraine.**
- **The United Nations' judicial body has called for Russia to immediately halt its military operations in Ukraine in a 13-2 judgement, with India's Dalveer Bhandari joining the majority, while the Russian and Chinese judges voted against the order.**
- **Although the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are binding, it has no direct means of enforcing them, and in rare cases, in the past, countries have ignored them.**

EU countries support plan for world-first carbon border tariff

- **European Union countries backed the bloc's plan to impose a world-first carbon dioxide emissions tariff on imports of polluting goods, although the finer details will need to be worked out in upcoming negotiations.**

- **The EU wants to introduce CO2 emissions costs from 2026** on imports of steel, cement, fertilisers, aluminium and electricity – **a move aimed at protecting European industry from being undercut by cheaper goods made in countries with weaker environmental rules.** A three-year transition phase for the levy would begin in 2023, so EU countries and the European parliament are racing to negotiate and approve the rules this year.

World Happiness Report: Finland tops for 5th straight year

- **For the fifth straight year, the United Nations' World Happiness Report has found Finland to be the happiest country in the world.** The report, the latest edition of which was released before the annual International Day of Happiness, is issued annually by the UN's Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- **World Happiness Report published since 2012, the World Happiness Report is based on two key ideas: Happiness or life evaluation measured through opinion surveys and Identifying key elements that determine well-being and life evaluation across countries.**
- **It ranks 150 countries (146 in 2022) on factors such as personal sense of well-being, levels of GDP, life expectancy etc.** The list, which is in its 10th year, assigns a score on a scale of 0-10, based on an average of data over a three-year-period. **India, meanwhile, saw a marginal improvement in its ranking, jumping three spots to 136, from 139 a year ago.**

'Green Triangle' named after Mahatma Gandhi inaugurated in Madagascar's capital as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav

- **As part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate India's 75th year of independence, a "Green Triangle" named after Mahatma Gandhi was jointly inaugurated in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo. Mayor of Antananarivo Naina Andriantsitohaina and India's Ambassador to Madagascar Abhay Kumar inaugurated the green space at a special ceremony in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo.**

Australia: Great Barrier Reef suffers widespread and severe coral bleaching due to high ocean temperatures

- **Australia's Great Barrier Reef is suffering widespread and severe coral bleaching due to high ocean temperatures.** According to a report by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Authority, **which manages the world's largest coral reef ecosystem, bleaching has been detected across the Marine Park.** The reef has suffered significantly from coral bleaching caused by unusually warm ocean temperatures in 2016, 2017, and 2020. The previous bleaching damaged two-thirds of the coral.

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands stretching for over 2,300 kilometres over an area of approximately 344,400 square kilometres (133,000 sq mi). The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia.

BIMSTEC Charter proposed to be signed during Sri Lanka Summit

- **BIMSTEC Charter proposed to be signed during Sri Lanka Summit- Bangladesh Foreign Minister.** Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen has said that the **BIMSTEC Charter is proposed to be signed during the forthcoming summit to be held in Sri Lanka** on March 30.
- **The BIMSTEC charter would help the forum play an effective role in the Bay of Bengal area including Bangladesh as a sustainable, peaceful and economically prosperous region.** The charter will help the BIMSTEC forum become a dynamic, effective and productive regional organisation through meaningful cooperation between the member countries.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion (2021). The BIMSTEC member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand– are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors. A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018), also referred to as the mini SAARC. Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. The permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Kuwait becomes hottest place on earth, temperature reaches 53.2 degrees Celsius

- **Kuwait reached a scorching temperature of 53.2 degrees Celsius (127.7 degrees Fahrenheit), making it among the hottest places on earth.** It was so hot in Kuwait last summer that birds dropped dead from the sky. Sea horses boiled to death in the bay. Dead clams coated the rocks, their shells popped open like they'd been steamed.
- The country continues to **burn oil for electricity and ranks among the top global carbon emitters per capita, according to the World Resources Institute.** As asphalt melts on highways, Kuwaitis bundle up for bone-chilling air-conditioning in malls. Renewable energy accounts for less than 1 percent of demand - far below Kuwait's target of 15 percent by 2030.

Kuwait is a country in Western Asia. It is situated in the northern edge of Eastern Arabia at the tip of the Persian Gulf, bordering Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. Kuwait also shares maritime borders with Iran. Most of the country's population reside in the urban agglomeration of the capital city Kuwait City. As of 2021, Kuwait has a population of 4.67 million people of which 1.45 million are Kuwaiti citizens while the remaining 3.2 million are foreign nationals from over 100 countries. The Kuwaiti dinar is the currency of Kuwait. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait.

Bangladesh most polluted country of the World

- **Bangladesh was the most polluted country in the world in 2021,** says the **World Air Quality Report prepared by the Swiss-based air quality technology company IQAir** in its latest report released.
- In terms of particulate matter in the air, **Bangladesh recorded an average PM2.5 level of 76.9 micrograms per cubic metre in 2021 against the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended maximum permissible level of 5 micrograms per cubic metre.**
- **Earlier, in 2018, 2019 and 2020 also Bangladesh was found to be the most polluted country in the world.** However, the PM2.5 level has shown a decline in Bangladesh from 77.1 micrograms per cubic metre in 2020 which was even higher at 83.3 in 2019 and 97.1 in 2018. The data reveals that not a single country in the world managed to meet the WHO's air quality standard in 2021. All over the world, 93 cities reported PM 2.5 levels at 10 times the recommended level. Among the cities, **Dhaka was the second most polluted city in the world with a PM 2.5 level of 78.1 just below New Delhi which had a PM 2.5 level of 85.1 in 2021.**

Russia conducts military drills on isles disputed with Japan

- **Russia was conducting drills on islands claimed by Tokyo, days after Moscow halted peace talks with Japan because of its sanctions over Russia's invasion of Ukraine.** Russia's Eastern Military District said it was **conducting military drills on the Kuril Islands** with more than 3,000 troops and hundreds of pieces of army equipment.
- **The territorial dispute over the four islets – which Russia says are part of its Kuril chain and which Japan calls its Northern Territories – has prevented Tokyo and Moscow from reaching a peace treaty formally ending hostilities.** Russia's exercises involved repelling amphibious warfare, including destroying defence aircraft carrying troops and testing skills to operate fire control systems of anti-tank guided missiles.

NATO extends Stoltenberg term for a year due to Russia's war

- **NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will remain in his role for an extra year to help steer the 30-nation military organization through the security crisis sparked by Russia's war on Ukraine.**
- **The former Norwegian prime minister was named to NATO's top civilian post in October 2014.** It's the second time that his term of office has been extended. His mandate was due to expire in September. In February, Norway's government appointed Stoltenberg as head of the Scandinavian country's central bank and said it hoped he could start in his new role around Dec 1.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 member states, 28 of which are in Europe and the other 2 being part of North America. Established in the aftermath of World War II, the organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty, signed 4 April 1949. NATO constitutes a system of collective security, whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defense in response to an attack by any external party. It was established during the Cold War in response to the threat posed by the Soviet Union. The NATO headquarters is located in Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium. Since its founding, the admission of new member states has increased the alliance from the original 12 countries to 30. The most recent member state to be added to NATO was North Macedonia on 27 March 2020. NATO currently recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine as aspiring members.

World's first single tower suspension bridge set to open in Yunnan, China

- **Lvzhijiang Bridge in China** will be the **world's first single tower, single-span suspension bridge in the world** when it opens to traffic next month. **Stretching 798 metres over a Lvzhijiang (which literally translates as the "Green Juice River")**, the bridge will make travel in the scenic and remote Yunnan province faster and easier.
- **Built in a V-shape mountainous valley, the bridge is only held by one tower on one side and supported at both ends by cables, giving it a gravity-defying look and hailed as being an engineering marvel.**

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. China claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons. However, several ASEAN member countries, including Vietnam, Philippines and Brunei, have made counterclaims. Chinese claims in the South China Sea are described in part by the nine-dash line. China and India are the two neighbouring countries in Asia. India shares 3488 km of border with China that runs along the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir declassifies files on civil war

- **South Sudan's President Salva Kiir has issued a directive to declassify intelligence reports on how the country's long-running civil war began.** President Kiir said all those found culpable of offences by the released materials will be granted presidential pardon. The declassification is expected to help in the process of national reconciliation and healing, he said in an address. **It is the first time the president has issued such a directive.**

South Sudan is a landlocked country in east/central Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia, Sudan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Kenya. Juba is the capital and largest city. It gained independence from Sudan in 2011, making it the most recent sovereign state or country with widespread recognition as of 2022. The South Sudanese pound is the official currency of the Republic of South Sudan.

Hungary's pro-Putin PM Orban claims victory in national vote

- **Prime Minister Viktor Orban declared victory in national elections, claiming a mandate for a fourth term** as a partial vote count predicted a strong lead for his right-wing party. With 75% of votes tallied, Orban's Fidesz-led coalition had won 54.5%, while a pro-European opposition coalition, United for Hungary, had nearly 34%.

Hungary is a landlocked country in Central Europe. Budapest is the country's capital and largest city; it is bordered by Slovakia to the north, Ukraine to the northeast, Romania to the east and southeast, Serbia to the south, Croatia and Slovenia to the southwest and Austria to the west. The forint is the currency of Hungary.

Turkmenistan to promote implementation of stalled 1,800 km TAPI gas pipeline

- **Turkmenistan will promote the implementation of the stalled 1,800 km TAPI gas pipeline** that will pass through Afghanistan, and Pakistan and culminate in India. **The announcement which was part of The Tunxi Initiative of the Neighbouring Countries of Afghanistan on Supporting Economic Reconstruction in and Practical Cooperation with Afghanistan** also said that Pakistan will support the probable resumption of work on the TAPI gas pipeline.
- **The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) Pipeline, also known as Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline, is a natural gas pipeline being developed by the Galkynysh – TAPI Pipeline Company Limited with participation of the Asian Development Bank.** The pipeline will transport natural gas from the Galkynysh Gas Field in Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India. **Construction on the project started in Turkmenistan on 13 December 2015.**

Turkmenistan also known as Turkmenia, is a landlocked country in Central Asia, bordered by Kazakhstan to the northwest, Uzbekistan to the north, east and northeast, Afghanistan to the southeast, Iran to the south and southwest and the Caspian Sea to the west. Ashgabat is the capital and largest city of the country. Serdar Berdimuhamedow is the third and current president of Turkmenistan, serving since 19 March 2022. The manat is the currency of Turkmenistan.

Taliban Unveils New Cabinet, Includes US-Designated Terrorist

- **Mullah Mohammad Hassan, the little-known head of the Taliban's leadership council, was named as acting prime minister. Taliban co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the main public face of the group who signed a peace deal with the Trump administration last year, will serve as his deputy.**
- **Sirajuddin Haqqani, leader of the Haqqani Network who is on the FBI's most wanted list for terrorism, will serve as acting interior minister.** That may complicate any moves by the U.S. to cooperate with the Taliban, particularly as President Joe Biden urges the Taliban to cut all ties with terrorist groups.
- **At least 14 members of the Taliban's hardline interim government in Kabul are on the UN Security Council's terrorism blacklist, including acting Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund and his both deputies, raising concern of the international community over the composition of the new Cabinet in Afghanistan.**
- **Specially designated global terrorist Sirajuddin Haqqani, who carries a reward of \$10-million US bounty on his head, is the acting interior minister. Acting Defence Minister Mullah Yaqoob, acting Foreign Minister Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi and his deputy Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai are all listed under the UNSC 1988 Sanctions Committee.**
- **The 33-member interim Cabinet includes four of the five leaders known as the "Taliban Five" who were once held at the Guantanamo Bay prison.** They include Mullah Mohammad Fazil (deputy defence minister), Khairullah Khairkhwa (information and culture minister), Mullah Noorullah Noori (Borders and Tribal Affairs minister) and Mullah Abdul Haq Wasiq (Director of Intelligence). The fifth member of the group, Mohammad Nabi Omari, has been appointed as governor of eastern Khost Province recently. Acting Prime Minister Mullah Hasan has been described as "a close associate" of Taliban founder Mullah Omar in a UN sanctions report. **Both Deputy Prime Ministers — Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and Maulvi Abdul Salam Hanafi, who is involved in drug trafficking, are also on the UN blacklist.**

Afghanistan is a landlocked country at the crossroads of Central and South Asia. It is bordered by Pakistan and India to the east and south, Iran to the west, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to the north, and China to the northeast. It is inhabited by 31.4 million people as of 2020, with 4.6 million living in the capital and largest city, Kabul. Hibatullah Akhundzada is the third Supreme Commander of the Taliban and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Abdul Ghani Baradar is the First Vice Emir of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The afghani is the currency of it. The twenty-year-long war between the government and the Taliban reached a climax with the 2021 Taliban offensive and the resulting fall of Kabul which returned the Taliban to power.

India hosts SCO-RATS meet; focus on situation in Afghanistan

- **Counter-terrorism experts from India, Pakistan and other member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) deliberated on boosting cooperation in combating various regional security challenges at a meeting hosted by New Delhi. The meeting is taking place under the framework of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.**
- **Pakistan has sent a three-member team for the meeting. India assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO) on October 28 for a period of one year.**
- **India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence. A similar conference was organised by India in December which was participated by all the member states. Afghanistan is among the observer states of the SCO.**
- **India has not recognised the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and has been pitching for the formation of a truly inclusive government in Kabul besides insisting that Afghan soil must not be used for any terrorist activities against any country.**
- **India has been concerned about the developments in Afghanistan.** It hosted a regional dialogue on Afghanistan in November that was attended by National Security Advisors of Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

- The participating countries vowed to **work towards ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a safe haven for global terrorism and called for the formation of an “open and truly inclusive” government** in Kabul with representation from all sections of Afghan society. **The Afghan issue has figured prominently in almost all key meetings of the SCO.**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), also known as the Shanghai Pact, is a transcontinental political, economic, security, and military alliance. It is a permanent intergovernmental international organization. The creation of SCO was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China). The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed during the St.Petersburg SCO Heads of State meeting in June 2002, and entered into force on 19 September 2003. In terms of geographic scope and population, it is the world’s largest regional organization, covering approximately 60% of the area of Eurasia, 40% of the world population, and more than 30% of global GDP. The SCO is the successor to the Shanghai Five, a mutual security agreement formed in 1996 between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Its membership has since expanded to eight states, with India and Pakistan joining on 9 June 2017. Iran started accession as a full member in September 2021 at the Dushanbe Summit in Tajikistan. Iran has been accepted as the ninth full member of the organisation. Several countries are engaged as observers or partners. The SCO is governed by the Heads of State Council (HSC), its supreme decision-making body, which meets once a year. Military exercises are also regularly conducted among members to promote cooperation and coordination against terrorism and other external threats, and to maintain regional peace and stability.

Bangladesh signs deal with Adani group for Indian Economic Zone

- **The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) signed an agreement with the Indian company Adani Ports and SEZ Limited to set up an Indian Economic Zone** at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN) in Mirsarai of Chattogram.
- **The Indian Economic Zone will provide facilities for Indian investors in Bangladesh.** The signing of the non-binding agreement called term-sheet between the two entities in Mumbai indicated that the development of the Indian Economic Zone (IEZ) will start in full swing soon.

Yemen’s president steps aside amid efforts to end war

- **Yemen’s exiled president stepped aside and transferred his powers to a presidential council as international and regional efforts to end the country’s long-running civil war** gained momentum with a two-month truce. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, major players in the conflict appear to have played a role in **President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi’s decision**, quickly welcoming it with **a pledge of \$3 billion in aid.** The head of the new council has close ties to Riyadh.

Yemen is a country in Western Asia, on the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. It borders Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the northeast and shares maritime borders with Eritrea, Djibouti, Somaliland and Somalia. It is the second-largest Arab sovereign state in the peninsula. Yemen’s constitutionally stated capital, and largest city, is the city of Sanaa. Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed has been the Prime Minister of Yemen since 18 October 2018. Yemeni rial is the official currency of the Republic of Yemen.

US Senate confirms Ketanji Brown Jackson as US Supreme Court Judge, first Black woman to be elevated to the post

- **The US Senate has confirmed Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson for the Supreme Court in a largely partisan vote. The Senate voted 53 to 47 to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, making her the first Black woman elevated to the Supreme Court.** Three Republicans joined Democrats and independents in supporting **Jackson to be the first African American woman on the highest court.** President Joe Biden termed Jackson’s confirmation as a historic moment for the US.

Imran Khan first Pakistan PM to lose no-trust vote

- **Imran Khan has become the first Prime Minister of Pakistan to lose a no-trust vote in the National Assembly.** Despite several attempts to block the no-confidence motion here in the National Assembly, the voting took place after midnight in which **as many as 174 members voted in favour of the motion in the 342-member House while members of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were absent.** Notably, **no Prime Minister has completed full five-year tenure in Pakistan so far.**
- **Imran Khan Niazi is a former Pakistani cricketer, who after leading the country to victory in the 1992 World Cup Final, retired from cricket and joined politics. He is the founding Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). In 1997, he founded his own political party ‘Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.** Khan

contested for a National Assembly seat in October 2002 elections and served as a Member Parliament from NA- 71, Mianwali until 2007. **In 2018, Imran Khan stormed to power in Pakistan by winning 176 votes.**

Nepal suspends Central Bank Governor amid forex woes

- In a rare move, **the Nepal Government has suspended the country's Central Bank Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari over disagreements with Finance Minister Janardhan Sharma** and for not doing enough to pull the economy from doldrums. **This is only the second instance that a sitting governor, who enjoys a five-year tenure, was suspended.**

Opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif elected as Pakistan's 23rd Prime Minister

- **The Opposition's joint candidate Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the country's 23rd Prime Minister. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief got 174 votes.** Mr Shehbaz had earlier contested for the Prime Ministership in 2018 as well in which Imran had received 176 votes and he could bag only 96 votes at the time.

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the world's fifth-most populous country, with a population of almost 227 million, and has the world's second-largest Muslim population after Indonesia. It has a 1,046-kilometre (650-mile) coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south, and is bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the west, Iran to the southwest, and China to the northeast. It is separated narrowly from Tajikistan by Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor in the north, and also shares a maritime border with Oman. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is serving as the current President of Pakistan. The Pakistani rupee has been the official currency of Pakistan.

Samia Suluhu Hassan becomes Tanzania's first woman President

- **Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in as Tanzania's first female president** at the government offices of State House in Dar es Salaam. **Ms Hassan took the oath of office**, vowing to uphold the constitution of the country. The inauguration was witnessed by the East African country's chief justice and members of the Cabinet. Tanzania's former presidents Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Jakaya Kikwete and Abied Karume were also present.

Tanzania is a country in East Africa within the African Great Lakes region. The shilingi is the currency of Tanzania. Samia Suluhu Hassan is serving as the current president of Tanzania.

Maldives President Solih bans 'India Out' campaign

- **Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih issued a decree banning the 'India Out' campaign**, now led by former President Abdulla Yameen, terming it a "threat to national security." **The 'India Out' campaign, started and sustained by critics of the Solih administration**, gained prominence in recent months with former President Yameen spearheading it.
- **The campaign accuses the Maldivian government of "allowing" Indian military presence in the island nation** – the government has repeatedly denied it – and, of "being a puppet" of New Delhi. **President Solih has opted for an 'India first' foreign policy** and has said he is unapologetic about Male's close ties with New Delhi.

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the "King's Island" for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

Russia successfully test-launched Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile

- **Russia announced that it successfully test-launched a Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile** at a time when Moscow-West tensions have sharply escalated over Ukraine. **The Sarmat is the successor to Russia's Voyevoda ICBM, which is also known as the SS-18 "Satan" Mod-5**, according to the defense intelligence site Janes. Like the SS-18, **the new vehicle is thought to be capable of hitting targets up to 11,200 miles (18,000 kilometers) away.**

Russia or the Russian Federation is a transcontinental country spanning Eastern Europe and Northern Asia. It is the largest country in the world; covering over 17,125,191 square kilometres (6,612,073 sq mi), consisting of more than one-eighth of the Earth's inhabited land area, extending to eleven time zones, and has bordering sixteen sovereign nations, the most of any country in the world. Vladimir Putin is serving as the current President of Russia since 2012, previously being in the office from 1999 until 2008. He was also Prime Minister from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012. Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russian Federation. Mikhail Mishustin is serving as Prime Minister of Russia since 16 January 2020.

Emmanuel Macron re-elected for second consecutive term as President of France

- **Emmanuel Macron** has won a second term in France's presidential election with 58.2 per cent of the vote. **Macron's far-right challenger Marine Le Pen** won 41.8 per cent of the vote in an election that saw the country's highest abstention rate in 50 years. 44-year old **Macron** looks set to become the first president since **Chirac** two decades ago to secure a second term in office.

World's first floating city in Busan, South Korea

- **The world's first prototype floating city** that adapts to sea level rise has just been unveiled at UN headquarters in New York. Rising water levels all over the world have been a cause of worry for humans. Coastal cities, due to frequent flooding, cause huge losses to property and the environment which cannot be ignored. **OCEANIX Busan, in South Korea, aims to provide breakthrough technology for coastal cities facing land shortages and the threat of climate change. As a pilot project of the United Nations, Busan plans to be the first city to adopt a "floating city" wherein some parts would be ready by 2025.**

UK hosts 'world's first' hub for drones, future flying taxis

- **Britain has launched Air-One, a "vertiport" for drones and future electric vehicles taking off and landing vertically. It's proclaimed as the first of its kind in the world. A pop-up urban port for delivery drones – and one day, potentially flying taxis – launched in Britain, lifting a box of prosecco for a brief celebratory test flight hailed as groundbreaking.**

World military expenditure passes \$2 trillion for 1st time; India in 3rd place: SIPRI

- **The global military expenditure has crossed the USD 2 trillion mark for the first time, with the US, the world's largest economy, being the top spender, Sweden-based defence think-tank SIPRI said.**
- **India is in third position.** In its latest report, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said that the **total global military expenditure increased by 0.7 per cent in real terms in 2021**, to reach USD 2,113 billion. **"The five largest spenders in 2021 were the United States, China, India, the United Kingdom and Russia, together accounting for 62 per cent of expenditure,"** it said.

World Economic Forum meeting begins in Davos, Switzerland

- **The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland is scheduled from May 22nd to 26th 2022. The meeting was originally scheduled for January 17-21st but was postponed due to the outbreak of the Omicron variant. The Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum begins at Davos in Switzerland.**
- **Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal led the Indian delegation at the five-day meet. This event would further help reinforce country's position as an important and relevant stakeholder in shaping the global narrative, particularly as India assumes Presidency of the G-20 next year.**
- **The theme for WEF annual Meeting 2022 is 'working Together, restoring Trust'. This year's WEF meeting will be the first global in-person leadership event since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following topics will be focused on at the WEF meeting: Pandemic recovery, Tackling climate change, Building a better future for work, Accelerating stakeholder capitalism and Harnessing the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.**

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international non-governmental and lobbying organisation based in Cologne, canton of Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded on 24 January 1971 by German engineer and economist Klaus Schwab. The foundation, which is mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies – typically global enterprises with more than five billion US dollars in turnover – as well as public subsidies, **views its own mission as "improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas". The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.**

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurates three floating Border Outposts on Indo-Bangladesh Border

- **Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah inaugurated three floating Border Outposts (BOP) on the Indo-Bangladesh border to protect the inaccessible areas of the Sundarbans. The floating Border Outposts (BOP) Sutlej, Kaveri and Narmada have been built by the Koch Shipyard. Each BOP costs Rs. 38 crore and weighs around 53 thousand metric tonnes. The floating BOPs are equipped with modern facilities and safety equipment.**

Nepal's Kami Rita Sherpa climbs Mount Everest for 26th time to set new world record

- **Nepal's legendary climber Kami Rita Sherpa has climbed the Mt Everest, the tallest peak in the world for the 26th time to set a new world record.** As the Everest climbing season is approaching fast and hundreds of climbers are waiting for fair weather to reach the top, Kami Rita and his team went to the top of Everest to fix the ropes so that the Everest expedition becomes easier for the other climbers.

India invites Montreal-based ICAO to join International Solar Alliance

- As he interacted with executives and representatives of various nations at the **International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)**, **India's civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia extended an invitation to the Montreal-based United Nations agency to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA).**
- **Several international and multilateral organisations are partners of the ISA, which was launched by India and France in 2015.** Among them are UN agencies like United Nations Development Programme, UN Environment, and others like the World Bank, European Union, and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The **International Solar Alliance** is a **common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.** The initiative was **launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015** by the **then, President of France and the Prime Minister of India.** In January 2016, **Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance headquarters and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India.** **Ajay Mathuri is the current Director General of ISA.**

Marcos Jr. won Philippine presidency

- **The namesake son of late Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos appeared to have been elected Philippine president by a landslide in an astonishing reversal of the 1986 "People Power" pro-democracy revolt that booted his father into global infamy.**

The **Philippines** is an **archipelagic country in Southeast Asia.** **Manila is the national capital, while the largest city is Quezon City.** **The Philippine peso is the official currency of the Philippines.** **Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr. is the current President of the Philippines.**

Sri Lankan PM Mahinda Rajapaksa resigns after anti-govt protests

- **Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned from his post after anti-government protests across the island nation. Sri Lanka's Health Minister Prof. Channa Jayasumana has also handed over his resignation letter to the President.** These resignations came after violent clashes erupted in Colombo over the economic crisis in the country.

Yoon Suk Yeol sworn in as President of South Korea

- **A new political era is underway in South Korea. Yoon Suk Yeol was sworn in as President, ushering in the country's first conservative government in five years.** The ceremony attracted about 40,000 people, including US second gentleman Douglas Emhoff and Japan's Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa. One of Yoon's main challenges will be dealing with North Korea, which is accelerating its nuclear and missile development.

South Korea is a country in East Asia, constituting the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and sharing a land border with North Korea. Its western border is formed by the Yellow Sea, while its eastern border is defined by the Sea of Japan. **The South Korean won is the official currency of South Korea.** **Yoon Suk-yeol is the current President of South Korea.** **38th parallel, popular name given to latitude 38° N that in East Asia roughly demarcates North Korea and South Korea.**

Hungary elects Katalin Novak as first female President of the country

- **In Hungary, Katalin Novak has taken over as the first female President of the country.** The Parliament elected Novak as President of Hungary on March 10. Following her election, Novak said that she wanted to be a "President of peace." She is also **Hungary's youngest President at 44 years of age.**

Hungary is a landlocked country in Central Europe. **Budapest is the country's capital and largest city; it is bordered by Slovakia to the north, Ukraine to the northeast, Romania to the east and southeast, Serbia to the south, Croatia and Slovenia to the southwest and Austria to the west.** **The forint is the currency of Hungary.**

Sweden to apply for NATO membership

- Since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, Finland and Sweden have considered applying for NATO membership, in what would be a major policy shift for the Nordic countries. Russia has repeatedly warned of military escalation and even the potential deployment of nuclear weapons in the Baltic region if the two countries join the Trans-Atlantic alliance. **If the countries do join NATO, it will be a political game-changer and bolster the alliance's defenses. When NATO was established in 1949, two years into the Cold War, Finland and Sweden did not join.**
- Finland shares a 1,300 km (807-mile) border with Russia and gained independence from the nation in 1917. The countries have fought two wars against each other. **In 1948, Finland signed an agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with Russia.** The pact included an agreement that Finland isolate itself militarily from Western Europe. However, at the end of the Cold War in 1991, the threat from Russia toward Finland decreased and the Nordic country was able to operate more independently.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April, 1949. It is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 member states – 28 European states, the United States, and Canada. Established in the aftermath of World War II on the insistence of the Truman administration in the United States, the organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty, which was signed on 4 April 1949. The NATO headquarters is located in Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium. The most recent member state to be added to NATO was North Macedonia on 27 March 2020. NATO currently recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine as aspiring members. Jens Stoltenberg is a Norwegian politician serving as the current and 13th secretary general of NATO since 2014. A member of the Labour Party, he previously served as the 34th Prime Minister of Norway from 2000 to 2001 and again from 2005 until 2013. The Members of the NATO alliance benefit from Article 5, which guarantees that an attack on one NATO ally is an attack on all.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed to be new UAE president

- The Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates elected Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan as the **President of the country.** He has replaced Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who died at the age of 73. **Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ), the former president's half-brother, has been the de facto ruler of the UAE for years now, particularly after Khalifa suffered a stroke in 2014.**

Abu Dhab is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south and by Oman to the east and northeast. The land border with Qatar in the Khawr al Udayd area is a source of ongoing dispute.

Australia's new Prime Minister Anthony Albanese sworn in

- Australia's Labor Party leader Anthony Albanese was sworn in as Prime Minister of Australia. The 59-year-old new prime minister was sworn in at a brief ceremony in Government House, Canberra. **Labor Senator Penny Wong was sworn in as foreign minister, Richard Marles as deputy prime minister, Jim Chalmers as treasurer, and Katy Gallagher as finance minister.** Albanese claimed the victory, ending his wait for power after nine years and with this **Anthony Albanese became the country's 31st Prime Minister.**

Belgium becomes world's first nation to mandate 21-day quarantine for Monkeypox

- Belgium became the first country in the world to make a 21-day quarantine compulsory for 'monkeypox'. So far, 14 countries have reported cases of the viral disease, and Belgium contributed with three cases.

Monkeypox is a viral disease caused by the Monkeypox virus, which belongs to the Orthopoxvirus genus in the Poxviridae family and is associated with diseases such as smallpox, cowpox, horsepox, and camelpox. According to the WHO, the first large Monkeypox outbreak was detected in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996–97, with lower case fatality and a greater attack rate. Monkeypox has symptoms that are comparable to smallpox, which was proclaimed eradicated in the 1980s. It was first discovered in humans in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1970, two years after smallpox had been eradicated from the area. Monkeypox has made an appearance in the United Kingdom in 2022. The patient has a recent travel history from Nigeria, where they are suspected to have contracted the infection, before travelling to the UK, according to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which confirmed the case.

World Economic Forum launches alliance to supercharge India's climate action

- **The World Economic Forum (WEF) has launched the India chapter of the Alliance of CEO Climate Action Leaders to supercharge India's climate action and decarbonization efforts.** Part of the World Economic Forum's Climate Action Platform, the alliance will continue efforts to achieve the vision outlined in the white paper released last year, **'Mission 2070: A Green New Deal for a Net Zero India', on India's low-carbon transition by 2070.**

The Prime Minister of India at the COP-26 Glasgow summit presented five nectar elements, Panchamrit, to deal with climate change: 1. India will reach its **non-fossil installed electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030.** 2. India will **meet 50% of its electricity requirements from renewable energy by 2030.** 3. India will **reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now onwards till 2030.** 4. **By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by less than 45%.** 5. **By the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net-zero.**

Third edition of India-Bangladesh Navy exercise begins at Mongla port

- **The third edition of Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral exercise Bongosagar commenced at Port Mongla, Bangladesh.** The Harbour Phase of exercise is underway. It will be followed by a Sea Phase in the Northern Bay of Bengal. **Exercise Bongosagar is aimed at developing a high degree of interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations between the two navies. Guided Missile Corvette Kora and Offshore Patrol Vessel Sumedha of the Indian Navy are participated in the Exercise.** Both the ships are indigenously built. Bangladesh Navy is being represented by BNS Abu Ubaidah and Ali Haider, both Guided Missile Frigates.

India beats China to become world's 3rd strongest Air Force in the Global Air Powers Ranking 2022

- **The World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft (WDMMA) has released the Global Air Powers Ranking of 2022, which ranked the Indian Air Force as the third strongest Air Force in the world.** As per the report, **the Indian Air Force was ranked higher than the Chinese Air Force but also the Japan Air Self-Defense Force, the Israeli Air Force, and the French Air and Space Force in terms of strength.**

Bangladesh to be the 'country of Focus' at the Mumbai International Film Festival

- **As a fitting tribute to the golden jubilee of the liberation of Bangladesh, it has been made 'Country of Focus' during the 17th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF).** A special package of 11 films from Bangladesh including critically acclaimed film Hasina- A Daughter's Tale will be presented at India's foremost documentary film festival MIFF 2022.

Russia conducts test-launch of Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile

- **Russian frigate Admiral Gorshkov successfully test-fired a Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile from the Barents Sea. The missile hit a naval target about 1,000 kms away in the White Sea and the flight of the projectile corresponded to the designed parameters, it added. The Tsirkon missile has been test-fired several times from the Admiral Gorshkov frigate and a nuclear-powered submarine.**

Reskilling Revolution initiative

- **The Reskilling Revolution initiative marked two years of progress at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2022 in Davos, Switzerland. Reskilling Revolution initiative is a global coalition of 50 CEOs, 25 ministers, and 350 organizations committed to realizing the gains of skilling.** It was launched in 2020 at the World Economic Forum's (WEFs) 50th Annual Meeting. It aims to **provide 1 billion people with better education, skills, and economic opportunity by 2030.**

US' Frontier overtakes Japan's Fugaku as world's most powerful supercomputer

- **According to the 59th edition of the Top 500 list of the world's most powerful supercomputers unveiled by Germany, ORNL's Supercomputer Frontier from the US, a supercomputer built using Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) architecture and equipped with Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) processors, outperformed Japan's Supercomputer Fugaku to become the world's fastest supercomputer.**
- **Frontier's nearest competitor, Fugaku, has a performance score of 442 petaflops on the Linpack benchmark, a standard for officially ranking global, publicly disclosed supercomputers. While Fugaku was based on Arm's core designs, US's Frontier is powered by AMD.**

A supercomputer is a computer that performs at or near the currently highest operational rate for computers. Generally, PETAFL0P is a measure of a Supercomputer's processing speed and can be expressed as a thousand trillion floating point operations per second. FLOPS (floating point operations per second) are typically used to measure the performance of a computer's processor. Using floating-point encoding, extremely long numbers can be handled relatively easily. Globally, China has the maximum number of supercomputers and maintains the top position in the world, followed by the US, Japan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland and the United Kingdom. India's first supercomputer was PARAM 8000. PARAM Shivay, the first supercomputer assembled indigenously, was installed in IIT (BHU), followed by PARAM Shakti, PARAM Brahma, PARAM Yukti, PARAM Sanganak at IIT-Kharagpur, IISER, Pune, JNCASR, Bengaluru and IIT Kanpur respectively. In 2020, PARAM Siddhi, the High-Performance Computing-Artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer, achieved global ranking of 62nd in Top 500 most powerful supercomputer systems in the world.

Turkey officially changes name at UN to 'Turkiye'

- **Turkey has told the United Nations that, at the behest of its president, it wishes from now on to be called "Turkiye" in all languages.** Over the past few years, the country has sought to change the branding on its products from "made in Turkey" to be "made in Turkiye."
- **In addition to making the UN's nomenclature match how the nation is spelled in Turkish,** the update would also help distinguish the country from the bird of the same name in English.

Turkey, officially the Republic of Turkiye is a transcontinental country located mainly on Anatolia in Western Asia, with a portion on the Balkans in Southeast Europe. It shares borders with the Black Sea to the north; Georgia to the northeast; Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to the east; Iraq to the southeast; Syria and the Mediterranean Sea to the south; the Aegean Sea to the west; and Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest. Cyprus is located off the south coast. Ankara is Turkey's capital. The Turkish lira is the official currency of Turkey and Northern Cyprus. Recep Tayyip Erdo an is serving as the current President of Turkey since 2014.

UAE first in the world to achieve 100% COVID-19 vaccination rate

- **The United Arab Emirates (UAE) reached a major milestone in its National COVID-19 vaccination campaign,** with 100 percent of the eligible categories having been vaccinated, **thus becoming the first country in the world to achieve this goal.** The National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority (NCEMA) said in a statement that the eligible categories include frontline workers, volunteers, residents, the elderly and individuals with chronic diseases whose health condition allows them to take the vaccine.

Czech Republic has been approved to replace Russia on the UN Human Rights Council

- **Following Russia's suspension due to allegations of horrendous rights violations by Russian military in Ukraine,** the United Nations General Assembly **unanimously opted for the Czech Republic to replace it on the world organization's primary human rights council. The Czech Republic was the only contender for a seat on the Human Rights Council,** which has **47 members.** A successor for Russia has to come from an East European country because seats on the Geneva-based council are divided among regional groups.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world. The Council has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis. The headquarters of the Council are at the United Nations Office at Geneva in Switzerland. The Council investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in United Nations member states and addresses thematic human rights issues like freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women's rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities. The Council was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 to replace the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR, herein CHR).

Sky Bridge 721: World's longest suspension bridge, been opened in Czech Republic

- **The world's largest suspension bridge has opened to travellers in the Czech Republic.** The bridge, which had been under construction for nearly two years, was **officially opened. Sky Bridge 721 is the name given to it.** The promenade promises both beautiful views of the cloud-shrouded Jesenky mountains and an exhilarating, but slightly dangerous experience. **The Czech Republic Sky Bridge is 154 metres longer than Nepal's Baglung Parbat Footbridge,** which is the world's longest suspension footbridge.

The Czech Republic also called Czechia is a landlocked country in Central Europe. The capital and largest city is Prague. Milos Zeman is current President of the Czech Republic since 2013. Petr Fiala has been the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic since November 2021. The Czech koruna, also known as the Czech crown has been the currency of the Czech Republic since 1993.

Bangladesh PM Hasina offers Chittagong Port for use by India

- **External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar called on Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who offered her country's main seaport - Chittagong Port - to India's northeastern states like Assam and Tripura to enhance connectivity between the two neighbours.**

Russia's Withdrawal from UNWTO

- **The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has announced that Russia has decided to withdraw from the UNWTO. The announcement was made by UN World Tourism Organization Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. According to the UNWTO, Russia decided to withdraw from this organization ahead of a vote by the body to suspend Russia for its war against Ukraine. This development comes amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.**

Russia's Victory Day

- **May 9 is celebrated as "Victory Day" in Russia. To commemorate the Soviet Union's role in defeating Nazi Germany in World War II. It was first celebrated in 1965 under Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. It was occasionally marked in the Soviet era and revived by President Boris Yeltsin for the 50th anniversary in 1995. In 2008, Vladimir Putin made it an annual event featuring military hardware. 2022 marks the 77th anniversary. Victory Day is marked by a military parade in Moscow, and Russian leaders traditionally stand on the tomb of Vladimir Lenin in Red Square to observe it. On June 22, 1941, the German army began its invasion of the Soviet Union. Operation Barbarossa is the code name for the German invasion of the Soviet Union.**

Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant

- **The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, built between 1984 and 1995, is the largest nuclear power plant in Europe and the ninth largest in the world. It has six reactors, each generating 950MW, and a total output of 5,700MW, enough energy for roughly 4m homes.**

Thailand is the first country in Asia to decriminalise cannabis

- **Thailand has become the first country in Asia to decriminalize Marijuana which is also known as Cannabis. It has decriminalized Marijuana with the aim of boosting its agriculture and tourism sectors. Under decriminalization, it is no longer a crime in Thailand to grow and trade marijuana and hemp products, or use parts of the plant to treat illnesses.**
- **In 2018, Canada became the first G20 country to legalize the recreational use of cannabis. Uruguay legalized the recreational use of marijuana for all adults above the age of 18 in 2013.**

Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia. Bangkok is the nation's capital and largest city. The baht is the official currency of Thailand. Vajiralongkorn is the King of Thailand. Prayut Chan-o-cha has been the Prime Minister of Thailand since 2014.

World Wars in the History

- **World War I, often abbreviated WW1, also known as the First World War and contemporaneously known as the Great War, was an international conflict that began on 28 July 1914 and ended on 11 November 1918. The war pitted the Central Powers—mainly Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey—against the Allies—mainly France, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, Japan, and, from 1917, the United States. It ended with the defeat of the Central Powers.**
- **The Treaty of Versailles was the most important of the peace treaties of World War I. It ended the state of war between Germany and the Allied Powers. World War I was one of the great watersheds of 20th-century geopolitical history. It led to the fall of four great imperial dynasties (in Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey), resulted in the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and, in its destabilization of European society, laid the groundwork for World War II.**
- **World War II, also called Second World War, was a conflict that involved virtually every part of the world during the years 1939–45. The principal belligerents were the Axis powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—and the Allies—France, Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and, to a lesser**

extent, China. The war was in many respects a **continuation**, after an **uneasy 20-year hiatus**, of the disputes left unsettled by World War I. **During Adolf Hitler dictatorship under Germany**, he **initiated World War II in Europe by invading Poland on 1 September 1939**. World War II started in 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. **Great Britain and France responded by declaring war on Germany. The war in Europe ended with Germany's surrender on May 7, 1945.** The war in the Pacific ended when Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945.

- A number of commentators have expressed concerns that the **ongoing 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine may escalate into World War III. In April 2022, Russian state television stated that a third world war had now begun, telling Russians to “recognize” that the country was now “fighting against NATO infrastructure, if not NATO itself” in Ukraine.**

India-Bangladesh Joint Military Exercise Sampriti commences at Jeshore in Bangladesh

- **The 10th edition of the Joint Military Exercise ‘Sampriti’ between the Armies of India and Bangladesh commenced at Jeshore in Bangladesh.** The exercise being conducted between June 5-16 will **focus on joint counter terrorism, counter insurgency operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation.**

Five countries elected to UNSC as non-permanent members

- **Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland were elected to the UN Security Council as non-permanent members for the 2023-2024 term and will replace India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway at the horse-shoe table from January 1 next year. The 193-member UN General Assembly held elections to elect the five non-permanent members for the two-year term 2023-24.**
- **For two seats in the Western Europe and other States category, Switzerland (187 votes) and Malta (185 votes) were elected, for two seats in African and Asia-Pacific States Mozambique (192 votes) and Japan (184 votes) were elected and for the one seat in the Latin American and Caribbean States category, Ecuador was elected with 190 votes.**
- **Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland will join Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, and the UAE as well as the five permanent members China, France, Russia, the UK and the US as UNSC members for the year 2023. India's two-year term at the UNSC as non-permanent member will end in December 2022, when it was also hold the Presidency of the powerful UN organ.**

4 Holy Relics of Lord Buddha from India to be taken to Mongolia for 11-day exposition as part of celebrations of Mongolian Buddh Purnima

- **In a special gesture towards the people of Mongolia, four Holy Relics of Lord Buddha are being taken from India to Mongolia for an 11-day exposition as part of celebrations of Mongolian Buddha Purnima.** A 25-member delegation, led by Union Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju accompanying the sacred relics will leave for Mongolia. The Holy Relics will be displayed at the Batsagaan Temple within the premises of Gandan Monastery.
- **The Holy Buddha relics, currently housed in the National Museum, are known as the ‘Kapilvastu Relics’ since they are from a site in Bihar first discovered in 1898 which is believed to be the ancient city of Kapilvastu.** Mr Rijiju said, it is another historic milestone in India-Mongolia relations and will further boost cultural and spiritual relations between the two countries.

Russia becomes India's second biggest oil exporter

- **Russia rose to become India's second biggest supplier of oil in May, pushing Saudi Arabia into third place but still behind Iraq which remains No. 1, data from trade sources showed.**
- **In May Indian refiners received about 819,000 barrels per day (bpd) Russian oil, the highest thus far in any month, compared to about 277,00 in April, the data showed. Russian-origin crude hit 5% of India's total seaborne imports in April for the first time, rising from under 1% throughout 2021 and Q1 2022, the data showed.**

China to complete world's first railway loop around a desert in Xinjiang

- **China will complete the world's first railway loop around a desert, at 2,712 kilometers and around the vast Taklimakan Desert, when a new 825-kilometer section opens in Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.**

SCO approves the Plan for conduct of the Joint Border Operation Friendship Border 2022

- **The eighth meeting of the heads of the border services of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of India. It was attended**

by representatives of the border services of India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Nearly 5 mn in India displaced due to climate change, disasters in 2021: UN

- Nearly five million people in India were internally displaced due to climate change and disasters in 2021, the United Nations has said in a report. The annual Global Trends Report by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) highlighted that globally 100 million people were forced to flee their homes last year due to violence, human rights abuses, food insecurity, the climate crisis, war in Ukraine and other emergencies from Africa to Afghanistan.
- According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), in 2021, there were 23.7 million new internal displacements globally due to disasters (these are in addition to those internally displaced due to conflict and violence).

FATF retains Pakistan on its 'grey list' for terror funding & money laundering

- Global financial watchdog, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has said that Pakistan will continue to stay on its 'grey list' and a final decision to remove it from the list will be taken after an "on-site" verification visit by the Paris-based body.

Multinational Peacekeeping Exercise Ex Khaan Quest 2022 culminates in Mongolia

- The Multinational Peacekeeping Exercise Ex Khaan Quest 2022 culminated at the Peace Support Operations Training Centre at Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia. The Defence Ministry said, this exercise provided a platform for mutual learning and sharing best practices amongst the armies from 16 nations. The Indian contingent consisting of personnel from the LADAKH SCOUTS participated in the field training as well as the Command Post exercise. A number of training activities were organised during the course of the exercise.

Gustavo Petro elected Colombia's President; Francia Marquez, to be the country's first black woman Vice President

- Leftist Gustavo Petro, a former member of the M-19 guerrilla movement, who has vowed profound social and economic change, won Colombia's presidency the first progressive to do so in the country's history. Petro beat construction magnate Rodolfo Hernandez with an unexpectedly wide margin of more than 700,000 votes. Petro, a former mayor of capital Bogota and current senator, has pledged to fight inequality with free university education, pension reforms and high taxes on unproductive land. He won 50.5% to Hernandez's 47.3%.

Colombia is a country in South America with an insular region in North America. The Capital city is Bogota. The Colombian peso is the currency of Colombia. Ivan Duque has been the President of Colombia since 7 August 2018. Duque will be succeeded by Gustavo Petro on 7 August 2022, after Petro ended up winning the runoff round in the 2022 Colombian presidential election.

Indonesia to start building new capital city worth \$34 billion in August

- Indonesia plans to move its capital to East Kalimantan, from Jakarta, to bring more wealth and development outside of the wealthiest island of Java. Indonesia plans to move its capital to East Kalimantan, from Jakarta, to bring more wealth and development outside of the wealthiest island of Java.
- Nusantara is being planned as an environmentally-friendly city that will use entirely renewable energy, despite criticism that its construction could threaten one of the world's oldest rainforests.

Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It consists of over 17,000 islands, including Sumatra, Sulawesi, Java, and parts of Borneo and New Guinea. Indonesia is the world's largest island country and the 14th-largest country by area. With about 270 million people, Indonesia is the world's fourth-most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world's most populous island, is home to more than half of the country's population. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia.

Two new countries apply to join BRICS

- Two new countries - Iran and Argentina - have applied to join the increasingly influential BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - grouping. The most recent BRICS meeting was held (via video conference) with China as the host country and the next is scheduled to take place in South Africa next year.

Turkey lifts veto on Finland, Sweden joining NATO, clearing path for expansion

- **NATO ally Turkey lifted its veto over Finland and Sweden's bid to join the Western alliance** after the three nations agreed to protect each other's security that tested allied unity against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- **The breakthrough came after four hours of talks just before a NATO summit began in Madrid**, averting an embarrassing impasse at the gathering of 30 leaders that aims to show resolve against Russia, now seen by the U.S.-led alliance as a direct security threat rather than a possible adversary.
- **It means Helsinki and Stockholm can proceed with their application to join the nuclear-armed alliance**, cementing what is set to be the **biggest shift in European security in decades**, as the two, long-neutral Nordic countries seek NATO protection.

Amsterdam's Schiphol airport becomes first in the world to cap flights to limit emissions

- **Amsterdam's Schiphol airport becomes first in the world to cap flights to limit emissions.** The Dutch government made a historic announcement that the **number of flights arriving at Schiphol airport will be capped to bring down pollution.** Schiphol, which is the third largest airport in Europe after London Heathrow and Charles de Gaulle in Paris, will be limited to 440,000 flights a year from 2023. This represents an 11 per cent reduction from the pre-pandemic numbers in 2019 for the central European travel hub, and is a first in terms of putting climate before economic growth.

Ketanji Brown Jackson sworn in, becomes 1st Black woman on US Supreme Court

- **Ketanji Brown Jackson has been sworn in to the Supreme Court as the first Black woman on the nation's highest court.** Jackson is the court's 116th justice and she took the place of the justice she once worked for. Jackson recited the two oaths required of Supreme Court justices, one administered by Breyer and the other by Chief Justice John Roberts.
- **Sandra Day O'Connor is an American retired attorney and politician who served as the first female associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1981 to 2006.** She was **both the first woman nominated and the first confirmed to the court.** She was the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court.

Sweden, Finland sign Accession Protocols at NATO Headquarters

- **Sweden and Finland signed the Accession Protocols at the NATO Headquarters.** The signing was held in the presence of **Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto and Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde.** The signing comes days after the **trilateral memorandum between Turkey, Finland, and Sweden.** Turkey, had initially opposed the Nordic countries' entry into the group alleging that the two nations are providing shelter to Kurdish separatists.

Al-Shehena Becomes First Woman in Saudi King's Council Of Ministers

- **Saudi Arabia's King Salman has included two women in his cabinet, both appointed for senior posts.** Al-Shehena bint Saleh al-Azzaz has been **appointed Vice Secretary General of the Kingdom's Council of Ministers, the first woman to hold the post.** Princess Haifa bint Mohammed has also been appointed Vice Minister of Tourism.

Former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe shot dead in Nara

- **Japan's former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has died in hospital after he was shot at a political campaign event in Nara city.** Abe was shot at twice while he was giving a speech on a street in the city of Nara.
- According to the police the suspect, **named as Tetsuya Yamagami**, admitted shooting Abe with a homemade gun, and said he had a grudge against a specific organisation. Several other handmade weapons, similar to those used in the attack, had been confiscated after a search of the suspect's house, police officers. **Abe, who was Japan's longest-serving prime minister, held office in 2006 for a year and then again from 2012 to 2020, before stepping down citing health reasons.**
- He also pushed for an economic policy that **came to be known as "Abenomics"**, built on monetary easing, fiscal stimulus and structural reforms. He was **succeeded by his close party ally Yoshihide Suga, who was later replaced by Fumio Kishida.**

India projected to surpass China as world's most populous country during 2023: UN report

- **India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country next year**, according to a report by the United Nations which said that the **world population is forecast to reach eight billion** by

mid-November 2022. The World Population Prospects 2022 by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, said that **the global population is projected to reach eight billion on November 15, 2022.**

World Population Day is observed every year on July 11 to raise awareness about global population issues. The theme for this year is **“A world of 8 billion: Towards a resilient future for all – Harnessing opportunities and ensuring rights and choices for all”**. As the theme suggests, there are 8 billion people living today but not all of them have equal rights and opportunities.

India ranks low at 135th globally for gender parity: World Economic Forum

- **India was on July 13 ranked low at 135th place in terms of gender parity**, despite an improvement of five places since last year on better performance in areas of economic participation and opportunity. **Iceland retained its place as the world’s most gender-equal country, followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand and Sweden**, as per the annual Gender Gap Report 2022 of the World Economic Forum (WEF) released in Geneva. **Only 11 countries are ranked below India on the index of 146 nations**, with Afghanistan, Pakistan, Congo, Iran and Chad being the worst-five.
- **The WEF warned that the cost of living crisis is expected to hit women hardest globally** with a widening gender gap in the labour force and it will take another 132 years (compared to 136 in 2021) to close the gender gap. The report further said that COVID-19 has set gender parity back by a generation and a weak recovery was making it worse globally. On India, the WEF said its gender gap score recorded its seventh-highest level in the last 16 years, but it continues to rank among the worst performers on various parameters.

SCO set for its second expansion with Iran to be admitted at Samarkand Summit

- **The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is set for its second expansion with Iran to be added as its newest member** at the upcoming summit in the historic city of Samarkand in mid-September under the Uzbekistan Presidency. **SCO Secretary-General Zhang Ming said that he expects to see a Memorandum of Obligations of Iran joining the SCO to be passed at the summit. Belarus has also applied for SCO membership.**
- **The decision to admit Iran was made in last year’s Dushanbe summit and Belarus has submitted its application**, Zhang told a media briefing ahead of the **grouping’s summit to be held in Samarkand in Uzbekistan on September 15-16.**

Italian PM Draghi resigns after key coalition allies boycott confidence vote

- **Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi resigned after his national unity government fell apart**, setting the country on course for an early election and hitting financial markets. **Draghi, an unelected former central banker who has led a broad coalition for 18 months**, tendered his resignation in a meeting with President Sergio Mattarella. When three of his main partners snubbed a confidence vote he had called to try to end divisions and renew their fractious alliance. **The political crisis has up-ended months of stability in Italy**, during which Draghi had helped shape Europe’s tough response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and had boosted the country’s standing in financial markets.

Italy is a country that consists of a peninsula delimited by the Alps and several islands surrounding it. Italy is located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, in Southern Europe. **A unitary parliamentary republic with Rome as its capital. Euro is the currency of it. Sergio Mattarella is the current President of Italy since 2015.**

Ranil Wickremesinghe elected as new President of Sri Lanka

- **In Sri Lanka, acting President Ranil Wickremesinghe elected new President;** the Speaker announced the result after election was held in Parliament amid tight security. In the 225-member Parliament, **Ranil Wickremesinghe obtained 134 votes while Dulas Alahapperume obtained 82 votes and Anura Kumara Dissanayake has obtained 3 votes.**
- **A total of 223 MPs including the Speaker voted while two MPS abstained from the voting. Mr Wickremesinghe had been serving as acting President after Gotabaya Rajapaksa had to resign** from the top post following widespread protests in the country. The worst economic crisis in Sri Lanka’s history has prompted an acute shortage of essential items like fuel.

Myanmar's economy fragile as fighting, inflation hit poor

- **Army-ruled Myanmar's economy remains fragile as civil strife, inflation, and onerous policy decisions add to troubles facing farmers and businesses, reports by the World Bank.** Myanmar is one of several countries in Asia, also including Sri Lanka and Laos, whose economies are imperiled by soaring prices and weaker currencies.
- **A military takeover in February 2021, on top of the pandemic, has reversed a decade of reforms and strong economic growth, leaving 40% of the population living in poverty.** Myanmar has been ruled by the military for most of the past 70 years. **The army's takeover interrupted a gradual transition toward democratic civilian government and a more modern, open economy and drew a slew of sanctions against the military,** which controls many industries. Foreign investment has largely collapsed and many foreign-owned businesses have withdrawn, including major energy companies like France's Total SA and Telenor of Norway.

Myanmar is formerly known as Burma, is a country in Southeast Asia. It is the largest country in Mainland Southeast Asia. Myanmar is bordered by Bangladesh and India to its northwest, China to its northeast, Laos and Thailand to its east and southeast, and the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal to its south and southwest. The country's capital city is Naypyidaw, and its largest city is Yangon (Rangoon). The kyat is the currency of Myanmar (Burma). Following the 2020 Myanmar general election, in which Aung San Suu Kyi's party won a clear majority in both houses, the Burmese military (Tatmadaw) again seized power in a coup d'état. Min Aung Hlaing is army general who has ruled Myanmar as the chairman of the State Administration Council since seizing power in the February 2021 coup d'état. He took the nominally civilian role of prime minister of Myanmar in August 2021 upon the formation of the Provisional Government. Myint Swe is currently serving as Acting President of Myanmar as well as First Vice President. The Tatmadaw is the official name of the armed forces of Myanmar (formerly Burma).

Indian-origin prof is 1st Canadian to win global award for pathbreaking research

- **Indian-origin prof is the first Canadian to win global award for pathbreaking research. Electrical and computer engineering professor Dr. Sudip Shekhar is the first Canadian to receive the Schmidt Science Polymaths Award, which includes receiving US \$2.5 million to develop a highly compact biomedical sensor.**
- **He is one of the 10 researchers selected for the 2022 cohort of the Schmidt Science Polymaths award.** That programme “makes long-term bets on recently-tenured professors with remarkable track records, promising futures, and a desire to explore risky new research ideas across disciplines”.

Dinesh Gunawardena takes oath as Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister

- **In Sri Lanka, Dinesh Gunawardena took the oath as Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister.** Gunawardena's appointment comes a day after six-time Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as the country's new President.

Tunisians vote on proposal to give President more power

- **Tunisians are voting for a controversial new constitution put forward by President Kais Saied that critics say will formalize his power grab and reverse hard-won democratic gains in the North African nation. The new constitution gives the office of the President all executive powers and removes key checks and balances. The power of Tunisia's judiciary and parliament would be greatly reduced.**

Tunisia officially the Republic of Tunisia is the northernmost country in Africa. It is a part of the Maghreb region of North Africa. Its capital and largest city is Tunis. The dinar is the currency of Tunisia. Kais Saied is serving as the President of Tunisia since October 2019. In 2011, the Tunisian Revolution, triggered by the lack of freedom and democracy under the 24-year rule of president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, overthrew his regime and catalyzed the broader Arab Spring across the region.

Russia to opt out of International Space Station after 2024

- **Russia has decided to quit the International Space Station “after 2024”, the newly-appointed chief of Moscow's space agency told President Vladimir Putin. Russia will opt out of the International Space Station after 2024 and focus on building its own orbiting outpost. “The decision to leave the station after 2024 has been made”. The International Space Station (ISS) is the largest modular space station currently in low Earth orbit. It is a multinational collaborative project involving five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).**

- **Russia and the United States have worked side by side on the ISS, which has been in orbit since 1998. Sending the first man into space in 1961 and launching the first satellite four years earlier are among key accomplishments of the Soviet space programme and remain a major source of national pride in Russia.**

Saudi Arabia to set aside \$80 billion for crown prince's megaproject

- **The Neom Investment Fund could potentially expand to 400 billion riyals. For the first time, he also outlined details on how he plans to finance Neom – one of the largest and most complex construction projects in the world.**

Women outnumber men in Bangladesh population census

- **For the first time in the history of Bangladesh women outnumber men in its total population. The preliminary result of the 6th population census of Bangladesh recorded 8.33 crore women and 8.17 crore men. Releasing the summary data of the 6th Population and Housing Census 2022, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) revealed that the total population of the country increased from 14.4 crore in 2011 to 16.51 crore in 2022.**

New Zealand introduces world-first 'tobacco laws' to create a smoke-free generation

- **Buying cigarettes will become illegal for the next generation in New Zealand. The island nation becomes the first country to pass legislation on it. With the first reading of a new bill in parliament, Aotearoa New Zealand's plan to be smokefree by 2025 takes another tangible step forward. The Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Smoked Tobacco) Amendment Bill will now go to the Health Select Committee for submissions and review, and (presumably) return to the House in late 2022 to be passed into law.**

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. It consists of two main landmasses over 700 smaller islands. New Zealand's capital city is Wellington, and its most populous city is Auckland. Jacinda Ardern is serving as the 40th Prime Minister of New Zealand and leader of the Labour Party since 2017. The New Zealand dollar is the official currency and legal tender of New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Niue, the Ross Dependency, Tokelau, and a British territory, the Pitcairn Islands

India's ranking on latest World Press Freedom Index

- **In the 2022 edition of the Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, India fell to the 150th position, its lowest ever, out of 180 countries. In the last edition, India was ranked eight positions higher, at 142. The ranking is based on a country's performance in five broad categories: political context, legal framework, economic context, sociocultural context and safety of journalists. Of the five, India's ranking was lowest in the safety of journalists category (163) and best in the legal framework category (120). Countries ranked lower than India include Sudan (151), Russia (155), Pakistan (157), Bangladesh (162) and China (175).**
- **According to the World Press Freedom Index 2022, Norway (1st), Denmark (2nd), Sweden (3rd) Estonia (4th), and Finland (5th) grabbed the top five positions. North Korea, on the other hand, remained at the bottom of Reporters Without Borders' list of 180 countries and territories.**

Saudi Arabia's futuristic 'zero-gravity vertical city'

- **Two buildings, the world's largest structures, will reach up to 1,600 feet in height and run parallel for 75 miles or 120 km. Called an 'architectural marvel', when ready, NEOM will "run in a straight line" from the mountains of NEOM to the Red Sea.**
- **Vertical farming is a part of the plan and will be integrated into the buildings. The project will allow people to travel from one end to another on a 20-minute stretch. While the prince claims it will be ready by 2030, engineers said it could take up to 50 years for completion.**

Saudi Arabia is a country on the Arabian Peninsula in Western Asia. It is bordered by the Red Sea to the west; Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait to the north; the Persian Gulf, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the east; Oman to the southeast; and Yemen to the south. Bahrain is an island country off the east coast. Its capital and largest city is Riyadh. The Saudi riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia. Mohammed bin Salman is the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and minister of defense of Saudi Arabia.

Zimbabwe will issue gold 'Mosi-oa-tunya' coins as sky-high inflation slams local currency

- **The governor of Zimbabwe's central bank said that the coins will be sold based on the international price of gold and cost of production. They can be purchased in Zimbabwean dollars, US Dollars, and other currencies starting July 25.**

- **The gold coins will be called “Mosi-oa-tunya,” meaning “The Smoke Which Thunders,”** which is a reference to Victoria Falls. **Gold is considered a safe haven during times of economic uncertainty** as well as **a hedge against inflation**. However, benchmark gold prices are down 16% from a high in March. In 2008, Zimbabwe’s inflation rate shot up to an astonishing 89.7 sextillion percent. It led the country to temporarily abandon its currency and use foreign currency instead, namely the US dollar.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in Southeast Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. The capital and largest city is Harare. The Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) dollar or RTG (Zimdollar or zollar, now abbreviated as ZWL or ZWL\$) was the only official currency in Zimbabwe from June 2019 to March 2020, after which foreign currencies were allowed for trade in the country again.

Kosovo postpones implementation of new border rules after tensions rise

- **The Kosovo postponed the implementation of new border rules after Police had to close two border crossings with Serbia due to rising tensions.** They were forced to **shut the Bernjak and Jarinje border crossings after demonstrators** shot at authorities and blocked roads.
- **The protesters were angry about a new rule that would have forced all people entering Kosovo with Serbian IDs to replace them with a temporary document during their stay in the country.** A similar rule is applied by Belgrade authorities to Kosovars who visit Serbia.

Kosovo is a partially recognised state in Southeast Europe. Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008, and has since gained diplomatic recognition as a sovereign state by 97 member states of the United Nations. Its capital and largest city is Pristina. Euro is the official currency of it. Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu is a politician serving as the current President of Kosovo.

UK plans to launch the world’s biggest drone superhighway

- **The UK is set to become home to the world’s largest automated drone superhighway within the next two years.** The drones will be **used on the 164-mile Skyway project connecting towns and cities, including Cambridge and Rugby. The plan is part of \$325 million of measures by the UK to boost aerospace innovations.** Proposed schemes include using drone monitoring to make motorways safer, including by spotting hazards to improve journey times. Delivering mail and medicines to more remote parts of the UK such as the islands off its southwestern tip are also in the planning stages.

China continues military drills in Taiwan Strait

- **China continued its live-fire military exercises in waters near Taiwan for the fourth day, while also announcing new exercises in the Yellow Sea, between China and the Korean peninsula. Chinese authorities will also conduct live-fire military exercises on the Yellow and Bohai seas, between China and the Korean peninsula.** The Bohai Sea drill will be held until September 8, while Yellow Sea exercises, which started will run until August 15, according to the Maritime Safety Administration.
- **Chinese military analysts described the exercises as carrying out an effective blockade, with the waters and airspace closed in six regions around Taiwan during the drills, and as signalling a new normal in China’s military activities around Taiwan. Almost all other countries that criticised China’s military drills in the Taiwan Strait have also acknowledged the “one-China” policy regarding their relations with Beijing. India is among the very few countries that have not made a reference to the policy in their response to the tensions in the Taiwan Strait. U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi arrived in Taiwan on a trip she said shows an unwavering American commitment to the Chinese-claimed self-ruled island, but China condemned the highest-level U.S. visit in 25 years as a threat to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.**

Taiwan officially the Republic of China (ROC) is a country in East Asia, at the junction of the East and South China Seas in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to the northwest, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. The main island of Taiwan, also known as Formosa. The capital, Taipei, forms along with New Taipei City. The New Taiwan dollar is the official currency of Taiwan. Tsai Ing-wen is the incumbent as the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) since 2016.

Colombia’s First-ever Leftist President Gustavo Petro Sworn in

- **Gustavo Petro has been sworn in as the first leftist President of Colombia** at a ceremony in the capital, Bogota. The 62-year-old is a former **member of Colombia’s M-19 guerrilla group as well as a former**

senator and mayor of Bogota. He succeeds Ivan Duque. Mr Petro is part of a growing group of leftist politicians and political outsiders who have been winning elections in Latin America since the pandemic broke out. **A 2016 peace deal between Colombia's Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia turned much of the focus of voters away from the violent conflicts playing out in rural areas.**

- **Along with his running mate Francia Marquez, who became the first Black female vice president in the nation's history,** Petro took over the presidency from his predecessor, right-wing President Ivan Duque, who **failed to tackle unemployment, rising poverty, and violence against human rights leaders during his term.**

Colombia is a country in South America with an insular region in North America. The Capital city is Bogota. The Colombian peso is the currency of Colombia. Gustavo Petro has been the President of Colombia since 7 August 2022. Juan Manuel Santos was the President of Colombia from 2010 to 2018. He was the sole recipient of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize.

US Senate confirms Indian American litigator Roopali H Desai to a top court

- **The US Senate has confirmed Indian American litigator Roopali H Desai to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, making her the first South Asian judge to serve on this powerful court.** Desai was confirmed by the Senate by a bipartisan vote of 67-29. Headquartered in San Francisco, California, the Ninth Circuit is by far the largest of the thirteen courts of appeals, covering a total of 9 states and 2 territories and with 29 active judgeships.

China, Nepal agree on cross-Himalayan railway

- **China has agreed to finance a feasibility study for a cross-border railway with Nepal under the trans-Himalayan multi-dimensional connectivity network, part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and pledged \$118 million for China-assisted projects in the country.**
- **Keyrung-Kathmandu Railway is part of the trans-Himalayan multi-dimensional connectivity network, the plan for which was first formally agreed between China and Nepal in 2017 when Kathmandu joined the BRI. President Xi Jinping had visited Nepal in October, 2019, when bilateral ties were upgraded to a "strategic partnership".**

Mexican President proposes 3 men commission for world peace including PM Modi

- **Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has proposed a 3-men commission comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, and Pope Francis for global peace.**
- **The Mexican President is planning to submit a written proposal to the UN to create the commission, made up of three world leaders, including PM Modi, to promote a world truce for a period of five years.** The Mexican President said, **the aim of the commission is to present a proposal to stop the wars around the world and reach an agreement to seek a truce for at least five years.**
- **He said, the move will help governments around the world dedicate themselves to support their people, especially the people who are suffering the most from the war and its effects. Calling for an end to warlike actions, the Mexican President has invited China, Russia, and the US to seek peace and hoped the three countries will listen and accept intermediation such as the one he is proposing.**

Mexico is a country in the southern portion of North America. Mexico City is the capital and largest city of Mexico. It is bordered to the north by the United States; to the south and west by the Pacific Ocean; to the southeast by Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Sea; and to the east by the Gulf of Mexico. The Mexican peso is the currency of Mexico.

'Force multiplier': India gifts maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Sri Lanka

- **India gifted a Dornier maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Sri Lanka which will enable the island nation to tackle multiple challenges like human and drug trafficking, smuggling and other organised forms of crime in its coastal waters more effectively.** India will provide to Sri Lanka two Dornier aircraft which are being **manufactured by state-run aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).**

Scotland to be first country to provide free period products

- **Scotland will become the first country in the world to protect the right to access free period products with a new law which is set to go into effect. The Scottish parliament introduced the change by unanimously passing the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act in November 2020.**

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Covering the northern third of the island of Great Britain, mainland Scotland has a 154-kilometre border with England to the southeast and is otherwise surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west, the North Sea to the northeast and the Irish Sea to the south. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. Sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom and its associated territories. Nicola Ferguson Sturgeon is a Scottish politician serving as First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) since 2014. She is the first woman to hold either position.

Maldives Floating City

- **Maldives Floating City is the first development of a new era in which Maldivians return to the water with resilient eco-friendly floating projects.** The city has a nature-based structure of roads and water canals resembling the beautiful and efficient way in which real brain coral is organised.

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the “King’s Island” for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

Latvia and Estonia withdraw from cooperation group between China and Central and Eastern European countries

- **Latvia and Estonia have withdrawn from a cooperation group between China and over a dozen Central and Eastern European countries.** The move comes amid Western criticism of China over escalating military pressure on Taiwan.
- **Relations between Lithuania and China worsened after former allowed Taiwan to open a de facto embassy late last year.** Both Latvia and Estonia said they will continue to work towards constructive and pragmatic relations with China while respecting the rules-based international order and human rights. **Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia are among countries that remain in the cooperation format.**
- **The Czech Republic’s foreign ministry said in May the promise of large Chinese investments and mutually beneficial trade were not being fulfilled,** following calls within the country’s parliament to quit the group.

Baltic states, the northeastern region of Europe, includes the countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. Estonia is a country in Northern Europe. The capital city is Tallinn. Latvia is a country in the Northern Europe. Its capital and largest city is Riga. Euro is the official currency of Estonia and Latvia.

Bromley home of UK’s first Indian MP fitted with blue plaque

- **Dadabhai Naoroji, who in 1892 became the first Indian to win a popular election to the UK parliament, has been commemorated with a blue plaque. Known as the “grand old man of India”, Naoroji’s long career in politics was defined by his campaigning against British rule in India.**
- **He is celebrated with a blue plaque to mark the 75th anniversary of Indian independence. Naoroji, who is often described as the father of Indian nationalism, spent more than three decades of his life in London. His plaque marks the redbrick semi-detached house in Penge, Bromley that was his home around the beginning of the 20th century.**
- **Naoroji first stood for parliament as a Liberal candidate for Holborn in 1886. He was unsuccessful, despite the endorsement of Florence Nightingale. But it was a comment by Prime Minister Lord Salisbury – that the time had not come when “a British constituency would elect a black man” – that propelled him into the national spotlight. In the general election of July 1892, Naoroji was elected as a Liberal MP for the north London constituency of Finsbury Central, in the face of hostile propaganda that claimed he was a fire-worshipper.**

Dadabhai Naoroji also known as the “Grand Old Man of India” and “Unofficial Ambassador of India”, was an Indian political leader, merchant, scholar and writer who was a Liberal Party Member of Parliament in the United Kingdom House of Commons between 1892 and 1895 and the second MP of Asian descent to be a British MP behind Anglo-Indian MP David Ochterlony Dyce Sombre, who was disenfranchised for corruption after nine months in office. Naoroji is renowned for his work in the Indian National Congress, of which he was one of the founding members and thrice president - 1886, 1893, 1906. His book Poverty and Un-British Rule in India brought attention to his theory of the Indian “wealth drain” into Britain.

Indian company NHPC to develop Nepal hydropower plant left by China

- **Nepal has signed a pact with an Indian company NHPC to develop a hydroelectric plant** in the west of the nation years after a Chinese firm backed out. **Nepal has opened its rivers, which it sees as having a combined potential to generate more than 42,000 megawatts of hydroelectric power**, to foreign players to **develop its economy and export electricity to narrow the trade deficit of more than \$13 billion**.
- **India's NHPC Ltd. signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) allowing it to study details like feasibility**, environmental impact, inundation of land and construction **costs for two projects - West Seti (750 megawatts) and SR 6 (450 megawatts)**. Both plants are to be located on the West Seti River in Nepal's least developed far western region.

NHPC Limited (erstwhile National Hydroelectric Power Corporation) is an Indian government hydropower board under the ownership of Ministry of Power, Government of India that was incorporated in the year 1975 with an authorised capital of ₹2,000 million and with an objective to plan, promote and organise an integrated and efficient development of hydroelectric power in all aspects. Later on NHPC expanded its objects to include other sources of energy like Solar, Geothermal, Tidal, Wind etc. At present, NHPC is a Mini Ratna Category-I Enterprise of the Govt. of India. It is headquartered in Faridabad, Haryana.

Germany inaugurates world's first hydrogen-powered train fleet

- **Germany has inaugurated a railway line powered entirely by hydrogen, a “world premiere” and a significant step forward for green train transport** despite nagging supply challenges.
- **A fleet of 14 trains provided by French industrial giant Alstom to the German state of Lower Saxony has replaced diesel locomotives** on the 100 km (60 miles) of track connecting the cities of Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven, Bremervoerde and Buxtehude near Hamburg. **Hydrogen trains have become a promising way to decarbonise the rail sector and replace climate-warming diesel**, which still powers 20 percent of journeys in Germany.
- **Billed as a “zero emission” mode of transport, the trains mix hydrogen on board with oxygen present** in the ambient air, thanks to a fuel cell installed in the roof. This produces the electricity needed to pull the train. Regional rail operator LNVG said the fleet, which cost 93 million euros (\$93m), would prevent 4,400 tonnes of CO₂ being released into the atmosphere each year.

Germany is a country in Central Europe. It is the second-most populous country in Europe after Russia, and the most populous member state of the European Union. The nation's capital and largest city is Berlin, and its financial centre is Frankfurt; the largest urban area is the Ruhr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving as the President of Germany since 19 March 2017. Euro is the official currency of it. Olaf Scholz is the chancellor of Germany.

In a first, India votes against Russia in UNSC during procedural vote on Ukraine

- **India for the first time voted against Russia during a “procedural vote” at the United Nations Security Council on Ukraine**, as the 15-member powerful UN body invited Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to address a meeting through a video tele-conference.
- **This is for the first time that India has voted against Russia on the issue of Ukraine, after the Russian military action began** in February. So far, New Delhi has abstained at the UN Security Council on Ukraine, much to the annoyance of the Western powers led by the United States.
- **Western nations, including the US, have imposed major economic and other sanctions on Russia following the aggression**. India currently is a non-permanent member of the UNSC for a two-year term, which ends in December.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN) located in New York and is charged with ensuring international peace and security, recommending the admission of new UN members to the General Assembly, and approving any changes to the UN Charter. Its powers include establishing peacekeeping operations, enacting international sanctions, and authorizing military action. **The UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.** Like the UN as a whole, the Security Council was created after World War II to address the failings of the League of Nations in maintaining world peace. It held its first session on 17 January 1946 but was largely paralyzed in the following decades by the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union (and their allies). The Security Council consists of fifteen members, of which five are permanent: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These were the great powers that were the victors of World War II (or their successor states). Permanent members can veto (block) any substantive resolution, including those on the admission of new member states to the United Nations or nominees for the office of Secretary-General, but there is no veto right in emergency special sessions of the General Assembly. The other ten members are elected on a regional basis for a term of two years. The body's presidency rotates monthly among its members. Antonio Guterres is a Portuguese politician and diplomat. He was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 2005 to 2015. Since 2017, he is serving as secretary-general of the United Nations, the ninth person to hold this title.

In a first, India refers to 'militarisation' of Taiwan Strait by China

- India has for the first time referred to what it called “the militarisation of the Taiwan Strait”, marking a rare instance of New Delhi appearing to comment on China’s actions towards Taiwan. **Foreign Ministers of the G7 — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, U.K., and U.S. — expressed concerns about China’s military activity in the Strait**, referring to “threatening actions” by China.
- India has followed a “One China policy” since its recognition of the PRC in 1949, and only maintains trade and cultural relations with Taiwan. India routinely reiterated this policy until 2008, after which it stopped mentioning it in official statements, a demand that China usually asks of most countries in official declarations.

Taiwan officially the Republic of China (ROC) is a country in East Asia, at the junction of the East and South China Seas in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to the northwest, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. The main island of Taiwan, also known as Formosa. The capital, Taipei, forms along with New Taipei City. The New Taiwan dollar is the official currency of Taiwan. Tsai Ing-wen is the incumbent as the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) since 2016.

C. Business & Economy

Paytm Payments Bank gets RBI nod to function as scheduled payments bank

- Paytm Payments Bank has gained central bank approval to function as a scheduled payments bank helping it to expand its financial services operations.
- As a scheduled payments bank, Paytm Payments can participate in government and companies’ request for proposals, primary auctions, fixed-rate and variable rate repos, and reverse repos, along with participation in Marginal Standing Facility. It will also be eligible to be a partner in government-run financial inclusion schemes.

Paytm (“pay through mobile”) is an Indian multinational technology company that specialises in digital wallet, e-commerce, payment system and financial technology company, based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. Paytm was founded in August 2010 with an initial investment of \$2 million by its founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Noida, a region adjacent to India’s capital New Delhi. It started off as a prepaid mobile and DTH recharge platform, and later added data card, postpaid mobile and landline bill payments in 2013.

Paytm Money offers voice-based trading

- Paytm Money has launched voice trading powered by artificial intelligence (AI), which allows users to explore, buy and sell securities by speaking out the commands. **Paytm Money is a group company of Paytm, which recently concluded its initial public offering (IPO).** The announcement comes three days before the planned listing on. “The voice trading feature enables a single voice command, with the use of neural networks and natural language processing (NLP), to allow instant processing.

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SEBI allows Invesco MF to launch India’s first blockchain feeder fund

- **Markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has approved the Invesco CoinShares Global Blockchain ETF Fund of Fund (FoF), which will be the first scheme in India to offer exposure to global companies participating in the blockchain ecosystem.**
- **The feeder fund will invest in Ireland-domiciled Invesco CoinShares Global Blockchain UCITS Exchange-traded Fund (ETF). The fund holds investments such as Canadian bitcoin miner Bitfarms Ltd, US crypto exchange Coinbase Global Inc and the world’s biggest corporate crypto holder MicroStrategy Inc.**

China overtakes US as world’s richest nation as global wealth surges

- **China has surpassed the United States to become the richest nation in the world as global wealth tripled over the past two decades, according to a new report by the research arm of consultants McKinsey & Co.**
- **The worldwide net worth rose to \$514 trillion in 2020, from \$156 trillion in 2000, according to research conducted by McKinsey & Co. China emerged at the top of the worldwide list, accounting for almost one-third of the increase.**

India, world’s largest recipient of remittances, received USD 87 bn in 2021: World Bank

- **According to the World Bank’s Migration and Development Brief, India has become the world’s largest recipient of Remittances, receiving USD 87 billion (a gain of 4.6 % from previous year) with the United States being the biggest source, in 2021. The United States is accounting for over 20% of all Remittances.**
- **India is followed by China, Mexico, the Philippines, and Egypt, the Washington-based global lender. In India, remittances are projected to grow three per cent in 2022 to USD 89.6 billion, reflecting a drop in overall migrant stock, as a large proportion of returnees from the Arab countries await return, it said.**
- **Remittances are usually understood as financial or in-kind transfers made by migrants to friends and relatives back in communities of origin. These are basically sum of two main components - Personal Transfers in cash or in kind between resident and non-resident households and Compensation of Employees, which refers to the income of workers who work in another country for a limited period of time. Remittances help in stimulating economic development in recipient countries, but this can also make such countries over-reliant on them.**

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world’s poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries. The International Development Association (IDA) is a multinational financial institution providing aid to poor countries in the form of loans. It is also referred to as soft loan window of the World Bank.

JP Morgan becomes world’s most systemic bank

- **JP Morgan Chase has become the world’s most systemically important bank once again according to the latest annual ranking of top lenders by global regulators, with BNP Paribas and Goldman Sachs also now deemed more systemic.**
- **The Financial Stability Board (FSB), made up of regulators from G20 countries, published its latest table of the world’s 30 most systemic banks. The 30 banks are divided between four “buckets” in order of how systemic, interconnected and complex they are, with JP Morgan now in a higher bucket than its nearest peers.**

JPMorgan Chase & Co. is an American multinational investment bank and financial services holding company headquartered in New York City. JPMorgan Chase is incorporated in Delaware. As of June 30, 2021, JPMorgan Chase is the largest bank in the United States, the world's largest bank by market capitalization, and the fifth-largest worldwide in terms of total assets, controlling US\$3.684 trillion. As a "Bulge Bracket" bank, it is a major provider of various investment banking and financial services. As of 2021 it is the largest lender to the fossil fuel industry in the world.

India's first government-approved vehicle scrapping and recycling facility

- **Maruti Suzuki Toyotsu India (MSTI), a joint venture (JV) between Maruti Suzuki India (MSIL) and Toyota Tsusho Corporation, has opened its first government-approved end-of-life vehicle (ELV) scrapping and recycling unit in Noida in Uttar Pradesh.**
- **Built with an investment of Rs 44 crore, the 10,993-square metre facility, with a capacity to scrap and recycle over 24,000 ELVs annually, was inaugurated by Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Nitin Gadkari. It's a step towards a circular economy, with the aim to promote organised, transparent, and environment-friendly dismantling of ELVs.**

New Wage Rate Index series released; base year revised to 2016 from 1963-65

- **Ministry of Labour released a new series of Wage Rate Index (WRI) with base year 2016, being compiled and maintained by the Labour Bureau, an attached office of the ministry.**
- **The new series of WRI with base 2016=100 will replace the old series with base 1963-65. The government periodically revises the base year for major economic indicators to reflect the changes in the economy and to capture the wage pattern of workers.**

GIFT city emerging India's first Greenfield smart city

- **Now operational with more than 200 entities which have set up their offices where more than 12,000 people are working, the Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT City) is India's first and only International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) where banks, stock exchanges and financial services firms have set up their global operations.**
- **Around seven km from Gujarat's capital Gandhinagar, on the banks of the Sabarmati river in approximately 886 acres, once a barren land along the river is now emerging as the country's first greenfield integrated city — a dream project Prime Minister Narendra Modi had envisaged as Chief Minister.**

India 'very unequal', top 10% hold 57% of national income: Inequality Report

- **India stands out as a "poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite", where the top 10 per cent holds 57 per cent of the total national income while the bottom 50 per cent's share is just 13 per cent in 2021, according to the latest World Inequality Report 2022.**
- **The report has also flagged a drop in global income during 2020, with about half of the dip in rich countries and the rest in low-income and emerging regions. This is attributed primarily due to the impact of "South and Southeast Asia, and more precisely" India.**
- **"When India is removed from the analysis, it appears that the global bottom 50 per cent income share actually slightly increased in 2020," states the report authored by economist and co-director of the World Inequality Lab, Lucas Chancel, along with economists Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman.**
- **"While the top 10 per cent and top 1 per cent hold respectively 57 per cent and 22 per cent of total national income, the bottom 50 per cent share has gone down to 13 per cent. India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite," the report states.**
- **According to the report, India's middle class is relatively poor with an average wealth of only Rs 7,23,930 or 29.5 per cent of the total national income, as compared with the top 10 per cent and 1 per cent who own 65 per cent (Rs 63,54,070) and 33 per cent (Rs 3,24,49,360), respectively.**

Gita Gopinath: India-born economist who is set to be IMF's number two

- **Chief economist Gita Gopinath will become the number two official at the Washington-based crisis lender IMF next month.**
- **The India-born economist will succeed Geoffrey Okamoto as first deputy managing director, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva. For the first time, IMF will have two women holding the top leadership roles.**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 190 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 190 countries that make up its near-global membership. Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, from Bulgaria, is Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of International Monetary Fund (IMF) from October 1, 2019. Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first woman to occupy the top post at the global lender. The latest currency that was added to the basket of currencies by the International Monetary Fund to determine the value of XDR is the Chinese renminbi in 2016. The other international currencies in the basket of currencies are British Pound, Japanese Yen, US Dollar, and Euro. XDR is the currency code of Special Drawing Rights. Andorra has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to become its 190th member.

India's newest carrier Akasa Air unveils brand logo

- **Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveiled its brand logo** which it said has been inspired by the element of the sky.
- **“The Rising A symbolises the warmth of the sun, the effortless flight of a bird, and the dependability of an aircraft wing. Always moving upwards. Always inspiring to rise. The logo of the new budget carrier is A, and the brand slogan of the company is ‘it’s your sky’.**

5G services to roll out in India's four metros, selected cities in 2022

- **The Fifth Generation or 5G telecom services are set to be rolled out in selected cities in India in 2022.** The cities which are set to get the 5G telecom services in 2022 include Gurugram, Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Ahmadabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, and Gandhinagar.
- **Leading telecom service providers Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio and Vodafone Idea, have established 5G trials sites in these cities.** “These Metros and big cities would be the first places for launch of 5G services in the country.

The fifth generation is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks. While 4G was a great leap forward, allowing people to stream music and video on the go, 5G is designed to connect many more types of devices than smartphones and offers far higher speed and capacity. The government is also involved actively to facilitate the rollout of 5G services. The Department of Telecom has roped in leading research institutions for the development and testing of 5G technology. Eight agencies - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Madras, IIT Kanpur, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore, Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER), and Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology (CEWiT) - are involved in the research project called ‘Indigenous 5G Test bed project’. The Indigenous 5G Test bed project started in 2018 and is set to be completed by December 31, 2021. The project has been funded by the Department of Telecom. The department has spent Rs224 crore on this project.

RBI allows LIC to hold 9.99% stake in IndusInd Bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to 9.99 per cent.** “The bank has received an intimation from the RBI on December 9 that it has granted its approval to Life Insurance Corporation, shareholder of the bank, who holds 4.95 per cent of the capital of the bank, to acquire up to 9.99 per cent of the total issued capital.”

Life Insurance Corporation of India (abbreviated as LIC) is an Indian government owned insurance and investment corporation under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The Life insurance Corporation of India was established on September 1, 1956, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India. It is based in Mumbai.

Bank of Baroda launches bob World Wave, a wearable payment solution

- **Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) launched bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.**

- A bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their SpO2, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. With bob World Wave, BOB is providing an exclusive 3-months free wellness package along with a personal health coach, doctor tele-consultation and interactive video coaching.
- The device will provide contactless payments of up to ₹5,000 in all NFC enabled PoS devices. Customers can do contactless payment above ₹5,000 using a PIN.

Bank of Baroda (BOB) is an Indian nationalised banking and financial services company. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance. It is the fourth largest nationalised bank in India. The government of India announced the merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank on September 17, 2018, to create the country's second largest lender.

India welcomes Egypt as 4th member of BRICS New Development Bank

- India has welcomed Egypt as the fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank. Bangladesh, UAE, and Uruguay joined in September 2021. Membership expansion enables New Development Bank to position itself as a premier development institution for emerging economies.
- The BRICS brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing 41 per cent of the global population, 24 per cent of the global GDP and 16 per cent of the global trade. "We are delighted to welcome Egypt into NDB's family. Egypt is one of the world's fastest-growing countries, a major economy in the African continent and the Middle East region as well as a key player in development finance institutions," said Marcos Troyjo, President of NDB.

The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). According to the Agreement on the NDB, "the Bank shall support public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments." Moreover, the NDB "shall cooperate with international organizations and other financial entities, and provide technical assistance for projects to be supported by the Bank." The initial authorized capital of the bank is \$100 billion divided into 1 million shares having a par value of \$100,000 each. The initial subscribed capital of the NDB is \$50 billion divided into paid-in shares (\$10 billion) and callable shares (\$40 billion). The initial subscribed capital of the bank was equally distributed among the founding members. The Agreement on the NDB specifies that every member will have one vote no one would have any veto powers. The bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China. Marcos Troyjo is President of the New Development Bank (NDB).

Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal takes over as CEO of Twitter

- Indian tech wizard Parag Agrawal takes over as CEO of the social media platform Twitter following the departure of its co-founder CEO. Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey has stepped down as chief executive of the company paving way for the current chief technical officer, Parag Agrawal, to take over. Mr Dorsey has been serving as chief executive of both Twitter and payment firm Square.
- Parag Agrawal, IIT alumnus, joins the likes of Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella as Indian-origin techies at the help of the biggest tech companies of the world. A Computer Science and Engineering graduate from IIT Bombay, Agrawal is a Ph.D. from Stanford University.

Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Registered users can post, like, and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year.

HUL chairman Sanjiv Mehta to take over as FICCI president

- Sanjiv Mehta, Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) will be appointed as Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) President. Currently, Sanjiv Mehta is also the President of Unilever South Asia and is a member of the 'Unilever Leadership Executive' which is Unilever's Global Executive Board. He will be succeeding Uday Shankar, the current President of FICCI.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group based in India. Established in 1927, on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi by Indian businessman Mr. G.D. Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas. It is the largest, oldest and the apex business organisation in India. It is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation. FICCI draws its membership from the corporate sector, both private and public, including SMEs and MNCs. It is involved in sector-specific business building, business promotion and networking. It is headquartered in the national capital New Delhi.

JSW Group becomes first Indian corporate house to introduce EV policy

- Mumbai-based JSW Group has become the first major Indian multinational conglomerate to roll out an electric vehicle (EV) policy for its employees. Under the new scheme, employees will be able to avail an incentive of up to Rs 3 lakh towards purchasing a four-wheeler or two-wheeler EV. The Green Initiative JSW Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy will be rolled out nationwide for all JSW employees from January 1, 2022.

Vodafone sells world's first SMS 'Merry Christmas' for 107,000 euros

- Vodafone announced that it is auctioning the world's first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT). Now, the company has announced that a bidder has paid 107,000 euros for the replica of the first communication protocol of a short message, perpetuated as a NFT.
- The proceeds from the auction will go to a good cause this Christmas season. Vodafone will donate them to UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, to support the 82.4 million people who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict and persecution.

Vodafone Group Plc is a British multinational telecommunications company. Its registered office and global headquarters are in Newbury, Berkshire, England. The name Vodafone comes from VOice DATA FONE (the latter a sensational spelling of "phone"), chosen by the company to "reflect the provision of voice and data services over mobile phones".

CryptoWire launches India's first Global Index of cryptocurrencies

- CryptoWire, a crypto super app, has announced the launch of India's first index of cryptocurrencies – IC15. This is aimed at empowering knowledge on crypto and blockchain ecosystem.
- The IC15 is a rule-based broad market index by market capitalisation, which tracks and measures the performance of the top 15 widely traded liquid cryptocurrencies listed on leading crypto exchanges of the world. The base value of the index is set at 10,000 and the base date is April 1, 2018. As on January 1, 2022, IC15 open value was at 71,463.30 Points.

A cryptocurrency or crypto, is a virtual currency secured by cryptography. It is designed to work as a medium of exchange, where individual ownership records are stored in a computerised database. The defining trait of a cryptocurrency is that they are not issued by the government agency of any country making them immune against any interference and manipulation from them. The first type of crypto currency was Bitcoin, which to this day remains the most-used, valuable and popular. Along with Bitcoin, other alternative cryptocurrencies with varying degrees of functions and specifications have been created. Some are iterations of bitcoin while others have been created from the ground up. Bitcoin was launched in 2009 by an individual or group known by the pseudonym "Satoshi Nakamoto. The competing cryptocurrencies that were created as a result of Bitcoin's success are known as altcoins. Some of the well-known altcoins are as follows: Litecoin, Peercoin, Namecoin, Ethereum and Cardana.

Apple becomes first company to hit \$3 trillion market value, then slips

- Apple Inc (AAPL.O) became the first company to hit a \$3 trillion stock market value, before ending the day a hair below that milestone, as investors bet the iPhone maker will keep launching best-selling products as it explores new markets such as automated cars and virtual reality.
- In China, the world's largest smartphone market, Apple continued to lead for the second straight month, beating rivals such as Vivo and Xiaomi. In August 2018, Apple became the first American company ever to be worth \$1 trillion, an achievement that took 42 years. It surged past \$2 trillion two years later. Its next trillion took just 16 months and 15 days. Another tech giant, Microsoft, could follow Apple into the \$3 trillion club early this year.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in consumer electronics, computer software and online services. Apple is the largest information technology company by revenue (totaling \$274.5 billion in 2020) and, since January 2021, the world's most valuable company. As of 2021, Apple is the fourth-largest PC vendor by unit sales and fourth-largest smartphone manufacturer. It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), and Microsoft. Apple was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne to develop and sell Wozniak's Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated by Jobs and Wozniak as Apple Computer, Inc. It is headquartered in Silicon Valley, California.

RBI approves small, offline e-payments

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come out with the framework for facilitating small-value digital payments in offline mode, a move that would promote digital payments in semi-urban and rural areas.**
- **The framework incorporates feedback received from the pilot experiments on offline transactions conducted in different parts of the country between September 2020 and June 2021. An offline digital payment does not require Internet or telecom connectivity.**
- **“Under this new framework, such payments can be carried out face-to-face (proximity mode) using any channel or instrument like cards, wallets and mobile devices,” the RBI said. “Such transactions would not require an Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA). Since the transactions are offline, alerts (by way of SMS and / or e-mail) will be received by the customer after a time lag,” it added.**
- **There is a limit of Rs. 200 per transaction and an overall limit of Rs. 2,000 for all transactions until the balance in the account is replenished. Balance replenishment can only occur in an online mode. “Offline mode of payment can be enabled only after obtaining specific consent of the provisions of circulars limiting customer liability issued by Reserve Bank (as amended from time to time). Customers also have recourse to the Reserve Bank — Integrated Ombudsman Scheme for grievance redress,” the regulator said.**

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton-Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shaktikanta Das is the current Governor of RBI.

Mamaearth parent company becomes first unicorn of 2022

- **Honasa Consumer, the parent company of Mamaearth, The Derma Co, and the House of Brands, has raised \$52 million in a round led by Sequoia.**
- **The round saw participation from Belgium-based Sofina Ventures, and Evolvece, a UAE-based India-focused fund. With the latest funding, Mamaearth parent has become the first unicorn of 2022, valued at \$1.2 billion. The round also gave employees an opportunity to monetise their vested employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs).**

In business, a unicorn is a privately held startup company valued at over \$1 billion. The term was first popularised in 2013 by venture capitalist Aileen Lee, choosing the mythical animal to represent the statistical rarity of such successful ventures. According to CB Insights, there are more than 803 unicorns as of August 2021. The largest unicorns included ByteDance, SpaceX and Stripe.

Airtel Payments Bank designated as scheduled bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Airtel Payments Bank Ltd. has been included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 which means it has been categorised as a Scheduled Bank.**
- **With this, the bank can now pitch for government-issued Requests for Proposals (RFP) and primary auctions and undertake both Central and State Government business participating in government-operated welfare schemes.**

- **Airtel Payments Bank is among the fastest-growing digital banks in the country, with a base of 115 million users. It offers a suite of digital solutions through the Airtel Thanks app and a retail network of over 500,000 neighbourhood banking points. The bank turned profitable in the quarter ended September 2021.**

Scheduled Banks in India refer to those banks which have been included in the Second Schedule of Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. Every Scheduled bank enjoys two types of principal facilities: It becomes eligible for debts/loans at the bank rate from the RBI; and, it automatically acquires the membership of clearing house. Payment banks were established to promote financial inclusion by offering; ‘modest savings accounts and payments/remittance services to migratory labour workforce, low-income households, small enterprises, other unorganised sector entities, and other users.’ These banks can accept a restricted deposit, which is now capped at Rs 200,000 per person but could be raised in the future. These banks are unable to provide loans or credit cards. Banks of this type can handle both current and savings accounts. Payments banks can provide ATM and debit cards, as well as online and mobile banking.

NHPC, GEDCOL JV to set up India’s largest floating solar power project in Odisha

- **State-owned hydropower giant NHPC has signed a pact with Green Energy Development Corporation of Odisha to form a joint venture to set up 500-megawatt floating solar power projects in Odisha. The joint venture (JV) will make an initial investment of over Rs 2,000 crore to set up 300 MW floating solar projects, which would generate 600 million units (MU) per annum.**
- **“It is first of its kind in Odisha and largest in the country so far. The project will help the State to meet its renewable energy generation target and purchase obligation besides creating investment and employment opportunities. Analysts are of the view that floating solar plants can be a good alternative to conventional ground-mounted PV systems as they not only conserve water through reduction of evaporation, but also increase generation due to cooling effect on the panels and reduced installation time.**

Sapio Analytics partners WazirX to launch India’s first NFT on ancient artwork

- **Sapio Analytics, an artificial intelligence-based government support organization has joined hands with WazirX NFT marketplace to launch digital collectibles of rare artwork from ancient India. The company claims that this would be the first when ancient Indian artwork would to be converted into a non-fungible token (NFT).**
- **Ancient Artworks of India will now be available for ownership through data-driven government advisory firm Sapio Analytics. This collaboration will feature rare artworks from the ancient times of India.**
- **The introductory NFT is artwork from 5th century CE that shows the meaning of divinity with the power to elevate the consciousness of those who engage with the art. The artwork belongs to Pitalkhora Buddhist Caves and was photographed by world-renowned filmmaker and art historian Benoy K Behl in 1992.**

WazirX is an Indian cryptocurrency exchange founded in 2018. WazirX was founded by computer science engineer Nischal Shetty in March 2018. WazirX acquired by world largest cryptocurrency exchange Binance. Wazir launched its NFT platform in March 2021.

PM Narendra Modi delivered ‘State of the World’ special address at WEF’s Davos Agenda

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered ‘State of the World’ special address at the World Economic Forum’s Davos Agenda. The WEF is hosted the event on its website and social media channels from January 17 to January 21.**
- **This is the second consecutive year that the forum has had to host the summit digitally due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It hopes to convene the 2022 annual meeting later this year. Announcing its schedule, the forum said that “Davos Agenda 2022” will be the first global platform for key world leaders to share their visions for 2022. The event is being convened on the theme of “The State of the World.” During the address the PM proposed the a ‘P-3’ approach. The P-3 approach stands for “pro-planet people”, he added.**

The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** is an international non-governmental and lobbying organisation based in **Cologny, canton of Geneva, Switzerland**. It was **founded on 24 January 1971** by German engineer and economist **Klaus Schwab**. The foundation, which is **mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies** – typically global enterprises with more than five billion US dollars in turnover – as well as public subsidies, **views its own mission as “improving the state of the world** by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas”. **The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.**

Russia’s Sberbank launches country’s first ever blockchain ETF securities

- **The largest state-owned banking and financial services provider in Russia and the post-Soviet space Sberbank** announced the launch of **the country’s first block chain-based exchange-traded fund (ETF)**, giving investors access to the blockchain space. Sber asset management officially informed that the **newly launched ETF will be linked to various crypto and blockchain-based industries.**
- **The new product will operate under the ticker Sber-Blockchain economy (SBBE) and will provide Russian investors an opportunity to profit from the crypto sector without the need to get involved directly in the development, acquisition, storage, and sale of digital assets. The bank said that it’s the first-of-its-kind in the Russian stock market.** The new ‘Sber Blockchain Economy Fund’ will give investors access to the blockchain space without the direct need to buy and store digital assets.

Navrang Saini gets additional charge as IBBI Chairperson

- **Navrang Saini** has been given the additional charge as the **Chairperson of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)**. The post fell vacant after **M.S. Sahoo** retired after a five-year tenure on September 30.
- **Mr. Saini is a Whole Time Member of IBBI.** IBBI is a key institution in implementing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), which came into force in 2016.

The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** is the **regulator for overseeing insolvency proceedings and entities like Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Insolvency Professionals (IP) and Information Utilities (IU) in India.** It was **established on 1 October 2016** and given **statutory powers** through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. It covers **Individuals, Companies, Limited Liability Partnerships and Partnership firms.** The new code will **speed up the resolution process for stressed assets in the country.** It attempts to simplify the process of insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings. It handles the cases using two tribunals like **NCLT (National company law tribunal) and Debt recovery tribunal.** IBBI will have **10 members**, including representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Law and corporate affairs, and the Reserve Bank of India. The Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has to be completed within the 330-day deadline prescribed under the law.**

Govt set to allow 20% foreign direct investment in LIC ahead of listing

- **The Centre has decided to allow 20 per cent foreign direct investment in the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC),** like in the case of public sector banks (PSBs). According to the current foreign direct investment (FDI) policy, **74 per cent foreign investment is permitted under the automatic route in the insurance sector.**
- However, **these rules do not apply to the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC),** which is administered through a separate LIC Act. As per Sebi rules, **both foreign portfolio investment (FPI) and FDI are permitted under public offer.**

Edelweiss General Insurance launches India’s first mobile telematics-based motor insurance

- **Edelweiss General Insurance has launched Switch - India’s first on-demand comprehensive motor insurance product, under the IRDAI’s Sandbox initiative.** Switch is a fully digital, mobile telematics-based motor policy that detects motion and automatically activates insurance when the vehicle is driven, making it convenient and hassle-free for customers.
- **Switch allows customers to save money based on their driving behaviour.** This usage-based model measures the quantity as well as the quality of driving and calculates premium accordingly. This makes motor insurance product in the market that generates a real-time driving score and dynamically rates the premium.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is a regulatory body under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India and is tasked with regulating and licensing the insurance and re-insurance industries in India. It was constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The agency's headquarters are in Hyderabad, Telangana, where it moved from Delhi in 2001. IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India. Debasish Panda is the current chairman of Insurance Regulatory Development of India (Irdai).

Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas succeeds Gita Gopinath as IMF's chief economist

- **The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has named French economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas as its next chief economist. Gourinchas will succeed Gita Gopinath, who will join the IMF's management team as First Deputy Managing Director.**

Former RBI governor Urjit Patel appointed vice president of AIIB

- **Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Urjit Patel has been appointed vice president of the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).**
- **Mr. Patel will serve on a three year term as one of the multilateral development bank's five vice presidents, and will take the place of former Gujarat Chief Secretary D.J. Pandian who had been, as Vice President, leading the AIIB's investment operations and all sovereign and non-sovereign lending in South and Southeast Asia. The bank's president, China's Jin Liqun, was reelected for a second five-year term last year.**

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to improve economic and social outcomes in Asia. The bank currently has 104 members, including 17 prospective members from around the world. The bank started operation after the agreement entered into force on 25 December 2015, after ratifications were received from 10 member states holding a total number of 50% of the initial subscriptions of the Authorized Capital Stock. The starting capital of the bank was US\$100 billion, equivalent to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the capital of the Asian Development Bank and about half that of the World Bank. The bank was proposed by China in 2013 and the initiative was launched at a ceremony in Beijing in October 2014. It received the highest credit ratings from the three biggest rating agencies in the world, and is seen as a potential rival to the World Bank and IMF. Jin Liqun is currently the President of the AIIB.

PM announces January 16 as National Start-up Day

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed India's startups ecosystem, acknowledging 42 startups turned unicorns, or a startup valued at \$1 billion or more, in 2021. He announced that January 16 will be celebrated as National Startup day.**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that 2022 has brought several possibilities for the Startup ecosystem in the country. He said, India is celebrating 75th years of independence, and when India will achieve 100 years of independence, role of startup will be significant in the nation's progress.**
- **"Five years ago, there were less than 500 startups in India, today there are close to 60,000 startups in the country. The prime minister pointed out innovation campaign going on in India has helped improve the country's ranking in the Global Innovation Index. In 2015, India was at number 81 in this ranking and it now ranks 46 in Innovation Index.**

Government of India launched the flagship initiative, "Startup India" in 2016. The program envisages to build a strong ecosystem that is conducive for the growth of startup businesses and kickstarted an entrepreneurship revolution. Further, the overhaul of the digital payments ecosystem is being led by State innovation (NPCI), with Aadhaar, Jan Dhan, UPI, and India Stack. As India improved its digital connectivity, market access barriers have been brought down and created a favourable ecosystem for startups. India is the third largest Unicorn ecosystem in the world after US and China.

Wealth of richest 98 same as bottom 552 million, says Oxfam report

- **India's richest families saw their wealth reach a record high in 2021, even as 84 per cent of Indian households saw an income decline amid the pandemic, according to a report from non-profit Oxfam India titled 'Inequality Kills'. It said the richest 98 Indians own the same wealth as the bottom 552 million people.**

- **The number of Indian billionaires grew during the year from 102 to 142**, according to the report published ahead of the **World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda**. It called for **higher taxation on the richest 10 per cent of the Indian population** to help fund measures to reduce inequality. **This could cover schemes for education, health care, and social security**, according to the report titled **'Inequality Kills'**. **The wealth of the top 100 families is now Rs 57.3 trillion**, according to the report.
- A separate analysis of the data from the **World Inequality Report** suggests that **taxing the top 10 per cent would cover families with significantly lower wealth than the top 100**. **The average wealth of the top 100 families is Rs 5.7 trillion going by the Oxfam numbers**. The average wealth of the top 10 per cent is Rs 63-65 lakh, shows a Business Standard analysis of the data from the World Inequality Report. India was described as **'very unequal,' with the top 10 of the country holding 57 per cent of the wealth**, while the share of the **bottom half is 13 per cent**. The report had also pointed out the role of higher taxation globally to reduce inequality.

Oxfam is a British founded confederation of 21 independent charitable organizations focusing on the **alleviation of global poverty, founded in 1942** and led by Oxfam International.

Bengaluru-based ed-tech startup launches world's first 'neoschool'

- **Bengaluru-based ed-tech startup StayQrious launched the world's first 'neoschool', an after-school online initiative that aims to teach students things that they would not learn in regular schools**. The initiative hopes to give children access to an international standard of education without having to attend expensive international schools.
- **The aim of the school is to offer students a wide range of unconventional subjects and teaching that they will not get during their regular schooling**. The neoschool hopes to encourage children in critical, scientific and design thinking, as well as problem-solving.

The government is now the biggest shareholder in Vodafone Idea

- **Vodafone Idea announced that it will accept the Indian government's proposal to convert its spectrum and adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues to equity, making the government the largest shareholder of the company**.
- **With this, the Indian government will now hold a 35.8% stake in the company**. The promoters – **Vodafone Plc. and Aditya Birla Group** – will hold **28.5% and 17.5% stake, respectively**. This is down from the current **shareholding of 44.39% and 27.66%, respectively**.

Vi or Vodafone Idea Limited is an Indian telecom operator with its headquarters based in Mumbai and Gandhinagar. It is a **pan-India integrated GSM operator offering 2G, 3G, 4G, 4G+, VoLTE, and VoWiFi services**. As of **31 October 2021**, Vi has a **subscriber base of 269.03 million, making it third largest mobile telecommunications network in India** and **10th largest mobile telecommunications network in the world**. **Ravinder Takkar, Ex-CEO of Vodafone Romania is the current CEO of the company**. On **7 September 2020**, Vodafone Idea **unveiled its new brand identity, 'Vi' which involves the integration of the company's erstwhile separate brands 'Vodafone' and 'Idea' into one unified brand**.

Google to invest up to \$1 billion in Bharti Airtel

- **Alphabet Inc's Google will invest up to \$1 billion in Bharti Airtel** in a move that could help bolster the Indian telecom operator's digital offerings. The investment includes a **\$700 million equity investment in Airtel at a price of 734 rupees (\$9.77) per share and up to \$300 million towards implementing commercial agreements, including investments in scaling Airtel's offerings**.

Alphabet Inc. is an American multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mountain View, California. It was **created through a restructuring of Google on October 2, 2015**, and became the **parent company of Google** and several former Google subsidiaries. **Larry Page and Sergey Brin announced their resignation from their executive posts in December 2019**, with the **CEO role is filled by Sundar Pichai, also the CEO of Google**. **Page and Brin remain co-founders, employees, board members, and controlling shareholders of Alphabet Inc.**

Binance launches world's first dedicated Indian NFT Collection

- **World's largest cryptocurrency exchange Binance launched its first ever Indian NFT collection inspired by Indian mythology and Southeast Asian, Japanese and Chinese folklore**. **A series of MetaMasters based on blended Indian and Chinese mythology, with MetaMasters Mahadev being the first among them**.

- **Non-fungible tokens or NFTs are cryptographic assets on a blockchain with unique identification codes and metadata** that distinguish them from each other. **Unlike cryptocurrencies, they cannot be traded or exchanged at equivalency.**

30% tax on crypto, RBI to issue its digital currency

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman **proposed to tax “any income from transfer of any virtual digital asset” at a rate of 30 per cent and impose a 1 per cent tax deduction at source (TDS) of transactions above a monetary threshold.**
- While the upside is limited from a revenue mobilisation perspective, **the step is important as it is the first formal recognition by the Government of increasingly popular financial instruments, such as crypto currencies, and applications, such as non-fungible tokens.**

Asia’s First Education Metaverse Crypto Coin- Koubek launched in India

- **Asia’s 1st Education Metaverse Crypto Coin-Koubek Coin launched in India, Koubek Coin is being hailed as one of the most exciting projects to emerge in this space.**
- **Koubek Coin – Asia’s 1st Education Metaverse Coin revolutionise the Education space like never before.** Tokenomics, security & vision of the project combined with a vastly experienced team of both technical and commercial entrepreneurs which ensure Koubek Coin is destined for success and growth.
- **Koubek Coin is a deflationary, self-reflecting Coin designed to grow to be scarcer over time.** Koubek Coin holders have unique weighted voting rights which decide the plan of action for proposal methods and academic initiatives.

BSES commissions India’s 1st smart managed EV charging station in Delhi

- **BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL), a subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure-backed BSES has commissioned India’s first ‘Smart Managed EV Charging Station’ in the national capital.**
- **Supported by Nordic Innovation, an organisation promoted by the governments of Nordic countries, and executed by Fortum Charge & Drive, it will be the first BYPL operated and managed Smart EV Charging Station.**

Government of India appoints Ravi Mittal as IBBI chairperson

- **The government has appointed former civil servant Ravi Mittal as the chairperson of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI).** The appointment comes little over four months after the post fell vacant **following the retirement of M S Sahoo** who completed his five-year term on September 30, 2021. **Mittal will be the second full-time Chairperson of the IBBI, a key institution in implementing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), which came into force in 2016.**

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) is the **regulator for overseeing insolvency proceedings and entities like Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Insolvency Professionals (IP) and Information Utilities (IU) in India. It was established on 1 October 2016 and given statutory powers through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. It covers Individuals, Companies, Limited Liability Partnerships and Partnership firms.** The new code will **speed up the resolution process for stressed assets in the country.** It attempts to simplify the process of insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings. **It handles the cases using two tribunals like NCLT (National company law tribunal) and Debt recovery tribunal.** **IBBI will have 10 members,** including representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Law and corporate affairs, and the Reserve Bank of India. The Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has to be completed within the 330-day deadline prescribed under the law.**

Bank of Baroda to acquire Union Bank’s 21% stake in IndiaFirst Life

- **Bank of Baroda (BoB) board has approved acquisition of a 21% stake of Union Bank of India in IndiaFirst Life Insurance,** subject to regulatory approvals. The bank, however, did not provide details of valuation of the deal.

Bank of Baroda (BOB) is an Indian nationalised banking and financial services company. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance. **It is the fourth largest nationalised bank in India.** **The government of India announced the merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank on September 17, 2018, to create the country’s second largest lender.**

Cryptowire launches India’s first global index of cryptocurrencies

- **CryptoWire, the global crypto app which is a special business unit of TickerPlant has launched India’s first index of cryptocurrencies, named IC15.**

- **IC15 is a rule-based broad market index by market capitalisation**, which tracks and measures the performance of top 15 widely traded liquid cryptocurrencies, in terms of market capitalisation, listed on leading crypto exchanges of the world.
- **IC15 has been designed with the objective of insights of crypto mining**, a benchmark for fund managers, portfolio diversification, a benchmark and a mirror of the underlying crypto market among others.

Cryptocurrency is a specific type of virtual currency, which is decentralised and protected by cryptographic encryption techniques. Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple are a few notable examples of cryptocurrencies. Bitcoin is a type of digital currency that enables instant payments to anyone. Bitcoin was introduced in 2009. Bitcoin is based on an open-source protocol and is not issued by any central authority. The origin of Bitcoin is unclear, as is who founded it. A person, or a group of people, who went by the identity of Satoshi Nakamoto are said to have conceptualised an accounting system in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. In 2018, The RBI issued a circular preventing all banks from dealing in cryptocurrencies. This circular was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 2020. Recently, the government has announced to introduce a bill; Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, to create a sovereign digital currency and simultaneously ban all private cryptocurrencies.

Apple is the most valued brand of 2022, followed by Amazon, Google, and Microsoft

- **Apple has been ranked at the top of the list showing 500 global companies with the highest brand values.** The company's continued success across verticals is being credited to the strong brand value tied to Apple.
- **The Global 500 2022 report by Brandirectory**, which follows research conducted recently, **suggests that Apple is the world's most valuable brand for 2022.** Apple snatches the top spot with a total valuation of **\$355.1 billion**, as calculated by Brand Directory. **This is the highest brand value ever recorded in the Brand Finance Global 500 ranking.**
- **Following Apple are other tech majors, including Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Samsung, Facebook or Meta, Huawei and Verizon.** The only two non-tech companies in the top 10 list include Walmart placed at fifth position and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China placed at 8th.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in consumer electronics, computer software and online services. Apple is the largest information technology company by revenue (totaling \$274.5 billion in 2020) and, since January 2021, the world's most valuable company. As of 2021, Apple is the fourth-largest PC vendor by unit sales and fourth-largest smartphone manufacturer. It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), and Microsoft. Apple was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne to develop and sell Wozniak's Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated by Jobs and Wozniak as Apple Computer, Inc. It is headquartered in Silicon Valley, California.

Dabur becomes first Indian plastic waste neutral' FMCG Company in India

- **Dabur India, India's largest Ayurveda company said it has become a complete plastic waste neutral firm** in the country after collecting, **processing and recycling around 27,000 metric tonnes of post-consumer plastic waste during FY21-22.**
- **With this, Dabur has become the first Indian consumer goods company to achieve the landmark of surpassing its plastic packaging usage with recycling.** Dabur has also announced the launch of a new 'Save the Environment' campaign in Himachal Pradesh to create awareness within communities on managing plastic waste within their households.

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), also known as consumer packaged goods (CPG), are products that are sold quickly and at a relatively low cost. Examples include non-durable household goods such as packaged foods, beverages, toiletries, candies, cosmetics, over-the-counter drugs, dry goods, and other consumables.

JPMorgan world's first bank in metaverse

- **JPMorgan Chase & Co, the largest bank in the United States, has become the first bank in the world to be in the metaverse**, an immersive 3D version of the internet tipped to transform workplaces and online interactions. JPMorgan launched its lounge on Decentraland, a metaverse platform. The Onyx lounge is named after the multinational investment bank's blockchain business that was launched in 2020.

JPMorgan Chase & Co. is an American multinational investment bank and financial services holding company headquartered in New York City. JPMorgan Chase is incorporated in Delaware. As of September 30, 2021, JPMorgan Chase is the largest bank in the United States, the world's largest bank by market capitalization, and the fifth-largest bank in the world in terms of total assets, with total assets of US\$3.758 trillion.

Tata Sons reappoints N Chandrasekaran as Executive Chairman for a second term of five years

- **N Chandrasekaran** has been **reappointed as chairman of Tata Sons for a second term of five years**, having the support and approval of the board of Tata Trusts and its chairman Ratan Tata.
- A board meeting held at Bombay House ratified the same. **Chandrasekaran, popularly referred to as Chandra in business and media circles, assumed Tata Sons' top office in 2017 amid a major boardroom turmoil — a tumultuous period marked by trust deficit and leadership crisis following the sudden and bitter ouster of Cyrus Mistry.**

Tata Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mumbai. Founded in 1868 by Jamshedji Tata, the group gained international recognition after purchasing several global companies. It is one of the biggest and oldest industrial groups in India. Each Tata company operates independently under the guidance and supervision of its own board of directors and shareholders. In 1991, Ratan Tata became chairman of Tata Group. This was also the year of economic liberalization in India, opening up the market to foreign competitors. Natarajan Chandrasekaran became the first non-Parsi and professional executive to head the Tata Group. Significant Tata affiliates include Air India, Tata Chemicals, Tata Communications, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Consumer Products, Tata Elxsi, Tata Motors, Tata Power, Tata Steel, Jamshedpur FC, Tanishq, Voltas, Tata Cliq, Tata Projects Limited, Tata Capital, Titan, Trent, Indian Hotels Company Limited, Taj Air, Croma, and Tata Starbucks, etc.

Jupiter Meta launches India's first fully curated Non-Fungible Token (NFT) marketplace

- **Jupiter Meta launches India's first fully curated Non-Fungible Token (NFT) marketplace, taking it live on February 23.** The digital marketplace, or the metaverse, will **focus on music, film, and gaming, creating singular experiences** for each user and enabling everyone to maximise their time in the metaverse.
- **The Metaverse is the future of augmented reality and virtual reality technologies**, with technologies going beyond gaming that enables innovation, with event promoters hosting virtual live music performances and museums offering virtual tours, more examples of a blend of the virtual and real worlds. **Non-fungible token, or NFT, is a digital asset that uses blockchain technology to record who owns a virtual object such as an image, video, or in-game item.**

Moody's raises India's growth forecast to 9.5 percent from seven percent for the year 2022

- American credit rating agency, **Moody's Investors Service has raised India's growth forecast to 9.5 percent from 7 percent for the calendar year 2022.** The agency revised its growth projection for India citing a stronger-than-expected economic recovery from the national lockdown of 2020 and the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-2021.
- Moody's said in a statement that they have **raised the 2022 calendar year growth forecasts for India and maintained the forecast for 5.5 percent growth in 2023.** This translates into 8.4 percent growth in fiscal year 2022-23 and 6.5 percent growth in fiscal year 2023-24. However, it flagged high oil prices and supply distortions as a drag on growth.

A credit rating agency (CRA) assesses an entity's (group, company, government, etc.) creditworthiness in general terms or relating to particular debt or financial obligation. These agencies help lenders and investors determine the potential risk involved in lending money to a particular borrowing entity and gauge the entity's repayment ability based on its past credit behaviour. SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) authorizes and regulates all credit rating agencies in India as per SEBI Regulations, 1999 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992. There are seven credit rating agencies in India including CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, India Ratings and Research Pvt Ltd, Acuite Ratings & Research, Brickwork Ratings India Pvt. Ltd. and Infomerics Valuation and Rating Pvt. Ltd. that are authorised by SEBI to assess credit ratings.

Government of India permits up to 20% FDI under automatic route in LIC

- **Government has permitted up to 20 percent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under automatic route in Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) with an aim to facilitate disinvestment of the country's**

largest insurer. The reform in the FDI policy will facilitate foreign investment in LIC and such other bodies corporate, for which the government may have a requirement for disinvestment purposes.

- **At present, the FDI policy did not prescribe any specific provision for foreign investment in LIC** which is a **statutory corporation established under LIC Act, 1956.** The policy permits FDI in insurance companies and intermediaries or insurance intermediaries in the insurance sector. **The FDI ceiling for public sector banks is 20% on government approval route.**

Life Insurance Corporation of India (abbreviated as LIC) is an **Indian government owned insurance and investment corporation under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India.** The Life Insurance Corporation of India was **established on September 1, 1956,** when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. **Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India.** It is based in Mumbai. **Shri. Mangalam Ramasubramanian Kumar** is the current Chairperson of LIC.

India gets world's first on-demand doorstep fast EV charging services

- **India is going to have its first on-demand doorstep, quick Electric Vehicle charging services. Hopcharge, a start-up providing these services has begun its services across Gurgaon** following a successful pilot run in sections of the city.

Madhabi Puri appointed as new chairperson of SEBI

- **Ms Madhabi Puri** has been **appointed as the new chairperson of market regulator SEBI.** She is the **first woman chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India.** Ms Puri is the former head of ICICI Securities, also served in SEBI as a Whole Time Member. **She replaces Ajay Tyagi, whose tenure as Sebi chairman ended. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, approved her appointment for an initial period of three years, the government said in a notification.**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the **regulatory body for securities and commodity market in India under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India.** It was **established on 12 April 1988 and given Statutory Powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992.** SEBI has its headquarters at the business district of **Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai.** **Ajay Tyagi** was **appointed chairman on 10 February 2017, replacing U K Sinha, and took charge of the chairman office on 1 March 2017.**

India's first green charging station in the pipeline

- In a first of its kind initiative, **the National Highway for Electric Vehicle (NHEV), an organization for promoting electrification of the country's transportation systems, is constructing a green charging hub along the Jaipur-Delhi-Agra E-highway.**
- **While the electric charging stations itself provides an emission free environment, what makes the new initiative unique is that it will also use green construction techniques for such EV stations** apart from providing a wholesome look and feel of the place. The prototype of the station suggests that the new set up will be **creating a net zero carbon infrastructure. The aim is to reduce carbon footprint to zero or move towards net-positive.**

Ex-DFS Secretary Panda is new Irdai chief

- **Former finance secretary Debasish Panda** took charge as the **new chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai).** The appointment of the Irdai chairman comes nearly nine months after the **vacancy was created following Subhash Chandra Khuntia completing his term** in May last year.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is a **regulatory body under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India and is tasked with regulating and licensing the insurance and re-insurance industries in India.** It was **constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India.** The agency's headquarters are in **Hyderabad, Telangana,** where it moved from Delhi in 2001. **IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India.**

India achieves \$400 billion goods exports target for first time

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that for the **first time, India achieved its target of reaching \$400 billion in exports. "India set an ambitious target of \$400 billion of goods exports & achieves this target for the first time ever. As per the graphic, averages of \$46 million worth of exports were done every hour.**

- As India **surpassed its merchandise export target of \$400 billion** set for FY2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the achievement as **“a key milestone” in the country’s “Aatmanirbhar Bharat journey”**. The target was achieved with 10 days to spare — exports crossed \$400.8 billion on March 21 and there’s a likelihood that total exports for the fiscal may cross \$410 billion by the end of the month.
- **While topping \$400 billion**, exports have registered a 37 per cent increase compared to \$292 billion in the previous fiscal and 21 per cent over the previous record high of exports of \$330 billion set in FY2019, prior to the pandemic. **India’s imports during the period have also surged to a record high level of over \$589 billion during the fiscal, taking India’s trade deficit to a record \$188.2 billion.**

Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka, being considered as one of the well-known South Asian nations to have better socio-economic indicators than its neighbouring counterparts and having the status of an upper-middle-income nation is facing its worst-ever economic crisis, with **electricity blackouts and shortage of essential goods being normal affairs nowadays**. The nation is going **through a severe foreign exchange crisis leading to a rise in petroleum prices and inflation**. Many Sri Lankan **nationals are also fleeing to other countries to escape the crisis**.
- **What has happened in Sri Lanka?**
- Sri Lankan economy began to disintegrate a few weeks ago when the country began to face the issue of the foreign currency crisis or a balance of payments (BOP) crisis that led to the devaluation of Sri Lankan currency hitting payments for essentials.
- The decline in the foreign exchange reserves began in August 2020 leading to the government declaring an economic emergency but in November 2021, the foreign exchange reserves dipped to a precarious level. Reportedly, the gross foreign reserves dropped 24 per cent further in January 2022 to US\$ 2.3 billion. This gave rise to high uncertainty among people regarding the nation’s economic stability in the coming time and the Sri Lankan government’s ability to account for the import of essential items and debt servicing.
- **Thousands of Sri Lankans are suffering in this crisis with petroleum prices going up and a shortage of essential items. At some places, food or fuel is either unavailable or exorbitantly priced.** The crisis is wreaking havoc on people and disrupting their lives in several ways.
- **What is the extent of this Sri Lankan crisis?**
- Sri Lanka depends heavily on imports to meet its various needs such as petroleum, food, paper, sugar, lentils, medicines, and transportation equipment, among other essential items. **A lack of foreign currency means the country does not have the money to buy (import) these commodities.** Inflation is soaring, hitting 15.1 per cent in February 2022. Government data shows that food inflation has risen to 25.7 per cent.
- Sri Lanka’s public debt is projected to have raised from 94 per cent in 2019 to 119 per cent of GDP in 2021. Amidst the balance of payments (BOP) crisis, global rating agencies such as Moody’s, S&P and Fitch have all downgraded Sri Lanka’s sovereign ratings.
- Many rating agencies downgraded Sri Lanka’s sovereign ratings to the junk category citing rising repayment pressures and “uneven access” to financing as reasons. The situation is so critical that the government had to suspend operations at its only fuel refinery because it ran out of crude oil stocks.
- The crisis has resulted in the cancellation of school examinations because it ran out of printing paper. People are also facing long hours of power cuts daily. Angry crowds are blockading streets. The government is using police and the army to monitor the situation and prevent any unrest.

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. The rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka. SLINEX (Sri Lanka India Naval Exercise) are a series of naval exercises between the Indian Navy and the Sri Lanka Navy. The first ever SLINEX exercise took place in 2005.

RBI launches UPI123pay and 24x7 helpline for digital payments in Mumbai

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched new UPI services for feature phones called UPI123Pay for non-internet users to make digital payments, also launched a 24x7 helpline for digital payments called ‘Digisaathi’.

- **'Digisaathi'** has also been set up by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** to provide users with automated responses on information related to digital payment products and services. Presently it is available in English and Hindi language.
- **The 24x7 helpline** will give an **opportunity to provide solutions to various queries about digital payments**. There are more than 40 crore feature phone users in India and they are not able to use digital payment solutions. **Considering this fact RBI has launched the UPI for feature phones.**

NDB first multilateral agency to open office in Gift City

- **New Development Bank (NDB)** will become the **first multilateral agency to open an office in the Gujarat International Finance Tech City (Gift)** after an approval for the same this week. **NDB vice president representing India Anil Kishora said the multilateral agency will take all requisite steps to make the Indian office operational by the middle of May.** The Indian office will help identify suitable projects and try to create a pipeline of potential financing for the bank. **NDB also expects to partner with the newly launched National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) to support crucial infrastructure projects in India.**

The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). According to the Agreement on the NDB, "the Bank shall support public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments." Moreover, the NDB "shall cooperate with international organizations and other financial entities, and provide technical assistance for projects to be supported by the Bank." The initial authorized capital of the bank is \$100 billion divided into 1 million shares having a par value of \$100,000 each. The initial subscribed capital of the bank was equally distributed among the founding members. The Agreement on the NDB specifies that every member will have one vote no one would have any veto powers. The bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China. The first regional office of the NDB is in Johannesburg, South Africa.

'40 over 40 – World's Most Inspiring Women'

- **Debjani Ghosh, the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) President** made it to **'40 over 40 – The World's Most Inspiring Women'** list. Ghosh is the first woman at the helm of NASSCOM in the three-decade history.
- **The '40 over 40 – The World's Most Inspiring Women' list was released by FemaleOneZero (F10) Magazine, in association with Capgemini Invent.** The list also featured **Arundhati Bhattacharya, Chairperson and CEO at Salesforce India.** It tagged the former State Bank of India Chairperson as **'India's Highflyer'.**

NHPC, GEDCOL JV to set up India's largest floating solar power project in Odisha

- **State-owned hydropower giant NHPC has signed a pact with Green Energy Development Corporation of Odisha to form a joint venture to set up 500-megawatt floating solar power projects in Odisha.** The joint venture (JV) will make an initial investment of over Rs 2,000 crore to set up 300 MW floating solar projects, which would generate 600 million units (MU) per annum. **"NHPC Limited, India's premier hydropower company has signed Promoters Agreement with Green Energy Development Corporation of Odisha Ltd (GEDCOL), a leading State PSU in the renewable energy sector in Odisha for 'Development of 500 MW Floating Solar Projects on different water bodies in Odisha',"**

NHPC Limited (erstwhile National Hydroelectric Power Corporation) is an Indian government hydropower board under the ownership of Ministry of Power that was incorporated in the year 1975 and with an objective to plan, promote and organise an integrated and efficient development of hydroelectric power in all aspects. It is headquartered in Faridabad, Haryana.

Samsung opens first all-women mobile store in India

- On the occasion of International Women's Day, **Samsung opened its first all-women mobile store in India.** Called **Samsung SmartCafe**, the store is located at Vijay Cross Road, in Navrangpura area of Ahmedabad.

Malta launches Marija, the country's first Virtual Citizen, a World's first

- **Malta has launched the first-ever Virtual Citizen at a conference organised** by the Ministry for Tourism and Consumer Protection on the Digital Tourism Roadmap 2030. Marija will bring together, in perfect synergy, the infinite possibilities of artificial intelligence, incorporating them with a new immersive experience allowing

everyone to access a wealth of information about Malta. **Marija is an interactive AI-powered virtual being ready to help all tourists who want to learn more about Malta's rich history and everything happening on the Maltese Islands.**

Zomato Instant: World's First 10-minute Food Delivery to start from Gurugram

- **In a global first, Zomato has decided to launch the instant 10-minute food delivery platform, Zomato Instant. The announcement was made by Zomato founder, Deepinder Goyal, online.** The service, according to Goyal, will start from four locations in Gurugram next month. The announcement comes after the company **acquired Blinkit (earlier Grofers) which delivers groceries in 15-20 minutes. Zomato is an Indian multinational restaurant aggregator and food delivery company founded by Deepinder Goyal and Pankaj Chaddah in 2008. It is based in Gurugram.**

Maruti Suzuki appoints Hisashi Takeuchi as MD and CEO

- **India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) has appointed Hisashi Takeuchi as the new Managing Director and CEO with effect from April 1, 2022.** The company's board in its meeting appointed Takeuchi as the Managing Director and CEO from April 1, consequent to the completion of the term of Kenichi Ayukawa on March 31, 2022.

India breaks into world's top five club in terms of market capitalisation

- **India's equity market has broken into the world's top five club in terms of market capitalisation for the first time. The country's total market cap stands at \$3.21 trillion, which is higher than that of the UK (\$3.19 trillion), Saudi Arabia (\$3.18 trillion), and Canada (\$3.18 trillion).**

Tata Sons' chief N Chandrasekaran appointed Air India chairman

- **Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran has been appointed the Chairman of Air India at a board meeting of the airline.** Chandrasekaran also serves as the **non-executive chairman of several other Tata Group companies, including Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Tata Chemicals and Tata Consumer Products.** He was reappointed Tata Sons' executive chairman last month for another five years.

Koo becomes the first social media platform in the world to launch voluntary self-verification for all users

- **The Koo app launches voluntary self-verification, becoming the first social media platform in the world to do so.** Any user can now self-verify their profile on the platform within seconds by using their government-approved ID card. This move empowers users to prove the authenticity of their accounts on the platform, hence lending credibility to the thoughts and opinions that they share. Voluntary self-verification promotes visibility of genuine voices. A visible marker in the form of a green tick will identify an account as being self-verified.
- **Koo is the first 'significant social media intermediary' to enable this feature in accordance with Rule 4(7) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.**

L'Oréal founder's granddaughter is world's richest woman

- **Francoise Bettencourt Meyers, cosmetics giant L'Oréal's founder's granddaughter, is the richest woman in the world - with a net worth of \$74.8 billion - according to business publication Forbes' 2022 list of richest individuals. Meyers' net worth rose marginally over the past 12 months - up from \$73.6 billion in 2021 - and has increased significantly from 2020 - it was \$48.9 billion two years ago.**

HDFC Ltd to merge with HDFC Bank

- **In what could be the largest merger in the financial sector, mortgage firm HDFC Ltd will merge with HDFC Bank, creating an entity with a combined market capitalisation of Rs 13.50 lakh crore.** After the merger, HDFC Bank will be 100 per cent owned by public shareholders and existing shareholders of HDFC Ltd will own 41 per cent of HDFC Bank.
- **HDFC Bank is India's largest private sector bank by assets with a market cap of Rs 8.35 lakh crore.** Subsidiaries and associates of HDFC Ltd will become subsidiaries and associates of HDFC Bank. **While HDFC Bank will continue to be the second-largest lender in the country after State Bank of India, its size following the merger would be twice that of ICICI Bank, the third largest lender.**

HDFC Bank Limited is an **Indian banking and financial services company** headquartered in the **city of Mumbai, India**. It is **India's largest private sector bank by assets** and **world's 10th largest bank by market capitalisation** as of April 2021. It is the **third largest company by market capitalisation of \$122.50 billion** on the Indian stock exchanges. **Sashidhar Jagdishan** is the **current MD and CEO of HDFC Bank**.

RBI 'State of the economy' report: 'Global policy tightening may precipitate rocketing inflation'

- **Cautioning on the 'grim' near-term global outlook, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the surge in commodity prices is already posing inflation risks**, especially through the conduit of surging imports.
- "Rapidly widening trade and current account deficits co-existing with portfolio capital outflows weigh on external sustainability, although the strength of underlying fundamentals and the stock of international reserves provide buffers," **the RBI said in its 'State of the economy' report.**

Union Bank first public sector lender to join account aggregator platform

- **Union Bank of India has become the first public sector lender to go live on the account aggregator ecosystem**, a part of the **government's digital initiatives** to improve credit delivery.
- **The account aggregator ecosystem helps lenders leverage digital data acquired with the customer's consent to provide seamless service without physical documentation.** Any financial information user (FIU) can request data based on a consent given by the customer on their account aggregator handle.
- **The framework facilitates sharing of financial information on a real-time basis** between regulated entities. AAs are **licensed by the Reserve Bank of India to enable the flow of data between Financial Information Providers (FIPs) and Financial Information Users (FIUs).**

HUL's Dapada is first FMCG factory in India to join WEF's Lighthouse Network

- **Hindustan Unilever's (HUL) Dapada factory, which manufactures home care products like Surf excel, Rin, and Vim, has joined the 'Lighthouse Network'.** Dapada is the **first FMCG manufacturing site in India** which has been accorded this status.
- **The Global Lighthouse Network is a community of manufacturing sites recognised by the World Economic Forum (WEF)** for applying advanced technologies, innovations, and sustainable practices to modernise business operations.

Gautam Adani joins the elite \$100 billion club, surpasses Ambani

- **Gautam Adani, the chairman of Adani Group, is the latest to join the elite \$100 billion club** as he surpassed Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani to become **India's richest man**, according to Bloomberg's Billionaires Index.

3 Indians in list of women self-made billionaires

- **Three Indian women - Falguni Nayar of Nykaa, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw of Biocon and Radha Vembu of Zoho - feature in the latest Hurun list of women self-made billionaires** (Hurun Richest Self-Made Women in the World 2022). **Falguni Nayar, founder and CEO of the beauty and lifestyle retail company Nykaa, is in the top 10 richest list** with a wealth of 7.6 billion dollars.
- **After the IPO of Nykaa, Nayar overtook long-time India's number one woman billionaire Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw to become the richest self-made woman in India.** She is also first in Hurun's list of Top 10 New Faces.
- **Radha Vembu is at the top in India and is second across the world on the list of Biggest Risers.** Vembu is the second richest self-made woman billionaire in India with a massive \$3.9 billion. **Radha Vembu, who is in the 25th position on the self-made women billionaire list, is a product manager of Zoho, a company that she founded with her brother.**

Tata group launches super app Tata Neu

- **Tata group launched possibly India's first super app, Tata Neu, that brings together grocery-to-hotel-to-airline ticket booking and medicine on a single platform, rivalling similar products from Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart.**

Reliance Industries becomes 1st Indian company to hit Rs 19-trillion m-cap

- **Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) became the first Indian listed company to touch the Rs 19-trillion market capitalisation-mark** after its shares scaled a record high.
- **RIL is one of India's biggest conglomerates** with a presence in refining or marketing petrochemicals (O2C), oil and gas exploration, retail, digital services and media, making it a well-diversified business entity.

Reliance Industries Limited is an Indian multinational conglomerate company, headquartered in Mumbai. It has diverse businesses including energy, petrochemicals, natural gas, retail, telecommunications, mass media, and textiles. Reliance is one of the most profitable companies in India, the largest publicly traded company in India by market capitalisation, and the largest company in India as measured by revenue. RIL has a market capitalisation of US\$243 billion as of March 31, 2022. The company was co-founded by Dhirubhai Ambani and Champaklal Damani in 1960's as Reliance Commercial Corporation. **Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani** is an Indian business magnate and chairman, managing director, and the largest shareholder of RIL.

World's richest man Elon Musk acquires Twitter in 44 billion dollar deal

- **Twitter has announced to sell its social media company to world's richest man Elon Musk, in a 44 billion dollar deal.** Under the terms of the deal, shareholders will receive 54.20 dollar in cash for each share of Twitter stock they own, matching Mr.
- **Musk's original offer and marking a 38% premium over the stock price** the day before he revealed his stake in the company. The deal, which was unanimously approved by Twitter's board, is expected to close this year. Under the deal, Twitter's shares will be delisted and it will be taken private.

Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interacts with messages known as "tweets". Registered users can post, like, and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Twitter was created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams in March 2006 and launched in July of that year. On April 25, 2022, the Twitter board of directors agreed to a \$44 billion buyout by Elon Musk, the CEO of SpaceX and Tesla, potentially making it one of the biggest deals to turn a company private. Parag Agrawal is an Indian-American software engineer who is the chief executive officer (CEO) of Twitter.

NASSCOM appoints TCS's Krishnan Ramanujam as chairperson

- **The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), has announced the appointment of Krishnan Ramanujam, who is President, Enterprise Growth Group, at Tata Consultancy Services, as the industry body's chairperson for 2022-23.**
- **Krishnan takes on the position from his previous role as vice-chairperson, succeeding Rekha M. Menon, chairperson** and senior managing director of Accenture in India who served as chairperson of NASSCOM for the year 2021-22.
- **NASSCOM also announced the appointment of Anant Maheshwari, President, Microsoft India, as its vice-chairperson for 2022-23.**

The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) is an Indian non-governmental trade association and advocacy group, focused mainly on the technology industry of India. Established in 1988, NASSCOM is a non-profit organisation. It is headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

Nexo, Mastercard Launch "World's First" Crypto-Backed Payment Card

- **Crypto lender Nexo said it has teamed up with global payments company Mastercard to launch what it calls the world's first "crypto-backed" payment card.** It signals the latest move by crypto and incumbent financial networks to join forces as digital assets become more mainstream.
- **Nexo said the card, available in selected European countries initially, allows users to spend without having to sell their digital assets such as bitcoin, which are used as collateral to back the credit granted.** Most traditional credit cards are unsecured and have a set credit limit. **The card is linked to a Nexo-provided, crypto-backed credit line and can be used at 92 million merchants worldwide where MasterCard is accepted, allowing investors to spend up to 90% of the fiat value of their crypto assets.**

Mastercard Inc. is an American multinational financial services corporation headquartered in the Mastercard International Global Headquarters in Purchase, New York. The Global Operations Headquarters is located in O'Fallon, Missouri, a municipality of St. Charles County, Missouri. Throughout the world, its principal business is to process payments between the banks of merchants and the card-issuing banks or credit unions of the purchasers who use the "Mastercard" brand debit, credit and prepaid cards to make purchases.

FEMA provisions amended, 20% FDI in LIC allowed

- The government has amended rules of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA)**, paving the way for **up to 20 per cent foreign direct investment** in the **insurance behemoth LIC**. The government is planning to dilute its stake in LIC through the Initial Public Offering (IPO). LIC had, filed the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) before the markets regulator Sebi for the IPO.
- The notification **has inserted a paragraph in the existing policy, allowing up to 20 per cent FDI in LIC through the automatic route**. Since the foreign inflows' ceiling for public sector banks is 20 per cent under government approval route as per the present FDI policy, it has been **decided to allow foreign investment of up to 20 per cent in LIC and other such corporate bodies**.

The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA), is an Act of the Parliament of India **“to consolidate and amend the law relating to foreign exchange with the objective of facilitating external trade and payments and for promoting the orderly development and maintenance of foreign exchange market in India”**. It was passed in the 29th December 1999 in parliament, **replacing the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA)**. It enabled a new **foreign exchange management regime consistent with the emerging framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO)**. It also paved the way for the introduction of the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002**, which came into effect from 1 July 2005.

OIL commissions India's first pure green hydrogen plant in Assam

- **Solar-powered pump station has installed capacity for 10 kg hydrogen per day**. Exploration and production major **Oil India Limited (OIL)** has commissioned **“India's first 99.999% pure” green hydrogen plant in Assam**.
- **Green hydrogen, which has the potential to replace fossil fuels, is the name given to hydrogen gas produced using renewable energy such as wind or solar power that do not entail greenhouse gas emissions**. The green hydrogen pilot plant set up in central Assam's **Jorhat** has an installed capacity for producing 10 kg of hydrogen per day.

Oil India Limited (OIL) is the **second largest Indian-government owned hydrocarbon explorer and producer**. It is under the ownership of **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas oversees its operations, with its headquarters in **Duliajan, Assam**. The government corporation is a **Navratna** with its offices in **Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Guwahati and Jodhpur**.

ISMC announces plan to set up India's first semiconductor fabrication unit

- **International semiconductor consortium ISMC, a joint venture between Abu Dhabi-based Next Orbit Ventures and Israel's Tower Semiconductor** will invest \$3 billion in **Karnataka** to set up **India's first chip-making plant**, the state government said. **ISMC announced its plan to set up India's first semiconductor fabrication unit**.

Telangana: Procter & Gamble's first liquid detergent making unit in India inaugurated

- **IT & Industries Minister KT Rama Rao inaugurated US-based Procter & Gamble's (P&G) first liquid detergent manufacturing unit in Kothur**. This is **P&G's first liquid detergent manufacturing unit in India**. The company has **invested about Rs 200 crore in setting up the new liquid detergent unit** which focuses on producing the company's fabric care brands **Ariel, Tide** and baby care brand **Pampers**.

India remains world's top remittance recipient

- **India has once emerged as the largest remittance receiving country in 2021 while Mexico pushed China to the thirds slot**, according to the World Bank. **India received remittances worth over \$89 billion in 2021** which was a **healthy 8 per cent higher than the \$82.73 billion in 2020**.
- **Despite the world having been affected badly by Covid in 2020**, the remittances in that year were a shade over **the \$82.69 billion in the non Covid year of 2019**. Some of the increase is accounted for by the falling value of the rupee vis-à-vis the dollar.
- For the current year too, **India's inbound remittances will continue to rise, helped by one of the lowest transaction costs in the world**. Globally, the average cost of sending \$ 200 was 6 per but it was the **cheapest to send money to South Asia (4.3 percent)** and most expensive to send to **Sub-Saharan Africa (7.8 percent)**.

Remittances are usually understood as financial or in-kind transfers made by migrants to friends and relatives back in communities of origin. These are basically sum of two main components - Personal Transfers in cash or in kind between resident and non-resident households and Compensation of Employees, which refers to the income of workers who work in another country for a limited period of time. **Remittances help in stimulating economic development in recipient countries, but this can also make such countries over-reliant on them.** World Bank's Migration and Development Brief is prepared by the Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Economics (DEC)- the premier research and data arm of the World Bank.

US surpasses China as India's biggest trading partner

- **The US was India's top trading partner in 2021-22, surpassing China, latest data from the commerce ministry showed,** pointing to post-pandemic realignments of global trade and strengthening of ties between two of the world's largest democracies. According to the data of the commerce ministry, in 2021-22, **the bilateral trade between the U.S. and India stood at \$ 119.42 billion as against \$80.51 billion in 2020-21. During 2021-22, India's two-way commerce with China aggregated at \$115.42 billion as compared to \$86.4 billion in 2020-21,** the data showed.
- **The US has consistently been India's largest market for services exports,** but latest trade data show overseas sales of merchandise goods to that country overtook China, **making it the largest bilateral trading nation of Asia's third-largest economy. Exports to the U.S. increased to \$76.11 billion in 2021-22 from \$51.62 billion in previous fiscal year,** while imports rose to \$ 43.31 billion as compared to about \$29 billion in 2020-21.
- **In 2021-22, the UAE with \$72.9 billion was the third largest trading partner of India. It was followed by Saudi Arabia (\$42,85 billion), Iraq (\$34.33 billion) and Singapore (\$30 billion).**

A trade surplus is an economic measure of a positive balance of trade, where a country's exports exceed its imports. A trade surplus can create employment and economic growth, but may also lead to higher prices and interest rates within an economy.

RBI Board approves nomination of Rajiv Ranjan as ex-officio member of Monetary Policy Committee

- **The Reserve Bank of India's Central Board of Directors met for the 595th time.** The meeting was held through video conferencing under the chairmanship of RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, according to the RBI. **The Board approved the appointment of Executive Director Dr. Rajiv Ranjan to the Monetary Policy Committee as an ex-officio member. Ranjan replaced Mridul Sagggar, who retired on April 30. Ranjan is the MPC's third (ex-officio) internal member.** In addition to Deputy Governors and other Directors of the Central Board, Department of Economic Affairs, Secretary, Ajay Seth was also present in the meeting.

The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India. The meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee are held at least 4 times a year (specifically, at least once a QUARTER) and it publishes its decisions after each such meeting. **The committee comprises six members - three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India. The Governor of Reserve Bank of India is the chairperson ex officio of the committee. Decisions are taken by majority with the Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie. The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 was amended by Finance Act (India), 2016 to constitute MPC which will bring more transparency and accountability in fixing India's Monetary Policy. The current mandate of the committee is to maintain 4% annual inflation until 31 March 2026 with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%. The committee is answerable to the Government of India if the inflation exceeds the range prescribed for three consecutive quarters.**

BRICS bank to open India's regional office in GIFT City in Gujarat

- **The New Development Bank (NDB) of the BRICS countries will set up India's regional office at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).** The aim is to help the country with its infrastructure and sustainable development needs. **Headquartered in Shanghai, the NDB was established by BRICS nations, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The bank formally opened in July 2015.**

BRICS is the acronym coined to associate five major emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Since 2009, the governments of the BRICS states have met annually at formal summits. Originally the first four were grouped as “BRIC” (or “the BRICs”) before the induction of South Africa in 2010. The term “BRIC” is believed to be coined in 2001 by then-chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, Jim O’Neill, in his publication Building Better Global Economic BRICs. But, it was actually coined by Roopa Purushothaman who was a Research Assistant in the original report. The BRIC grouping’s 1st formal summit, also held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, commenced on 16 June 2009.

World Bank announces up to \$30 bn to address food security crisis

- **The World Bank has announced actions it plans to take as part of a comprehensive, global response to the ongoing food security crisis, with up to \$30 billion financing in existing and new projects.** The bank said that the financing in areas such as agriculture, nutrition, social protection, water and irrigation will be available for implementation to address food insecurity over the next 15 months. It will include **efforts to encourage food and fertiliser production, enhance food systems, facilitate greater trade, and support vulnerable households and producers.** The World Bank is working with countries on the preparation of \$12 billion of new projects for the next 15 months to respond to the food security crisis.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world’s poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries. The International Development Association (IDA) is a multinational financial institution providing aid to poor countries in the form of loans. It is also referred to as soft loan window of the World Bank.

RIL is first Indian company to cross \$100 bn revenue

- **Reliance Industries’s revenue has crossed \$100 billion in fiscal 2022, becoming the first Indian company to reach the milestone.** The company has recorded a 22.5% rise in net profit for the quarter ended March 2022. Reliance has recorded strong growth in retail, digital services, and the oil & gas business. **The company has also reported the highest-ever quarterly EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) of Rs 33,968 crores (28% up) year-on-year.**

Google appoints former NITI Aayog, CCI official as India public policy chief

- **Google has appointed Archana Gulati — a former official with the NITI Aayog and the Competition Commission of India (CCI) — as its public policy head in India.** The CCI published initial findings of a case against Google, where it termed the Android owner’s billing system for app developers as “unfair and discriminatory”, paving the way for potential penalties.

RailTel launches PM-WANI based access to its WiFi across 100 railway stations

- **RailTel, a mini Ratna PSU, launched Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme based access to its Public WiFi services across 100 railway stations** having 2,384 WiFi hotspots in 22 states. The chairman and managing director of RailTel Puneet Chawla launched this WiFi access scheme.
- **PM-WANI is an ambitious program of the Department of Telecom (DoT) to connect all silo Wi-Fi networks** for ease of use and proliferate broadband usage for the masses. **To access this WiFi network, android users can download the mobile app ‘Wi-DOT’ available on Google Play Store.** This app has been developed in close coordination with C-DOT.

Sanjiv Bajaj elected as CII President

- **The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has a new President in Sanjiv Bajaj, who is Chairman and Managing Director of Bajaj Finserv.** He has **assumed office as President of CII for 2022-23.** He **takes over from TV Narendran, CEO & Managing Director, Tata Steel Limited.**

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group headquartered in New Delhi, India, founded in 1895. CII engages business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas. It is a membership-based organisation.

Tata Group appoints Campbell Wilson as CEO & MD of Air India

- The Tata Group has appointed Campbell Wilson, the CEO of Singapore Airlines' wholly-owned low-cost subsidiary Scoot, as Air India's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD).
- The Mumbai-based conglomerate completed its acquisition of the state-owned national carrier in January, and has been searching for a person to lead the airline's turnaround plan. Wilson is the Tata Group's second attempt at hiring a CEO-MD for Air India, as the previous CEO-designate, former Turkish Airlines chairman Ilker Ayci, declined to take up the position citing "attempts" to paint his appointment "with undesirable colours".

Reliance becomes top-ranked Indian firm on Forbes Global 2000 list

- Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd climbed two spots to No 53 on Forbes' latest Global 2000 list of public companies worldwide. Forbes Global 2000 ranks the largest companies in the world using four metrics: sales, profits, assets and market value, Forbes said releasing the 2022 ranking of the world's top 2,000 companies. Reliance is the top-ranked Indian firm on the list, followed by State Bank of India at No 105, HDFC Bank at No 153 and ICICI Bank at No 204.
- Other top 10 Indian firms on the list include state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) at 228 rank, Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd (HDFC) at No 268, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) at No 357, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) at No 384, Tata Steel at No 407 and Axis Bank at No 431.

Forbes is an American business magazine owned by Integrated Whale Media Investments and the Forbes family. Published eight times a year, it features articles on finance, industry, investing, and marketing topics. Its headquarters is located in Jersey City, New Jersey. B. C. Forbes, a financial columnist for the Hearst papers, and his partner Walter Drey, the general manager of the Magazine of Wall Street, founded Forbes magazine on September 15, 1917. The motto of Forbes magazine is "Change the World". Its chair and editor-in-chief is Steve Forbes, and its CEO is Mike Federle. The magazine is well known for its lists and rankings, including of the richest Americans (the Forbes 400), of the America's Wealthiest Celebrities, of the world's top companies (the Forbes Global 2000), Forbes list of the World's Most Powerful People, and The World's Billionaires. In 2014, it was sold to a Hong Kong-based investment group, Integrated Whale Media Investments.

Govt to sell its entire stake in Hindustan Zinc

- The Union Cabinet approved the sale of the government's remaining stake in Hindustan Zinc. The central government currently owns a 29.54 per cent stake in Hindustan Zinc which is worth around Rs 37,000 crore. Hindustan Zinc was a majority government-owned company. The government had earlier offloaded 26 per cent stake in the firm in 2002, which was bought by Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Group.

Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) is an Indian integrated mining and resources producer of zinc, lead, silver and cadmium. It is a subsidiary of Vedanta Limited. Earlier it was a Central Public Sector Undertaking, sold by Government of India to Vedanta Limited when Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Bharatiya Janta Party Government was in power in the year 2003. HZL is the world's second largest zinc producer. They are one of the world's largest integrated producers of zinc and are among leading global lead and silver producers.

CoinSwitch launches India's first crypto rupee Index CRE8

- India's largest Crypto investing app CoinSwitch launched the Crypto Rupee Index (CRE8), India's first benchmark index to measure the performance of the Indian Rupee-based crypto market. "Owned and administered by CoinSwitch, CRE8 tracks the performance of eight crypto assets that represent over 85 per cent of the total market capitalisation of cryptos traded in Indian Rupee.

India's first hybrid power plant commissioned by Adani Green in Rajasthan

- In a first, India has got a wind-solar hybrid power generation plant in Rajasthan. AHEJOL, a subsidiary of Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL), has commissioned the 390 MW hybrid power plant in Jaisalmer. Integrated through solar and wind power generation, the plant harnesses the full potential of renewable energy. The new plant has a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) with tariff at Rs 2.69 per kWh, well below the Average Power Procurement Cost (APPC) at national level, delivering access to affordable, modern, and clean energy to all.

India drops 8 ranks in WEF's Travel & Tourism Development Index, Japan top scorer

- **The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Travel & Tourism Development Index** which comprises 117 countries shows that despite the positive trends, the travel and tourism sector is still facing many hurdles with its recovery. **Japan, the United States, Spain, France and Germany are at the top of the list.** India, with a score of 4.2, ranks 54th, eight lower than in 2019. Data shows that India is the top scorer in South Asia.

Delhi airport becomes India's first to run entirely on hydro and solar energy

- **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport has switched to hydro and solar power for its consumption needs from June 1, making it India's first airport to run entirely on a combination of these forms of green energy,** operator Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) said.
- **In 2015, the Cochin International Airport in Kerala became the first airport in the world to run solely using solar energy.** DIAL says while they are using a combination of hydro and solar power, a major chunk of this is now hydro dependent. **This is part of the airport's goal to achieve the 'Net Zero Carbon Emissions Airport' target by the year 2030.** Since June 1, around 6 per cent of the airport's electricity requirement is being met from on-site solar power plants, while the remaining 94 per cent energy is coming from a hydropower plant.

The world's 'most' and 'least' liveable cities, says a new report

- In its report, **the Economist Intelligence Unit says that the Liveability Index rose sharply in the 2022 survey** that was conducted. **"Scores for culture and environment, healthcare and education have improved on the back of Covid curbs being eased.**
- **Austria's capital city Vienna has made a comeback on the top of the list.** "A rollback of Covid restrictions has translated into liveability rankings resembling those seen before the pandemic. **Vienna (Austria) tops the rankings in 2022, as it did in 2019 and 2018,"** the Liveability Index said.
- **Denmark's capital Copenhagen and Switzerland's Zurich came in second and third place respectively.** Another city in Switzerland, Geneva, was in sixth place. Syria's capital city Damascus was at the bottom of the 10 least liveable cities.
- **"The bottom ten cities in our rankings remain fairly stable,** with none of the new cities dipping this low. As in previous surveys, **living conditions remain worst in Damascus, the capital of Syria,"** the index said. **Iran's capital city Tehran was at the top of this list, followed by Douala city in Cameroon,** Zimbabwe's capital city Harare and Bangladesh's capital Dhaka.

Mukesh Ambani steps down as director of Reliance Jio, son Akash takes over

- **Mukesh Ambani's son, Akash Ambani, was named chairman of the board at Reliance Jio,** signaling a transition in leadership for one of the world's wealthiest business families. Akash Ambani, previously a non-executive director at Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., was appointed chairman a day after his father resigned. **Mukesh Ambani will remain chairman of Jio Platforms Ltd.,** the flagship company that owns all Jio digital services brands including Reliance Jio Infocomm.

Union bank of India appoints its first woman MD & CEO A Manimekhalai

- **Union Bank of India has got its first woman MD & CEO - A Manimekhalai.** The government-owned bank announced the **appointment of the Canara Bank Executive Director for a period of three years** with effect from the date of assumption of office or until further order, whichever is earlier.

Union Bank of India is an Indian government-owned bank with 120+ million customers and a total business of US\$106 billion. After the amalgamation with Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank, which came into effect on 1 April 2020, the amalgamated entity became the one of the largest PSU bank in terms of branch network with around 9500 branches. Union Bank of India was established on 11 November 1919 in Bombay (now Mumbai) by Seth Sitaram Poddar.

RBI's first global hackathon 'HARBINGER 2021' begins

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is organising its first global hackathon 'HARBINGER 2021' with the theme 'Smarter Digital Payments'** to further improve India's fledging digital payment systems.
- **The hackathon aims to identify and enable solutions and/or business models that have the potential to make digital payments accessible to the underprivileged section,** enhancing the ease of payments, enriching the experience of the users while strengthening the security of digital payments, and protecting the consumers.

World Bank Report on Extreme Poverty in India

- According to a working paper of the World Bank, extreme poverty in India has dropped from 22.5 percent in 2011 to 10.2 percent in the pre-Covid year of 2019. Also, the pace of poverty reduction in rural India has been more than in urban areas of the country. The number of people living on less than USD 1.90 (around Rs. 145) per day has been used to measure extreme poverty.
- In the urban and rural areas poverty level declined by 7.9 percent and 14.7 percent respectively during the period 2011 to 2019. In 2019, the poverty level stood at 11.6 percent in rural areas and 6.3 percent in urban areas. In 2016, the year of demonetization, urban poverty rose by 2 percentage points while rural poverty rose by 10 basis points in 2019. The paper reported that the consumption inequality in India eased after 2011, with barely any change noticed between the periods 2015 and 2019.

World Bank Group Launches First Country Climate and Development Report

- The World Bank Group has launched the first in a series of new core diagnostic reports that integrate climate change and development considerations and help countries prioritize the most impactful actions that can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and boost adaptation. The Country Climate and Development Reports (CCDRs) build on rigorous data and research and identify main sources of GHG emissions and climate vulnerabilities.

The Bretton Woods Institutions are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They were set up at a meeting of 43 countries in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in July 1944. Their aims were to help rebuild the shattered postwar economy and to promote international economic cooperation. The original Bretton Woods agreement also included plans for an International Trade Organisation (ITO) but these lay dormant until the World Trade Organisation (WTO) was created in the early 1990s.

Google-Telangana MoU on Using Tech for Development

- On 28th April 2022, Google announced that it is collaborating with the state government of Telangana and signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the aim of supporting and accelerating the state's vision to leverage technology for the purpose of inclusive social development and sustainable economic development.
- Under this MoU, Google will be extending Google Career Certificate scholarships to the youngsters of the state to make them job-ready. Google will also be collaborating with the Telangana government to support the state's women entrepreneurs through business, digital, and financial skills training.

Google LLC is an American multinational technology company that focuses on artificial intelligence, search engine technology, online advertising, cloud computing, computer software, quantum computing, e-commerce, and consumer electronics. It has been referred to as the "most powerful company in the world" and one of the world's most valuable brands due to its market dominance, data collection, and technological advantages in the area of artificial intelligence. It is considered one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Apple, Meta, and Microsoft. Google was founded on September 4, 1998, by Larry Page and Sergey Brin while they were PhD students at Stanford University in California. In 2015, Google was reorganized as a wholly owned subsidiary of Alphabet Inc. Sundar Pichai was appointed CEO of Google on October 24, 2015, replacing Larry Page, who became the CEO of Alphabet. On December 3, 2019, Pichai also became the CEO of Alphabet.

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. It is a land locked state in India. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhar Rao has been serving as the first and current Chief Minister of Telangana since 2014. Tamilisai Soundararajan is an Indian medical doctor serving as current Governor of Telangana.

Taj ranked as 'world's strongest hotel brand' by Brand Finance

- Tata group hospitality firm Indian Hotels Company Ltd iconic brand Taj has been rated as the 'world's strongest hotel brand' by Brand Finance, a global leading brand valuation consultancy. In its 'Hotels 50 2022' annual report, Brand Finance ranked Taj ahead of Premier Inn, Hilton Hotels and Resorts, Hampton by Hilton, Embassy Suites Hotels, JW Marriott.

Zimbabwe to introduce gold coins as local currency tumbles

- **Zimbabwe's central bank** said it would **start selling gold coins as a store of value to tame runaway inflation**, which has **considerably weakened the local currency**. The coins will be available for sale from July 25 in **local currency, US dollars, and other foreign currencies at a price based on the prevailing international price of gold and the cost of production**.
- The **"Mosi-oa-tunya" coin, named after Victoria falls**, can be **converted into cash and be traded locally and internationally**. Gold coins are used by investors internationally to hedge against inflation and wars. Zimbabwe more than doubled its policy rate to 200% from 80% and outlined plans to make the US dollar legal tender for the next five years to boost confidence.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in Southeast Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. The capital and largest city is Harare. The Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) dollar or RTG (Zimdollar or zollar, now abbreviated as ZWL or ZWL\$) was the only official currency in Zimbabwe from June 2019 to March 2020, after which foreign currencies were allowed for trade in the country again.

Bengaluru "least liveable" city in India, ranked 146th Globally

- **The European Intelligence Unit (EIU)** has ranked **India's IT hub Bengaluru as the "least liveable" city in India**. The EIU, in its Global Liveability Index 2022, has **ranked 173 cities across the world**. The ranking is **based on five factors - healthcare, stability, culture and environment, infrastructure, and education**.
- Among all the five factors, the EIU gives the **most weightage to culture and environment, and stability**. **Both the factors account for 50% of the weightage in the ranking, with 25% each**. Healthcare and infrastructure are given the **weightage of 20% each, while education's share is 10% in the ranking**.
- **It is for the first time that five Indian cities have found a place on this list. Delhi has been ranked the best liveable city in India, followed by Mumbai, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Bengaluru**. However, Delhi's global ranking is 140th in the index. Mumbai was ranked 141st, while Chennai and Ahmedabad secured the 142nd and 143rd ranks in the list. Bengaluru ranked the least among the Indian cities, standing at 146th position globally.
- **Before 2022, only Delhi and Mumbai featured among the total of 173 cities ranked in the index**. For the first time, the **ranking has included Chennai, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad**. According to EIU, **the ideal score is 100 but all the five Indian cities surveyed in the index have been ranked between 140 and 146**. The report suggests employers to have a provision of allowance based on the discomfort a city offers to the employees.
- **The first place on the list is yet again acquired by Vienna, followed by Copenhagen in second place. The 10 least liveable cities include Tehran, Dhaka, Karachi, and Lagos**. The ranking is done on various scales with stability and culture and environment having the highest weightage of 25 per cent each, while healthcare and infrastructure get weightage of 20 per cent and education has a weightage of 10 per cent.

Japan, Singapore and South Korea have topped the Henley Passport Index

- **Japan, Singapore and South Korea have topped the Henley Passport Index - which uses exclusive data from the International Air Transport Authority - to rank 199 passports. The Henley Passport Index is a global ranking of countries according to the travel freedom enjoyed by of holders of that country's ordinary passport for its citizens.**

PM Narendra Modi launches India's first International Bullion Exchange in Gandhinagar

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India's first International Bullion Exchange at Gujarat International Finance Tech (GIFT) City in Gandhinagar**. He also **launched NSE IFSC-SGX Connect and laid the foundation stone of the headquarters of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) at GIFT City**. IIBX will facilitate efficient price discovery with the assurance of responsible sourcing and quality, apart from giving impetus to the financialisation of gold in India.
- The Prime Minister, during his visit, **laid down the foundation stone of the headquarters building of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), the unified regulator for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) in India. The IFSCA building has been conceptualised as an iconic structure, reflective of the growing prominence and stature of GIFT-IFSC as a leading International Financial Centre.**

Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) is an **under-construction central business district** in **Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India**. It is **India's first operational greenfield smart city and international financial services center**, which the Government of Gujarat **promoted as a greenfield project**. **The city is located on the banks of the Sabarmati River** and is around 12 km (7.5 mi) from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport. The city is designed so residents can walk to work, and includes commercial, financial and residential complexes.

Government of India authorises SBI to issue and encash Electoral Bonds

- **The Union Government has authorised the State Bank of India for issue and encash Electoral Bonds** through its 29 Authorised Branches.
- **With effect from July 1 to July 10, State Bank of India (SBI)**, in the 21st phase of sale, has been granted authorization to issue and encash electoral bonds through its 29 authorised branches, according to a statement from the finance ministry.

Electoral Bonds are issued in multiples of Rs. 1,000, Rs. 10,000, Rs. 1 lakh, Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore without any maximum limit. State Bank of India is authorised to issue and encash these bonds, which are valid for fifteen days from the date of issuance. These bonds are only redeemable in the designated account of a registered political party. The bonds are available for purchase by any citizen of India for a period of ten days each in the months of January, April, July and October as may be specified by the Central Government. A person being an individual can buy bonds, either singly or jointly with other individuals. The donor's name is not mentioned on the bond. Donors who contribute less than Rs. 20,000 to political parties through purchase of electoral bonds need not provide their identity details such as PAN, etc. Electoral bonds can be used to finance registered political parties that received at least 1% of the votes cast in the most recent Lok Sabha or legislative assembly elections. The central idea behind the electoral bonds scheme was to bring about transparency in electoral funding in India. The government had described the scheme as an "electoral reform" in a country moving towards a "cashless-digital economy".

India gets \$1.75 billion World Bank loan for health, private investment

- **The World Bank has approved loans totalling USD 1.75 billion (about Rs 13,834.54 crore) to fund India's PM Ayushman Bharat scheme and private investment to boost the economic growth.** Of the total loan, **USD 1 billion will go towards the health sector, while the rest USD 750 million will be in the form of development policy loan (DPL) to fill the financing gaps through private sector investment in the economy.**
- **The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved two complementary loans of USD 500 million each to support and enhance India's health sector.** Through this combined financing of USD 1 billion, the World Bank will **support India's flagship Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), launched in October 2021.**

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries. The International Development Association (IDA) is a multinational financial institution providing aid to poor countries in the form of loans. It is also referred to as soft loan window of the World Bank.

In a first, Union Bank of India launches virtual banking lounge on Metaverse

- **State-led Union Bank of India launched a Metaverse-based virtual lounge** where it will showcase its products to customers virtually. **The lender is the first Indian bank to open a virtual shop for publicity.**
- **"Uni-verse, the Metaverse virtual lounge of the bank, hosts the bank's product information and videos** in the initial phase. Uni-verse will deliver a unique experience of banking to the customers who can roam around the lounge, **get information of the bank's deposits, loans, government welfare schemes, and digital initiatives as if they are experiencing the real world.**

- **This initiative is in partnership with Tech Mahindra.** Union Bank is not the first lender to open a shop in the Metaverse; **US-based JPMorgan Chase & Co achieved that feat earlier this year.**

RBI sets up mechanism to settle trade payments in Indian rupee

- **RBI has set up a mechanism to settle trade payments in Indian rupee.** The central bank has **put in place this additional arrangement for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports and imports in rupee.** The move is aimed at promoting growth of global trade with emphasis on exports from India and to support the increasing interest of global trading community in Indian rupee.
- **Before putting in place this mechanism, authorized dealer banks were required to take prior approval from the Foreign Exchange Department of RBI.** Under the framework, **all exports and imports may be denominated and invoiced in rupee.** **Authorized Dealer (AD) banks** in India have been **permitted to open rupee Vostro accounts.** Accordingly, for settlement of trade transactions with any country, AD bank in India may open special rupee Vostro accounts of correspondent banks of the partner trading country.
- **As per the broad framework for cross-border trade transactions in INR under Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA),** all exports and imports under this arrangement may be denominated and invoiced in rupee (INR) and the exchange rate between the currencies of the two trading partner countries may be market determined.

Balance of Payment (BoP) of a country can be defined as a systematic statement of all economic transactions of a country with the rest of the world during a specific period usually one year. The Balance of Payments (BoP) is composed of two main aspects: Current Account and Capital Account. The Current Account of BoP measures the inflow and outflow of goods, services, investment incomes and transfer payments. Trade in services (invisibles), trade in goods (visibles), unilateral transfers, remittances from abroad, and international aid are some of the main components of the Current Account. When all the goods and services are combined, together they make up the Balance of Trade (BoT) of a country. Capital Account of BoP records all those transactions, between the residents of a country and the rest of the world, which cause a change in the assets or liabilities of the residents of the country or its government. Loans and borrowing by private or public sectors, investments, and changes in the forex reserves are some of the examples of the components of the Capital Account.

US top UAE in remittances to India according to RBI paper

- **India is by far the world's largest recipient of remittances.** According to the World Bank, the country received \$87 billion in 2021, showing a growth of 4.6%. Defying the early projections, however, **India remained the top recipient, accounting for 12% of total global remittances, recording a marginal decline of 0.2% in 2020 and a growth of 8% in 2021.** China and Mexico come next, with \$53 billion remittances each. **Remittances from the Indian diaspora in the US surged through the Covid months that saw a contraction in inflows from the traditional Gulf stronghold as jobs, contact-intensive and outdoor-oriented, were lost in West Asia through the initial shutdowns.**
- **Research by central bank economists showed that the US surpassed the UAE as the top source country, accounting for 23% of total remittances in 2020-21.** As the top recipient, India was expected to be one of the worst affected - with a projected decline of 23% - as the host country basket of the diaspora was vulnerable to the twin effects of economic slowdown and slump in oil prices. **Amid steady migration of skilled workers, advanced economies, particularly the US, the UK and Singapore emerged as big sources of remittances, accounting for 36% of total remittances in 2020-21.**

AIIB announces first overseas office, likely in Abu Dhabi

- **The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) announced that it will establish an interim operational hub, its first overseas office outside Beijing, as the fast-growing multilateral bank aims to expand its global presence.** Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will be the hub's preferred location.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to improve economic and social outcomes in Asia. The bank currently has 105 members, including 14 prospective members from around the world. The breakdown of the 105 members by continents are as follows: 42 in Asia, 26 in Europe, 20 in Africa, 8 in Oceania, 8 in South America, and 1 in North America. The bank was proposed by China in 2013 and the initiative was launched at a ceremony in Beijing in October 2014. It is headquartered in Beijing and began its operations in January 2016. It received the highest credit ratings from the three biggest rating agencies in the world, and is seen as a potential rival to the World Bank and IMF. Jin Liqun is currently the President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Urjit Patel is the current Vice President of AIIB. India is the second largest shareholder of the AIIB and largest borrower of the AIIB.

World Bank appoints Indian national Indermit Gill as chief economist

- **The World Bank has appointed Indermit Gill, an Indian national, chief economist and senior vice-president for development economics at the multilateral development bank. “Indermit Gill brings to this role a combination of leadership, invaluable expertise and practical experience working with country governments on macroeconomic imbalances, growth, poverty, institutions, conflict, and climate change.”**
- **Gill will be only the second Indian to serve as chief economist at the World Bank. Kaushik Basu was the first, having served in the job from 2012-2016. Raghuram Rajan and Gita Gopinath have served as chief economists at the International Monetary Fund, the sister organisation of the World Bank.**

First all women-run cooperative bank coming up in Rajasthan

- **The first all women-run financial institution in the cooperative sector is coming up in Rajasthan following a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed with the Telangana government’s Stree Nidhi Credit Cooperative Federation.**
- **The new body will promote women’s empowerment by supporting their enterprises. The Rajasthan Mahila Nidhi will be set up on the lines of the Stree Nidhi of Telangana. Mahila Nidhi will strengthen the women’s self help groups in the State by extending timely loan facility for their enterprises. The institution will be operated entirely by women and will act as a complementary body with the formal banking system. It is also expected to bring down the number of loan applications pending in the banks.**

European Investment Bank joins India-led Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

- **The European Investment Bank (EIB), the bank of the European Union, has joined India led Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), a partnership of national governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks and the private sector, which promotes the rapid development of infrastructure resilient to climate change and natural disasters in countries at all stages of development.**
- **Launched at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019 at the initiative of the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, CDRI allows its members to share knowledge and resources and help countries to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) and expand universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and creating decent working conditions.**

India’s first dedicated branch for Startups to come up in Bengaluru

- **State Bank of India (SBI) and Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which would enable SBI to open the country’s first dedicated branch for startups. The new facility called the ‘SBI Startup Hub’ branch will be located at Koramangala in Bengaluru. The new branch is expected to be launched in August this year.**

India has become the 3rd largest start-up ecosystem in the world after the US and China. 44 Indian start-ups have achieved unicorn status in 2021 taking the overall tally of unicorns to 83, most of which are in the services sector. India has seen such rapid growth in unicorns due to several strategic as well as conditional reasons. A unicorn is any privately owned firm with a market capitalization of more than USD 1 billion. There are several categories like fintech, Edtechs, B2B (Business-to-Business) companies, etc.

South Africa-based H₂O Water Securities launches world-first crypto water token, receives \$150M investment from GEM

- **H₂O Water Securities, a South Africa-based company that combines finance, infrastructure and expertise in the deployment and operation of water plants, has launched a world-first crypto water**

token. As per the company, globally, **more than two billion people — almost 30 percent of the world's population — live in water scarce conditions** and this number is expected to increase to 50 percent of the population by 2030.

- Compounding the problem is a lack of funding for water infrastructure. **The global funding gap for water infrastructure could exceed \$18-trillion by the end of 2030, as highlighted by a 2016-18 OECD report.**

Nasscom, Google set up call centre to help rural women entrepreneurs scale up business

- **Nasscom Foundation along with Google has set up a call centre in collaboration** with a not-for-profit body ISAP **to help women farmers scale up their business.** The project is being **run on a pilot basis to initially reach out to 20,000 rural women entrepreneurs across six states — Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Rajasthan,** Nasscom Foundation CEO Nidhi Bhasin said at the launch of “DigiVaani Call Center”.
- **“DigiVaani will be one place where rural women entrepreneurs will be able to call and get the information around various schemes available for them, which can help them scale up their business,** be it government scheme or any other information that can be of help for them.

The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) is an Indian non-governmental trade association and advocacy group, focused mainly on the technology industry of India. Established in 1988, NASSCOM is a non-profit organization. It is the apex body for the \$227 billion dollar IT BPM industry in India, an industry that had made a phenomenal contribution to India's GDP, exports, employment, infrastructure and global visibility. In India, this industry provides the highest employment in the private sector. Krishnan Ramanujam is the current Chairperson of NASSCOM. Debjani Ghosh is the President of NASSCOM since April 2018. A veteran of the technology industry, she is the fifth president of NASSCOM and the first women at the helm in three-decade history.

Ashishkumar Chauhan quits as BSE chief; committee to manage affairs for interim period

- **Ashishkumar Chauhan has resigned as Managing Director and CEO of BSE and has been relieved of his roles and responsibilities at the exchange. Mr. Chauhan will be joining National Stock Exchange (NSE) as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).** In the interim, the board of BSE has decided that an executive management committee of the exchange would be running its affairs till appointment of the new MD and CEO.
- **The executive management committee comprises Neeraj Kulshrestha - Chief Regulatory Officer; Nayan Mehta - Chief Financial Officer; Kersi Tavadia - Chief Information Officer; Sameer Patil - Chief Business Officer; and Girish Joshi - Chief Trading Operations and Listing Sales.** Mr. Chauhan has been relieved of the roles and responsibilities at BSE with effect from July 25, 2022. **He introduced mobile stock trading to India, diversified in new areas including currency, commodities and equity derivatives, SME, startups, mutual fund and insurance distribution, spot markets and power trading.**

BSE Limited also known as the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), is an Indian stock exchange located on Dalal Street in Mumbai. Established in 1875 by cotton merchant Premchand Roychand, a Jain businessman, it is the oldest stock exchange in Asia, and also the tenth oldest in the world. The BSE is the 8th largest stock exchange with an overall market capitalisation of more than 276.713 lakh crore, as of January 2022.

Roshni Nadar remains richest Indian woman

- **HCL Technologies' chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra has retained her position as the richest woman in India, with a 54 per cent jump in her networth to Rs 84,330 crore in 2021. Falguni Nayar, who quit her investment banking career to start the beauty focused brand Nykaa around a decade ago, has emerged as the richest self-made woman with a networth of Rs 57,520 crore, as per the Kotak Private Banking-Hurun list published.**
- **Nayar, saw a 963 per cent increase in her wealth during the year and is also the second richest woman overall, trailing the 40-year-old Malhotra, the daughter of HCL Technologies' founder Shiv Nadar. Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw witnessed a 21 per cent decline in her fortune and has moved down one rank to be the third richest woman in the country with a wealth of Rs 29,030 crore.**

Roshni Nadar Malhotra is an Indian billionaire businesswoman, the chairperson of HCL Technologies and the first woman to lead a listed IT company in India. She is the only child of HCL founder and billionaire industrialist Shiv Nadar. HCL Technologies (Hindustan Computers Limited) is an Indian multinational information technology (IT) services and consulting company headquartered in Noida.

Singapore to be Uttar Pradesh's first partner

- **A day after Uttar Pradesh announced to hold roadshows in Singapore in the run up to Global Investor Summit-2023 to attract investments in the state, the Singapore High Commissioner to India, Simon Wong, expressed happiness over his country's alliance with the Yogi Adityanath government. Singapore has now become the first partner country of Uttar Pradesh. Companies from Singapore have made investments to the tune of over USD 250 million in UP.**

Singapore is a sovereign island city-state in maritime Southeast Asia. It lies about one degree of latitude (137 kilometres or 85 miles) north of the equator, off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, bordering the Straits of Malacca to the west, the Riau Islands (Indonesia) to the south, and the South China Sea to the east. Halimah Yacob is current President of Singapore. She is the first female president in the country's history. Lee Hsien Loong is the current Prime Minister of Singapore. The Singapore dollar is the official currency of Singapore.

Ashishkumar Chauhan's appointment as NSE MD

- **The appointment of former BSE chief Ashishkumar Chauhan as the managing director and CEO of National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) has been approved by the Extra Ordinary General Meeting (EOGM) of NSE.**

Sebi joins RBI's account aggregator ecosystem

- **Capital markets regulator Sebi joined the account aggregator framework, a move that will give a boost to the Reserve Bank of India-regulated financial-data sharing system. The move will allow customers to share information about their mutual fund and stock holdings with financial service providers.**
- **Account aggregator or AA is an RBI-regulated non-banking finance company (NBFC) that facilitates the collection of the financial information pertaining to a customer from financial information providers on the basis of the consent of the customer.**

An Account Aggregator (AA) is a framework that simply facilitates sharing of financial information in a real-time and data-blind manner (Data flow through AA are encrypted) between regulated entities (Banks and NBFCs). The RBI (Reserve Bank of India) in 2016 approved AA as a new class of NBFC (Non-Banking Financial Companies), whose primary responsibility is to facilitate the transfer of user's financial data with their explicit consent. AAs enable flow of data between Financial Information Providers (FIPs) and Financial Information Users (FIUs). The architecture of AA is based on the Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture (DEPA) framework. DEPA is an architecture that lets users securely access their data and share the same with third parties.

Former CEA Krishnamurthy Subramanian appointed India's Executive Director at IMF

- **Former Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian is set to become the next Executive Director (India) at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with effect from November 1, 2022. Subramanian, who is also a professor of finance at the Indian School of Business (ISB), will succeed the IMF's current ED (India) Surjit S Bhalla whose tenure has been curtailed up to October 31. Subramanian will hold the position for a period of three years or until further orders — whichever is earlier.**
- **Subramanian has served on the expert committee on governance of banks for The Reserve Bank of India. Previously, he has also served as a member of the Board of Directors at Bandhan Bank and the National Institute of Bank Management.**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 190 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 190 countries that make up its near-global membership. Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, from Bulgaria, is Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of International Monetary Fund (IMF) from October 1, 2019. Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first

woman to occupy the top post at the global lender. The latest currency that was added to the basket of currencies by the International Monetary Fund to determine the value of XDR is the Chinese renminbi in 2016. The other international currencies in the basket of currencies are British Pound, Japanese Yen, US Dollar, and Euro. XDR is the currency code of Special Drawing Rights. Andorra has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to become its 190th member.

Federal Bank becomes India's 1st to list its Payment Gateway on new tax platform

- Kerala-based Federal Bank has become country's first bank to list its Payment Gateway platform on the TIN 2.0 platform of the Income Tax Department. With this, TIN 2.0 platform taxpayers will get one more payment option and now make their payments with ease, using modes such as Credit/Debit Card, UPI, NEFT/RTGS and Internet Banking.
- Earlier in July, the Federal Bank partnered with the Central Board of direct taxes to assist taxpayers in making their payments via the e-pay tax facility in the e-filing portal of the income tax. The bank also received government's approval for collection of Direct Tax last financial year and has been made effective since 1 July 2022. With the partnership, federal Bank became the first one in India to be registered under Tin 2.0 platform of Income Tax Department.

Federal Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Aluva, Kochi. The bank has 1,272 branches spread across different states in India. It also has representative offices abroad in Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Dubai. The bank is also listed in the BSE, NSE and London Stock Exchange and has a branch in India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) at GIFT City. Shyam Srinivasan took charge as the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of The Federal Bank Ltd. K. P. Hormis was an Indian banker and lawyer, who is the founder of Federal Bank Limited.

SBI opens first branch for startups in Bengaluru

- India's largest lender SBI opened its first-ever startup branch in Bengaluru, which will be dedicated to fund and support early-stage entrepreneurs in setting up new companies till their listing on stock exchanges.

State Bank of India (SBI) is an Indian multinational public sector bank and financial services statutory body headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The bank descends from the Bank of Calcutta, founded in 1806 via the Imperial Bank of India, making it the oldest commercial bank in the Indian Subcontinent. The Government of India took control of the Imperial Bank of India in 1955, with Reserve Bank of India (India's central bank) taking a 60% stake, renaming it State Bank of India. SBI is the 43rd largest bank in the world and ranked 221st in the Fortune Global 500 list of the world's biggest corporations of 2020, being the only Indian bank on the list. It is a public sector bank and the largest bank in India with a 23% market share by assets and a 25% share of the total loan and deposits market. On 16th Aug 2022 an attempt to facilitate and support start-ups in the country, the State Bank of India (SBI) announced the launch of its first "state-of-the-art" dedicated branch for start-ups in the country in Bengaluru. YONO (You Only Need One) is an integrated digital banking platform offered by State Bank of India (SBI) to enable users to access a variety of financial and other services such as flight, train, bus and taxi bookings, online shopping, or medical bill payments.

India forex reserves 4th largest globally, says RBI governor

- India's forex reserves are the fourth largest globally, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said as he announced a third consecutive hike in policy rates. India's foreign exchange reserves rose by \$835 million to touch a record high of \$612.73 billion in the week ended July 16, 2021, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data showed. Currently, China has the largest reserves followed by Japan and Switzerland. India has overtaken Russia to become the fourth largest country with foreign exchange reserves.
- The central bank has raised key interest rates to pre-pandemic levels. The third straight increase is yet another step forward to cool down inflation. The key lending rate has been hiked by 50 basis points to 5.40 percent – a level last seen in August 2019. "Successive shocks to the global economy are taking their toll," the RBI governor said in a televised address. The International Monetary Fund last week slashed India's growth outlook for the ongoing financial year ending March 2023 to 7.4 percent from the 8.2 percent forecast in April.

Foreign exchange reserves are important assets held by the central bank in foreign currencies as reserves. They are commonly used to support the exchange rate and set monetary policy. In India's case, foreign reserves include Gold, Dollars, and the IMF's quota for Special Drawing Rights. Most of the reserves are usually held in US dollars, given the currency's importance in the international financial and trading system. Some central banks keep reserves in Euros, British pounds, Japanese yen, or Chinese yuan, in addition to their US dollar reserves. All international transactions are settled in US dollars and, therefore, required to support India's imports. More importantly, they need to maintain support and confidence for central bank action, whether monetary policy action or any exchange rate intervention to support the domestic currency. It also helps to limit any vulnerability due to sudden disturbances in foreign capital flows, which may arise during a crisis. Holding liquid foreign currency provides a cushion against such effects and provides confidence that there will still be enough foreign exchange to help the country with crucial imports in case of external shocks.

TechM to set up metaverse lounge for Union Bank of India

- **Tech Mahindra entered into a partnership with Union Bank of India (UBI) to unveil India's first PSU Metaverse Lounge, called 'Uni-Verse'.** Customers would be able to move around in the lounge, get information about deposits, loans, government welfare schemes, digital initiatives, etc. **To set up this meta lounge, Tech Mahindra would leverage its network and infrastructure capabilities** along with its foundational technological capabilities including pervasive artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, 5G, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR).

Tech Mahindra is an Indian multinational information technology services and consulting company. Part of the Mahindra Group, the company is headquartered in Pune and has its registered office in Mumbai. The company was ranked #5 in India's IT firms and overall #47 on Fortune India 500 list for 2019. **Anand Gopal Mahindra is an Indian billionaire businessman, and the chairman of Mahindra Group. Mahindra is the grandson of Jagdish Chandra Mahindra, co-founder of Mahindra & Mahindra.**

Decentraland announces world's first metaverse ATM

- **Popular metaverse platform Decentraland is launching the world's first metaverse ATM.** Decentraland is a virtual reality platform powered by the Ethereum blockchain. The platform enables users to create, experience, and monetize their content and applications.
- For context, **the metaverse is a blend of offline and online experiences in an interactive digital space,** where social interactions and transactions can occur simultaneously. Decentraland has joined hands with Transak payment gateway, and Metaverse Architects studio to enable users to easily purchase Mana or any other cryptocurrency. **Mana is primarily used as an in-game currency.**

In a first, LIC enters Fortune 500 list; RIL jumps 51 places, SBI only banker

- **Government-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) entered the Fortune Global 500 list for the first time.** Meanwhile, **Reliance Industries (RIL) which is the largest company in terms of market capitalization** in India jumped 51 places. However, **LIC was at the top of the list from India.** A total of nine Indian companies have entered the list, out of which, **five of them were state-owned and four were private sector firms.**
- **The list, topped by US retailer Walmart,** has nine Indian companies - five of them state-owned, and four from the private sector. Only the debutant LIC, which came out with its IPO last fiscal, was ranked higher than Reliance among the Indian corporates. **Walmart landed at No. 1 for the ninth straight year, trailed by Amazon, which reached its highest ranking ever.** Chinese energy giants State Grid, China National Petroleum, and Sinopec rounded out the top five.

Indian Oil Corporation to give Rs 50 crore for Cheetah relocation from Africa

- **The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Indian Oil Corporation for the trans-continental relocation of cheetahs from Africa to India.** The IOC will contribute Rs 50.22 crore over four years for the project, according to the MoU. The total cost of the project is currently Rs 75 crore. The funds provided by Indian Oil as a part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) will be used for cheetah reintroduction as well as its habitat management and protection, ecology development, staff training and veterinary healthcare.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) is an **Indian government-owned oil and gas explorer and producer, headquartered in New Delhi.** It is a **public sector undertaking** whose operations are overseen by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Microsoft becomes first multinational technology firm to join ONDC

- **Microsoft has become the first multinational technology firm to join ONDC**, a Government of India backed initiative to **develop a first-of-its-kind open network for digital commerce.** Through this, Microsoft intends to **introduce social eCommerce, i.e., group buying experience, in the Indian market.**
- **The US headquartered tech major intends to launch a shopping app for Indian consumers**, along with their social circle, harnessing the ONDC network to discover the best pricing among retailers. ONDC aims to catalyse and accelerate this by enabling all kinds of buyers and sellers to leverage the digitisation of commerce through its network, as it is based on the concepts of decentralisation, openness, and greater user utility.

Microsoft Corporation is an American multinational technology corporation which produces computer software, consumer electronics, personal computers, and related services headquartered at the Microsoft Redmond campus located in Redmond, Washington, United States. Its best-known software products are the Windows line of operating systems, the Microsoft Office suite, and the Internet Explorer and Edge web browsers. Its flagship hardware products are the Xbox video game consoles and the Microsoft Surface lineup of touchscreen personal computers. Microsoft ranked No. 21 in the 2020 Fortune 500 rankings of the largest United States corporations by total revenue; it was the world's largest software maker by revenue as of 2016. **It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Google, Amazon, Apple, and Meta.** Microsoft (the word being a portmanteau of “microcomputer software”) was founded by Bill Gates and Paul Allen on April 4, 1975, to develop and sell BASIC interpreters for the Altair 8800. Satya Narayana Nadella is an Indian-American business executive. He is the executive chairman and CEO of Microsoft, succeeding Steve Ballmer in 2014 as CEO and John W. Thompson in 2021 as chairman.

Razorpay becomes the only Indian company to be listed on ‘Forbes Cloud 100 List’ of the best private cloud companies in the world

- **Razorpay, India's leading full-stack Payments and Banking Platform for Businesses, has become the first Indian company to be named in the 2022 Forbes Cloud 100 List, the definitive ranking of the top 100 private cloud companies in the world.**
- **Published for the sixth time by Forbes in partnership with Bessemer Venture Partners and Salesforce Ventures, Razorpay has entered the list for the second time**, being listed at the #49th position for being a Financial Solutions Software (last year Razorpay ranked 57th).

Razorpay is an India-based, fintech company that provides payment gateway services to vendors, merchants and ecommerce platforms. It is an online system that is designed to handle end-to-end payments that can also be integrated with different websites and apps. The company was founded by IIT Roorkee alumni Shashank Kumar and Harshil Mathur in 2014. It is headquartered in Bangalore, India.

Ratan Tata launches India's first Companionship Startup for Senior Citizens

- **Industrialist Ratan Tata launched India's companionship startup for senior citizens, Goodfellows, in a bid to encourage intergenerational friendships. Shantanu Naidu, an MBA from Cornell University, founded the Goodfellows startup.** General Manager at Mr Tata's office and is the fifth generation of his family to **work in the Tata Group.** The startup appoints young graduates, ‘Goodfellows’, who **help in assisting the senior citizens and provide companionship, “similar to what a grandkid would do”.**

Ratan Naval Tata is an Indian industrialist, philanthropist, and a former chairman of Tata Sons. He was the **chairman of Tata Group, from 1990 to 2012**, and again, as **interim chairman**, from October 2016 through February 2017, and continues to head its charitable trusts. **He is the recipient of two civilian awards of India, the Padma Vibhushan (2008), the second highest civilian honour, and the Padma Bhushan (2000), the third highest civilian honour.**

Edelweiss MF to launch India's first gold and silver fund

- **Asset management company (AMC) Edelweiss Mutual Fund is scheduled to launch India's first scheme that offers exposure to gold and silver via a single fund. Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had in September allowed MF houses to introduce silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) in the Indian market.**

- **ICICI Prudential Silver ETF was the first silver-based fund in India.** Edelweiss' new scheme will target equal exposure to the two metals and will rebalance periodically. **Since the AMC doesn't have a standalone gold or silver fund, the scheme will invest in units of gold and silver ETFs managed by other fund houses or Edelweiss.**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the regulatory body for securities and commodity market in India under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It was established on 12 April 1988 and given Statutory Powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992. SEBI has its headquarters at the business district of Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. Madhabi Puri Buch is the current chairman of SEBI.

NTPC commissions first part of Gandhar Solar project

- The public sector enterprise **NTPC Limited has commissioned the first part of 20 MW Gandhar Solar PV Project at Gandhar in Gujarat.**
- **Gandhar Solar PV project is one of the 21 solar projects of NTPC.** With another project in Kaway, Gujarat the other 19 projects are spread across the geographical stretch of the nation covering the states of Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Kerala and the UT of Andaman & Nicobar Island. **So far, NTPC has a commissioned capacity of 2,104 MW of RE projects under own capacity addition.** These include 21 Solar, 1 Wind and 1 Small hydro project.

NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian public sector undertaking which is engaged in generation of electricity and allied activities. The headquarters of the company is situated at New Delhi. NTPC's core function is the generation and distribution of electricity to State Electricity Boards in India. The body also undertakes consultancy and turnkey project contracts that involve engineering, project management, construction management, and operation and management of power plants. In May 2010, **NTPC was conferred Maharatna status** by the Union Government of India, **one of only four companies to be awarded this status.**

D. Science & Technology

India launches the 41st Scientific Expedition to Antarctica

- **India has successfully launched the 41st Scientific Expedition to Antarctica** with the arrival of the first batch of its contingent at the southern white continent. **The first batch comprising of 23 scientists and support staff reached the Indian Antarctic station Maitri.**
- Four more batches shall be **landing in Antarctica by air using DROMLAN facility and onboard chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasily Golovnin** by mid-January 2022. The 41st expedition has two major programs. **The first program encompasses geological exploration of the Amery ice shelf at Bharati station.**
- This will help explore the link between India and Antarctica in the past. **The second program involves reconnaissance surveys and preparatory work for drilling of 500 meters of ice core near Maitri.**

Indian scientists discover star-planet bigger than Jupiter

- **The exoplanet search and study group at the Ahmedabad-based Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), has discovered a new exoplanet orbiting too close to an evolved or aging star with a mass of 1.5 times that of Sun and located 725 light years away.**
- **This discovery was made using PRL Advanced Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search optical fiber-fed spectrograph, the first of its kind in India, on the 1.2 metre Telescope of PRL at its Mt. Abu Observatory, the Bengaluru-headquartered space agency.**
- **The star is known as HD 82139 as per the Henry Draper catalogue and TOI 1789 as per the TESS catalogue. Hence, the planet is known as TOI 1789b or HD 82139b as per the IAU nomenclature.**

Scientists in Ahmedabad discover exoplanet 1.4 times bigger than Jupiter

- **Scientists from the Ahmedabad-based Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) have discovered an exoplanet that is 725 light years away from us and orbiting an ageing star that has 1.5 times the mass of our Sun, according to the department of space.**
- **The exoplanet is 1.4 times the size of Jupiter and it is orbiting unusually close to a star, completing one orbit in just 3.2 Earth days.** Despite being bigger than Jupiter, its mass is **70% that of the solar system's largest planet.** Exoplanets are planetary bodies that are outside our solar system and they usually orbit a star.

Kaiser-i-Hind is Arunachal's State butterfly

- **State Cabinet of Arunachal Pradesh, headed by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, approved “Kaiser-i-Hind” as the state butterfly. Kaiser-i-Hind is scientifically known as *Teinopalpus imperialis*. In literal terms, it means Emperor of India. The butterfly is having a wingspan of 90-120 mm. It is found across six States along Eastern Himalayas at elevations from 6,000-10,000 feet in a well-wooded terrain.**
- **The Kaiser-i-Hind is protected under Schedule II of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Despite that, they are hunted for the supply to butterfly collectors. International Union for Conservation of Nature has red-listed the Kaiser-i-Hind.**

225 hectare Maharashtra land handed over for first LIGO project in India

- **The Hingoli revenue department has handed over 225 hectare of land in Maharashtra to authorities of the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) project for setting up the first such facility in the country.**
- **There are currently a couple of such labs in the US - at Hanford in Washington and Livingston in Louisiana - which study the gravitational waves. In 2016, the central government had given an ‘in principle’ approval to the LIGO-India mega science proposal for research on gravitational waves.**
- **The project will provide opportunities to scientists and engineers to dig deeper into the realm of gravitational waves. A few years back, scientists had for the first time observed ripples in the fabric of spacetime called gravitational waves, arriving at the earth from a cataclysmic event in the distant universe.**

INDIGO or IndIGO (Indian Initiative in Gravitational-wave Observations) is a consortium of Indian gravitational-wave physicists. This is an initiative to set up advanced experimental facilities for a multi-institutional observatory project in gravitational-wave astronomy located near Aundha Nagnath, Hingoli District, Maharashtra, India. Predicted date of commission is in 2024. LIGO-India is a planned advanced gravitational-wave detector to be located in India, whose concept proposal is now under active consideration by the science funding agencies in India and US.

NASA launched test mission of asteroid-deflecting spacecraft

- **SpaceX launched NASA's planetary defense mission, Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART), on a Falcon 9 rocket from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The mission is an attempt to understand how to deflect an asteroid off a collision course toward Earth.**
- **A SpaceX rocket was blasted off from California as NASA seeks to demonstrate a first-of-its-kind planetary defense system, designed to deflect an asteroid from a potential doomsday collision with Earth. The DART mission will test NASA's ability to alter an asteroid's trajectory with kinetic force - crashing a robot spacecraft into it at high speed and nudging the space boulder just enough to keep our planet out of harm's way.**
- **DART's target is a tiny fraction of the size of the cataclysmic Chicxulub asteroid that slammed into Earth about 66 million years ago, killing most of the planet's animal species. It is not on a path that will cause it to hit Earth in the foreseeable future.**

Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (doing business as SpaceX) is an American aerospace manufacturer, space transportation services and communications corporation headquartered in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk with the goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars.

IIT Varanasi researchers develop India's first device for on-site production of ultra-pure Hydrogen

- **Scientists at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), BHU claim to have developed a first-of-its-kind device in India for the on-site production of ultra-pure Hydrogen.**
- **According to the team, at a time when India has committed to zero net emissions by 2070 at the COP26 Climate Summit this is a major development in the Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the device is 100 per cent indigenous and every component made in IIT (Banaras Hindu University) facilities.**

WHO avoids Greek alphabet Xi and names new Covid variant Omicron

- **The new variant of Covid identified first in South Africa has been named omicron by the World Health Organization. The variants of SARS-CoV-2 are named after Greek alphabets, but for naming omicron, the experts skipped two letters Nu and Xi and chose omicron instead.**

- In fact, Nu started trending on social media platforms **after the news of a new Covid variant came out as Nu was the possible choice for the name of this new variant**, which is believed to be more transmissible than the other variants.
- **Omicron**, the new Covid variant that has the world on alert, has been named after the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet. The first 12 have already been used for naming other strains. Why were letters 13 and 14 – Nu and Xi – skipped by the World Health Organisation?, **Many said the letters were avoided for a reason. The letter “Nu” could be confused with “new” and “Xi” is part of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s name.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. The WHO Constitution states its main objective as “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has six regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide. The WHO was established on 7 April 1948. The first meeting of the World Health Assembly (WHA), the agency’s governing body, took place on 24 July of that year. The current director-general is Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia.

Russia Carries Out another Successful Test of Zircon Hypersonic Missile

- **Russia had carried out another successful test of its Zircon hypersonic cruise missile**, as world powers race to develop the advanced weaponry.
- **Russia, the United States, France and China** have all been **experimenting with so-called hypersonic glide vehicles – defined as reaching speeds of at least Mach 5**. The missile has **undergone a number of recent tests**, with **Russia planning to equip both warships and submarines with the Zircon**.

MoS IT launches India’s first indigenous server Rudra

- **Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched the first indigenous server, Rudra, developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).**
- **The server design can be used for manufacturing classical standalone commercial servers and also as building blocks for building large supercomputing systems of tens of petaflops of computing performance.**

India successfully tests extended range version of multi barrel rocket launcher system, Pinaka-ER

- **The Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System was successfully tested at Pokharan range.** Successful tests of Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER), Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and **indigenously developed fuzes have been carried out at various test ranges.**
- **The system is jointly designed by laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.**
- **The Industry Partner has manufactured enhanced Pinaka Mk-1 rockets with DRDO’s hand holding during the production and Quality Assurance. The Pinaka - ER is the upgraded version of the earlier version of Pinaka** which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade. The system has been designed in the light of emerging requirements with advanced technologies enhancing the range.

First privately developed, 3D-printed cryogenic engine

- **Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully demonstrated the country’s first privately developed cryogenic rocket engine named Dhawan-1** after eminent rocket scientist Satish Dhawan.
- **The company will use the engine as the upper stage of its Vikram-2 launch vehicle.** Skyroot, one of the few startups that have come to prominence since India opened up its space sector last year, has **a series of three Vikram rockets that can carry payloads up to 720 kg to the low earth orbit.**

India, Russia sign pact to deepen space cooperation

- **India and Russia vowed to deepen collaboration in the space sector, including in the human spaceflight programme, and signed an agreement for cooperation in the building as well as operation of launch vehicles. The pact was signed during the India-Russia summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin**
- **India and Russia reaffirmed their commitment for increasing sourcing of Russian crude oil** on long-term contracts through preferential pricing, strengthening LNG imports to India, and the possible utilisation of the Northern Sea Route for energy supplies.

- A joint statement issued after the summit said the two countries welcomed the **enhanced cooperation between the Russian State Space Corporation 'Roscosmos' and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) including in the human spaceflight programmes and satellite navigation.**

New 'Made-In-India' Missile Successfully Tested

- To Strengthen Navy India successfully flight tested the indigenously developed new Vertical Launch Short Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) from the coast off Balasore, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official.
- The quick reaction surface-to-air-missile missile developed by DRDO was test launched from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur at about 3.08 pm from a vertical launcher against an electronic target at a very low altitude. The missile has an operational range of 50 to 60 km and features mid course inertial guidance through fiber optic gyroscope and active radar homing in terminal phase.

India successfully test fires long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART)

- India successfully tested a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) system developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO). The missile aimed at enhancing the country's anti-submarine warfare capability was launched from Balasore in Odisha.
- The missile is launched from a ground mobile launcher and it can cover a range of distances "This canister-based missile system consists of advanced technologies like two-stage solid propulsion, electro-mechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation."

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the current Chairman of DRDO.

Gaganyaan to be launched in 2023, India's first space station by 2030

- Clearing the air on the launch year of India's much-delayed maiden human spaceflight mission to space, Union space minister Jitendra Singh said the final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in 2023.
- He also said the Venus mission is planned for launch in 2023, L-1 Aditya solar and Chandrayaan-3 missions due for launch in 2022-23 and the country's first space station is likely to come up by 2030.
- Gaganyaan's major missions, like the test vehicle flight for the validation of crew escape system performance and first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan (G1), are scheduled during the beginning of second half of 2022.
- This will be followed by the second uncrewed mission at the end of 2022 carrying 'Vyommitra', a spacefaring human robot developed by Isro, and finally the first crewed Gaganyaan mission in 2023, "which would, undoubtedly, place India in the elite club of nations (America, China and Soviet Union now Russia)".

NASA spacecraft 'touches' the Sun

- A spacecraft launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) has achieved a feat once thought impossible. For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that's roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
- The \$1.6 billion mission also aims to improve forecasts of major space weather events that impact life on Earth, as well as astronauts in space, NASA said. Space weather can change the orbits of satellites, shorten their lifetimes or interfere with onboard electronics.
- As it circles closer to the solar surface, Parker Solar Probe is making new discoveries that other spacecraft were too far away to see, including from within the solar wind – the flow of particles from the sun that can influence us here on Earth.
- Parker Solar Probe will keep drawing ever closer to the sun and diving deeper into the corona until its grand finale orbit in 2025. The mission was named after Eugene Newman Parker, a physicist who proposed a number of concepts about how stars give off energy.

Aditya-L1 is the India's first spacecraft to study solar atmosphere developed by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and various other Indian research institutes. In celestial mechanics, the Lagrange points (also Lagrangian points, L-points, or libration points) are points near two large orbiting bodies. Normally, the two objects exert an unbalanced gravitational force at a point, altering the orbit of whatever is at that point. At the Lagrange points, the gravitational forces of the two large bodies and the centrifugal force balance each other. Aditya-L1 will be able to provide observations of Sun's photosphere, chromosphere and corona. In addition, an instrument will study the solar energetic particles' flux reaching the L1 orbit, while a magnetometer payload will measure the variation in magnetic field strength at the halo orbit around L1.

India successfully test fires new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' off Odisha

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.**
- **Agni P is a two-stage canisterised solid-propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system. Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of Agni class of missiles. It is a two-stage canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km.**

World's most powerful space telescope launched on quest to behold 1st stars

- **The world's most powerful space telescope blasted off into orbit, headed to an outpost 1.5 million kilometres (930,000 miles) from Earth, after several delays caused by technical hitches. The James Webb Space Telescope, some three decades and billions of dollars in the making, left Earth enclosed in its Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou Space Centre in French Guiana.**
- **The \$10 billion observatory hurtled toward its destination 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) away, or more than four times beyond the moon. It will take a month to get there and another five months before its infrared eyes are ready to start scanning the cosmos.**

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is a space telescope developed by NASA with the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). The telescope is named after James E. Webb, who was the administrator of NASA from 1961 to 1968 and played an integral role in the Apollo program. It is intended to succeed the Hubble Space Telescope as NASA's flagship mission in astrophysics. JWST was launched on 25 December 2021 on Ariane flight VA256. It is designed to provide improved infrared resolution and sensitivity over Hubble, and will enable a broad range of investigations across the fields of astronomy and cosmology, including observations of some of the most distant events and objects in the Universe such as the formation of the first galaxies, and allowing detailed atmospheric characterization of potentially habitable exoplanets.

INS Khukri, first of the India Built Missile Corvettes, Decommissioned After 32 Years

- **INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service". The corvette was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders on August 23, 1989 and had the distinction of being part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets. The ship was commissioned in Mumbai by Shri Krishna Chandra Pant, the then Raksha Mantri and Mrs Sudha Mulla, wife of late Capt Mahendra Nath Mulla. Commander (now Retired Vice Admiral) Sanjeev Bhasin was the first Commanding Officer.**

India successfully tests 'Pralay' missile off Odisha coast

- **India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile 'Pralay' off the Odisha coast. The solid-fuel, battlefield missile developed by Defence Research Development Organisation is based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme. 'Pralay' is a 350-500 km short-range, surface-to-surface missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.**

India's first rural 5G trial begins at Gujarat's Ajol

- **India's first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed 17 km away at Unava town in Gandhinagar district.**
- **A team including representatives of the department of telecom (DoT) and two private mobile service providers visited Ajol village to measure speeds. Officials recorded a 105.47 Mbps download speed and a 58.77 Mbps upload speed.**

Rajnath lays foundation stone for two DRDO centres in Lucknow

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the **foundation stone for a Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and a BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow.**
- “A first-of-its-kind Defence Technologies & Test Centre (DTTC),** over approximately 22 acres is being set up to accelerate the growth of the defence and aerospace manufacturing clusters in Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC).” It will consist of six sub-centres — **Deep-Tech Innovation & Startup Incubation Centre, Design & Simulation Centre, Testing & Evaluation Centre, Centre for Industry 4.0/Digital Manufacturing, Skill Development Centre and Business Development Centre.**

UN General Assembly grants Observer Status to International Solar Alliance

- UN General Assembly has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance.** He said, in the last six years, **International Solar Alliance has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships to benefit global energy growth and development.**

The **International Solar Alliance** is a **common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.** The initiative was **launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015** by the then, **President of France and the Prime Minister of India.** In January 2016, **Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance headquarters and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India.** **Ajay Mathuri is the current Director General of ISA.**

Tamil Nadu becomes first state to get own genome sequencing lab

- Tamil Nadu became the first state to get its own genome sequencing laboratory.** Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian said that the **Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has approved the state government’s request to set up a genomic sequencing lab.**
- The Tamil Nadu health department has been **raising concerns about the delay in receiving the results of the gene drop samples sent for genomic analysis amid the surge in Covid-19 cases.** So far, the state has sent samples to INSACOG-recognised centres in Instem Bangalore, CDFD Hyderabad, and NIV Pune.

Astronomers detect first signature of Magnetic Field on a Planet Outside of Our Solar System

- Researchers have identified the first signature of a magnetic field surrounding a planet outside of our solar system.** Earth’s magnetic field acts as a shield against energetic particles from the sun known as the solar wind. Magnetic fields could play similar roles on other planets.
- An international team of astronomers used data from the Hubble Space Telescope to discover the signature of a magnetic field in a planet outside our solar system.** The finding, described in a paper in the journal *Nature Astronomy*, **marks the first time such a feature has been seen on an exoplanet.**

India’s first 2 Omicron cases reported in Karnataka, One is Foreigner

- Two COVID-19 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in India, making it the 30th country in the world to report the coronavirus strain** that has triggered global alarm. **Both the cases have been reported in Karnataka** with the patients being two men aged 66 and 46.
- First discovered in southern Africa, Omicron represents a fresh challenge to global efforts to battle the pandemic** with several nations already re-imposing restrictions many had hoped were a thing of the past. It is the **latest coronavirus strain to emerge since the start of the pandemic, including the currently dominant Delta variant, which was first detected in India in October 2020.**
- The B.1.1.529 variant was first reported to WHO from South Africa on 24 November 2021.** The epidemiological situation in South Africa has been characterized by **three distinct peaks in reported cases**, the latest of which was predominantly the Delta variant. In recent weeks, infections have increased steeply, **coinciding with the detection of B.1.1.529 variant.** **The first known confirmed B.1.1.529 infection was from a specimen collected on 9 November 2021.**

Coronaviruses are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. Symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, headache, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms may begin one to fourteen days after exposure to the virus. At least a third of people who are infected do not develop noticeable symptoms.

Japan plans launch of world's first wooden satellite in 2023

- **A plan is underway in Japan to launch the world's first satellite made partially of wood in 2023, as its development team aims to harness the environmental friendliness and low cost of wood in space development.**
- **A satellite whose exterior is made of wood will burn up upon re-entering the Earth's atmosphere after the end of its operation, creating less burden on the environment, according to the team comprised of Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry Co.**

Indian-origin Ashok Elluswamy was first employee to be hired for Tesla's Autopilot team

- **Tesla founder and CEO Elon Musk, who has been using social media to recruit people, has disclosed that Indian-origin Ashok Elluswamy was the first employee to be hired for his electric vehicle company's Autopilot team. "Ashok was the first person recruited from my tweet saying that Tesla is starting an Autopilot team!" Musk said in a tweet in reply to a video of his interview.**

India to launch deep ocean mission by 2024

- **India will send its first-ever manned mission into the deep sea in 2024 after sending crewed missions into space in 2023. The mission, which has been called Samudrayan, was launched by the Centre in October 2021. "With the launch of this Unique Ocean Mission, India joins the elite club of nations such as the USA, Russia, Japan, France and China to have such underwater vehicles for carrying out subsea activities,".**
- **Samudrayan has been undertaken by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT). It will be a part of the Deep Ocean Mission, which will be implemented at a total budget Rs. 4,077 crore for five years. The preliminary design of the manned submersible MATSYA 6000 under the Samudrayan project, has already been completed.**

The Samudrayaan project is a part of the deep-sea ocean mission under Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) approved in 2021. It is India's first unique manned ocean mission that aims to send men into the deep sea in a submersible vehicle for deep-sea ocean exploration and mining of rare minerals. Resources such as polymetallic manganese nodules, Gas hydrates, hydrothermal sulfides, and cobalt crusts will be explored which are usually located at a depth between 1000 to 5500 meters. The project is undertaken by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), under MoES. India has been allocated a site of 75,000sq km in the Central Indian Ocean Basin by the International Sea Bed Authority (ISA) for the exploration of polymetallic nodules from the seabed in a 15-year contract. The estimated resource potential of polymetallic nodules is 380 million tonnes through preliminary studies. Major components in these nodules are manganese, nickel, copper, and cobalt.

India's forest, tree cover rose by 2,261 sq km in last 2 years: ISFR report

- **India's forest and tree cover has risen by 2,261 square kilometers in the last two years with Andhra Pradesh growing the maximum forest cover of 647 square kilometers, according to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021. The total tree-and-forest cover in the country includes an increase of 1,540 square kilometres of forest cover and 721 sq km of tree cover compared to the 2019 report.**
- **The biennial report by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), which is an assessment of the country's forest resources, was released by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, who revealed that the total tree-and-forest cover in the country includes an increase of 1,540 sq km of forest cover and 721 sq km of tree cover compared to the 2019 report.**
- **India's total forest and tree cover is now spread across 80.9 million hectares, which is 24.62 per cent of the geographical area of the country. The top five states in terms of increase in forest cover are Andhra Pradesh (647 sq km), Telangana (632 sq km), Odisha (537 sq km), Karnataka (155 sq km)**

and Jharkhand (110 sq km). **Area-wise, Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country** followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.

- **Out of these states and UTs, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya have more than 75 per cent forest cover, while 12 states/UTs** (Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Goa, Kerala, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Assam, Odisha) **have forest cover between 33 per cent to 75 per cent.**
- **In terms of forest cover as the percentage of total geographical area, the top five states are Mizoram (84.53 percent), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33 percent), Meghalaya (76 percent), Manipur (74.34 percent), and Nagaland (73.90 percent).**
- **To achieve India's aim of increasing additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes CO₂ equivalent by 2030, Nagar Van Yojna has been introduced to increase the tree cover and joined with the second phase of Green Mission in the next five years,".**

Forest Survey of India (FSI), was founded in June 1981 and was headquartered at Dehradun in Uttarakhand, it is the Government of India Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change organization which conducts forest surveys, studies and researches to periodically monitor the changing situations of land and forest resources and present the data for national planning, conservation and sustainable management of environmental protection as well for the implementation of social forestry projects.

In first, US surgeons transplant pig heart into human patient

- On January 7th, 2021 **David Bennett became the first person to have a heart transplanted successfully into him from a pig.** In press material issued three days after the operation, the University of Maryland confirmed Mr Bennett was doing well, and was capable of breathing on his own. **While he continues to rely on artificial support to pump blood around his body, the team behind the surgery, led by Bartley Griffith, plan gradually to reduce its use. This operation is a milestone for xenotransplantation—the transfer of organs from other species to human patients.**
- **Xenotransplantation is the process of grafting or transplanting organs or tissues between members of different species.** It has been pursued by modern medical science for decades, but experts have found it difficult to surmount the challenge presented by the immune system's rejection of an alien organ, ending in deadly outcomes for patients.

India successfully tests advanced “Sea to Sea” variant of BrahMos missile from INS Visakhapatnam

- **India successfully tested advanced sea to sea variant of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise missile from INS Visakhapatnam.** Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO said the missile hit the designated target ship precisely.
- **The missile is a joint venture between India and Russia where Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) represents the Indian side. The missile was tested from INS Visakhapatnam which is the latest warship of the Indian Navy inducted recently.**
- **BrahMos is the main weapon system of the Indian Navy warships and have been deployed on almost all of its surface platforms. An underwater version is also being developed which will not only be used by the submarines of India but will also be offered for export to friendly foreign nations.**

India Draws Up Action Plan to Reintroduce 50 Cheetahs Decades After They Disappeared From the Subcontinent

- **Cheetahs, native to Africa and Asia, became extinct in the 1950s from the Indian subcontinent. And now, the world's fastest land animal is all set to make a comeback to Indian jungles.**
- **The environment minister, Bhupendra Yadav, announced that as many as 50 Cheetahs would be translocated over the next five years from South Africa and Namibia.** He unveiled the action plan at the 19th meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
- **This is the first such effort to relocate Cheetahs—extinct for at least 70 years now—from another continent. Initially, the plan to reintroduce cheetahs was in 2021, however, it got delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The idea to bring back the species was first conceived in 2009.**
- **Several sites have been selected to host cheetahs in India. Among them, the first batch of eight cheetahs will arrive and stay in Kuno National Park (KNP) of Madhya Pradesh this year. KNP is the most**

recommended site in India due to its favourable habitat consisting of mixed woodland-grassland spread across 730 sq km.

Red Sanders falls back in IUCN's 'endangered' category

- **Red Sanders (Red Sandalwood)** has fallen back into the 'endangered' category in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List. The species, *Pterocarpus santalinus*, is an Indian endemic tree species, with a restricted geographical range in the Eastern Ghats.
- The species is endemic to a distinct tract of forests in Andhra Pradesh. It was classified as 'near threatened' in 2018 and has now joined the 'endangered' list once again in 2021. It was a moment of celebration when the species was lifted off from the endangered category for the first time since 1997.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN; officially International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) is an international organization working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. It is involved in data gathering and analysis, research, field projects, advocacy and education. IUCN's mission is to "influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable". IUCN was established in 1948. Its headquarters are in Gland, Switzerland.

India's First IVF Calf of Punganur Cattle Breed Born in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar

- Year 2022 brought cheer for the breed and the Animal Husbandry Department as the first IVF calf of the Punganur breed was born. "India's first IVF calf of Punganur cattle was born at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra," according to the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD).
- The DAHD, which is part of the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, has launched a project that can substantially enhance national dairy production while also safeguarding indigenous cattle. "Milk from indigenous cattle has a stronger nutritional value for combating diseases," an official stated.
- The DAHD has also been working on comparable projects for the Banni, Tharpakar, and Ongole breeds. Earlier in October, India's first Banni buffalo IVF calf was born in Gujarat's Somnath district, while Suratgarh in Rajasthan saw the birth of the first female Tharpakar calf created using the IVF technique.

In a first, India to export BrahMos missile to Philippines

- In a major boost to India's defence export plans, the Philippines has accepted Indian BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd's proposal worth \$374.9 million to supply a Shore-based Anti-Ship Missile System Acquisition Project for its navy. Most recently, the Indian Navy tested a naval variant of BrahMos, jointly developed by India and Russia, from its destroyer INS Visakhapatnam.

Odisha Newborn's 'True Human Tail' Surgically Removed in World's First Case

- A baby was born in Odisha with a spinal cord anomaly which doctors claimed to be the world's first recorded bony tail in the thoracic region. The 'tail' had been removed in a private hospital in Bhubaneswar, Prof (Dr) Ashok Kumar Mahapatra who conducted the surgery along with another neurosurgeon told reporters.
- "The newborn baby had a spinal cord anomaly with a tail at upper back and a dermal sinus pit in the coccygeal (tailbone) area and this is the only known case of a bony human tail in thoracic region," he said. A congenital dermal sinus is a scaly, multi-layered channel

The Global Risks Report 2022 revealed the top risks facing the world

- Climate action failure, extreme weather events and biodiversity loss were perceived by experts as the biggest threats for the global population over the next decade, according to a new report. Environmental factors like human environmental damage and natural resource crisis were also believed to be among the top 10 risks in the period, the Global Risks Report 2022 stated.
- The annual report was based on a survey of 1,000 global experts and leaders in business, government and civil society on their perception of long-term risks to the world. Views of over 12,000 leaders from 124 countries who identified their national short-term risks were also analysed.
- Most experts (31.1 per cent) thought extreme weather events will be also the biggest threat over the next two years (short-term), said the report published by the World Economic Forum. As many as 27.5 per cent of them said climate action failure will pose a major short-term risk.

Potato-shaped planet discovered about 1.8k light yrs from solar system

- **Astronomers have finally announced that an exoplanet discovered a few years ago is somewhat similar to a potato. The planet, named WASP-103b, is located in the constellation “Hercules”, at a distance of about 1,800 light-years from the solar system.**
- **According to news agency AFP, WASP-103b is a close distance away from its star WASP-103, which is about 50 times closer to its sun than Earth is to its sun, to the extent that the planet’s cycle takes only 22 hours, while the Earth’s cycle takes 365 days. Astronomers initially discovered this unusually shaped planet back in 2014.**

An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside the Solar System. The first possible evidence of an exoplanet was noted in 1917, but was not recognized as such. The first confirmation of detection occurred in 1992. A different planet, originally detected in 1988, was confirmed in 2003. As of 1 January 2022, there are 4,905 confirmed exoplanets in 3,629 planetary systems, with 808 systems having more than one planet.

Russia starts manufacturing reactor for Kudankulam nuclear power plant

- **Russia’s state atomic energy corporation has started manufacturing the nuclear reactor and steam generators for the sixth unit of Tamil Nadu’s Kudankulam nuclear power plant. Rosatom is currently building the 6,000-MW project at Kudankulam, which will have six VVER-1000 nuclear reactors, and is in talks with India to construct six more reactors at a new site that is yet to be identified.**

China builds the world’s first artificial moon

- **Chinese scientists have built an ‘artificial moon’ possessing lunar-like gravity to help them prepare astronauts for future exploration missions. The structure uses a powerful magnetic field to produce the celestial landscape — an approach inspired by experiments once used to levitate a frog.**

The Moon is Earth’s only natural satellite. At about one-quarter the diameter of Earth (comparable to the width of Australia), it is the largest natural satellite in the Solar System relative to the size of a major planet, the fifth largest satellite in the Solar System overall, and larger than any known dwarf planet. The most widely accepted origin explanation posits that the Moon formed about 4.51 billion years ago, not long after Earth, out of the debris from a giant impact between the planet and a hypothesized Mars-sized body called Theia. It then receded to a wider orbit because of tidal interaction with the Earth. Orbiting Earth at an average distance of 384,400 km (238,900 mi), or about 30 times Earth’s diameter, its gravitational influence slightly lengthens Earth’s day and is the main driver of Earth’s tides. The Moon’s orbit around Earth has a sidereal period of 27.3 days. During each synodic period of 29.5 days, the amount of visible surface illuminated by the Sun varies from none up to 100%, resulting in lunar phases that form the basis for the months of a lunar calendar.

NASA Spacecraft ‘Touches the Sun’ For the First-Time Ever

- **The Parker Solar Probe, launched by NASA, became the first spacecraft to fly through the outer atmosphere of the Sun. The spacecraft flew through the Sun’s upper atmosphere ‘Corona’ and sampled magnetic fields and particles there. “Parker Solar Probe “touching the Sun” is a monumental moment for solar science and a truly remarkable feat”. The Parker probe was launched in 2018 to make repeated and increasingly closer passes of the Sun.**
- **The spacecraft moves at a stunning speed of over 500,000 kmph to enable getting in quickly and getting out quickly to avoid heat damage. In one of its flyby, the probe had discovered magnetic zig-zag structures in the solar wind, called switchbacks are extremely close to the Sun. After the probe moved closer to the sun’s surface, scientists were able to identify that the switchbacks originate at the solar surface.**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. Sen. Bill Nelson was sworn in as the 14th NASA administrator on May 3, 2021, tasked with carrying out the Biden-Harris administration’s vision for the agency.

In a first, Olive Ridley Sea Turtle satellite tagged on India’s west coast

- **For the first time on the west coast of India, a female Olive Ridley Sea Turtle was successfully satellite tagged at Velas Beach in Ratnagiri. The turtle has been named ‘Prathama’, and was released in the Arabian Sea, signifying the start of a new era in sea turtle conservation in Maharashtra and the west coast. Till now, Olive Ridley Sea Turtles have been satellite tagged only on the eastern coast of India.**

The olive ridley sea turtle is the most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world. *L. olivacea* is found in warm and tropical waters, primarily in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but also in the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean. This turtle and the related Kemp's ridley turtle are best known for their unique mass nesting sites called arribadas, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.

Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve bags TX2 award

- **Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR) in Erode district has been given the prestigious TX2 award after its tiger numbers doubled to 80 since 2010. Apart from the STR, the Bardia National Park in Nepal has won this year's TX2 award for doubling the population of wild tigers. The awards are presented by the Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CAITS), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Global Tiger Forum (GTF), IUCN's Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP), Panthera, UNDP, The Lion's Share, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and WWF. They celebrate the 10th anniversary of all 13 tiger range countries committed to doubling the global population of wild tigers by 2022.**
- **Sathyamangalam wildlife sanctuary was declared a tiger reserve in 2013 and the reserve that spread across 1,411.60 sq km is an important link between the Nilgiris and Eastern Ghats landscape. The Nilgiri biosphere landscape that this reserve is part of is currently the home to the largest tiger population in the world. It is connected to other well-established tiger habitats like Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Bandipur Tiger Reserve and BR Hills Tiger Reserve.**

TX2 award acknowledges the efforts by the State governments and the local communities which have played one of the most important roles to turn a relatively new tiger reserve into one of the source populations of tigers in India.

IBM sets up a key cybersecurity hub for the entire Apac region in Bengaluru

- **IBM set up a cyber-security hub in Bengaluru to help businesses across the Asia Pacific region to manage and combat the growing threat of cyberattacks. The hub would have a new IBM Security Command Center, the first of its kind in the region, for training cybersecurity response techniques through highly realistic, simulated cyberattack, designed to prepare everyone from C-Suite through technical staff.**

International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) is an American multinational technology corporation headquartered in Armonk, New York. The company began in 1911, founded in Endicott, New York, by trust businessman Charles Ranlett Flint, as the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (CTR) and was renamed "International Business Machines" in 1924. IBM is incorporated in New York.

IISc commissions Param Pravega, one of the most powerful supercomputers in India

- **The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has installed and commissioned Param Pravega, one of the most powerful supercomputers in India, and the largest in an Indian academic institution under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).**
- **The system, which is expected to power diverse research and educational pursuits, has a total supercomputing capacity of 3.3 petaflops (1 petaflop equals a quadrillion or 1,015 operations per second), the premier science research institution based in Bengaluru. It has been designed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).**

NASA selects two missions to help better understand earth-sun environment

- **NASA has selected two science missions - the Multi-slit Solar Explorer (MUSE) and HelioSwarm - to help improve our understanding of the dynamics of the Sun, the Sun-Earth connection, and the constantly changing space environment.**
- **These missions will provide deeper insights into our universe and offer critical information to help protect astronauts, satellites, and communications signals such as GPS. "MUSE and HelioSwarm will provide new and deeper insight into the solar atmosphere and space weather.**

Malta becomes first country to introduce WHO training for dementia caregivers

- **Malta became the first country to introduce 'iSupport', WHO's online training for caregivers of people with dementia. The training launched in Malta is the result of a two-year collaboration between the Ministry for Senior Citizens and Active Ageing, clinicians, academics, civil society organizations and carers of people with dementia, to adapt the original version developed by WHO to the Maltese context.**

ISRO places three satellites in orbit in first launch of 2022

- **The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully placed its earth observation satellite EOS-04 and two small satellites into the intended orbit, its first launch mission in 2022. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C52) with the three satellites onboard blasted off.** In the first successful launch in about a year, the Indian Space Research Organisation sent EOS-04, an all-weather earth observation satellite, and two other satellites into space on a PSLV rocket. The launch starts a busy calendar for the Indian space agency, which has lined up as many as 19 launches this year, after two years of lull caused by the Covid19 pandemic.

Government of India bans 54 more Chinese apps over privacy, espionage concerns

- **India has banned 54 Chinese apps over privacy, security and espionage concerns**, saying that they were clones of previously taken down applications that obtained critical permissions to collect sensitive user data. **As many as 267 apps were earlier blocked in 2020, citing privacy and security threats amid border tensions between India and China.**
- **The banned apps include Beauty Camera, Equalizer, Music Player, Rise of Kingdoms: Lost Crusade, Tencent Xriver, and Conqueror Online II. India took down TikTok and 59 other applications in June 2020.** A month later, mirror applications were taken down as they were functioning despite the ban.

IIT-Hyderabad develops first indigenous 5G technology

- In a major boost to India's 5G capabilities, **a maiden 5G data call was developed by researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) and WiSig Networks using indigenously developed open radio access network (ORAN), a 5G compliant technology.** Till date, India has imported 2G, 3G and 4G technologies.

International Space Station to retire by crashing into Pacific Ocean by 2031

- **NASA laid out the details of how it plans to retire the International Space Station (ISS) in an official transition plan for the station that was sent to US Congress this week.**
- **The US space agency intends to retire the landmark research outpost within the next eight to nine years, plunging the massive structure into a remote part of the Pacific Ocean, nicknamed Spacecraft Cemetery.**
- **NASA is aiming for the space station's re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere in January 2031. The ISS mission control will lower its altitude, before performing a final maneuver to ensure it lands in the "South Pacific Oceanic Uninhabited Area (SPOUA),".**

The International Space Station (ISS) is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit. The ISS was launched in 1998 as part of joint efforts by the U.S., Russia, Japan, Canada and Europe. It is a multinational collaborative project involving five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada). The ownership and use of the space station is established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements. The station serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory in which scientific research is conducted in astrobiology, astronomy, meteorology, physics, and other fields. The ISS is suited for testing the spacecraft systems and equipment required for possible future long-duration missions to the Moon and Mars. The ISS was originally built to operate for 15 years.

China rover spots strange glass spheres on far side of the moon

- **China's Yutu-2 rover has spotted two strange glass spheres on the far side of the moon.** Glistening like translucent pearls against the moon's dry and dusty landscape, the lunar "spherules" are the first of their kind to be found on the lunar surface and formed fairly recently, researchers say.
- **Glass has been spotted on the moon before; by both the Yutu-2 rover and NASA's Apollo 16 mission.** It forms when silicon-rich minerals, such as pyroxene and feldspar, are rapidly superheated. **However, this is the first time glass spheres have been found on the moon.**

Chandrayaan-2 detected solar proton events due to high intensity solar flares in January 2022

- **Chandrayaan-2 Large Area Soft X-ray Spectrometer (CLASS) on-board Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter detected SPE due to an M5.5 class solar flare that occurred on January 20, 2022 (blue curve). The red curve shows the proton counts due to SPE recorded by GOES satellite operated by NOAA.**
- **When Sun is active, spectacular eruptions called solar flares occur that sometimes also spew out energetic particles (called Solar Proton Events or SPEs) into interplanetary space. Most of these are high energy protons that impact space systems and significantly increase radiation exposure to humans in space.**

India ranks third globally in forest area gain: Survey

- **India has increased its forest area in the past decade and ranks third globally in average annual net gain in forest area from 2010-2020**, the Department of Economic Affairs said in the annual Economic Survey.
- India added an average of 2,66,000 hectares of additional forest area every year during the period. **Forests covered 24% of India's total geographical area accounting for 2% of the world's total forest area in 2020**, the Survey said.
- **The top 10 countries account for 66% of the world's forest area.** Of these Brazil (59%), Peru (57%), Democratic Republic of Congo (56%) and Russia (50%) have **half or more of their total geographical area under forests.**

Rajkot first Indian city to pilot urban cooling action plan

- **The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has chosen Rajkot to become India's first city to develop an urban cooling action plan to combat extreme heat and bring solutions for sustainable cooling.** ICLEI South Asia, which made the announcement, is a **non-governmental organization that works in the sustainability space.** ICLEI South Asia is the technical partner to UNEP in this project.

India's first biomass-based hydrogen plant coming up in Madhya Pradesh

- **India's first commercial-scale biomass-based hydrogen plant is coming up in the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh.** The plant will produce a tonne of hydrogen per day, from 30 tonnes of biomass feedstock.
- It will also produce biochar and methane. The plant is being put up by a joint venture of Watomo Energies Ltd and Biezel Green Energy with an investment of Rs. 24 crore. **Watomo Energies, headquartered in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh; Biezel Green is a company promoted by Prof Preetam Singh, who teaches at the IIT BHU.**

Scientists set new record in creating energy from nuclear fusion

- **Scientists in the United Kingdom said they have achieved a new milestone in producing nuclear fusion energy, or imitating the way energy is produced in the Sun.** Energy by nuclear fusion is one of mankind's long standing quests as it **promises to be low carbon, safer than how nuclear energy is now produced and, with an efficiency that can technically exceed a 100%.**

Nuclear fusion is defined as the combining of several small nuclei into one large nucleus with the subsequent release of huge amounts of energy. It is the opposite reaction of fission, where heavy isotopes are split apart. Harnessing fusion, the process that powers the Sun, could provide a limitless, clean energy source. Fusion reactions take place in a state of matter called plasma. Plasma is a hot, charged gas made of positive ions and free-moving electrons that has unique properties distinct from solids, liquids and gases. At high temperatures, electrons are ripped from atom's nuclei and become a plasma or an ionised state of matter. Plasma is also known as the fourth state of matter.

Delhi-born Nishant Batra setting up first 4G network on Moon for NASA

- **Delhi-born Nishant Batra, a top executive at Finnish firm Nokia, is leading a project to establish the first 4G cellular network on the moon.** He will lead the efforts to **provide mobile connectivity to US Space agency NASA's ambitious Artemis moon-landing program.** 4G connectivity on the moon may become a reality in just a few months, Batra.

IIT Roorkee gets Petascale Supercomputer 'PARAM Ganga' under National Supercomputing Mission

- **The National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) which is being steered jointly by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeiTY) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and implemented by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, has progressed significantly.**
- **The four major pillars of the NSM, namely, Infrastructure, Applications, R&D, HRD, have been functioning efficiently to realize the goal of developing indigenous supercomputing eco system of the nation.** C-DAC has been entrusted the responsibility to design, development, deployment and commissioning of the supercomputing systems under the build approach of Mission.

North India's first centre for space sciences inaugurated in Jammu central university

- **Union minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated the Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Sciences at the Central University of Jammu saying the first course, B.Tech in Aviation and Aeronautics, with an intake capacity of 60 students, will start this year.**

- In October 2018, the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** had signed a **Memorandum of Understanding with the Central University of Jammu to set up the centre** with facilities for geo-spatial data analysis that will help in sustainable use of natural resources and plan land-use patterns.

Fifth Offshore Patrol Vessel ICGS ‘Saksham’ enters in service for India

- In a significant development aimed at bolstering the maritime security of the nation, the **Indian Coast Guard (ICR) has commissioned ICGS ‘Saksham’, the fifth Coast Guard Ship in the series of 105 M-Class offshore patrol vessels.**
- **Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Saksham is the 5th and last Offshore Patrol Vessel designed and developed by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) for Coast Guard.** The state-of-art offshore patrol vessel uses totally indigenous steering gear and gearbox, which was earlier being imported.

The **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** is a maritime law enforcement and search and rescue agency of India with jurisdiction over its territorial waters including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone. The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 1 February 1977 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

N Korea claims successful launch of ‘monster missile’ Hwasong-17

- **North Korea has announced that it successfully launched its largest intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in a test. The Hwasong-17 was first unveiled in 2020 at a parade** where its colossal size surprised even seasoned analysts. ICBMs are long-range missiles, capable of reaching the US. N Korea is banned from testing them and has been heavily sanctioned for doing so before.

India successfully test-fires surface to surface BrahMos supersonic cruise missile in Andaman and Nicobar

- **India has successfully test-fired surface to surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos in Andaman and Nicobar.** The extended range missile hit its target with pinpoint accuracy. **The extended range missile test firing was witnessed by Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari** and other defence officials who congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on the successful test-firing of BrahMos missile.
- **The range of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles had recently been extended to 500 km by simply upgrading the software.** No changes were made to the missile. **BrahMos was recently in a controversy after a missile was misfired due to a technical malfunction** from an Indian Air Force unit during a Command Air Staff Inspection (CASI). **The missile landed in Pakistani territory**, causing little damage to property and equipment and no harm to people.

BrahMos is named on the rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva. It is a two-stage (solid propellant engine in the first stage and liquid ramjet in second) missile. It is a multiplatform missile i.e it can be launched from land, air, and sea and multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions. **It operates on the “Fire and Forgets” principle i.e it does not require further guidance after launch.** The BrahMos missile was initially developed with a range capped at 290 km. The range of the missile was originally capped at 290 km as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). However, following India’s entry into the MTCR club in June 2016, the range is planned to be extended to 450 km and to 600 km at a later stage. BrahMos is a joint venture between the Defence Research and Development Organisation of India (DRDO) and the NPOM of Russia. **Brahmos is one of the fastest cruise missile currently operationally deployed with speed of Mach 2.8, which is nearly 3 times more than the speed of sound.**

Pterosaur, world’s biggest mid-Jurassic flying animal, discovered in Scotland

- **Scotland is well known for its cloudy days and constant rain. One hundred and seventy million years ago, it was much warmer and tropical – and it had huge reptiles with a wingspan of 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) soaring the skies.** That’s what researchers learned from a fossil that was discovered on the Isle of Skye, in northwest Scotland.
- **Pterosaurs, or pterodactyls as they are commonly known, were flying reptiles that existed from the Late Triassic, which was around 228 million years ago, to the end of the Cretaceous, 66 million years ago, when an asteroid wiped out almost all life on Earth.**
- **The new species is called Dearc sgiathanach pronounced “jark ski-an-ack,” which is a Scottish Gaelic name meaning both “winged reptile!” and “reptile from Skye.”** The discovery is “a superlative Scottish

fossil,” **Stephen Brusatte** told DW. The paleontologist at the University of Edinburgh led the National Geographic Society-funded expedition that found “Jark” back in 2017.

Massive dust cloud spotted by NASA’s Spitzer telescope could give insights into planet formation

- **A group of astronomers made over 100 routine observations of a distant ten-million-year-old star called HD166191 using NASA’s Spitzer Space Telescope** and combined that with knowledge about the star’s brightness and size to arrive at information that will help scientists test theories about how planets are formed and how they grow.
- **The Spitzer Space Telescope was an infrared space telescope that was launched by NASA in 2003 and continued operating for sixteen years before it was finally decommissioned in 2019. Most rocky planets, satellites and other celestial objects in the solar system, including the Moon and the Earth, were formed by massive collisions early in the early history of the solar system.**

Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari to conduct first spacewalk

- **Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari, who arrived on the Space Station last year will walk out of the safety of the airlock into the vacuum of space to conduct his first spacewalk. He will be joined by Flight Engineers Kayla Barron as they upgrade the International Space Station, whose services have been extended till 2030. The two astronauts will remain in the vacuum of space for nearly 6.5 hours as they prepare the Space Station for upgrades to the solar panels that power it up.**
- **NASA said that the duo will exit Quest, then translate over to the Starboard-4 truss structure and install modification kits that will ready the space station for its third roll-out solar array. Both Chari and Barron had been preparing for the spacewalk for over a week and had readied their spacesuits and placed their spacewalk tools inside Quest. The green signal was given by Nasa after the final procedures review and a conference with specialists on the ground.**

World First as UN Begins Creation of ‘Historic’ Global Treaty on Plastic Waste

- **The United Nations agreed to start negotiating a world-first global treaty on plastic pollution in what has been hailed a watershed moment for the planet. Nearly 200 nations at the UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi unanimously agreed to create an intergovernmental committee to negotiate and finalize a legally binding plastics treaty by 2024.**

First wildlife bond issued by World Bank to save Africa’s black rhino

- **The World Bank said it has priced the world’s first wildlife bond, raising \$150 million that will be partly used for the conservation of black rhinos in South Africa. The five-year bond will pay returns determined by the rate of growth in populations of the animals in two South African reserves, the Addo Elephant National Park and the Great Fish River Nature Reserve. “The Wildlife Conservation Bond is a first-of-its-kind, outcome-based, financial instrument that channels investments to achieve conservation outcomes – measured in this case by an increase in black rhino populations”.**

India unveils its Arctic policy, focuses on combating climate change

- **The Centre released India’s Arctic Policy, with the aim of enhancing the country’s cooperation with the resource-rich and rapidly transforming region. The policy also seeks to combat climate change and protect the environment in the region, which is warming three times faster than the rest of the world.**
- **Titled ‘India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development’, the policy is built on six central pillars — science and research, climate and environmental protection, economic and human development, transportation and connectivity, governance and international cooperation, and finally, national capacity building.**
- **The adverse effects of climate change are not only impacting the availability of mineral and hydrocarbon resources but are also transforming global shipping routes, according to an analysis of the policy published by the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.**

HIMADRI ‘the abode of snow’ is India’s first research station located at the International Arctic Research base, NyAlesund, Svalbard, Norway. It is located at a distance of 1,200 kilometres from the North Pole. It was inaugurated on the 1st July, 2008 by Shri. Kapil Sibal the-then Hon. Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, in the presence of dignitaries from Norway, UK, Germany and other countries besides India. Dakshin Gangotri was the first scientific base station of India situated in Antarctica, part of the Indian Antarctic Programme. It is located at a distance of 2,500 kilometres (1,600 mi) from the South Pole. It is currently being used as a supply base and transit camp. The base is named after Dakshin Gangotri Glacier. Maitri also known as Friendship Research Centre, is India’s second permanent research station in Antarctica as part of the Indian Antarctic Programme.

Indian-American among two astronauts who carried out spacewalk

- **Two astronauts at the International Space Station (ISS) exited the space station for a six and a half hour spacewalk or an Extravehicular Activity (EVA). This is the second spacewalk** being undertaken to upgrade the orbiting laboratory.
- According to a statement by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), **flight engineers Raja Chari of NASA and Matthias Maurer of the European Space Agency (ESA) were given the go-ahead to exit the ISS.**
- **This is the first spacewalk for Indian-American Raja Chari**, a colonel in the United States Air Force with over 2,000 flying hours. The 44-year-old astronaut is **also part of the Artemis program- to help pave the way for the next lunar missions including sending the first woman and next man to walk on the lunar surface in 2024.**

SpaceX launches first private astronaut mission to Space Station

- **SpaceX’s Crew-4 astronaut mission for NASA has launched successfully atop the Falcon 9 rocket from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft, named Freedom by the crew, successfully separated from the second stage of the Falcon 9 rocket and is now flying on its own.**
- **The Crew-4 flight carries mission Commander Kjell Lindgren, Pilot Bob Hines, and mission specialist Jessica Watkins (who is the geologist that Schmitt spoke of), all of whom are NASA astronauts. The flight also carries mission special Samantha Cristoforetti of the European Space Agency (ESA).**

Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (doing business as SpaceX) is an American aerospace manufacturer, a provider of space transportation services, and a communications corporation headquartered in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk with the goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars. SpaceX manufactures the Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy launch vehicles, several rocket engines, Cargo Dragon, crew spacecraft, and Starlink communications satellites. SpaceX is developing a satellite internet constellation named Starlink to provide commercial internet service. The company is also developing Starship, a privately funded, fully reusable, super heavy-lift launch system for interplanetary and orbital spaceflight.

India successfully flight-tests Anti-Tank Guided Missile HELINA

- **Indigenously developed helicopter launched Anti-Tank Guided Missile ‘HELINA’ was successfully flight tested on April 11, 2022 at high-altitude ranges as part of user validation trials. The flight-test was jointly conducted by the teams of scientists from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF). It is one of the most advanced Anti-Tank weapons in the world.**
- **The flight trials were conducted from an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and the missile was fired successfully engaging simulated tank target. The missile is guided by an Imaging Infra-Red (IIR) Seeker operating in the Lock on Before Launch mode. It is one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world.**

NASA’s Hubble discovers farthest star detected till date

- **NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope has discovered the farthest star ever seen to date. The star is more than 12.9 billion light-years away and likely existed within the first billion years after the beginning of the universe.**
- **The star system is officially called WHL0137-LS, but it has been nicknamed “Earendel”, which means “morning star” in Old English. This discovery is a massive leap from the previous record-holding**

star: “Icarus” or officially, MACS J1149+2223 Lensed Star 1. Icarus existed at a time when the universe was about 4 billion years old or about one-third of its current age. Scientists refer to this time as redshift 1.5. The word “redshift” is used because as the universe expands, light from distant objects shifts to a longer wavelength, appearing more reddish.

The Hubble Space Telescope (often referred to as HST or Hubble) is a space telescope that was launched into low Earth orbit in 1990 and remains in operation. It was not the first space telescope, but it is one of the largest and most versatile, renowned both as a vital research tool and as a public relations boon for astronomy. The Hubble telescope is named after astronomer Edwin Hubble and is one of NASA’s Great Observatories, along with the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory (1991–2000), the Chandra X-ray Observatory (1999–present), and the Spitzer Space Telescope (2003–2020). The Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) selects Hubble’s targets and processes the resulting data, while the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) controls the spacecraft.

Astronomers discover the ‘most distant galaxy ever’

- **Researchers at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics have spotted what might be the farthest astronomical object ever found — a galaxy candidate named HD1 that they estimate is 13.5 billion light-years away. That’s an astonishing 100 million light-years more distant than the current farthest galaxy, GN-z11. An international team of astronomers has discovered the most distant astronomical object of all time: a galaxy. Shining only about 300 million years after the Big Bang, it may contain the oldest stars in the universe or a supermassive black hole.**

India to develop and build first indigenous Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vessel

- **The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways decided to develop and build India’s first indigenous Hydrogen Fuelled Electric Vessels at Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL). This has kick started the efforts of the country towards green shipping. Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said that the plan for building Hydrogen Fuelled Electric Vessels is keeping pace with the Global Maritime Green Transitions.**

Sarbananda Sonowal is the current Cabinet Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Cabinet Minister of AYUSH in the Government of India. He is a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of India’s Parliament) from Assam. He is a former Chief Minister of Assam.

India’s largest lithium-ion battery plant starts production in Gujarat

- **India’s largest lithium-ion battery plant is located in the state of Gujarat. Indian battery maker Exide Industries and joint venture partner Switzerland’s Leclanche SA have begun mass production at the nation’s largest lithium-ion battery plant in the western state of Gujarat. The plant, with total installed capacity of 1.5 Gigawatt hours (GWh), has six automated assembly lines on which it will produce batteries for automobiles and energy storage applications, the joint venture company, Nexcharge.**

Lithium is referred to as “white gold” – Lithium metal is soft, white, and lustrous—and several of its alloys and compounds are produced on an industrial scale. The Lithium Triangle is a region of the Andes rich in lithium reserves around the borders of Argentina, Bolivia and Chile. The area is thought to hold around 54% of the world’s lithium reserves. Australia, Chile, China and Argentina are the world’s top four lithium-producing countries. Australia is by far the world’s top producer of lithium, with an output of 42,000 tonnes in 2019. As of now, India currently imports all its lithium needs. The Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India has discovered 1600 kg Lithium in Mandla district of Karnataka.

Blue Origin NS-21 mission to include first Mexican-origin woman to space

- **Blue Origin, the aerospace company founded by Jeff Bezos, has announced the crew flying on its NS-21 mission. The six passengers going on a spaceflight on the company’s New Shepard spacecraft will include electrical engineer and former NASA test lead Katya Echazarreta, who will become the first Mexican-born woman and youngest American woman to fly to space.**
- **She will be flying as part of Space for Humanity’s sponsored Citizen Astronaut Program. The rest of the crew will include Blue Origin investor and NS-19 astronaut Evan Dick, business jet pilot Hamish Harding, civil production engineer Victor Correa Hespanha, venture capitalist Jaison Robinson and explorer and venture capitalist Victor Vescovo.**

Mumbai gets India's first EV charging station powered by food waste

- Maharashtra Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray inaugurated the India's first bio-gas powered EV charging station at Keshavrao Khadye road near Haji Ali in Mumbai.

Indigenously built space telescope 'Astrosat' witnesses birth of black holes for five hundredth time

- Astrosat, India's first dedicated astronomy mission witnessed the birth of black holes for the five hundredth time early. Black holes, the ultimate cosmic enigma, have been a subject of intense scrutiny from astronomers from all over the world.
- However, Indian scientists are making great headway in studying black hole births using the indigenously built space telescope - Astrosat. It may be noted that astronomers study Gamma Ray Bursts, also called the mini big bangs and X-rays from such bursts to better understand formation of black holes.
- Astrosat with a lift-off mass of 1,515 kilogram was launched from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, on 28th of September 2015. It is the most sensitive space telescope in the world; consisting of five instruments that can simultaneously study the universe in ultraviolet, optical and X-ray radiation. One of these instruments is the Cadmium Zinc Telluride Imager - CZTI, which discovers the birth of black holes.

A black hole is a place in space where gravity pulls so much that even light cannot get out. The gravity is so strong because matter has been squeezed into a tiny space. This can happen when a star is dying. **Because no light can get out, people can't see black holes. They are invisible. Space telescopes with special tools can help find black holes.** The special tools can see how stars that are very close to black holes act differently than other stars. Scientists have also detected the gravitational waves generated when two black holes collide. **The concept was theorized by Albert Einstein in 1915 and the term 'black hole' was coined by John Archibald Wheeler. The light surrounding the black hole right to the edge of the event horizon, which is the goal of the Event Horizon Telescope. In April 2019, the scientists at the Event Horizon Telescope Project released the first-ever image of a Black Hole (more precisely, of its shadow). A gravitational singularity, spacetime singularity or simply singularity is a condition in which gravity is so intense that spacetime itself breaks down catastrophically.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated World's first Nano Urea (Liquid) Plant in Gujarat

- The Prime Minister addressed the Seminar of Leaders of various Cooperative Institutions on 'Sahakar Se Samridhhi' at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, where he inaugurated World's first Nano Urea (Liquid) Plant constructed at Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd (IFFCO) at Kalol. The cooperative sector of Gujarat has been a role model for the entire nation. There are more than 84 thousand cooperative societies in the state.
- The organization of the Seminar of leaders of various Cooperative institutions on 'Sahakar Se Samridhhi' is yet another step towards further strengthening the cooperative movement in the state. The Nano Urea (Liquid) Plant has been built at the cost of around 175 crore rupees in an effort to further provide farmers the means to boost productivity and help increase their income.

PARAM PORUL Supercomputer inaugurated at NIT, Tiruchirappalli

- In a joint initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), a state-of-the-art Supercomputer, PARAM PORUL was inaugurated at NIT Tiruchirappalli.
- NIT, Tiruchirappalli has been carrying out research in the areas of societal interest such as Health, Agriculture, Weather, and Financial Services. The PARAM PORUL supercomputing facility is established under Phase 2 of the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM). The majority of the components used to build this system have been manufactured and assembled within the country. This includes the indigenous software stack developed by C-DAC, in line with the Make in India initiative.

Supercomputing in India has a history going back to the 1980s. The Government of India created an indigenous development programme as they had difficulty purchasing foreign supercomputers. With the PARAM Siddhi-AI is being the fastest supercomputer in India. In 2015 the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology announced a "National Supercomputing Mission" (NSM) to install 73 indigenous supercomputers throughout the country by 2022. The NSM is being implemented by C-DAC and the Indian Institute of Science.

NASA scientists crack 60-year solar flare mystery

- In the span of a few minutes, a solar flare can release enough energy to power the whole world for over 2000 years. These flares are triggered by a process called magnetic reconnection, a phenomenon that scientists have been trying to understand for more than half a century.
- Fully understanding it can give new insights into nuclear fusion and will also help provide better predictions for solar particle storms that can affect technology on Earth. Now scientists with NASA's Magnetospheric Multiscale Mission (MMS) may have finally figured out this puzzle. They have developed a theory for how the most explosive type of magnetic reconnection—called fast magnetic reconnection—happens and how it takes place at such a consistent speed.

A solar flare is a sudden flash of increased brightness on the Sun, usually observed near its surface and in proximity to a sunspot group. Powerful flares are often, but not always, accompanied by a coronal mass ejection. Even the most powerful flares are barely detectable in the total solar irradiance (the “solar constant”). Solar flares occur in a power-law spectrum of magnitudes; an energy release of typically 10^{20} joules of energy suffices to produce a clearly observable event, while a major event can emit up to 10^{25} joules.

Astronomers capture 1st image of Milky Way's huge black hole

- The first photograph of Sagittarius A* (pronounced as *sadge-ay-star*), a supermassive black hole about 26,000 light years from Earth and situated at the centre of the Milky Way, was revealed by astronomers of the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT). More than 300 researchers from 80 institutions collaborated on this project.
- In April 2019, astronomers captured the first ever photograph of a black hole M87, which was located in a distant galaxy called Messier 87. It is 4 million times more massive than our sun. This is not the first black hole image. The same group released the first one in 2019 and it was from a galaxy 53 million light-years away. The Milky Way black hole is much closer, about 27,000 light-years away. A light year is 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion kilometres).
- Black holes are extremely dense points in space that create deep gravity sinks from which even light cannot escape. It can be formed by a death of a massive star. A black hole takes up zero space but does have mass, that used to be a star. And black holes get more massive as they consume matter near them. For instance, for a spacecraft to leave the surface of the Earth, it needs to be travelling at a speed of about 40,000 km per hour which is so great that even light cannot escape it.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age.
- The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the disease and how the virus spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by staying at least 1 metre apart from others, wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently. Get vaccinated when it's your turn and follow local guidance. The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. These particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. It is important to practice respiratory etiquette, for example by coughing into a flexed elbow, and to stay home and self-isolate until you recover if you feel unwell.

The COVID-19 pandemic in India is a part of the worldwide pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The first cases of COVID-19 in India were reported on 30 January 2020 in three towns of Kerala, among three Indian medical students who had returned from Wuhan, the epicenter of the pandemic. The disease spread worldwide, leading to the COVID-19 pandemic. The official names COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2 were issued by the WHO on 11 February 2020. The Director-General, Tedros Adhanom explained that CO stands for *corona*, VI for *virus*, D for *disease*, and 19 for 2019, the year in which the outbreak was first identified. The WHO additionally uses “the COVID-19 virus” and “the virus responsible for COVID-19” in public communications.

State of the World's Forests 2022: 10% of total forest area on Earth lost in 30 years

- **The world has lost 420 million hectares (mha), approximately 10.34 per cent of its total forest area in the last 30 years**, according to the 2022 edition of The State of the World's Forests (SOFO). The report, released on day one of the World Forestry Congress, also presented three pathways for achieving green recovery and tackling environmental crises.
- **The 420 mha of forests have been lost between 1990 and 2020, due to deforestation**, though forests cover 4.06 billion ha (31 per cent) of the earth's geographical area. It added that although the rate of deforestation was declining, 10 mha of forests were lost every year between 2015 and 2020.
- **“Unless additional action is taken, an estimated 289 mha of forests would be deforested between 2016 and 2050 in the tropics alone, resulting in the emission of 169 GtCO₂e,”** it warned. Globally, ecosystems at risk of deforestation or degradation contain at least 260 Gt of irrecoverable or difficult-to-recover carbon, particularly in peatlands, mangroves, old-growth forests and marshes, the report added. SOFO 2022, stated that 15 per cent of 250 emerging infectious diseases have been linked to forests. It further stated that 30 per cent of new diseases, reported since 1960, can be attributed to deforestation and land-use-change.

Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary notified as 52nd Reserve Forest for Wild cats

- **Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav** has said that **Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan has been notified**. Mr Yadav said, it is the **52nd Reserve of India**, which will conserve biodiversity and bring in ecotourism and development to the area.

World's first liquid-mirror telescope for astronomy comes to India

- **India's first liquid-mirror telescope**, which will observe asteroids, supernovae, space debris and all other celestial objects from an altitude of 2,450 metres in the Himalayas, has seen its first light. It has now entered the commissioning phase and will start scientific observations sometime in October this year.
- **The International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT), which is the largest in Asia, has been set up at the Devasthal Observatory**. Established on the campus of the Devasthal Observatory of the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) in Nainital, the International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT) is the only liquid-mirror telescope operational anywhere in the world.

ESA Announces World's First Mission to Remove Defunct Satellites from Low-Earth Orbit

- **The problem of space debris is growing exponentially and this has raised concerns for global space agencies** about the future of existing and functional satellites as well as the International Space Station (ISS). To ensure that there is no more addition to thousands of rogue spacecraft and debris pieces in the low-Earth orbit (LEO), the European Space Agency (ESA) has introduced its new mission - the Sunrise Programme.
- According to ESA, the mission will soon enter its development stage as British in-orbit servicing company Astroscale has joined the ESA Partnership Project with satellite operator OneWeb. The company will soon begin manufacturing the first commercial “servicer” prototype designed to capture multiple satellites in LEO.

Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile, Agni-4 successfully test-fired

- **Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile, Agni-4, successfully tested. A successful training launch of Agni-4, was carried out from APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha**. The Defence Ministry said, the successful test was part of routine user training launches carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command. The missile, one of many in the Agni series of strategic missiles, has a range of over 3,500 km.

Agni class of missiles are the mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability, which also includes the Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft. Agni missiles are long range, nuclear weapons capable surface to surface ballistic missile. The first missile of the series, Agni-I was developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP) and tested in 1989. After its success, Agni missile program was separated from the IGMDP upon realizing its strategic importance. Agni-P is a two-stage canisterised solid propellant missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system. It has a range of up to 2000 km. It is a canisterised surface-to-surface ballistic missile. Agni I: It is a Medium Range Ballistic Missile with a Range of 700-800 km. Agni II: It is also a Medium Range Ballistic Missile with a Range more than 2000 km. Agni III: It is also an Inter-Medium Range Ballistic Missile with Range of more than 2,500 Km. Agni IV: It is also an Inter-Medium Range Ballistic Missile with Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher. Agni-V: The longest of the Agni series, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km. Agni- VI: The longest of the Agni series, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of ICBM 11,000–12,000 km (Under development).

China releases world's 'most detailed' map of Moon

- **China has released a new comprehensive geologic map of the moon, the “most detailed” to date,** which is expected to make a vital contribution to scientific research, exploration and landing site selection on the **Earth's only natural satellite.**
- Chinese scientists from multiple research institutes and universities have **created the high resolution topographic map based on data from China's lunar exploration Chang'e project and other data and research findings from international organisations.**

India successfully tests Short-Range Ballistic Missile Prithvi-II

- A successful training launch of a **Short-Range Ballistic Missile, Prithvi-II** was carried out from the **Integrated Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha.** The missile is a proven system and is capable of **striking targets with a very high degree of precision.** The user training launch successfully validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile.
- **The trial of the surface-to-surface missile, which has a strike range of 350 km,** was carried out from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur near here at around 7.30 pm, sources said adding that it is a routine training trial.

MoU signed for India's first graphene research and innovation centre signed

- **The stage is set for the first graphene research and innovation centre in the country to become a reality as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has been signed by the implementation partners in this regard. **Digital University Kerala, the country's first on-campus digital university, Centre for Materials for Electronics Technologies (C-MET) and Tata Steel** are the **implementation partners of the innovative initiative.**

Indian communication satellite to be launched by Arianespace

- **The European space agency, Arianespace, will put into orbit two communication satellites belonging to India and Malaysia in the geostationary orbit.** The two satellites cumulatively weighing over 10 thousand kilograms will be flown by Ariane-5 rocket from the spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.
- **The Indian satellite, GSAT-24 has been developed by the New Space India Limited (NSIL), ISRO's commercial arm, for television service provider Tata Sky. The GSAT-24 is a 24-Ku band communication satellite weighing over four thousand kilograms with Pan-India coverage for meeting DTH application needs.** Moreover, the satellite has been configured to have a mission life of 15 years.

NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is an autonomous regional satellite navigation system established and maintained by ISRO. The satellite system was first announced in 2007 and was meant to be fully functional by 2012 but it did not happen due to various constraints. The first of the nine satellites was sent into orbit in 2013. PM Narendra Modi then officially announced the launch of Navic App on 72nd Independence Day celebration i.e on 15 August 2018. It covers India and a region extending up to 1,500 km beyond Indian mainland (primary coverage area) with plans of extension. India became the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by the International Maritime Organisation(IMO). The other three countries that have its navigation systems are the US, Russia and China.

Scientists harness light therapy to target and kill cancer cells in world first

- **Scientists have successfully developed a revolutionary cancer treatment that lights up and wipes out microscopic cancer cells. Light-activated therapy forces cancer cells to glow in the dark,** helping surgeons remove more tumors than existing techniques, and then kills remaining cells within minutes once the surgery is complete.
- **In a world-first trial on mice with glioblastoma, one of the most common and aggressive types of brain cancer, scans revealed that the new treatment illuminated even the smallest cancer cells to help surgeons remove them, and then swept away those left.** “This research demonstrates a novel approach to identifying and treating glioblastoma cells in the brain using light to turn an immunosuppressive environment into an immune-vulnerable one, and which has exciting potential as a therapy against this aggressive type of brain tumour.”

Hubble space telescope captures two star-forming spiral galaxies

- **NASA's Hubble Space Telescope has captured images of two spiral galaxies, which are collectively known as Arp 303. Individually, they are called IC 563 (bottom) and IC 564 (top) are more than 275 million light-years away** in the direction of the constellation Sextans.

India ranks at the bottom in a list of 180 countries in the 2022 Environmental Performance Index

- **India** has been **ranked at the bottom in a list of 180 countries** that were **judged for their environmental performances in the 2022 Environmental Performance Index (EPI)**. The list is headed by **Denmark**, which is seen as the **world's most sustainable country**.
- The EPI 2022 report says: “Based on the latest scientific insights and environmental data, **India ranks at the bottom of all countries in the 2022 EPI, with low scores across a range of critical issues.**” The EPI is a **biennial index**. It quantifies and numerically ranks the environmental performance of a country based on the **three broad issues of ecosystem vitality, health, and climate policy**.

World's first fishing cat census done in Chilika

- **The Chilika Lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, has 176 fishing cats**, according to a census conducted by Chilika Development Authority (CDA) in collaboration with The Fishing Cat Project (TFCP). **This is the world's first population estimation of the fishing cat**, which has been conducted outside the protected area network.

Largest known plant in the world is 4,500 years old and stretches across 180 km

- **Researchers have discovered what is now believed to be the largest plant in the world:** an ancient specimen of an incredibly **resilient seagrass that stretches across 180 km and is estimated to be at least 4,500 years old**. The single plant of *Posidonia australis* was **discovered in the shallow waters of the World Heritage Area of Shark Bay in Western Australia**.

India's first autonomous navigation facility, TiHAN, launched at IIT Hyderabad

- **India's first Autonomous Navigation facility, TiHAN was inaugurated by Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science & Technology at the IIT Hyderabad campus.** Developed at a budget of Rs. 130 crores by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology, TiHAN (Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation) is a multidisciplinary initiative that will make India a global player in the futuristic and next generation ‘smart mobility’ technology.
- **The vision of TiHAN-IITH is to become a global player for next generation smart mobility technologies** and the Ministry of Science & Technology has come forward to support this initiative, which will be a trendsetter for others as well. In India, **there is presently no such testbed facility for assessing autonomous vehicle performance, and hence the need for this TiHAN Testbed.**”

NASA reveals asteroid Bennu has a surface like a ‘plastic ball pit’

- **NASA has revealed that 101955 Bennu, an asteroid discovered back in 1999, has a surface that can be compared to a play area for kids**, complete with loosely packed particles that make up the entire exterior of the asteroid. The findings come after NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft collected a sample (comprising dust and rock) from the asteroid back during a mission. **Scientists have now discovered from the sample that the Asteroid's exterior is not as tightly packed as it seemed.**

OSIRIS-REx (Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer) is a NASA asteroid-study and sample-return mission. The mission's primary goal is to **obtain a sample of at least 60 g (2.1 oz) from 101955 Bennu, a carbonaceous near-Earth asteroid**, and return the sample to Earth for a detailed analysis. **OSIRIS-REx was launched on 8 September 2016, flew past Earth on 22 September 2017, and rendezvoused with Bennu on 3 December 2018.**

Space tech startup Agnikul opens India's first rocket engine factory in Chennai

- **Space tech startup Agnikul Cosmos inaugurated India's first-ever facility to manufacture 3D-printed rocket engines in Chennai.** The facility will use **additive manufacturing technology to build 3D printed rocket engines** and will be **used to produce engines for its own in-house rockets**.
- **Named Rocket Factory 1, it was unveiled by Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran and Isro chairman S Somanath in the presence of Pawan Goenka, the chairman of IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre).** The 10,000-square-foot facility is located at IIT-Madras Research Park. It will have a 400 mm × 400 mm × 400 mm metal 3D-printer from EOS that will enable end-to-end manufacturing of a rocket engine under one roof.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) is an **autonomous nodal agency**, approved by the Union Government and will be governed by the Department of Space. This organisation shall act as a medium between ISRO and the private space sector in India. Under the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre, the private parties will be allowed to perform space activities and use the equipment and facilities of the Department of Space (DoS) for launch manifest. This will be the first time that the infrastructure and property under the control of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be used by the private sector. IN-SPACE will act as a single-point interface between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and everyone who wants to participate in space-related activities, or use India's space resources.

India's first manned ocean mission 'Samudrayaan' to send humans in 6-km ocean depth

- India is making considerable efforts to unveil the mysteries tucked in the deep sea waters. Under the mega ocean mission 'Samudrayaan', the nation aims to send a team of experts into the deep sea to carry out various deep underwater studies. India's first manned ocean mission was launched by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- As part of the mission, a self-propelled manned submersible viz 'MATSYA 6000' is being developed to carry 3 human beings to a water depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools for deep ocean exploration. "The manned submersible will allow scientific personnel to observe and understand unexplored deep sea areas by direct interventions.
- MATSYA 6000 will help the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) conduct deep-ocean exploration for resources such as gas hydrates, and polymetallic manganese nodules, hydro-thermal sulphides, and cobalt crusts, which are found at depths of 1000 to 5500 metres. The Mission will open up greater opportunities for growth in the areas of clean energy, drinking water, and the blue economy.

In October 2021, the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has launched India's first manned ocean mission "Samudrayaan" in Chennai. It is a part of the Rs 6000-crores Deep Ocean Mission. The Ministry of Earth Sciences has launched the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM). DOM is a mission mode project to support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India. Earlier, the Ministry of Earth Sciences had also rolled out the draft Blue Economy Policy. Blue Economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health. The Sagarmala project is the strategic initiative for port-led development through the extensive use of IT-enabled services for the modernization of ports.

India reports first Monkeypox case in Kerala

- A man from Kerala who recently returned from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was confirmed as India's first case of monkeypox, prompting the Union government to depute a high-level multi-disciplinary team to the southern state. He is a traveller from UAE. He reached the state on July 12th. He reached Trivandrum airport and all the steps are being taken as per the guidelines issued by WHO and ICMR.

Monkeypox is a viral disease caused by the Monkeypox virus, which belongs to the Orthopoxvirus genus in the Poxviridae family and is associated with diseases such as smallpox, cowpox, horsepox, and camelpox. According to the WHO, the first large Monkeypox outbreak was detected in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996–97, with lower case fatality and a greater attack rate. Monkeypox has symptoms that are comparable to smallpox, which was proclaimed eradicated in the 1980s. It was first discovered in humans in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1970, two years after smallpox had been eradicated from the area. Monkeypox has made an appearance in the United Kingdom in 2022. The patient has a recent travel history from Nigeria, where they are suspected to have contracted the infection, before travelling to the UK, according to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which confirmed the case.

Cosmic cliffs and dancing galaxies: NASA's James Webb telescope begins new era of astronomy

- The first image from NASA's new space telescope offers the deepest look of the cosmos ever captured. The first image of James Webb Telescope, known as Webb's First Deep Field, is of a galaxy cluster named SMACS 0723. The cosmic cliffs of a stellar nursery, a quintet of galaxies bound in a celestial dance: the James Webb Space Telescope released its next wave of images heralding a new era of astronomy. The latest tranche included the "mountains" and "valleys" of a star-forming region called NGC 3324 in the Carina Nebula, dubbed the "Cosmic Cliffs," 7,600 light years away.

The James Webb Space Telescope is an infrared observatory launched by an Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana, on December 25, 2021. It is the world's most powerful 'telescope'. The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) led JWST's development in collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). On 25th January, 2022, the James Webb Space Telescope reached the point referred to as the second Lagrange point (L2) between the Earth and Sun. This point is 15,00,000 kilometres away from the Earth - more than four times as distant as the moon. The telescope is expected to work in this orbit for a decade or two, watching the birth of our universe. The Telescope was previously known as the Next Generation Telescope. It was renamed the JWST in September 2002.

WHO declares monkeypox a global emergency

- **The World Health Organisation has declared the global monkeypox outbreak a 'public health emergency of international concern' (PHEIC), one step below that of a 'pandemic.' A PHEIC, according to the WHO, constitutes "...an extraordinary event, which constitutes a public health risk to other States through the international spread, and which potentially requires a coordinated international response.."**
- **Declaring a global emergency means the monkeypox outbreak is an "extraordinary event" that could spill over into more countries and requires a coordinated global response. As part of the PHEIC declaration which is said to be "temporary" and reviewed every three months, countries are expected to follow guidelines. They are grouped into three categories: those with no reported cases or where the last case was from 21 days ago; those with recently imported cases and experiencing human-to-human transmission and finally, countries where cases are being reported and have a history of the presence of the virus.**
- **WHO previously declared emergencies for public health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2014 West African Ebola outbreak, the Zika virus in Latin America in 2016 and the ongoing effort to eradicate Polio. The emergency declaration mostly serves as a plea to draw more global resources and attention to an outbreak.**

NASA's VIPER mission delayed to 2024, is designed to look for origin of water on Moon

- **NASA has requested the Astrobotic and VIPER (Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover) team to adjust VIPER's delivery to the Moon's South Pole from November 2023 to November 2024. VIPER is a rover that will return measurements that will provide insight into the origin and distribution of water on the Moon and help determine how future human space exploration missions can harvest the Moon's resources.**
- **VIPER is part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative, which allows the acquisition of lunar delivery services from American companies for payloads for the moon that advance science, exploration or commercial development capabilities.**

UN Ocean Conference: 198 countries adopt Lisbon Declaration

- **All 198 members of the United Nations unanimously adopted July 1, 2022 the Lisbon Declaration on ocean conservation. The nations, on the last day of the UN Ocean Conference 2022, committed to follow science-based and innovative actions on an urgent basis. They also recognised that developing countries, particularly small island developing states and least developed countries need assistance with capacity building.**

The term ocean is derived from the Greek word "Oceanus" which means enormous river encircling the earth. There are five major oceans in the world- Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Arctic Ocean and Southern Ocean. Pacific Ocean is the world's largest ocean. It is bigger than all the continents put together (covers one-third of the earth's surface area). The Pacific Ocean separates North America, South America from Asia and Australia. Atlantic Ocean is the second largest ocean of the world. It covers about 20% of the earth's surface area. It is S shaped ocean. Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world. It is named after India which makes up much of its northern border. Southern Ocean also known as the Antarctic Ocean or Austral Ocean, comprises the southernmost waters of the world ocean. It is the fourth largest ocean/ second smallest ocean in the world, located south of 60°S latitude and encircling Antarctica. The Arctic Ocean is shallower and smaller than the other four oceans. It lies entirely within the Arctic Circle.

MP's Kuno prepares for world's first intercontinental cheetah translocation project

- **Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park** have been asked to prepare for the relocation of about 12-14 cheetahs in what is going to be the world's first intercontinental cheetah translocation project.
- **The plan to reintroduce cheetahs — a species that went extinct in the 1950s — to India** has been decades in the making. **The Indian government had initially approached Iran, where the Asiatic cheetah, the same subspecies that went extinct in India, exists, and was even keen on cloning the species**

Earth completes rotation in less than 24-hours, smashes record again for shortest day

- **On July 29, the Earth broke its record for the shortest day as it completed a full spin in 1.59 milliseconds less than its standard 24-hour rotation.** According to the Independent, the planet recently has been increasing its speed. **Back in 2020, the Earth saw its shortest month** that has ever been recorded since the 1960s.
- **On July 19 of that year, the shortest of all time was measured. It was 1.47 milliseconds shorter than a typical 24-hour day.** The next year, the planet continued to spin at a generally increased rate, but it did not break any records. However, according to Interesting Engineering (IE), a 50-year phase of shorter days may be starting right now.

Earth is the third planet from the Sun and the only astronomical object known to harbor life. While large volumes of water can be found throughout the Solar System, only Earth sustains liquid surface water. About 71% of Earth's surface is made up of the ocean, dwarfing Earth's polar ice, lakes, and rivers. Planet Earth has been called the "Blue Planet" due to the abundant water on its surface. The remaining 29% of Earth's surface is land, consisting of continents and islands. Earth is an ellipsoid with a circumference of about 40,000 km. Earth formed over 4.5 billion years ago. Earth is orbited by one permanent natural satellite, the Moon, which orbits Earth at 380,000 km (1.3 light seconds) and is roughly a quarter as wide as Earth.

South Korea's first lunar orbiter launched by SpaceX

- **South Korea's first lunar orbiter successfully launched on a year-long mission to observe the Moon,** Seoul with the payload including a new disruption-tolerant network for sending data from space. **The mission was formerly called the Korea Pathfinder Lunar Orbiter (KPLRO), which is now known as Danuri, a play on the Korean words for "moon" and "enjoy".** The mission is managed by the Korean Aerospace Research Institute (KARI).
- **Danuri was on a Falcon 9 rocket launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida by Elon Musk's aerospace company SpaceX.** It aims to reach the Moon by mid-December. The goal of Danuri is to test South Korea's lunar spacecraft technology. **If South Korea successfully executes this lunar mission, it will become the eighth political body to execute a moon mission** after the United States, the former Soviet Union, China, Japan, India, Luxembourg, and the European Union.

SSLV-D1/EOS-02 mission: ISRO says satellites placed in wrong orbit, no longer usable

- **After launching its Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV), carrying EOS-2 and Azaadisat satellites, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) said the satellites are no longer usable as they deviated from their circular orbit.**
- It added that a committee would analyse the issue and following its recommendations, the Isro will come back with SSLV-D2 soon. ISRO said the **maiden SSLV-D1 placed the satellites into 356 km x 76 km elliptical orbit instead of 356 km circular orbit.** "Satellites are no longer usable. Issue is reasonably identified. Failure of a logic to identify a sensor failure and go for a salvage action caused the deviation".
- **Unlike Isro's trusted workhorse — Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV) — the SSLV can carry payloads weighing up to 500 kg and deploy satellites into a 500 km low earth orbit. It uses solid fuel — hydroxyl terminated polybutadiene — to fire the first three stages** which takes the payloads to the desired altitude. **The fourth stage comprises liquid propulsion-based Velocity Trimming Module (VTM) to place the satellites into orbit.**
- **The objective of the EOS-02 was to provide inputs on thermal anomalies towards supporting applications in the domains of geo-environmental studies, forestry, hydrology, agriculture, soil, and coastal studies.** The AzaadiSAT carries 75 different payloads each weighing around 50 grams. Girl students from rural regions across the country were provided guidance to build these payloads which are integrated by the student team of 'Space Kidz India', ISRO said.

ISRO is the space agency of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. S Somanath is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

NASA's Artemis I mission will send yeast to deep space with BioSentinel

- **NASA's BioSentinel is likely to carry microorganisms to deep space to help scientists better understand the effects of deep space radiation on biological lifeforms. While NASA's Artemis I mission is an uncrewed mission, there will be some living passengers on board. BioSentinel, a shoebox-sized CubeSat, will carry microorganisms—in the form of yeast—into deep space so that scientists can fill critical gaps in the knowledge about the health risks of radiation in deep space.**
- **The primary objective of BioSentinel is to monitor the vital signs of yeast to see how the microorganism fare when exposed to the radiation of deep space. Yeast cells have biological mechanisms that are similar to human cells, including DNA damage and repair.**

India's HAL opens its first overseas office in Malaysia for LCA Tejas

- **In a first, India's largest defense public sector undertaking (DPSU), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has announced that the entity is going to establish an office in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). This is an important step as defence sector has achieved a significant growth in exporting military equipment, despite a late starter in the highly competitive global defence market.**
- **The office in Malaysia will help HAL in tapping the new business opportunities for Fighter Lead-in Trainer (FLIT) LCA and other requirements of Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) like Su-30 MKM and Hawk upgrades. It will reinforce commitment of India in supporting the Malaysian Defence Forces and industry for sustainable aerospace and defence landscape in Malaysia.**

Rocket Lab Introduces World's first Private Mission to Venus; Launch Targeted in 2023

- **US-based aerospace company Rocket Lab, introduced its next mission which involves sending a probe to Venus. Targeted for launch in May 2023, this would mark the first endeavour to the dreadful planet by a private company. According to Rocket Lab, the mission would be launched using its Electron rocket and the secondary Photon spacecraft that recently launched NASA's CAPSTONE mission to the Moon.**
- **Rocket Lab's Venus mission is supported by a research team at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the company explained the mission profile in an official document released. The mission which involves a probe weighing approximately 20 kg will be fitted inside the Photon spacecraft mounted atop the Electron rocket standing 18 meters tall. Electron is Rocket Lab's dedicated launch vehicle which can lift payloads up to 300 kg to a 500 km orbit from both of the company's launch sites in the Mahia Peninsula in New Zealand and on Wallops Island, Virginia.**

Venus is the second planet from the Sun and is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. As the brightest natural object in Earth's night sky after the Moon, Venus can cast shadows and can be visible to the naked eye in broad daylight. Venus orbits the Sun every 224.7 Earth days. Venus is a terrestrial planet and is sometimes called Earth's "sister planet" because of their similar size, mass, proximity to the Sun, and bulk composition. Venus does not have any moons, a distinction it shares only with Mercury among the planets in the Solar System.

Samir V. Kamat appointed DRDO chief

- **Distinguished scientist Samir V Kamat was appointed as Secretary of the Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).**
- **Mr. Kamat, who is Director General, Naval Systems & Materials, at the DRDO will succeed G Sathesh Reddy who has been named as scientific adviser to the Defence Minister. Mr. Kamat has been appointed to the post till he attains the age of 60 years or until further orders.**

Pluto turned into a dwarf planet

- **On 24 August 2006, Pluto's status was downgraded from a full sized planet, which it had donned for more than 70 years, to a dwarf planet by the worldwide society of professional astronomers – International Astronomical Union (IAU). Renowned astronomer Percival Lowell believed that this planet, then called Planet X, perturbed the orbits of Uranus and Neptune. However, this hypothesis of Lowell was later proved incorrect.**

- But after subsequent discoveries and advancement in technology, astronomers found over 1,000 objects orbiting beyond Neptune. The zone is now called the trans-Neptunian region, and these bodies are labelled as **Trans-Neptunian Objects**. These discoveries perplexed astronomers to give a second thought to Pluto being a planet, as it might simply be the first of a population of small, icy bodies beyond the orbit of Neptune.

Pluto (minor-planet designation: 134340 Pluto) is a dwarf planet in the Kuiper belt, a ring of bodies beyond the orbit of Neptune. **In 1930, it was the first object discovered in the Kuiper belt**, when it was **declared the ninth planet from the Sun**. Beginning in the 1990s, following the discovery of several objects of similar size in the Kuiper belt including the dwarf planet Eris, and the scattered disc, **Pluto's status as a planet was questioned**. **In 2006 the International Astronomical Union (IAU) formally re-defined the term planet**, reclassifying Pluto as a dwarf planet. **Pluto is the ninth-largest and tenth-most-massive known object directly orbiting the Sun.**

Scientists create world's first 'synthetic embryos'

- **Researchers have created the world's first "synthetic embryos" in a groundbreaking feat that bypassed the need for sperm, eggs and fertilisation.** Scientists at the Weizmann Institute in Israel found that stem cells from mice could be made to self-assemble into early embryo-like structures with an intestinal tract, the beginnings of a brain, and a beating heart.
- **Known as synthetic embryos because they are created without fertilised eggs**, the living structures are expected, in the near term, to drive deeper understanding of how organs and tissues form during the development of natural embryos. But researchers believe the work could also **reduce animal experimentation and ultimately pave the way for new sources of cells and tissues for human transplantation**. For example, skin cells from a leukaemia patient could potentially be transformed into bone marrow stem cells to treat their condition.

Hyderabad researchers develop India's first 3D-printed artificial cornea

- In a ground-breaking research, **for the first time in India, researchers from Hyderabad have successfully 3D-printed an artificial cornea** and transplanted it into a rabbit eye.
- In the major collaborative effort, **researchers from L V Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI), Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H), and the Center for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)**, have **developed a 3D-printed cornea from the human donor corneal tissue**. Developed indigenously through government and philanthropic funding, the product is completely natural, contains no synthetic components, is free of animal residues and is safe to use in patients.

IIT Guwahati Researchers develop new method to produce a sugar substitute 'Xylitol' from sugarcane waste

- **IIT Guwahati Researchers develop new method to produce a sugar substitute 'Xylitol' from sugarcane waste.** The Method developed by IIT Guwahati Researchers to produce 'Xylitol,' which has potential antidiabetic effects, overcomes limitations of chemical methods of synthesis & time delays associated with conventional fermentation.
- **IIT stated that with increasing awareness of the adverse effects of white sugar (sucrose), not only for patients with diabetes but also for general health**, there has been a rise in the consumption of safe alternative sweeteners. Xylitol, a sugar alcohol derived from natural products, has potential antidiabetic and anti-obesogenic effects, is a mild prebiotic and protects teeth against caries.

India: Target to eliminate Kala-azar by 2023

- **Union Government of India has set the target to eliminate Kala-azar from country by 2023. According to Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar (Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare)**, out of 633 Kala-azar endemic blocks, **625 blocks have successfully eliminated the kala-azar in 2021. India's target is way ahead than World Health Organisation (WHO)'s target of eliminating the disease by 2030.**
- **Kala Azar is also called as Leishmaniasis.** It is a **neglected tropical disease**, by which over 100 countries are affected, including India. Neglected tropical diseases are a group of multiple communicable diseases that are prevalent in tropical and subtropical conditions of 149 countries. **The disease is caused due to parasite called Leishmania. This parasite is transmitted via bite of sand flies.**

First govt organ transplant facility in Kozhikode

- **India's first exclusive organ transplant super speciality hospital in the government sector is all set to come up in Kozhikode.** The facility is expected to offer services for less than 40% of the expenses involved in an organ transplant surgery in private hospitals.

- **The ₹500-crore hospital, inspired by the Miami Transplant Institute**, will come up on around 20 acres of the leprosy hospital in Chevayur. There will be more than 150 expert doctors and 800 nursing staff and other technical staff at the 500-bed hospital.

Climate study: Arctic warming around four times faster than rest of the planet

- **The Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the rest of the planet over the last 40 years**, according to new research. **This is much faster than the previous estimates by the United Nations' climate science panel** in 2019. At that time, it said the **region was warming by more than double the global average due to a process known as Arctic amplification, or intense warming in the Arctic.**
- However, **researchers from the Finnish Meteorological Institute found in a study** that the **pace of the temperature increase around the North Pole** in recent decades was four times higher than the rest of the planet. **Presenting their analysis of post-1979 temperatures in the Arctic**, even researchers said, some parts of the region, notably the Barents Sea north of Norway and Russia, are warming up to seven times faster.
- **The result is faster melting of the Greenland ice sheet**, which leads to greater sea-level rise. But it also affects atmospheric circulation in North America and elsewhere, with impacts on weather like extreme rainfall and heat waves, although some of the impacts are a subject of debate among scientists.

Hubble telescope captures star-studded image of globular cluster

- **The NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope captured this glittering image of the globular cluster NGC 6540 in the Sagittarius constellation.** Globular clusters are tightly-bound and stable swarms of stars that **can hold tens of thousands to millions of stars together.**
- **All of the stars are trapped in the closely-packed group by their mutual gravitational attraction.** They are usually much larger than open clusters and the strong gravitational attraction between the stars gives them their regular spherical shape, which is why they are named “globular.”

The Hubble Space Telescope (often referred to as HST or Hubble) is a space telescope that was launched into low Earth orbit in 1990 and remains in operation. It was not the first space telescope, but it is one of the largest and most versatile, renowned both as a vital research tool and as a public relations boon for astronomy. The Hubble telescope is named after astronomer Edwin Hubble and is one of NASA's Great Observatories. The Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) selects Hubble's targets and processes the resulting data, while the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) controls the spacecraft.

E. Sports

ICC Men's T-20 Cricket World Cup: Australia lift ICC T-20 World Cup by beating New Zealand in Dubai

- **Australia lifted their maiden T20 World Cup title as they defeated New Zealand** in the final by 8 wickets at Dubai International stadium. **Australia scored 173/2 to win the tournament, the highest total in seven finals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.** That was in reply to New Zealand's score of 172/4 in the first innings.
- **Mitchell Marsh was named Player of the Match for his unbeaten 77 off 50 balls** in the final against New Zealand. It was the sixth half-century of his T20I career, all coming in 2021.
- **Australia opener David Warner was named Player of the Tournament for racking up 289 runs** at an average of 48.16 and an impressive strike-rate of 146.70.
- **Having won ICC Cricket World Cups (in the ODI format) in 1987, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2015, Australia have now pocketed one in the T20 format as well.** The next team with most men's World Cup titles is West Indies (four), followed by India (three), Pakistan, Sri Lanka and England (two each).

USA to co-host T20 Cricket World Cup in 2024

- **The United States will co-host its first major cricket tournament in 2024 when it stages part of the men's T20 World Cup.**
- The baseball-loving country, which has never **appeared at either a T20 or a 50-over World Cup**, will host the event along with the more established cricket nations of the West Indies.

Ganguly replaces Kumble as ICC Cricket's Committee chairman

- **BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has been appointed as the Chairman of the ICC men's Cricket Committee, the game's governing body.**

- **Ganguly will replace fellow Indian Anil Kumble**, who stepped down after serving a maximum of three, three-year terms. **Johnny Grave, CEO of Cricket West Indies has been appointed to the ICC Women's Cricket Committee.**

WBBL07: Smriti Mandhana becomes first from India to score a hundred

- **Smriti Mandhana became the first Indian to score a hundred in the Women's Big Bash League** when she hit one for Sydney Thunder against Melbourne Renegades. **Sydney Thunder's Smriti Mandhana scored an unbeaten 114 off 64 balls in the match against the Melbourne Renegades.**

India Named Participant in First-ever 'FIH Hockey5s Lausanne' to be held in June 2022

- **The International Hockey Federation (FIH) is delighted to announce that its first ever senior World Hockey5s event** - which was initially scheduled in September this year but postponed due to COVID-related issues - **will take place on 4-5 June 2022, in Lausanne, Switzerland.**

India and Bangladesh to jointly host 2031 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup

- **The International Cricket Council (ICC) has decided that India and Bangladesh will jointly host the 2031 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.** The hosts were selected via a competitive bidding process which was overseen by a board sub-committee **chaired by Martin Snedden along with Sourav Ganguly and Ricky Skerritt.**

ICC appoints Geoff Allardice as permanent CEO

- **Australian Geoff Allardice has been appointed as permanent CEO of the International Cricket Council** after serving the role on an interim basis for more than eight months. **Allardice thus replaced Manu Sawhney, who had resigned from his position in July.**

The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** is the world governing body of cricket. It was founded as the **Imperial Cricket Conference** in 1909 by representatives from Australia, England and South Africa. It was renamed as the **International Cricket Conference** in 1965, and took up its current name in 1987. The ICC has its **headquarters in Dubai, UAE.** The ICC has **105 member nations currently: 12 Full Members that play Test matches, and 94 Associate Members.** **Shashank Manohar resigned as Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) on 30 June 2020, after more than four years in the role.** **ICC deputy chairman Imran Khwaja was made interim chairman until an election in November.** **New Zealand administrator Greg Barclay was elected Chairman on 24 November 2020.**

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Finals-21: Tamil Nadu defeats Karnataka by four wickets in Delhi

- In cricket, **Tamil Nadu lifted the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy defeating Karnataka.** **Batsman M. Shahruckh Khan smashed a dramatic last-ball six to help Tamil Nadu defend the T-20 title with a thrilling four-wicket win in the summit clash in Arun Jaitley Stadium Delhi.**

BWF gives Prakash Padukone lifetime achievement award

- **Indian badminton great Prakash Padukone will receive the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award this year from the Badminton World Federation (BWF).**
- **The BWF Council shortlisted the Indian legend based on the award commission's recommendation.** **Badminton Association of India (BAI) had submitted his name for this award.**

Harmanpreet becomes first Indian to achieve this honor in WBBL

- **India's Harmanpreet Kaur enjoyed a fantastic Women's Big Bash League (WBBL) season.** The senior Indian cricketer has achieved a special honor.
- **She has become the first Indian player to be named the WBBL Player of the Tournament.** She has ended the regular season as **Melbourne Renegades' leading batter with 399 runs and bowler with 15 wickets.**

Mumbai City FC become first Indian club to field team in FIFA Global Series

- **Defending Indian Super League champions Mumbai City FC launched the club's official Esports team.** Recognising the global reach of Esports along with its ability to bring fans closer to the club, **Mumbai City FC, become the first Indian football club to field a team in the FIFA Global Series.**

Squash: Saurav Ghosal becomes the first Indian to win Malaysian Open

- **The Indian squash star, Saurav Ghosal, has become the first Indian to be crowned the Malaysian Open Champion - a PSA World Tour Bronze event.** The 35-year-old defeated top seed Miguel Rodrigues of Colombia 3-0 in 55 minutes to be crowned the champion.

Paramjeet Kumar becomes first Indian para powerlifter to win medal at World Championships

- **Paramjeet Kumar** became the first powerlifter from India to clinch a medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships.
- **Competing in the men's up to 49 kg category, Paramjeet Kumar of Punjab clinched bronze** in the ongoing Championships in Tbilisi, Georgia. Parmjeet's medal-winning lift was 158 kg.

Shreyas Iyer becomes first Indian to score century and half-century on Test debut

- **Shreyas Iyer** became the first Indian to score a century and a half-century on Test debut. With 170 runs in the match, **Iyer became the third-highest run-scorer for India on debut. Shikhar Dhawan (187) against Australia in Mohali in 2012 is still the highest scorer for India while Rohit Sharma (177) stands second.**

Argentina's Lionel Messi claims Ballon d'Or for seventh time

- **Popular Argentine striker Lionel Messi won the 2021 Ballon d'Or, adding the seventh golden ball to his account.** The 34-year-old who is also the **star player of Paris St-Germain football club, has won Ballon d'Or in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019 and 2021.** Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski ranked second and Chelsea's Jorginho stood third as runners up to the Ballon d'Or.

Athlete Anju Bobby George wins World Athletics Women of year award

- **The former international long jump star Anju Bobby George has been awarded the Woman of the Year Award by World Athletics (WA) for grooming talent in the country and advocating gender equality.**
- **44-year-old only Indian known for winning a medal in the World Championships with a long jump bronze in the 2003 edition was named for the award in the world body's annual awards. Senior Vice President of the Indian Athletics Federation, Bobby George is also a constant voice for gender equality and mentors schoolgirls for future leadership positions within the sport producing a world U20 medallist.**

Viktor Axelsen, Tai Tzu Ying named BWF Male and Female Player of the Year

- **Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen and Tokyo Games silver medallist Tai Tzu Ying were named the BWF Male and Female Player of the Year respectively** in recognition of their stellar runs this season.
- **It was the first season-ending award in this category for both Axelsen and Tai Tzu Ying — the All England champions of 2020.** All eight winners were honoured in a virtual broadcast. Axelsen was rewarded for his extraordinary run starting from the Barcelona Spain Masters. **The Dane made 10 finals in 11 individual tournaments, winning seven of those, including gold at the Tokyo Games.**

New Zealand's Ajaz Patel creates history becomes third bowler in Test cricket to claim all 10 wickets in an innings

- **In the 2nd Test between India and New Zealand, left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel created history by taking all 10 wickets in an innings and became the third bowler after Jim Laker and Anil Kumble to achieve the feat. He dismissed all 10 Indian batsmen in the first innings** at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. Patel finished with figures of 10/119 as India were bowled out for 325.

Magnus Carlsen claims fifth successive world chess crown

- **Norway's Magnus Carlsen claimed his fifth world chess crown in Dubai** with a crushing 7.5-3.5 victory against Ian Nepomniachtchi, who faded badly after going toe-to-toe with the Norwegian defending champion in the early games.
- **Carlsen retained his status as undisputed king of world chess. It is his fifth successive world title (starting in Chennai in November 2013). Besides, he is world No. 1 in all formats including rapid and blitz. Anand had won five official World titles but only three were in Matchplay, considered as the ultimate test.**
- **Viswanathan Anand is an Indian chess grandmaster and the fifteenth undisputed world chess champion. He became the first grandmaster from India in 1988, and is one of the few players to have surpassed an Elo rating of 2800, a feat he first achieved in 2006.**

Simone Biles named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year

- **Simone Biles was named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year.** The world's most decorated gymnast was hailed for putting her mental health first when she withdrew from four event finals at the Tokyo Olympics.

Seven-time Formula One Champion Lewis Hamilton Receives Knighthood

- Britain's seven-times Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton received a knighthood for services to motorsport, days after losing out on what would have been a record eighth title in the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.
- Hamilton is the fourth Formula One driver to receive the honorary title of "Sir" in Britain after the Australian Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart, and the only one to have received the award while still racing.

Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver in BWF World Championships in Spain

- In Badminton, Kidambi Srikanth bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 15-21, 20-22 in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain.
- Srikanth is the first Indian to finish runners-up. Lakshya finished with the bronze medal. This is the first time that India got two medals in the men's singles in the same edition of the Badminton World championships. Before this, India got two bronze medals in the Men's singles at the Badminton world championships with Prakash Padukone in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth in 2019.

Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

- Swashbuckling India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.
- In February 2021, Pant was named the Men's Player of the Month in the first edition of the ICC Player of the Month Awards.

PV Sindhu appointed BWF's Athletes' Commission member

- India's two-time Olympic medallist shuttler PV Sindhu was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission. The former world champion was named alongside five others who will serve as members till 2025.
- The Chair and Deputy Chair will be decided among the six members. "The new Commission will meet soon and decide the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission amongst the six members.

Pankaj Advani wins his 11th National Billiards title

- Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title his 11th in the tournament after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala.

Jhulan Goswami first Woman Cricketer to launch rare NFT Cricket Memorabilia

- Jhulan Goswami sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix, in association with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT) auction in Dubai.
- Sports NFTs have proven to be game-changing digital assets in recent times and the launch of CricFlix's rare NFTs will offer fans unique ownership rights alongside opportunities to make revenue by accumulating treasured moments from their digital sporting collection.

Arif Khan becomes first Indian to qualify for two events in Winter Olympics

- Jammu and Kashmir-based alpine skier Arif Mohammed Khan has qualified for his second event at the 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing. By doing this, he becomes the first Indian to qualify for two events at the Winter Olympics. There are three Indians who have previously competed at the Winter Olympics in 2 events.

'Neeraj' to be mascot for first Kerala Olympic Games

- A rabbit mascot named Neeraj, in honour of Neeraj Chopra, the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, will be the symbol for the first ever 'Kerala Olympic Games', slated to be held in February 2022.

Jamshedpur FC creates history, becomes first Indian club to join Global Football Alliance

- In a major boost to the Jharkhand soccer fraternity, Jamshedpur FC became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA).
- The Tata Steel-owned club became the 20th member to be accepted in the association, with the achievement being regarded as a milestone in Indian Football.

Himachal Pradesh beat Tamil Nadu to clinch Vijay Hazare Trophy

- **Himachal Pradesh batters played out of their skins to beat Tamil Nadu in the final of Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.**

Bharath Subramaniam becomes India's 73rd chess GM

- **Fourteen-year old Bharath Subramaniam became India's 73rd chess Grandmaster, securing the third and final GM norm at an event in Italy.**
- **The Chennai-based player scored 6.5 points from nine rounds along with four others to finish seventh overall in the event held at Cattolica.**

Khelo India Games 2023

- **The Khelo India Games were introduced to revive the sports culture in India. The 2021 Khelo India Games were postponed due to COVID crisis. It is now to be conducted in Haryana in January 2022. The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur is to attend the games. The Khelo India Youth Games 2022-23 is to be held in Madhya Pradesh. The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet recently approved to host the games from Bhopal.**

India defeat Sri Lanka in U-19 Asia Cup 2021 finals

- **India has lifted the under-19 Asia cricket Cup by defeating Sri Lanka by nine wickets in a rain-interrupted One-Day International final in Dubai through the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method..**

FIFA's Qatar 2022 World Cup will have the first 'transportable' stadium

- **The 2022 FIFA World Cup will register several firsts for the 22nd quadrennial competition. It'll be the first World Cup held in the Arab World, the first time the tournament has been held outside of late spring or early summer, and the first time a World Cup game has been played in a "transportable" stadium.**
- **Stadium 974 in the Qatari capital, Doha, was completed in late November and used for the Arab World Cup in preparation for the global competition later this year. Its name comes from both the international dialing code for Qatar and the number of recycled shipping containers used in construction.**

The FIFA World Cup is an international association football competition contested by the senior men's national teams of the members of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the sport's global governing body. The championship has been awarded every four years since the inaugural tournament in 1930, except in 1942 and 1946 when it was not held because of the Second World War. The current champion is France, which won its second title at the 2018 tournament in Russia. The 21 World Cup tournaments have been won by eight national teams. Brazil have won five times, and they are the only team to have played in every tournament.

BCCI stitches IPL deal with Tatas to hand Vivo a smooth exit

- **For the second time in 17 months, Chinese mobile-maker Vivo has exited the Indian Premier League (IPL) as title sponsors, and this time for good. Troubled by the political bickering that had first forced the company to opt out of the IPL ahead of the 2020 season, Vivo once again decided to exit because of the lack of traction they were getting out of the investment.**
- **The BCCI have found a new title partner in the Tatas, and a deal has been signed for the 2022 edition, following which either renegotiations will take place or the BCCI will float a fresh RFP.**

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is a domestic, annual Twenty20 cricket tournament in India, organized by the IPL Governing Council, under the aegis of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). It is the most watched Twenty20 tournament and the second-best paying sporting league globally. IPL was established in 2008 and currently consists of eight teams in eight cities across India. The inaugural IPL season was won by Rajasthan Royals. As of October 2021, there have been fourteen seasons of the IPL tournament. The latest season was conducted with Chennai Super Kings winning the title. The Mumbai Indian won the IPL title 5 times overall and it is the most successful team in the tournament.

Rafael Nadal defeats Maxime Cressy to claim Melbourne title

- **In Tennis, 20-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal defeated American Maxime Cressy in the Men's Singles final of the Melbourne Summer Set ATP 250 event.**

Tasnim Mir becomes first Indian to claim world no 1 status in u-19 girls singles

- **Young shuttler Tasnim Mir became the first Indian to grab the world no 1 ranking in the under-19 girls singles in the latest BWF junior rankings.** In Boys singles, Lakshya Sen, Siril Verma and Aditya Joshi had become the world no 1.

Cricket West Indies Salutes Clive Lloyd on Knighthood

- **Cricket West Indies (CWI) has congratulated West Indies legend, Clive Lloyd, on receiving Knighthood.** The former West Indies captain received the honour for his services to the game of cricket.
- **Clive Lloyd led West Indies to victory over Australia at Lords in the final of the inaugural Cricket World Cup tournament in 1975.** Four years later he again led West Indies to the world title when they beat England again at a historic venue. He played in 110 Tests and 87 One-Day Internationals and is one of the most successful captains of all time.

Naomi Osaka tops Forbes list of highest-earning female athletes

- **Japan's Naomi Osaka, a four-time Grand Slam tennis champion** who has helped raise awareness of mental health issues in sport, **is the world's highest-paid female athlete, according to a list published by business magazine Forbes.**
- **Osaka raked in \$57.3 million in prize money and endorsements over the last year,** nearly all of which came from an endorsement portfolio that has added more than 10 brand partners over the last year and a half.

Satwik/Chirag become first ever Indian pair to win India Open doubles title

- **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty became the first team from country to win the India Open** after **toppling three-time world champions Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan,** New Delhi.
- **India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty displayed nerves of steel** and even put their more illustrious opponents under pressure with their tactics to **clinch the men's doubles title in the Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2022, which is part of HSBC BWF World Tour tournament series,** at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall.

Indian team beats Pakistan, Nepal to win title in World Esports Cup 2021

- **Demonstrating top skills and outclassing opponents from Pakistan and Nepal in the Global Finals, Indian team – Total Gaming – lifted the title in the inaugural World Esports Cup 2021 (WEC '21).** Indian teams bagged the first four places in the competition.

Unmukt Chand becomes first Indian man to play in BBL

- **Former U-19 World Cup-winning captain Unmukt Chand became the first Indian male cricketer to play in Australia's Big Bash League (BBL).** The right-handed batter made **his debut for Melbourne Renegades** against Hobart Hurricanes.

The top performers across the men's and women's international game are celebrated in this year's ICC Awards.

- **ICC Umpire of the Year – Marais Erasmus:** Standing in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final between Australia and New Zealand, Marais Erasmus has led the way in his officiating, earning the respect of his peers and the international cricket fraternity.
- **ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year – Mohammad Rizwan (Pakistan)**
- **ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year – Tammy Beaumont (England)**
- **ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year – Janneman Malan (South Africa)**
- **ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year – Fatima Sana (Pakistan)**
- **ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year – Babar Azam (Pakistan)**
- **ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year – Lizelle Lee (South Africa)**
- **ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year – Joe Root (England)**
- **Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year – Smriti Mandhana (India)**
- **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year – Shaheen Afridi (Pakistan)**

Smriti Mandhana wins ICC women's Cricketer of the Year

- **India's swashbuckling opener Smriti Mandhana was named the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year for her incredible run of form across all formats in 2021.** Mandhana was short-listed for the top award

– the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy – along with Tammy Beaumont of England, Lizelle Lee of South Africa and Gaby Lewis of Ireland. Mandhana made India's first-ever pink-ball Test even more memorable by smashing her maiden century in the longest format.

Women's Asia Cup Hockey: India win bronze beating China 2-0

- **India beat China 2-0 for a bronze medal in the Women's Asia Cup Hockey at Muscat in Oman.**

Women's Asia Cup hockey: Japan wins title

- **Japan emerged champions after beating Korea 4-2 in the summit clash.** Last edition champions India defeated China 2-0 to win a consolation bronze medal at the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament

Australian Open: World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty Becomes First Australian in 44 Years to be Crowned Champion

- **Ashleigh Barty being crowned the Australian Open champion for the very first time.** This is Ash Barty's third grand slam title. It has been **44 years since any Australian won the title in their own backyard. Chris O'Neil did it in 1978** and since then, many including the great Hewitt tried but failed to conquer the glory.

Australian Open 2022: Rafael Nadal makes history, wins record 21st Grand Slam title

- **Rafael Nadal roared back from two-sets-to-love down to beat Daniil Medvedev** in the classic final and **win Australian Open 2022 men singles trophy, claiming his record-breaking 21st Grand Slam title.**
- Under the lights at Rod Laver Arena, the legendary Spaniard demonstrated his trademark big-match mentality, overcoming the Russian Medvedev 2-6, 6-7(5), 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 in an epic five hours and 24 minutes final to win the trophy. With his dramatic victory, **Nadal has claimed sole ownership of the record for the most Grand Slam men's titles, moving past Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic who are both on 20 major crowns.**

PR Sreejesh becomes second Indian to win World Games Athlete of the Year Award

- Veteran India hockey goalkeeper **PR Sreejesh won the prestigious World Games Athlete of the Year for his 2021 performances, becoming only the second Indian to receive the accolade.**
- **In 2020, Indian women's hockey captain Rani Rampal became the first Indian to win the honour for her 2019 show.** Sreejesh beat competition from sport climber Alberto Gins Lopez of Spain and Italy's wushu player Michele Giordano for the award.

Jacqueline Williams creates cricketing history, becomes first female to officiate in ICC U19 World Cup final

- **Jacqueline Williams created cricketing history when she was part of the team of match officials for the final of the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup final** at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.
- The 45-year-old Jamaican entered the history books when **she became the first woman to stand in a U19 World Cup match earlier in this tournament.** Williams is an experienced umpire who has officiated at the regional level for close to a decade.

Ranji Trophy: Bihar's Gani becomes first player to hit triple ton on first-class debut

- **Bihar's Sakibul Gani waltzed into the record books, becoming the first player in the history of the game to score a triple century on his first-class debut.** Gani, son of a farmer from Bihar's Motihari district, scored 341 off 405 balls, hitting 56 fours and two sixes, in the Plate Group Ranji Trophy fixture against Mizoram at the Jadavpur University Campus ground in Kolkata.

Chess: Indian GM R Praggnanandhaa defeats world champion Magnus Carlsen at Airthings Masters

- **In Chess, Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa defeated world champion, Magnus Carlsen** in the **eighth round of the Airthings Masters competition.** Praggnanandhaa won with black pieces in 39 moves to halt Carlsen's run of three straight wins.
- Earlier, **the Indian registered a solitary win versus Levon Aronian along with recording two draws and four defeats.** Airthings Masters, is a 16-player online rapid chess tournament. **Praggnanandhaa has become only the third Indian after Viswanathan Anand and P Harikrishna to beat Carlsen.**

Mirabai Chanu secures Gold Medal in Singapore Weightlifting International

- **Mirabai Chanu is set to represent India at the Commonwealth Games 2022 after securing a gold medal in the 55 kilogram category by lifting a total of 191 kilograms in the Singapore Weightlifting International.**

IPL 2022: MS Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings creates history, becomes India's 1st sports unicorn at Rs 7,600 crore value

- Ahead of the 15th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), one of its most successful franchises, **Chennai Super Kings (CSK)**, has become the country's first sports Unicorn with its market cap having touched a high of **Rs 7,600 crores** and its share in the grey market trading in the Rs 210-225 price band.
- The **Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led CSK**, which won its fourth IPL title in Dubai last year, now has a market cap more than its parent entity, India Cements.

The 2022 Winter Olympics

- The **2022 Winter Olympics**, officially called the **XXIV Olympic Winter Games** and commonly known as **Beijing 2022**, was an international winter multi-sport event held between 4 February and 20 February 2022 in Beijing, China, and surrounding areas with competition in selected events beginning 2 February.
- **Beijing was selected as host city in 2015 at the 128th IOC Session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**, marking its second time hosting the Olympics, and the last of three consecutive Olympics hosted in East Asia. **Having previously hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, Beijing became the first city to have hosted both the Summer and Winter Olympics.** The venues for the Games were concentrated upon Beijing, its suburb Yanqing District, and Zhangjiakou, with some events (including the ceremonies and curling) repurposing venues originally built for Beijing 2008 (such as Beijing National Stadium and the Beijing National Aquatics Centre).
- **The Games featured a record 109 events across 15 disciplines, with big air freestyle skiing and women's monobob making their Olympic debuts as medal events**, as well as several new mixed competitions. A total of 2,871 athletes representing 91 teams are competing in these Games, with Haiti and Saudi Arabia making their Winter Olympic debut.
- **Norway finished at the top of the medal table for the second successive Winter Olympics**, winning a total of 37 medals, of which 16 were gold, setting a new record for the largest number of gold medals won at a single Winter Olympics. The host nation China finished third with nine gold medals, marking their most successful performance in Winter Olympics history.
- **"Together for a Shared Future" is the official motto of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022.** The motto represents the power of the Games to overcome global challenges as a community, with a shared future for humankind.
- **Bing Dwen Dwen** is the official mascot of the 2022 Winter Olympics, and **Shuey Rhon Rhon** is the official mascot of the 2022 Winter Paralympics. Both events are held in Beijing, the capital of China.

India wins bid to host 2023 International Olympic Committee session in Mumbai

- **India won the right to host the 2023 IOC session in Mumbai during the 139th IOC session** that was held in Beijing, China, on the sidelines of the Winter Olympics. This will be the **second time India hosts an IOC session**, having done so in 1983 in New Delhi. India won the bid unopposed.

Norway retains title with most medals at 2022 Winter Olympics

- **With all 109 medal events decided, competition at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing is officially complete.** After three weeks of dominance, **Norway stands alone atop the chart with the most total medals (37) and the most gold medals (16).**
- **Norway broke its own record for the most gold medals won at a single Winter Olympics with 16**, to go along with eight silver medals and 13 bronze medals. (Norway and Germany in 2018 both matched the record of 14 gold medals at a single Winter Olympics previously set by Canada in Vancouver 2010). **Norway narrowly missed eclipsing its high-water mark of 39 total medals, won in PyeongChang.**
- **India competed at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, China, from 4 to 20 February 2022. India ended without winning a single medal at the 2022 Winter Olympics.** India's team consisted of one male alpine skier. Arif Khan was the country's flagbearer during the opening ceremony. Meanwhile a volunteer was the flagbearer during the closing ceremony. **The Ministry of External Affairs decided that Indian envoy will not attend the opening or closing ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics because of China making Galwan soldier torchbearer.**
- The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** is a non-governmental sports organisation based in Lausanne, Switzerland. Founded by Pierre de Coubertin and Demetrios Vikelas in 1894, it is the authority responsible for organising the modern (Summer, Winter, and Youth) Olympic Games.

Australian Hannah Green becomes first woman to win pro mixed-gender event

- **Former Women's PGA champion Hannah Green became the first woman to win a mixed-gender golf tournament** over 72 holes when she closed with a 5-under 66 for a four-shot victory in the TPS Murray River on the PGA Tour of Australasia.

Saurabh Chaudhary clinches India's first gold at ISSF World Cup in Cairo

- **Saurabh Chaudhary clinched India's first gold medal at the ongoing International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Cairo, Egypt. The Indian defeated Michael Schwald of Germany 16-6 in the gold medal match of the Men's 10m Air Pistol event.**

Australian cricket icon Shane Warne passes away at 52

- **Shane Warne, Australian cricket legend who helped his nation win the World Cup in 1999 and was part of five Ashes-winning teams during his career, died aged 52.**
- **Warne played his first Test match in 1992 and took more than 1,000 wickets in Tests and One Day Internationals (ODIs). Warne's 708 Test wickets was the record for the most wickets taken by any bowler in Test cricket until 2007. He was named one of the Wisden Cricketers of the Year in the 1994 Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, and was the Wisden Leading Cricketer in the World in 1997 and 2004. A useful lower-order batsman, Warne scored more than 3,000 Test runs, with a highest score of 99 – and remains the highest Test runscorer without a century.**
- **He played in the first four seasons (2008–2011) of the Indian Premier League for the Rajasthan Royals, where he played the roles of both captain and coach, winning the competition in 2008.**

Mithali Raj becomes 1st woman cricketer to appear at 6 Cricket World Cups

- **Indian women's cricket team skipper Mithali Raj became the first woman, and only the third cricketer ever, to appear at six ICC Women's Cricket World Cups. In doing so, Mithali ensured the record enters a new decade – former Pakistan cricketer Javed Miandad appeared in the first six Men's Cricket World Cups between 1975 and 1996 with Sachin Tendulkar beginning his World Cup career in 1992.**

Jhulan Goswami becomes first woman bowler to claim 250 wickets in ODIs

- **Veteran Team India pacer Jhulan Goswami created history in their ICC Women's World Cup 2022 match against England by becoming first-ever woman pacer to claim 250 wickets in ODI cricket.**

BCCI secretary Jay Shah's term as ACC president extended by one year

- **BCCI secretary Jay Shah's tenure as president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) was unanimously extended by a year at its annual general meeting. Shah had taken over the reins of the ACC in January last year from Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan, making him the youngest administrator to be re-appointed as ACC president.**

Devendra Jhajharia receives Padma Bhushan, first para athlete to do so

- **The legendary Devendra Jhajharia became the first para athlete to receive the Padma Bhushan, the country's third highest civilian award. Jhajharia is a multiple-time Paralympics medal winner, having won his maiden gold during the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, his second gold medal during the Rio Games in 2016, and a silver medal during the 2020 Tokyo edition last year.**

12th ICC Women's World Cup to begin in New Zealand

- **The 12th ICC Women's Cricket World Cup is all set to begin from 4th March in New Zealand. The opening match will be played between the hosts and the West Indies at the Bay Oval in Tauranga.**

India wins first ever women's team medal at World Race Walking Championships

- **The race walking trio of Bhawna Jat, Ravina and Munita Prajapati scripted history by winning the country's maiden women's 20 km team medal, a bronze, at the World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships. China and Greece won the gold and silver respectively.**

Indoor Skydiving to be launched for the first time in India at Hyderabad

- **For the first time in India, GravityZip is all set to offer the thrill of flying high, and of simulated free fall, with its indoor skydiving at Gandipet in the city. There is no plane nor is there a parachute, just ride the smooth column of air that is created by a wind tunnel at the facility that is gearing up to open its door for thrill seekers.**

India to host FIDE Chess Olympiad 2022 in Chennai

- **India has won the bid to host the FIDE Chess Olympiad 2022 in Chennai.** It was originally scheduled to be held in Russia. But the FIDE recently announced that it pulled out from there following the Ukraine invasion.

Hyderabad FC crowned ISL champions after beating Kerala Blasters on penalties

- **Hyderabad FC goalkeeper Laxmikant Kattimani lay flat on the ground after muddling a fairly straightforward save to hand Kerala Blasters FC the edge in the 2021-22 Indian Super League (ISL) final.** A chunk of Blasters fans had made the trip from Kerala to Goa for the final and their team gave them ample reason to be upbeat in the first half, dictating the pace and possession (61%).

Manchester City is World's Highest Revenue-generating Club for the First Time

- **Manchester City has topped the Deloitte Football Money League for the first time as the world's highest revenue-generating club in a 2020-21 season** affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

P V Sindhu clinches Swiss Open title

- **Ace Indian shuttler P V Sindhu notched up her second women's singles title of the season** with a straight game win over Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan in the summit clash of the **Swiss Open Super 300 badminton tournament.** Sindhu had won the **Syed Modi International Super 300 in Lucknow.**

Max Verstappen snatches first win of the season in Saudi Arabia

- **Formula One world champion Max Verstappen scored his first points of the season in Saudi Arabia** bouncing back as a winner after Red Bull's surprise blank in Bahrain the weekend before. The 24-year-old, now third in the standings after the opening two races, said he played the long game to win a 50-lap battle with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

Shikhar Dhawan scripts history, becomes 1st Indian to hit 1000 boundaries in T20s

- **Shikhar Dhawan scripted history by becoming the first Indian batter to complete 1,000 boundaries in T20 cricket.** The India opener became only the 5th batter overall in world cricket as **he joined an elite list of cricketers, including West Indies great Chris Gayle.**

Max Verstappen, Elaine Thompson-Herah win top honours at Laureus Sports Awards

- **Reigning Formula One world champion Max Verstappen and Jamaican Olympic sprint queen Elaine Thompson-Herah** **Winners won the top honours at the 2022 Laureus World Sports Awards.** Leading an illustrious group of sports stars honoured by the Laureus World Sports Academy, **Verstappen and Thompson-Herah were named World Sportsman of the Year and World Sportswoman of the Year.**
- **The Awards recognised the sporting achievements of 2021,** one of the highlights of which was the **European Championship victory by the Italian men's football team that won its second Laureus Team of the Year Award as a result.**
- **Tennis sensation Emma Raducanu received the Laureus Breakthrough of the Year Award** following her US Open victory at the age of 18. **India's star javelin thrower and reigning Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra was also nominated in the category.** The full list of winners is given below:
- **World Sportsman of the Year Award: Max Verstappen**
- **World Sportswoman of the Year Award: Elaine Thompson-Herah**
- **World Team of the Year Award: Italy Men's Football Team**
- **World Breakthrough of the Year Award: Emma Raducanu**
- **World Comeback of the Year Award: Sky Brown**

BYJU'S becomes official sponsor of 2022 World Cup

- **Indian Ed Tech firm BYJU'S has been announced as the official sponsor of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.** The firm will now have **access to FIFA World Cup's mark, emblem, and assets to create unique promotions and run them across passionate football fans across the world.**
- **BYJU'S is now the first Indian firm to be associated with the World Cup.** It will also create engaging educational content for the young fans as part of a multifaceted activation plan.

The FIFA World Cup is an international association football competition contested by the senior men's national teams of the members of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the sport's global governing body. The championship has been awarded every four years since the inaugural tournament in 1930, except in 1942 and 1946 when it was not held because of the Second World War. The current champion is France, which won its second title at the 2018 tournament in Russia. The 21 World Cup tournaments have been won by eight national teams. Brazil has won five times, and they are the only team to have played in every tournament. Giovanni Vincenzo Infantino is a Swiss-Italian football administrator and the current president of FIFA.

ICC Women's World Cup: Australia lifts title for seventh time after beating England by 71 runs

- **Australia has lifted the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup** defeating England at Hagley Oval in Christchurch. This is the record for the seventh time Australia women have won the world cup. Earlier, Put into bat first by England, **Australia posted 356 for 5 in 50 overs. This is the record for the seventh time Australia women have won the world cup.**
- For England, even an unbeaten 148 by Natalie Sciver could not save the defeat to Australia. Jess Jonassen and Alana King took three wickets each for Australia. **Alyssa Healy was declared Player of the Match and also the Player of the tournament.**

Australia's Victoria state to host 2026 Commonwealth Games

- **The Australian state of Victoria announced that it will host the 2026 Commonwealth Games**, with all sporting events taking place outside of the state capital Melbourne. **The 2026 Games will be held in four regional hubs in the towns of Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Gippsland**, each with its own athletes' village.

Mumbai City FC become the first Indian club to win in Asian Champions League

- **Mumbai City FC scripted history when they beat Iraqi Air Force Club 2-1 in a Group B tie at the King Fahd Stadium in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.** With the win, Mumbai City FC became the first-ever Indian Club to win an Asian Champions League match.

Chennai to host first ever Chess Olympiad in India

- **India will host the Chess Olympiad for the first time, from July 28 to August 10, in Chennai.** The 44th edition of the biggest chess event in the world will have a virtual participant list with most of the stars joining from across the globe. **The event was originally scheduled in Russia.** Amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, the International Chess Federation (FIDE) started looking for new hosts and invited new bidders.

Former Australian cricketer Andrew Symonds dies in road accident

- **Former Australia cricketer Andrew Symonds died in a car crash.** Symonds was the sole passenger in the crash just outside of Townsville in his home state of Queensland. He died on the spot.

Messi tops Forbes' list of highest-paid athletes over the last year

- **Lionel Messi was the world's highest-paid athlete over the last year**, according to the annual Forbes list released that had the Paris Saint-Germain forward ahead of the NBA's LeBron James and Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo. **Messi earned \$130 million, a figure which includes \$55 million of endorsements**, during the 12-month period ending May 1, 2022, to sit atop the list of the 10 highest-paid athletes a year after finishing second to Irish MMA fighter Conor McGregor.

India win first-ever Thomas Cup crown, hammer 14-time champions 3-0 in final in historic feat

- **India won the first-ever Thomas Cup crown, dethroning 14-time champions Indonesia in Bangkok.** Lakshya Sen, Satwiksairaj-Chirag Shetty and Kidambi Srikanth clinched stunning victories to help India script history. India dished out a performance for the ages with World Championships medallist Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth and the world number 8 doubles duo of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy producing memorable performances. **India had never reached the final of the Thomas and Uber Cup in the tournament's 73-year-long history**, but the Indian men not only broke the drought but went a step ahead and became only the 6th nation after China, Indonesia, Japan, Denmark, and Malaysia to win the Thomas Cup title.

Manchester City crowned 2021/22 Premier League champions

- **In Football, Manchester City have been crowned 2021/22 Premier League champions their fourth title success in the last five seasons.** Manchester City's dramatic 3-2 win over Aston Villa in the final game

of the season sealed the title and saw them finish one point ahead of second-place Liverpool at the end of a grueling battle for supremacy. **In Manchester City's 38 league matches this season, they have won 29, drawn six, and lost three, scoring 99 goals in the process.**

Rajasthan govt sets up sports award in Rajiv Gandhi's name

- **Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award will be introduced in the state for sportspersons. Nearly a year after former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's name was removed from the country's top sports award Khel Ratna, the Rajasthan government set up an award in his name to felicitate medallists in games.**

China cites pandemic and withdraws as host of 2023 Asian Cup

- **China withdrew as host of soccer's 2023 Asian Cup in the latest cancellation of the country's sports hosting duties during the COVID-19 pandemic.** The Asian Football Confederation praised Chinese soccer officials for making "this very difficult but necessary decision in the collective interests of the AFC Asian Cup." **The 24-nation tournament was due to be played in 10 cities in mostly newly built stadiums in June and July of next year.**
- **China's withdrawal could let Qatar or Saudi Arabia step up as hosts while both are bidding in a contest to host the 2027 edition. India and Iran are also candidates for the 2027 edition with a decision expected early next year. Qatar has stadiums in place to host the 2022 World Cup kicking off in November.**

Viswanathan Anand defeats Magnus Carlsen in blitz event of Norway Chess

- **Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand defeated world champion Magnus Carlsen in the seventh round of the blitz event of Norway Chess in Oslo Norway.**

Rafael Nadal wins French Open title beating Casper Ruud

- **In French Open tennis, Spaniard Rafael Nadal has won the 14th singles title of the tournament beating Casper Ruud of Norway 6-3, 6-3, 6-0 in the final. With this victory, 36-year-old Nadal has become the oldest champion at Roland Garros. It is his 22nd Grand Slam title.**

Legend of Indian Women's cricket Mithali Raj announces her retirement from all forms of international cricket

- **The legend of Indian Women's cricket, Mithali Raj announced her retirement from all forms of international cricket at the age of 39 years. She retired from T20 way back in September 2019, but continued to play in ODIs and Test matches. Raj ends her 23-year international career 7805 ODI runs in 232 matches, at an average just over 50. She also scored 2364 runs in 89 T20Is, as well as 699 runs in 12 Tests, including a century and four half-centuries. She finishes her career as the top run-scorer in ODI cricket, 1813 runs ahead of the next highest – England legend Charlotte Edwards. Mithali made her international debut in June 1999, in an ODI against Ireland. She is the only Indian captain - male or female - to have led India in two World Cup finals (2005 and 2017).**

Neeraj Chopra clinches gold in 2022 Kuortane Games in Finland

- **Tokyo Olympic gold medallist Neeraj Chopra has clinched gold in the 2022 Kuortane Games in Finland. Neeraj defeated reigning world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada for the second time in four days. Neeraj threw 86.69 metres to clinch the top prize.**
- **The Indian javelin thrower hit the spot on his very first try at the tournament, had a foul on his second try, and bore a nasty slip in his third attempt, following which he chose to skip the remaining two attempts. Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad settled for silver with a throw of 86.64 metres while Anderson Peters claimed bronze with a throw of 84.75 metres.**

Novak Djokovic becomes 1st player to win 80 matches in all four Grand Slams

- **Novak Djokovic became the first player in history to win 80 matches in all four Grand Slams when he defeated Kwon Soon-woo on Centre Court for his 80th win in Wimbledon.**

Manisha Kalyan set to become first Indian to play in UEFA Women's Champions League

- **Manisha Kalyan is set to become the first Indian to play in the UEFA Women's Champions League when she signed with Cyprus champions Apollon Ladies. Manisha has signed a two-year deal with Cypriot Champion Club Apollon Ladies. She is all set to become the first Indian to play in the UEFA Women's Champions League this season."**

IPL 2022: Champions Gujarat Titans

- **Hardik Pandya's Gujarat Titans won the Indian Premier League (IPL) title in their debut season, defeating 2008 champions Rajasthan Royals by seven wickets in the final in Ahmedabad.** Among other top prize money winners, **Jos Buttler got the Orange Cap for finishing the season with 863 runs and also won the Most Sixes, Most Fours, Powerplayer of the season, Gamechanger of the season and Most Valuable Player award.** RR spinner Yuzvendra Chahal wins Purple Cap with 27 wickets.

44th Chess Olympiad's official logo, mascot launched in Chennai

- **In the run-up to the prestigious 44th Chess Olympiad, Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin released the official logo and mascot 'Thambi' (younger brother in Tamil). The mascot 'Thambi' is a knight dressed in the traditional Tamil attire veshti (Dhoti) with a shirt and is seen with folded hands, apparently extending the Tamil greeting 'Vanakkam'. The words "Chess Believe" are seen on its shirt.**
- **As the country is all set to host the world's biggest chess event for the first time ever in the 100-year history of the Olympiad, a vibrant logo, expressing the excitement with its exuberant colours, was unveiled in Chennai. "This is the first time that India is hosting a sporting event of this magnitude in any discipline and we decided that the Mascot of the Olympiad should be the 'knight' popularly known as the stuntman on the chess board".**

Haryana is ultimate Khelo India champion

- **Haryana tops the medal tally with 52 gold, 39 silver and 46 bronze medals ahead of Maharashtra who finish second with 45 gold, 40 silver and 40 bronze.** Karnataka, which dominated the swimming events with 19 gold medals, finished third in the medals tally with 22 gold, 17 silver and 28 bronze medals. With the day starting with Maharashtra leading the medals tally, **Haryana boxers came up with a dominating display to win ten gold medals out of the 20 medals on offer in boxing to help hosts Haryana win the overall championship trophy on the concluding day of the Khelo India Youth Games at Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex.**
- **While Haryana had topped the medal tally with a total of 108 medals in the first edition of the games at Delhi in 2018, the state finished at the second spot in the last two editions of the games. In 2019, Haryana finished second in the medal tally with a total of 178 medals while in 2020, Haryana finished second with 200 medals.**

In a first, 3 countries to host 2026 FIFA World Cup

- **First time ever, the FIFA World Cup will be hosted by three different countries, and it will feature 48 teams. Matches for the 2026 World Cup will be held in 11 US cities and three host sites in Mexico and two in Canada, the game's world governing body, announced FIFA.**

International Olympic Day 2022

- **International Olympic Day or World Olympic Day is observed every year on June 23** and it's a celebration of sport, health, and being together. The day provides a moment for everyone to gather and get active with purpose.
- **The theme this year is 'Together, For a Peaceful World',** which will be accompanied by the social media hashtags #MoveForPeace and #OlympicDay. The World Olympic Day 2022 emphasises the power that sport has to build a better world and brings people together in peace.

Neeraj Chopra clinches Silver medal at prestigious Diamond League meet

- **Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra clinched his first-ever medal at the prestigious Diamond League meet in Stockholm** as he broke his own national record for the second time in a month. **Chopra finished 2nd at the Stockholm Diamond League with a massive throw of 89.94 meter.** Reigning world champion Anderson Peters won the event with a best throw of 90.31 meter. Chopra broke his own national record of 89.30m that he set at the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku earlier this month.
- **The prestigious one-day meet at the Swedish capital is Chopra's biggest event ahead of the World Championships in Eugene, USA, next month. Chopra is the first Indian to win a gold medal in athletics at the Olympics.**

94-year-old Bhagwani Devi Dagar wins gold in World Masters Athletics Championships

- **Following the footsteps of the famous Shooter Dadis Chandro Tomar and Prakash Tomar, 94-year-old Bhagwani Devi Dagar also showed that age is no bar when she won the gold medal in the 100m sprint at the World Masters Athletics Championships held in Tampere.** In the 100m sprint, Dagar clocked 24.74 seconds and she also **won a bronze medal in shot put.**

India's Arjun Babuta wins first gold medal at ISSF World Cup in South Korea

- In Shooting, **India's Arjun Babuta have won his first gold medal** at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup stage at Changwon in South Korea. **This was India's first medal under new national foreign rifle coach Thomas Farnik.**

World Athletics Championships: Peru's Garcia Leon wins worlds' first gold in 20 km race walk

- **Peruvian Kimberly Garcia Leon won the first gold medal of the World Championships in Eugene, Oregon with her victory in the 20 km race walk.** Garcia Leon crossed the line in a time of 1:26:58, with Poland's Katarzyna Zdzienicka claiming silver and China's Qieyang Shijie taking bronze. Qieyang and Garcia Leon shared a 20-second lead over the rest of the pack at the halfway mark and battled shoulder-to-shoulder through the next 5 km in hot conditions.

Sindhu clinches Singapore Open title

- **Double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu lifted the Singapore Open Super 500 trophy after outwitting China's Wang Zhi Yi** in an intense woman's singles final. This was her third title of the season – having won two Super 300 crowns in Syed Modi International and Swiss Open – and an addition to her brimming cabinet which has a gold, two silver and two bronze medals from the World Championships besides two Olympic medals.

Mairaj Khan creates history, becomes first Indian to win skeet gold at ISSF World Cup

- **Mairaj Khan braved rough weather and poor light to create history. The Aligarh marksman became India's first-ever skeet shooter to clinch** a gold in men's event at the World Cup as he topped the podium in the ISSF event in Changwon, South Korea.

Neeraj Chopra creates history, becomes first Indian ever to win silver at World Athletics Championships

- **Neeraj Chopra broke into a smile after his fourth round throw of 88.13m.** The tension was somewhat eased after he moved into the provisional podium place in **second position following his best throw of the men's javelin throw final in Eugene, US.**
- **While a nation was asleep, the reigning Olympic champion created history after becoming the first ever Indian athlete to win silver at the World athletics championships** with his best effort of 88.13m to etch his name in the record books.
- **He, however, failed in his endeavour to become the first javelin thrower** after Norwegian track and field great Andreas Thorkildsen to hold both the Olympics and World Championships titles at the same time. **Thorkildsen had achieved the feat at the Berlin edition of the Worlds meet.**

PV Sindhu named India's flagbearer for Commonwealth Games' opening ceremony

- **Double Olympic medallist badminton ace PV Sindhu was named flagbearer of the Indian contingent for the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games.** Sindhu was also the **flagbearer at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.** The 2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games has the **largest contingent of female athletes in the history of the Games.** A total of 215 athletes from India will be competing at the Commonwealth Games.

Commonwealth Games 2022: Mirabai Chanu wins first gold for India

- Star weightlifter **Mirabai Chanu (49 kg) went on a record-smashing spree, claiming four of them in a power-packed performance, to claim India's first gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.** In a remarkable performance, Chanu smashed the Commonwealth and CWG record in snatch.

Pranjal Srivastava is the first Indian to win 3 gold medals at International Mathematical Olympiad

- **Indian students have been bringing laurels to the nation by winning the international Olympiads, especially in these recent years. The latest addition to this league is 18-year-old Pranjal Srivastava who is the first Indian to win three gold medals at the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) held in Oslo.**
- **Pranjal's name appears in the IMO hall-of-fame, as only 11 people** in the 63-year history of IMO have won more medals than him. **The International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) is the World Championship Mathematics Competition for High School students** and is **held annually in a different country.**
- **While the first IMO was held in 1959 in Romania, the 2022 IMO took place in Oslo.** This year, while Pranjal won the gold medal, five other Indian candidates bagged the bronze medal — Arjun Gupta, Atul Shatavart Nadig, Vedant Saini, Kaustuv Mishra and Aditya.

Gujarat CM Unveils Logo for 36th National Games

- **The logo for 36th National Games was released by CM Bhupendra Patel.** On the occasion, a tri-partite MoU was signed between state government, Indian Olympic Association and Gujarat State Olympic Association for successful organisation of the games. **The tagline of the event is “celebrating unity through sports”.**

Sanket Sargar, India's first medallist at CWG 2022

- **Sanket Sargar won India's first medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games with silver in the men's 55 kg weightlifting event in Birmingham.** Malaysia's Mohammad Aniq Bin Kasdan snatched gold with 249 kgs (107 kgs snatch and 142 kgs C&J) with his final attempt. The 21-year-old Indian lifter gave himself a bright start in the snatch category (one of the two composites of weightlifting) by lifting 113 kg, which was six kg more than his 20-year-old Malaysian rival. Sanket started weightlifting as a 13-year-old in 2013 with his sister also a weightlifter. Sargar came into Birmingham winning the National Championships and the Singapore International.
- However, **Kasdan made a stronger return in the clean and jerk segment by lifting a decisive 142 kg, seven more than Sargar, to claim gold.** Kasdan started the event as favourite as he was the No 1 in the Commonwealth ranking after lifting the exact same weight of 249 kg at the Commonwealth Championships in Tashkent.

CWG 2022: Sreeshankar scripts history with India's first medal in men's long jump in the Commonwealth Games

- **M Sreeshankar scripted history as he clinched India's first Commonwealth Games medal in the men's long jump event in Birmingham.** While India have a bronze and a silver medallist in the women's long jump event in CWG, 23-year-old Sreeshankar's effort saw the Indian men clinch their first-ever CWG medal in the men's long jump event.

Jeremy Lalrinnunga wins Gold medal in men's 67 kg weightlifting at CWG 2022

- **Jeremy Lalrinnunga on winning the Gold medal at Birmingham Commonwealth Games in the weightlifting 67 kg category.**

UP farmer's daughter Rupal Chaudhary becomes first Indian to win twin medals at World U-20 Athletics

- **Rupal Chaudhary created history by becoming the first Indian athlete to win two medals at the World U20 Athletics Championship** as she followed up her 4x400m relay silver with a bronze medal in the women's 400m.
- Earlier this year, **Rupal stunned pre-race favourite Priya Mohan of Karnataka to clinch the gold medal in the women's 400m at the National U-20 Federation Cup Athletics Championships.**
- **Rupal is the second Indian to have won a medal in the women's 400m after Hima Das clinched a historic gold in the 2018 edition of the championships in Finland** with a time of 51.46s. Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was the first Indian to win a gold in the championships in 2016 in Poland.

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat creates history, becomes first Indian woman to win Gold at CWG and Asian Games

- **Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat created history by winning the third consecutive gold medal in the Commonwealth games** that are currently underway at Birmingham.
- **She also became the first Indian woman win Gold at both the Commonwealth as well as Asian Games.** Phogat defeated Sri Lanka's Chamodya Keshani Maduravlage Don in the women's 53 kg freestyle wrestling at the Birmingham Games. Previously, she had won gold at Gold Coast in 2018 and Glasgow in 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Priyanka Goswami becomes first Indian woman to win a medal in race walk, clinches silver

- **Priyanka Goswami scripted history as she became the first Indian woman to win a medal in race walk** with a silver in 10,000m event at the Commonwealth Games. Harinder Singh was the first Indian to have won a medal in race walk – bronze – in the 20 km event in 2010 CWG in Delhi.

Lakshya Sen scripts sensational comeback to win CWG gold

- **India shuttler Lakshya Sen added to his illustrious list of achievements in 2022 by winning an elusive gold at the Commonwealth Games 2022. Lakshya, who was at the forefront of India's Thomas Cup win and is a bronze medal winner at the World Championships,** continued his brilliant run of form, and cemented himself as the fastest rising star of Indian badminton with a CWG medal.

Sharath Kamal wins second CWG gold in men's singles; 4th medal in Birmingham

- India's star paddler **Sharath Kamal won an incredible fourth medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, ending his run in the edition with an elusive gold medal in men's singles** event. Additionally, this is his second men's singles gold at CWG, as he takes his overall medal tally at the Games to 13. Earlier in the 2022 edition, Sharath won a gold medal in the men's team event, and followed it up with a silver in men's doubles and another gold in mixed doubles.

Indian Grandmaster and five-time world chess champion Viswanathan Anand expressed happiness at being elected as the Vice President of the World Chess Federation

- Indian Grandmaster and five-time world chess champion **Viswanathan Anand expressed happiness at being elected as the Vice President of the World Chess Federation**. The tenth round of the game is played with much expectation. Indian players are making their best efforts to conquer their opponents.

Serena Williams announces retirement from professional tennis

- **American tennis legend Serena Williams, the winner of 23 Grand Slam titles**, has announced that she will retire from professional tennis. **Serena Williams first major title was the 1999 US Open, when she was 17. She won her last Slam title at the 2017 Australian Open**. Serena and older sister Venus have been widely regarded as changing the face of tennis and inspiring future players, as well as pushing for gender equality.
- **With 23 Grand Slam singles titles - the most of any woman in the Open Era, Serena has also 73 WTA titles overall**, including all four Slams at least three times, 39 combined major titles in singles, doubles and mixed doubles, **14 major doubles titles with sister Venus, four Olympic gold medals in singles and doubles 319 weeks at the top of the world rankings**.

Manisha Kalyan becomes first Indian to play UEFA Women's Champions League

- **Young striker Manisha Kalyan has become the first Indian footballer to play at the UEFA Women's Champions League** when she made her debut for Apollon Ladies FC in the European Club competition in Engomi, Cyprus. The 20-year-old had **emerged as the fourth Indian women's international footballer to sign for an overseas club** when she landed a multi-year contract with Cypriot top division winners Apollon Ladies.

Haryana Girl Creates History, Becomes India's First-Ever U-20 World Wrestling Champion

- **Haryana wrestler Antim Panghal made history by becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to win the Under-20 world champion feat with an 8-0 win over Kazakhstan's Atlyn Shagayeva**. The U-20 World Wrestling Championship which **took place in Sofia, Bulgaria**. It was **for the first time in the competition's 34-year long history that an Indian girl has finished on top of the podium**.

Anderson first to play 100 Test matches at home

- **The England veteran seamer became the first player ever to feature in 100 Test matches at home**, achieving the landmark during the ongoing second England-South Africa Test in Manchester. **Anderson had already pipped past Sachin Tendulkar in the tally to play most number of home Tests**. The highest run scorer in international cricket had played 94 off his 200 Tests in India. Ricky Ponting (92), Stuart Broad (91*) and Alastair Cook (89) follow in the list.

World Championships: Satwik-Chirag claim India's first men's doubles medal

- **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty became the first Indian pair to win a medal in the men's doubles competition at the World Championships**. Satwik and Chirag, the world number 7 combination, which had claimed the Commonwealth Games gold medal earlier this month, stunned the local favourites and defending champions Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi.

CWG 2022: Full list of India's medal winners at the Birmingham Games

- **The Commonwealth Games 2022 concluded with India ending their medal tally at 61, which includes 22 gold, 16 silver and 23 bronze. India finished fourth in the overall medals tally and finished with 61 medals - 22 gold, 16 silver and 23 bronze**.
- **India recorded its 200th gold medal in Commonwealth Games history as PV Sindhu clinched the women's badminton singles gold in Birmingham**. P V Sindhu and young gun Lakshya Sen lived up expectations by **grabbing gold medals as India swept the singles badminton competition** while star doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy won the country's third gold from the badminton court with straight-game victory over England's Ben Lane and Sean Mendy at the Commonwealth Games.

- In table tennis, Sharath Kamal extended his domination at the Commonwealth Games by winning the gold medal in men's singles event, thrashing England's Liam Pitchford 4-1 in the final while Sathiyar Gnanasekaran came away with the Bronze.
- The Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham came to a close on August 8. It was the largest ever in the history of the Games with 5,054 athletes from 72 nations competing in 280 events in 20 sports from July 29 to August 8. As expected Australia topped the medal tally with 178 medals, just beating England by two. Australia won 67 gold, 57 silver and 54 bronze. England were second with 176 (57 gold, 66 silver and 53 bronze). Canada finished third with 92 (26, 32, 34).

Meghalaya to host upcoming North East Olympics Games

- Meghalaya will be hosting the upcoming North East Olympics Games beginning October 30 till November 6, 2022 in Shillong. The maiden Olympic games of the region were held in Manipur in October 2018, but the pandemic thwarted the second edition scheduled to be held in Arunachal Pradesh and hence, this year's North East Olympic Games 2.0 in Shillong strives to bridge the long gap for aspiring sportsperson of the region to improve themselves.

Mumbai Indians goes global; names of franchises in UAE, SA T20 Leagues unveiled

- Reliance Industries, the owner of five-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians introduced 'MI Emirates' and 'MI Cape Town' the name and brand identity of the two new franchises joining the Mumbai Indians #OneFamily. The 'MI Emirates' in UAE's International League T20 and 'MI Cape Town' in Cricket South Africa T20 League respectively. The teams, 'MI Emirates' or phonetically 'MY Emirates' and 'MY Cape Town' respectively, are dedicated to fans across both the Emirates and Cape Town.

FTX Crypto Cup

- GM Magnus Carlsen won the FTX Crypto Cup despite losing his final match in a tiebreak to GM Praggnanandhaa R., who thereby secured second place in the tournament. GM Alireza Firouzja finished in third place. The eight-player all-play-all tournament is the American finale of Champions Chess Tour. There is USD 7,500 at stake for each match win at the event.

India's first-of-its-kind naval shooting range inaugurated at INS Karna

- India's 1st Composite Indoor Shooting Range has been inaugurated at INS Karna. The Shooting range has been equipped with advanced target systems with associated control software to help personnel improve their firing skills. The Composite Indoor Shooting Range or CISR was inaugurated by Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta at INS Karna. INS Karna is the first in the Navy and the only military unit in the country to develop and operationalize an indoor shooting range.

F. Awards

Civil society organisation 'Pratham' to get Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021

- Pratham, a civil society organisation, has been awarded the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for the year 2021. Set up in 1995 in Mumbai by Dr Madhav Chavan and Farida Lambay, Pratham is dedicated to improving the quality of education for underprivileged children in India and across the world.
- The organisation started its work in the Mumbai slums, setting up community-based pre-schools. Its outreach in India has now expanded to an average 1 million children directly and 5 million through government partnerships annually.
- Its Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), based on surveying 6 lakh rural Indian children, is now used as a model to assess education outcomes and learning deficiencies in 14 countries.

The Indira Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual prestigious award. It has been named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. It is conferred every year since 1986 by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust. It consists of a monetary award of Rs. 25 lakh along with a citation. Parliamentarians for Global Action is the first recipient of the award in 1986 and Mikhail Gorbachev is a Russian and former Soviet politician, he is the second and first person to receive Indira Gandhi Peace Prize in 1987.

Union Minister Anurag Thakur confers 246 athletes and coaches with first-ever Sports Authority of India's Institutional Awards

- Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur conferred the first-ever Sports Authority of India's Institutional Awards to 246 athletes and coaches in New Delhi.

- A total of 162 athletes and 84 coaches have been conferred awards in the Outstanding Award and Best Award category for their performance in national and international competitions with cash awards. The awards acknowledge the exceptional performance of the SAI athletes and coaches under the various sports promotion schemes at the national and international level from 2016.

Indian Film Personality Award to be given to Hema Malini & Prasoon Joshi at IFFI

- Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur has announced that the Indian Film Personality Award for the year 2021 will be given to Hema Malini and Prasoon Joshi. The award will be given in the 52nd International Film Festival of India in Goa. The Film Festival will run from November 20 to 28.

Forbes-Listed Kerala Entrepreneur becomes first Indian to be honoured with Knighthood in Italy

- Sohan Roy, a Forbes-listed entrepreneur from Kerala and who has a passion for getting noticed in the film industry through his unconventional contribution to humanity and the world cinema has now become the first Indian who has been awarded the honorary title of 'Knight of Parte Guelfa' in Italy.
- The knighthood was conferred on Roy for his humanitarian and environmental protection efforts in business and movies. The conferring ceremony took place early this week at the prestigious Basilica of Santa Croce and the Palagio di Parte Guelfa in Florence.
- Some of the previous proud recipients are Pope Francis, Stefano Cordero di Montezemolo, Giannozzo Pucci di Barsento, Gualtiero Bassetti, Luciano Artusi, among others. His notable works include the documentary "Black Sand" on ecological degradation and unscientific mining methods which got shortlisted in the Oscars. The documentary is still going strong at various film festivals.

IFFI: Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award conferred upon legendary filmmakers Martin Scorsese and Istvan Szabo

- The 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is underway in Goa. The opening ceremony anchored by Padmashri awardee and renowned filmmaker Karan Johar and actor Manish Paul.
- The celebration started with the traditional lighting of the lamp. The 52nd edition of IFFI is also celebrating 75 years of India's independence and 60 years of the liberation of Goa. The newly instituted Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement award this year was awarded to acclaimed Hungarian filmmaker Istvan Szabo.

Maha Vir Chakra for Galwan hero Colonel B.S. Babu

- Colonel B. Santhosh Babu, Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar who was among the 20 personnel killed in the violent clash with Chinese troops at Galwan in June last year was posthumously awarded Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), the country's second highest war time gallantry award, by President Ram Nath Kovind. Havildar Tejinder Singh from 2 Medium Regiment has been awarded Vir Chakra, the third highest war time gallantry award.

IAF Group Captain Abhinandan awarded Vir Chakra for shooting down Pakistani F-16 aircraft

- Group Captain Varthaman Abhinandan, who shot down a Pakistan F-16 fighter jet in the aftermath of the Pulwama terror attack of February 2019, was awarded the Vir Chakra by President Ram Nath Kovind at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- The Vir Chakra is the third-highest Indian military honour during wartime after Param Vir Chakra and Maha Chakra. The Vir Chakra to Abhinandan had been announced in August 2019 but has been awarded by the President now in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
- President Kovind accorded the second-highest peacetime gallantry award Kirti Chakra (posthumously) to Sapper Prakash Jadhav for neutralising terrorists in an operation in Jammu and Kashmir. His wife and mother received the award.

The Param Vir Chakra (PVC) is India's highest military decoration, awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valour during wartime. Param Vir Chakra translates as the "Wheel of the Ultimate Brave", and the award is granted for "most conspicuous bravery in the presence of the enemy". Major Somnath Sharma, was the first recipient. Post-independence, new awards were instituted on 26 January 1950, with retroactive effect from 15 August 1947. Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) (great warrior medal) is the second highest military decoration in India, after the Param Vir Chakra, and is awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy, whether on land, at sea or in the air. It replaced the British Distinguished Service Order (DSO). The medal may be awarded posthumously.

IFFI 2021: Japanese movie 'Ring Wandering' bags Golden Peacock Award

- **Japanese director Masakazu Kaneko's "Ring Wandering", about an aspiring manga artist, won the top honour at the closing ceremony of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI),**
- **The film won the coveted Golden Peacock Award, which consists of a cash prize of Rs 40 lakh to be shared equally between Kaneko and producer Takashi Shiotsuki.**

Nizamuddin Basti conservation project gets two UNESCO Awards

- **Nine projects from six countries — Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand — have been honoured by a jury of heritage experts. The Nizamuddin Area comprises the World Heritage Site of Humayun's Tomb, the centuries-old settlement of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti and Sunder Nursery, in addition to the 16th Century Batashewala Tomb-Garden Complex, tomb of 16th Century courtier poet Khan I Khanan 'Rahim', and the Mughal-period caravanserai of Azimganj Serai.**

Hindi writer Wajahat to be awarded 31st Vyas Samman for 2019 play

- **The award, instituted in 1991 and given by the KK Birla Foundation, recognises outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen and published in the previous 10 years. It carries a cash prize of 4 lakh.**
- **Noted Hindi writer Asgar Wajahat will be awarded the 31st Vyas Samman for his play Mahabali, which was published in 2019. The award, instituted in 1991 and given by the KK Birla Foundation, recognises outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen and published in the previous 10 years. It carries a cash prize of 4 lakh. The recipient is chosen by a selection panel, which is headed by famous Hindi litterateur Prof. Ramji Tiwari. Ram Vilas Sharma is the first recipient of it.**

Indian Mathematician receives 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from Developing Countries

- **Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, has been awarded the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.**
- **Professor Gupta is the third woman to receive the Ramanujan Prize, which was first awarded in 2005 and is administered by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) jointly with the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Government of India and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).**
- **Ramanujan Prize is given annually to an eminent Mathematician who is less than 45 years of age on 31 December of the year of the award and has conducted outstanding research in developing countries by International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste and is sponsored by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India. The DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize committee, composed of eminent mathematicians from around the world, commented that Gupta's work "shows impressive algebraic skill and inventiveness".**

IIT-Kanpur Scientist Ropesh Goyal bags "Young Geospatial Scientist" Award

- **Ropesh Goyal from IIT-Kanpur won the 'Young Geospatial Scientist' award in recognition of his unique contribution to developing the Indian Geoid Model and computation software. Member of Space Commission, Government of India, and former ISRO Chairman AS Kiran Kumar presented the award to Goyal during the inaugural event of the DigiSmart India 2021 conference hosted by the Geospatial World.**
- **The 'Young Geospatial Scientist' award and a gold medal have been presented every year since 2011 to promising scientists below 35 years of age in memory of Rachapudi Kamakshi, a strategic analyst with a strong inclination towards geography and geospatial studies. The Rachapudi Kamakshi Memorial Trust is an organisation founded to help and encourage students and young and talented individuals with great ideas and research work in the field of geospatial sciences.**

Balkrishna Doshi honoured with the Royal Gold Medal 2022, the world's highest honour for architecture

- **Ahmedabad-based Balkrishna Doshi will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture. At 94, Doshi is being recognised for his career spanning seven decades, with over 100 built projects, across India.**
- **The Royal Gold Medal is "approved personally by Her Majesty The Queen and is given to a person or group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture.**

Padma Bhushan Anil Prakash Joshi, 2 others win Mother Teresa Memorial Award

- **Environmental**ist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan this year, has been awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021.
- **Vidyut Mohan**, the winner of the Earthshot Prize, and **Ridhima Pandey**, a young environmental activist from Uttarakhand, were also the recipients of the award.
- **The Harmony Foundation** identifies a theme each year for the Mother Teresa Memorial Awards and felicitates individuals and organisations who work in the realm of augmenting environmental sustainability.

Bhutan confers its highest civilian award on PM Narendra Modi

- **PM Narendra Modi** conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo. **Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering** shared on social media that he was overjoyed to hear His Majesty pronounce Prime Minister Modi's name for the highest civilian decoration of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- He also wished his countrymen as they celebrate the 114th National Day of Bhutan which commemorates the Coronation of His Majesty the First King of Bhutan, Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck on December 17, 1907.

Bhutan is a landlocked country in South Asia. Thimphu is its capital and largest city, while Phuntsholing is its financial center. Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck is the current reigning Druk Gyalpo or "Dragon King" of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Lotay Tshering is the current Prime Minister of Bhutan in office since 7 November 2018. He has also been the president of Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa since 14 May 2018. Bhutan is the first country in the world to come up with a happiness index and linked it to development, which is otherwise based on GDP numbers. The ngultrum is the currency of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Kumar Mangalam Birla receives Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award from TiE

- Aditya Birla Group's chairman, **Kumar Mangalam Birla** received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.
- Birla is the first Indian Industrialist to receive the award for global entrepreneurship along with top global business leaders Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, and Jeff Bezos. He was given this award at a ceremony in Dubai for his leadership of the conglomerate during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Indian climate action entrepreneur wins United Nations Women's Award for Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality

- **Divya Hegde** from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony. She has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts.
- Her organisation, Baeru Environmental Services, works in the areas of waste management, creation of livelihoods for rural women, and developing a circular economy in the region.

Urvashi Rautela becomes First Indian to be awarded 'Symbol of the Armour' By Israel's Army

- Actor and model **Urvashi Rautela** recently bagged a prestigious honour from the Israeli army. The 27-year-old received the 'Symbol of The Armour' award from the Israeli army Moshe Levy and became the first Indian to do so.

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021: Authors Namita Gokhale, Khalid Hussain, TMC MLA Bratya Basu among 20 winners

- Eminent author **Namita Gokhale**, TMC MLA **Bratya Basu** and noted Punjabi writer **Khalid Hussain** were among the 20 names announced for the Sahitya Akademi Award 2021.
- The annual awards, given in 20 Indian languages, included seven books of poetry, two novels, five short stories, two plays, one book each of biography, autobiography, criticism and epic poetry.
- While Gokhale won the award for her 2016 historical epic novel "Things to Leave Behind", Basu and Hussain won the awards for a play and collection of short stories "Sullan Da Salan", respectively.

The Sahitya Akademi Award is a literary honour in India, which the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, annually confers on writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the 24 major Indian languages such as Tamil, English, Bengali, Punjabi and the 22 listed languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution recognised by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. Established in 1954, the award comprises a plaque and a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000. The award's purpose is to recognise and promote excellence in Indian writing and also acknowledge new trends.

Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award

- **Renowned Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo** has been conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award for the year 2022. Noted Assamese poet Nilmani Phookan has bagged 56th Jnanpith award for the year 2021.
- **Mauzo is second Konkani writer to receive the highest literary award**, earlier being given to **Writer Ravindra Kelekar in 2006**. Mauzo is short story writer, novelist and screenplay writer. **His novel Karmelin had bagged Sahitya Akademi award in 1983**. His several short stories are translated into other languages and have appeared in various magazines. Stories of Mauzo depict the struggle of poor people, their agonies and sorrows.

Jnanpith Award is the oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their “outstanding contribution towards literature”. Instituted in 1961, the award is bestowed only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English, with no posthumous conferral. From 1965 till 1981, the award was given to the authors for their “most outstanding work” and consisted of a citation plaque, a cash prize and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom. **The first recipient of the award was the Malayalam writer G. Sankara Kurup who received the award in 1965 for his collection of poems, Odakkuzhal (The Bamboo Flute), published in 1950.**

Alia Bhatt India's 2021 Person of the Year

- **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India** has named **Bollywood star Alia Bhatt its 2021 Person of the Year**. She is an animal lover and often shares pictures with her pets. This year, Alia Bhatt invested in Phool, the company behind Fleather, which is a vegan leather made from discarded temple flowers.
- **Her vegan kids' line, Ed-a-Mamma, also won a 2021 PETA India fashion award** for helping to nurture kids' love for animals and nature. Alia also starred in a pro-adoption PETA India campaign to help cats and dogs. She has used her position to call for stronger animal protection laws.
- **PETA India, based in Mumbai, was launched in January 2000. It operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to experiment on, eat, wear, use for entertainment, or abuse in any other way**, while also educating policymakers and the public about animal abuse and promoting an understanding of the right of all animals to be treated with respect.

SKOCH Award for Assam mission on malnutrition

- **A mission to combat malnourishment among children aged six months to five years has earned the SKOCH Award for southern Assam's Cachar district**. Instituted in 2003, SKOCH Award recognises people, projects and institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation. **The project named Mission Parvarish saw 704 out of a targeted 800 children recover from the severely acute malnourished stage.**

79th edition of Golden Globe Awards announced

- **The 79th edition of the Golden Globe Awards has been announced. While the Power of the Dog movie won the two biggest awards, one of Best Film in Drama category and another of Best Director honoured upon Jane Campion.**
- **Will Smith took home his first Golden Globe of Best Film Actor for his movie King Richard. Nicole Kidman won her fifth Golden Globe for Best Film Actress for Being The Ricardos. West Side Story directed by Steven Spielberg won major awards that included Best Film in Comedy/Musical segment, Best Film Actress for Rachel Zegler and Best Supporting Actress for Ariana DeBose.**
- **Armstrong, took home two more awards as series stars Jeremy Strong won best actor award and Sarah Snook won best actress in a supporting role. It also won the Best Drama Series. Jason Sudeikis won Best TV Actor in Comedy/Musical category for Ted Lasso.**
- **Kenneth Branagh won the best screenplay in motion picture Globe for his black-and-white and semi-biographical film 'Belfast'. Oscar frontrunner and Japanese film 'Drive My Car' was named the best motion picture - non English and Disney's 'Encanto' was selected as the best motion picture - animated.** The Golden Globe Awards this time was announced via a liveblog by Hollywood Foreign Press Association due to the Covid-19 pandemic. **The Golden Globe Awards are accolades bestowed by the 87 members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association beginning in January 1944, recognizing excellence in both American and international film and television.**

Leading content creator Prajakta Koli becomes UNDP India's First Youth Climate Champion

- Young Indians become the leading voice to make the world more sustainable. Leading content creator and actor, **Prajakta Koli**, who embraces the moniker **MostlySane**, has become the first United Nations Development Programme India Youth Climate Champion.
- The title has been conferred to her following her contribution towards mental health, women's rights and girl child education through various global social campaigns. UNDP aims to eliminate poverty, achieve sustainable growth and scale up human development in countries where it is required the most.

Ex-Japan PM Shinzo Abe given Netaji Award 2022

- **Former Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe** was conferred with the **Netaji Award 2022** by **Netaji Research Bureau on January 23**. Consul General of Japan in Kolkata **Nakamura Yutaka** received the honour on behalf of Mr. Abe at a function at the **Elgin Road residence of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** on his **125th birth anniversary**. Moreover, in **January 2021**, India bestowed the **Padma Vibhushan** on former Japanese Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe**, the country's second-highest civilian honour.

Govt announces Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for 2022

- The **Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM)** and **Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority's Vice Chairman Vinod Sharma** have been selected for the **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for 2022** for their excellent work in disaster management.
- The central government has instituted the annual award —**Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar**—to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management. The award is announced every year on the freedom fighter's birth anniversary on **January 23**. It carries a cash prize of **₹51 lakh** and a certificate in the case of an institution and **₹5 lakh** and a certificate in the case of an individual.

Indian film Koozhangal gets the best film award at Dhaka International Film Festival

- **P S Vinothraj** directed film **Koozhangal** from India won the best film award in the **Asian Film Competition** section at the **20th Dhaka International Film Festival** which concluded in Dhaka.
- Apart from this, **four more Indian entries** were included among the **17 awards** given away for the films during the concluding session. The best actor award was given to **Jayasurya** for **Ranjith Sankar**-directed film **Sunny**. The Best Script Writer Award went to **Indranil Roychowdhury** and **Sugata Sinha** for **Indranil Roychowdhury**-directed India-Bangladesh film **Mayar Jonjal**.

Assam government to confer 'Asom Baibhav Award' to Ratan Tata

- With **Assam government** deciding to confer the '**Asom Baibhav Award**', state's highest civilian award, to industrialist **Ratan Tata**, the industrialist has expressed his inability to personally visit Assam to receive award.

Neeraj Chopra to be awarded with Param Vashistha Seva Medal on Republic Day

- Another feather in **Neeraj Chopra's** illustrious career as the **Tokyo Olympics gold medalist** will be awarded with the **Param Vashistha Seva Medal** by the **4 Rajputana Rifles** on Republic Day.
- **Neeraj Chopra** is a **Subedar in the Indian Army**. He had enrolled in **4 Rajputana Rifles** as a direct entry Naib Subedar in 2016. He was chosen for training at the **Mission Olympics Wing** and **Army Sports Institute** in Pune.

Jamia's first female vice-chancellor Najma Akhtar among Padma award winners

- **Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) vice-chancellor Najma Akhtar** has been selected for **Padma Shri** award for her contribution in the field of literature and education.

Padma Vibhushan for Kalyan Singh, Gen Rawat; Cong Ghulam Nabi Azad, CPM Buddhadeb on honours list

- The Government of India announced the **Padma Awards** ahead of **Republic Day 2022** and, in a bid to reach across the political divide, **picked Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad** and **CPI (M)'s Buddhadeb Bhattacharya for the Padma Bhushan**. Also on the award list were the country's Covid vaccine makers, leaders of US tech giants Google and Microsoft, and the late **General Bipin Rawat**, the first Chief of Defence Staff who, with his wife and 12 others, was killed in a helicopter crash last month.

- **Azad, ex-J&K chief minister and former Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha**, thanked the Government for recognising his sacrifices although he was a “hardcore Congressman”. **But Bhattacharya, in line with his party’s policy, said in a statement: “If I have been given Padma Bhushan, I refuse to accept it.”**
- **A total of four Padma Vibhushans, 17 Padma Bhushans and 107 Padma Shri awards have been conferred this year. Gen Rawat, former UP CM Kalyan Singh, Hindustani Classical vocalist Prabha Atre and Radheshyam Khemka of Gita Press have been named for the Padma Vibhushan. Apart from Rawat, Singh and Khemka have been conferred the award posthumously.**
- **The overall Padma list of 128 also includes Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Serum Institute of India’s Cyrus Poonawalla, Bharat Biotech’s Krishna Ella and Suchitra Ella and Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra.**

The Padma awards are announced every year on the eve of Republic Day. They are the highest civilian honour of India after the Bharat Ratna. They are instituted in 1954 along with Bharat Ratna. The awards are given in three categories: Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service), Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher order) and Padma Shri (distinguished service). The award seeks to recognise achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines where an element of public service is involved. All nominations received for Padma awards are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year. The Padma Awards Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and four to six eminent persons as members.

New Zealand’s Daryl Mitchell wins ICC’s ‘Spirit of Cricket’ award

- **New Zealand’s Daryl Mitchell was named the recipient of 2021’s ICC ‘Spirit of Cricket’ award for not taking an easy single during the T20 World Cup semifinal against England as he felt he had “obstructed” the way of bowler Adil Rashid in that moment.**

Neeraj Chopra nominated for Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award

- **Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra has been selected as one of the six nominees for the 2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award.** A panel of more than 1,300 of the leading sports journalists and broadcasters in the world have selected the nominees in each of seven categories for this year’s Laureus World Sports Awards. The Winners will be revealed in April, **following a vote by the Laureus World Sports Academy, the world’s ultimate sports jury, made up of 71 of the greatest sporting legends of all time.**

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla wins \$1 million Genesis Prize for COVID-19 vaccine

- **The global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc.’s Chairman and Chief Executive, Albert Bourla, has been awarded with the prestigious Genesis Prize 2022 on January 19, 2022. He has been awarded for his efforts in leading the development of a COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer–BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine). The award comes with a cash prize of \$1 million.**

ICICI Bank’s Sandeep Bakhshi named Business Standard Banker of the Year 2020-21

- **Sandeep Bakhshi has been named the Business Standard Banker of the Year 2020-21.** He is the **managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of ICICI Bank.** The winner was chosen by a jury of 5 members chaired by former Reserve Bank of India deputy governor S S Mundra. For 2020-21, ICICI Bank reported a net profit of Rs 16,193 crore against Rs 7,931 crore during the previous financial year.

Neena Gupta conferred Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians

- **Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, was conferred the Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians.** She received the award for the year 2021 for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.
- **The prize is awarded annually to a researcher from a developing country funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in association with the ICTP (International Centre for Theoretical Physics) and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).**
- **The prize is given to mathematicians under 45 years of age who have conducted outstanding research in a developing country. It is supported by the DST in the memory of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a self-taught genius in pure mathematics for his spectacular contributions.**

Coal India gets 'India's Most Trusted Public Sector Company' award

- **Maharatna company of the Government of India, Coal India Limited has been awarded the 'India's Most Trusted Public Sector Company' award. Coal India received this honour at the "Energy Meet and Excellence Award" function organized by Industry Chamber "ASSOCHAM" in Kolkata. The company has got this honour at a time when Coal India has not allowed the situation of power crisis in the country by significantly increasing coal production and supply in the last few months to meet the increased demand for coal for the power sector.**

Physicist Deepak Dhar becomes First Indian to be conferred with Prestigious Boltzmann Medal

- **Allahabad University (AU) alumnus and a renowned physicist working as emeritus faculty at the Indian Institute of Science, Education and Research (IISER), Pune, Deepak Dhar has been selected for the prestigious Boltzmann Medal for 2022—the first Indian to ever be awarded this prestigious honour for his contribution in the field of statistical physics.**
- **The Boltzmann Medal is given every three years by the C3 Commission on Statistical Physics of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP) at the Statphys Conference. The Award, comprising a gilded medal, honours outstanding achievements in statistical physics.**

India's Daniel Vijayaraj becomes first Male Nurse to bag Prestigious Nightingale Award

- **Daniel Vijayaraj has become the first nurse from India to bag the precious Nightingale Award constituted by the National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust in England.**
- **He is a native of the Keeladi village near the town of Keezhadi in the Sivagangai district of Tamil Nadu. Vijayaraj's work has also been recognised by Chief Minister MK Stalin, who personally appreciated him for the honour. Vijayaraj joined as a nurse at South Tees Hospital Middlesbrough in England in 2001. After 21 years of experience, he now holds a specialisation in dialysis and cardioversion and guides nursing students.**

Ram Nath Kovind to confer Nari Shakti Puraskar

- **President Ram Nath Kovind to confer Nari Shakti Puraskar for the years 2020 and 2021 on International Women's Day International Women's Day is being celebrated. The Day is observed every year to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.**
- **The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality. The theme for this year is 'hashtag breaks The Bias'. In all, 28 awards will be presented to 29 individuals. The winners for the year 2020 are from fields as diverse as entrepreneurship, agriculture, innovation, social work, arts and crafts, STEM, and wildlife conservation.**

Nari Shakti Puraskar Initiated in the year 1999, it is the highest Civilian Honour for Women in India. The President of India confers the Nari Shakti Puraskar on the International Women's Day (8th March), annually. The Nari Shakti Puraskar carries a cash award of Rs.2 Lakh and a certificate for individuals and institutions. The Ministry of Women and Child Development announces these national level awards for individuals/ groups/ Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)/ institutions etc.

Geetanjali Shree's 'Tomb of Sand' first Hindi novel nominated for International Booker Prize

- **Author Geetanjali Shree's novel 'Tomb of Sand' is among 13 books from across the world longlisted for the International Booker Prize, the first Hindi language work of fiction to make the cut. Shree's book, translated into English by Daisy Rockwell and described by the judges as "loud and irresistible", will compete for the GBP 50,000 prize, which is split evenly between the author and translator.**
- **"The constantly shifting perspectives and timeframes of Geetanjali Shree's inventive, energetic 'Tomb of Sand' lead us into every cranny of an 80-year-old woman's life and surprising past," the judges said of the Hindi novel. Uttar Pradesh born, Shree is an author of three novels and several story collections; her work has been translated into English, French, German, Serbian, and Korean.**

The International Booker Prize (formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize) is an international literary award hosted in the United Kingdom. The introduction of the International Prize to complement the Man Booker Prize was announced in June 2004. Sponsored by the Man Group, from 2005 until 2015 the award was given every two years to a living author of any nationality for a body of work published in English or generally available in English translation. It rewarded one author's "continued creativity, development and overall contribution to fiction on the world stage", and was a recognition of the writer's body of work rather than any one title. Since 2016, the award has been given annually to a single book translated into English and published in the United Kingdom or Ireland, with a £50,000 prize for the winning title, shared equally between author and translator. Crankstart, the charitable foundation of Sir Michael Moritz and his wife, Harriet Heyman began supporting The Booker Prizes on 1 June 2019. From this date, the prizes will be known as The Booker Prize and The International Booker Prize. Laszlo Krasznahorkai became the first author from Hungary to receive the Man Booker award. Arundhati Roy is the first Indian Citizen to win the Booker Prize.

Sahitya Akademi Awards- 2021 conferred to 24 eminent writers, playwrights and novelists

- As many as twenty-four eminent writers, playwrights and novelists have been conferred Sahitya Akademi Awards- 2021 in New Delhi. These awards have been provided for best writings in twenty-four Indian languages.
- English writer Namita Gokhale won the award for her novel 'Things to Leave Behind'. She is among the authors who have been honored with Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 in 20 different languages.
- Sahitya Akademi president DR. Chandrashekhar Kambar gave away the awards to them and handed a cheque of one lakh rupees, a shawl and memento to each of them. Those awarded with the Sahitya Akademi Awards are- Eminent Assamese novelist Anuradha sarma for her novel- Iyat Ekhan Aronya Asil, Bengali writer Bratya Basu, Bodo Poet Dr. Devakanta Ramchiary, Dogri Fiction writer Raj Rahi, English writer Namita Gokhale, Gujrati Poet Yagnesh Dave, Hindi playwright Daya Prakash Sinha and many more.
- 2019, and 2020, a total of 144 awards were given out (72 Winner prizes and 72 Runner-up prizes).

Sahitya Akademi Award by Sahitya Akademi is a literary honour in India that is conferred on the writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit that are published in any of the 24 major Indian languages. The prestigious literary award is conferred by Sahitya Akademi which is India's National Academy of Letters. Sahitya Akademi Award was established in 1954 and it comprises a plaque and a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000. The aim of the Sahitya Akademi Award is to recognize and promote excellence in Indian writing as well as also acknowledge the new trends in literature. Sahitya Akademi Award plaque which is awarded to the winners was designed by Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

Axis Bank won 'Asian Bank of the Year' at IFR Asia Awards 2021

- India's third-largest private sector bank, Axis Bank has been awarded IFR Asia's Asian Bank of The Year, for its breadth of coverage and depth of expertise in the Asian investment banking space. The award acknowledges the bank's outstanding performance in equity and debt issuance, across all major products and segments. Axis Bank was the only local house to serve as a global coordinator for the record Rs. 183 Bn Paytm IPO, and was also the global coordinator for Macrotech Developers' Rs. 25 Bn IPO.

Neeraj Chopra wins Sportsman of the Year award: Sportstar Aces 2022

- Tokyo Olympic gold medallist, Neeraj Chopra claimed the coveted 'Sportstar of the Year (Male)' award at the 2022 Sportstar Aces Awards. Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who claimed the silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics, received the 'Sportstar of the Year (Female)' award. The Aces Awards celebrate the spirit of excellence in sport and hope to inspire our athletes and sportspersons to continue to strive to break new records and reach new pinnacles of glory.

Abel prize for 2022: American mathematician Dennis P. Sullivan

- The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters has awarded the Abel Prize for the year 2022 to American Mathematician Dennis Parnell Sullivan. The citation mentions that the award has been given, "For his groundbreaking contributions to topology in its broadest sense, and in particular its algebraic, geometric and dynamical aspects."
- Topology is a field of mathematics which was born in the nineteenth century and has to do with properties of surfaces that do not change when they are deformed. Topologically, a circle and a square

are the same; similarly, surfaces of a doughnut and a coffee mug with one handle are topologically equivalent, however, the surface of a sphere and a coffee mug are not equivalent.

The Abel Prize is awarded annually by the King of Norway to one or more outstanding mathematicians. It is named after the Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802–1829) and directly modeled after the Nobel Prizes. It comes with a monetary award of 7.5 million Norwegian kroner (NOK) (increased from 6 million NOK in 2019). The Abel Prize's history dates back to 1899, when its establishment was proposed by the Norwegian mathematician Sophus Lie when he learned that Alfred Nobel's plans for annual prizes would not include a prize in mathematics. Jean-Pierre Serre is the first winner of Abel Prize. S. R. Srinivasa Varadhan is an Indian American mathematician who is known for his fundamental contributions to probability theory and in particular for creating a unified theory of large deviations. He is first Indian American mathematician to win Abel Prize.

Francis Kere becomes first African to win Pritzker Prize 2022

- **Architect, educator and social activist Francis Kere** has been **announced as the 2022 laureate of the Pritzker architecture prize 2022**, the award often referred to as architecture's highest honour. He was born in the small village of Gando in Burkina Faso, **Kere is the first black architect to win the coveted award.**
- **Established by the Hyatt Foundation in 1979, the Pritzker architecture prize** is bestowed on architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of talent, vision, and commitment. In 2021, the award went to French architects Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal while in 2020 saw Shelley McNamara and Yvonne Farrell of Grafton architects were honoured.

Oscar awards 2022 announced in Los Angeles; Will Smith wins first Oscar as best actor; Dune bags six awards and CODA takes three

- **The 94th Academy Awards returned to the Dolby Theater in Hollywood as the top films** from the last year were **honoured by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.** The show was hosted by Regina Hall, Amy Schumer and Wanda Sykes, the first time the award ceremony has had multiple hosts since Anne Hathaway and James Franco co-hosted the 83rd instalment in 2011. **The ceremony was marred by several controversies, most notably an incident in which actor Will Smith walked onstage and slapped comedian Chris Rock in the face after the latter made a joke about Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith. At the 94th Academy Awards Ceremony, Will Smith won the first Oscar of his career for his performance in King Richard. Jessica Chastain won Best Actress for The Eyes of Tammy Faye.**
- **The 94th Academy Awards are honouring the films released between January 1 and December 31, 2021.** The nominations were announced on February 8, by actors Tracee Ellis Ross and Leslie Jordan.
- **Netflix's The Power of the Dog leads the race with 12 nominations followed by sci-fi epic Dune,** with 10 nods. Indian documentary Writing With Fire is also nominated for Best Documentary (Feature).
- **Awards were presented across 23 categories,** which are determined based on voting by members of the Academy. This time, there are two new categories- Oscars Fan Favorite Award and Oscars Cheer Moment, which will be decided by fan voting, which was done online between February 14 and March 3, 2022.
- **Best Actor in a Leading Role: Will Smith, "King Richard"**
- **Best Actress in a Leading Role: Jessica Chastain (The Eyes of Tammy Faye)**
- **Best Picture: CODA**
- **Best International Feature Film: Drive My Car**
- **Documentary Short Subject: The Queen of Basketball**
- **Best Directing: Jane Campion (The Power of the Dog)**
- **Dune won six awards at the Oscars out of its ten nominations - Best original score, Best cinematography, Best visual effects, Best film editing, Best Sound, and Best production design.**
- **CODA was the big winner of the night winning the Best Picture award.** The film was nominated in three categories and won all three. **CODA's big win at the 94th Academy Awards is monumental in every way possible. The film won three big awards - Best Film, Best Supporting Actor for the hearing-impaired Troy Kotsur and Best Adapted Screenplay. The Oscar award for best-supporting actor went to Troy Kotsur for his role in "CODA." He is the first deaf male actor ever to be nominated and to win an Oscar.**

- **The Academy Awards, popularly known as the Oscars, are awards for artistic and technical merit in the film industry.** They are **regarded by many as the most prestigious and significant awards** in the entertainment industry worldwide. **Given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS),** the awards are an international recognition of excellence in cinematic achievements, as assessed by the Academy's voting membership. **The statuette depicts a knight rendered in the Art Deco style. The award was originally sculpted by George Stanley from a design sketch by Cedric Gibbons. AMPAS first presented it in 1929 at a private dinner hosted by Douglas Fairbanks in The Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in what would become known as the 1st Academy Awards.**

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Two Indians – Falguni Shah and Ricky Kej win big at the 64th Grammy Awards

- **Indian-American singer Falguni Shah won a Grammy Award for A Colorful World in the Best Children's Album category.** Falguni Shah has even performed and collaborated with music maestro AR Rahman and she is the only Indian-origin woman to be nominated in the Best Children's Music Album category at the Grammys twice. Falguni Shah was earlier nominated for a Grammy in the same category for her 2018 album Falu's Bazaar.
- **This is the second Grammy for the Indian musician. His first had come at the 57th Grammy ceremony in 2015 for Winds of Samsara – a collaboration with South African flautist Wouter Kellerman.** The 14-song album began with tributes to their respective fathers of the nation – Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela and went on to explore other aspects of Indian and African music.

Ramdarash Mishra named for Saraswati Samman 2021

- **Noted poet and litterateur Prof Ramdarash Mishra will be awarded the prestigious Saraswati Samman, 2021, for his collection of poems 'Mein to Yahan Hun',** the KK Birla Foundation announced. The recipient is chosen by a selection committee, whose current head is Dr Subhash C Kashyap. **Instituted in 1991, Saraswati Samman is one of the most prestigious literary awards in the country.** It is given every year to an outstanding literary work written in any Indian language by an Indian citizen and published within the last 10 years. It carries a citation, a plaque, and a cash prize of Rs 15 lakhs.

Renowned Assamese poet Nilamani Phookan to be conferred Jnanpith award in Guwahati

- **Renowned Assamese poet Nilamani Phookan will be conferred the country's highest literary award, Jnanpith in Guwahati.** A celebrated poet, Phookan was named for the Jnanpith Award in December last year.

The Jnanpith Award is the oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their “outstanding contribution towards literature”. Instituted in 1961, the award is bestowed only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English, with no posthumous conferral. From 1965 till 1981, the award was given to the authors for their “most outstanding work” and consisted of a citation plaque, a cash prize and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom. **The award carries cash prize of 11 lakh rupees, a citation plaque and a bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom. The first recipient of the award was the Malayalam writer G. Sankara Kurup who received the award in 1965 for his collection of poems, Odakkuzhal (The Bamboo Flute), published in 1950.**

PM Narendra Modi to be honoured with first-ever Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be honoured with the first-ever Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award, instituted in the memory of the veteran singer who passed away in February this year.**
- **Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan informed that the award ceremony will be held at Mumbai's Shanmukhanand Hall.** It added that the award will be **given annually to a person who has made a path-breaking, spectacular and exemplary contribution to the nation and its people.**

- The organization said, **Mr. Modi is an international statesman who has put India on the path of global leadership.** Calling Mr. Modi an inspiration, the organization said, he is one of the greatest leaders that India has seen in its glorious history.

David Attenborough receives the UN's most distinguished environment award

- **The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has awarded David Attenborough the Champions of the Earth Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication to research, documentation and advocacy for the protection of nature and its restoration.**
- **Attenborough's career as a broadcaster, natural historian, author and environmental advocate spans over seven decades.** He is most famous for his work with the BBC's Natural History Unit, including documentaries such as Life on Earth, the Living Planet, Our Planet and Our Blue Planet.

UK's Commonwealth Points of Light Award won by Kishore Kumar Das

- **The founder of the educational charity 'Bidyanando' Kishore Kumar Das from Bangladesh has been chosen for the United Kingdom's Commonwealth Points of Light Award** for his exceptional work in improving access to education for children from marginalised backgrounds. UK's Commonwealth Point of Light Awards recognises outstanding individual volunteers who are making a change in their community.

NASA's Cynthia Rosenzweig Receives 2022 World Food Prize

- **Cynthia Rosenzweig**, a senior research scientist and head of the Climate Impacts Group at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) in New York City, **received the 2022 World Food Prize from the World Food Prize Foundation.** According to the World Food Prize Foundation, the World Food Prize is a prestigious international award conceived as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture" with a mission to elevate innovations and inspire action to sustainably increase the quality, quantity and availability of food for all.

Farhan Akhtar gets the 12 Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival 2022 Award

- **Mr. Rajesh kumar Jain produced hindi feature film "Blue Mountains", who won golden elephant award from Govt. of India under best children film category and also got more than 6 awards for this film.** Farhan Akhtar after winning the award for his film TUFAN.

Shah Rukh Khan gets honoured with France's highest Civilian Award

- **Shah Rukh Khan has been honoured with many prestigious civilian awards earlier as well. The latest accolade is France's highest Civilian Award - known as the Knight of the Legion of Honour** which he has been bestowed with due to his outstanding contributions to spreading the practice of cultural diversity across the world.

India to be 'Country of Honour' at Cannes Marche' Du Film

- **India will be the Official Country of Honour at the upcoming Marche' Du Film, organised alongside the Cannes Film Festival in France.** This is for the first time that such an honour is being bestowed to any country.

Danish Siddiqui, Ukraine journalists among those honoured

- **The Pulitzer Prize Board recognised Ukrainian journalists for their "courage, endurance and commitment to truthful"** coverage of Russia's invasion of their country, which began on February 24.
- **The prestigious awards also honoured US media giant The Washington Post**, for its coverage of the January 6, 2021 riots- when a mob of supporters of former US president Donald Trump attacked the Capitol Building in Washington.
- **The Washington Post which won the Pulitzer Prize in public service journalism was recognised for its extensive reporting** – published in a sophisticated interactive series that found numerous problems and failures in political systems and security before, during, and after the January 6 riots.
- **Most of the news prizes were scooped up by The New York Times** - at three. The newspaper won the international reporting category **for exposing the vast civilian toll of US-led airstrikes across the Middle East, including in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan.** It also took the award for national reporting for its investigation into deadly police traffic stops around the United States.
- **Indian Reuters photographer, who was killed while covering fighting in Afghanistan, was part of a team that took home the Pulitzer for feature photography.** Danish Siddiqui and his colleagues Adnan Abidi, Sanna Irshad Mattoo, and Amit Dave won for images depicting the toll of the Covid-19 pandemic in India.

The Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine, online journalism, literature, and musical composition within the United States. It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of Joseph Pulitzer, who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher, and is administered by Columbia University. Prizes are awarded yearly in twenty-one categories. In twenty of the categories, each winner receives a certificate and a US\$15,000 cash award (raised from \$10,000 in 2017). The winner in the public service category is awarded a gold medal.

Nobel laureate and physicist wins 2022 Templeton Prize

- **Frank Wilczek, the Nobel Prize-winning theoretical physicist and author renowned for his boundary-pushing investigations into the fundamental laws of nature**, was honoured with this year's prestigious Templeton Prize, awarded to individuals whose life's work embodies a fusion of science and spirituality.
- **Established in 1972 by the late philanthropist Sir John Templeton**, the prize is one of the **world's most lucrative individual awards, currently more than US\$1.3mil (RM5.27mil)**. Past winners include Jane Goodall, Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Mamata Banerjee received Special Bangla Academy Award

- **West Bengal Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee received the Bangla Academy Award for her "relentless literary pursuit"**. The award, introduced this year by Sahitya Academy, was presented to Banerjee for her book "Kabita Bitan", which pays tribute to the best writers of West Bengal. **Mamata Banerjee's 'Kabita Bitan' was launched at the 2020 Kolkata Book Fair**. The book contains 946 poems written by the TMC supremo.

West Bengal is a state in the eastern region of India along the Bay of Bengal. Part of the Bengal region of the Indian subcontinent, it borders Bangladesh in the east, and Nepal and Bhutan in the north. The state capital is Kolkata. Under the East India Company rule and later under the British Raj, Calcutta served as the capital of British-held territories in India until 1911, when its perceived geographical disadvantages, combined with growing nationalism in Bengal, led to a shift of the capital to New Delhi. Mamata Banerjee is serving as the current Chief Minister of West Bengal since 2011, the first woman to hold the office. Jagdeep Dhankhar is serving as the current Governor of West Bengal.

Mame Khan becomes first folk artiste from India to walk Cannes 2022 red carpet

- **An 11-member Indian delegation led by I&B Minister Anurag Thakur walked the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival in France on the inaugural day.** Among them, dressed in traditional attire, was Manganiar singer Mame Khan from Rajasthan, who made history by becoming the first folk artiste to open the red carpet for an Indian contingent at Cannes.
- **This year, India has been named as the 'country of honour' at the Marché du Film**, the business counterpart of the Cannes Film Festival. **"Mame Khan, the traditional Manganiyar singer from Rajasthan, became the first folk artiste to open the red carpet event for the Indian contingent at Cannes,"**

Kenyan nurse Anna Qabale Duba crowned world's best nurse

- **Anna Qabale Duba, a Kenyan nurse stationed at the Marsabit County Referral Hospital, won the inaugural Aster Guardian Global Nursing Award** for endorsing education and campaigning against outdated cultural practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in her community. Duba, who took home USD 250,000 (approx. Ksh.29 million) in prize money, was feted by Emirates CEO Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum at an award ceremony held in Dubai, which commemorated the International Nurses Day.

Geetanjali Shree is first Indian winner of International Booker Prize

- **Geetanjali Shree has become the first Indian writer to win the International Booker Prize. Her novel Tomb of Sand, a family saga set in the shadow of the partition of India, follows an 80-year-old woman after the death of her husband. It was the first Hindi-language book to be shortlisted for the £50,000 prize.** The prize money will be split between Shree and the book's translator, US-based Daisy Rockwell.
- **The International Booker Prize is awarded every year for a book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.** Shree's 725-page novel competed against five other shortlisted titles, by Mieko Kawakami, Bora Chung, Jon Fosse, Claudia Pineiro and former winner Olga Tokarczuk.

The International Booker Prize (formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize) is an international literary award hosted in the United Kingdom. The introduction of the International Prize to complement the Man Booker Prize was announced in June 2004. Sponsored by the Man Group, from 2005 until 2015 the award was given every two years to a living author of any nationality for a body of work published in English or generally available in English translation. It rewarded one author's "continued creativity, development and overall contribution to fiction on the world stage", and was a recognition of the writer's body of work rather than any one title. Since 2016, the award has been given annually to a single book translated into English and published in the United Kingdom or Ireland, with a £50,000 prize for the winning title, shared equally between author and translator. Crankstart, the charitable foundation of Sir Michael Moritz and his wife, Harriet Heyman began supporting The Booker Prizes on 1 June 2019. The 2005 inaugural winner of the prize was Albanian writer Ismail Kadare.

Anjali Pandey bags the CII EXCON Committed Leader Award

- **Anjali Pandey, Engines and Components Business Unit Leader at Cummins India has been awarded the Committed Leader Award at CII EXCON 2022 in Bengaluru for her efforts to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. Cummins views Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) as a competitive advantage and hence it's a business imperative.**

Cannes Film Festival 2022: Complete List Of Winners

- **The 75th edition of the Cannes Film Festival came to a glittering close with the nine-member jury giving out the big awards at the prestigious festival. The awards were selected by a nine-member jury headed by French actor Vincent Lindon and presented in a closing ceremony inside Cannes' Grand Lumière Theater. The jury included an Indian face in actor Deepika Padukone. A separate section of two awards for documentary films was adjudged earlier on Saturday. Those awards were adjudged by a separate jury.**
- **FULL LIST OF WINNERS AT 2022 CANNES FILM FESTIVAL**
- **Palme d'Or: Triangle of Sadness, directed by Ruben Ostlund**
- **Grand Prix: Stars at Noon, directed by Claire Denis and Close directed by Lukas Dhont**
- **Jury Prize: Eo, directed by Jerzy Skolimowski and Le Otto Montagne, directed by Charlotte Vandermeersch and Felix van Groeningen**
- **Best Director: Park Chan-wook for Decision to Leave**
- **Best Actor: Song Kang-ho for Broker**
- **Best Actress: Zar Amir Ebrahimi for Holy Spider**

Kirti Chakra and 14 Shaurya Chakras awarded

- **Then President Ram Nath Kovind conferred one Kirti Chakra and 14 Shaurya Chakras during Defence Investiture Ceremony (Phase-2) at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. The gallantry awards were given to the personnel of the Armed Forces, Central Armed Police Forces and Police for displaying conspicuous gallantry, indomitable courage and extreme devotion to duty.**
- **The President also conferred 13 Param Vishisht Seva Medals and 29 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals for distinguished service of an exceptional order. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other dignitaries were present during the ceremony.**
- **Kirti Chakra was awarded to the constable of Jammu and Kashmir Police Altaf Hussain Bhat Posthumously. Mr. Bhat exhibited gallantry of the highest order, utmost commitment to duty and made supreme sacrifice for the nation while killing a terrorist in Ganderbal. Bhat was deputed to ensure the safety and security of protected functionaries in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district.**

The Kirti Chakra is an Indian military decoration awarded for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle. It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, including posthumous awards. It is the peacetime equivalent of the Maha Vir Chakra. It is second in order of precedence of peacetime gallantry awards, comes after Ashoka Chakra and before Shaurya Chakra. Before 1967, the award was known as the Ashoka Chakra, Class II. Established as the "Ashoka Chakra, Class II" by the President of India, 4 January 1952 (with effect from 15 August 1947). The statutes were revised and the decoration renamed on 27 January 1967.

RJ Umar receives the Immunisation Champion award by UNICEF

- **Radio Jockey Umar Nisar (RJ Umar) from South Kashmir**, has been awarded the ‘01 Best Content Award’ and the Immunization Champion award by United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) at the annual Radio4Child 2022 Awards in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The award was presented by multi-Grammy Award-winning music composer, environmentalist, and UNICEF celebrity supporter Ricky Kej, OIC UNICEF, UP Dr Zafrin Chowdhury, chief of communications and advocacy and partnerships, UNICEF India. The award has been conferred to Umar for his work of providing awareness and countering rumours to reach audiences during the pandemic.

Young women entrepreneur Rashmi Sahoo wins Times Business Award 2022

- **Director of Ruchi Foodline, Eastern India’s leading food brand and Odisha’s No.1 spices company, Rashmi Sahoo** has been presented the Times Business Award 2022. She was given the award by renowned Bollywood actor and social activist Sonu Sood. **The award was given in the category of Eastern India’s Leading READY -TO-EAT brand.** While working as director of Ruchi Foodline, she started and established Frozit – Odisha’s first frozen food company. **She not only revolutionized the food processing segment in Odisha but also changes the lives of thousands of women by proving employment opportunities.** Sahoo and Frozit have won various accolades across the world for their innovative food product line, quality and hygiene standards.

MIFF 2022: ‘Turn Your Body to the Sun’ bags Golden Conch award for the Best Documentary

- **The Dutch documentary film “Turn Your Body to the Sun”,** which tells the incredible story of a Soviet Prisoner of War, has won the prestigious Golden Conch award for the Best Documentary Film at MIFF 2022. **Directed by Aliona Van der Horst,** ‘Turn Your Body to the Sun’ brings to light the incredible life story of a Soviet soldier of Tatar descent, who was captured by the Nazis during World War II. Through his diaries as well as various personal and public archives and registries, his daughter Sana attempts to trace the path of her father to understand what made him the man she knew as a child.

Maharashtra Governor presents Honorary Doctorate to industrialist Ratan Tata

- **Industrialist and philanthropist, Ratan Tata** was presented with Honorary Doctor of Literature by Maharashtra Governor **Bhagat Singh Koshiyari** at Raj Bhavan Mumbai. The Honorary doctorate was presented to Mr. Ratan at the First Special Convocation of the HSNC University. The Governor said the honour for Ratan Tata is in effect the honour of the entire Tata family and Tata Group.

IIFA awards 2022: Announced Check the complete list of winners

- **The International Indian Film Academy Awards (IIFA)** held in **Abu Dhabi**. This year the IIFA 2022 Awards was hosted by **Salman Khan, Maniesh Paul and Riteish Deshmukh**. Sidharth Malhotra’s Shershaah dominated the awards this year, with the film winning in as many as five categories. **Sardar Udham, Mimi and Ludo** won in two categories each.
- **List of the winners of IIFA 2022:**
- **Best Actor (Male): Vicky Kaushal (Sardar Udham)**
- **Best Actor (Female): Kriti Sanon (Mimi)**
- **Best Director: Vishnuvaradhan (Shershaah)**
- **Best Film: Shershaah**
- **Best Playback Singer Female: Asees Kaur for ‘Raataan Lambiyan’, (Shershaah)**
- **Best Playback Singer Male: Jubin Nautiyal for song ‘Raataan Lambiyan’, (Shershaah)**

Slumdog Millionaire author, noted diplomat awarded honorary degree in Canada

- **Vikas Swarup** was recognised not just for his literary output, but also for his work as a diplomat. He was high-profile spokesperson for India’s Ministry of External Affairs before arriving in Canada in 2017 as the country’s High Commissioner to Ottawa. His “first novel won several international awards and was short-listed for the Best First Book by the Commonwealth Writer’s Prize. It has since been published in more than 40 languages.

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022

- **The prestigious ceremony of Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022** was held on February 20. The event was held in Mumbai and the best performances from last year were honoured in the event this time. This year Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 celebrated the opulence of Indian Cinema and also commemorated the 75 years of Independence or Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

- **Film of the Year Award: Pushpa: The Rise**
- **Best Film Award: Shershaah**
- **Best Actor Award: Ranveer Singh for film 83**
- **Best Actress Award: Kriti Sanon for film Mimi**
- **Best Director Award: Ken Ghosh for film State of Siege: Temple Attack**

Ukrainian mathematician becomes second woman to win Fields Medal

- **Ukrainian mathematician Maryna Viazovska was named as one of four recipients of the prestigious Fields Medal**, which is **often described as the Nobel Prize in mathematics**. The International Mathematical Union said Viazovska, who holds the chair in number theory at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, was being honored for her work on the densest packing of identical spheres in eight dimensions.
- **The Fields Medal is awarded every four years to mathematicians under age 40**. The recipients are normally announced at the International Congress of Mathematicians, **which was originally due to be held in Russia this year but moved to Helsinki instead**.
- **The name of the award honours the Canadian mathematician John Charles Fields**. The prize includes a monetary award which, **since 2006, has been CA\$15,000**. **The medal was first given to Finnish mathematician Lars Ahlfors and American mathematician Jesse Douglas in 1936**, and it has been given every four years since 1950. **Manjul Bhargava set a record by becoming first person of Indian origin to win the Fields Medal**, popularly known as the Nobel Prize of Mathematics.

Amruta Fadnavis given 'Indian of the World' award at UK parliament

- **Amruta Fadnavis, the wife of Maharashtra deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, received the 'Indian of the World' award** at the British Parliament. Fadnavis landed in London on June 29 and visited the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, where she performed a special puja and prayed for the stability and prosperity of Maharashtra. Her visit to the United Kingdom came as the **political crisis in Maharashtra ended with Eknath Shinde becoming the chief minister and Devendra Fadnavis as his deputy**.

Polish government honoured maharajas for helping refugees during WW II

- **The Polish government has honoured the maharajas of Jamnagar and Kolhapur and others who sheltered Polish refugees fleeing the Soviet Union invasion of Poland during World War II**. Honouring the invite, the Indian government sent a delegation of former royals, **including Yuvraj Sambhaji Raje and Sanyogitaraje Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and representatives of Jamnagar royalty, to Poland**. Poland's deputy PM Piotr Glineski also participated in the Warsaw event. Recalling their memories of living in India, Polish residents showcased pictures of the Indian kings' generosity.

Japan awards Ex-PM Shinzo Abe country's highest order posthumously

- **The Japanese government has decided to award former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe with the country's highest order posthumously**. Abe will receive the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum. **The longest-serving PM of Japan will be the fourth former prime minister to receive the decoration under the postwar Constitution**.

Film-makers Aparna Sen, Nandita Das win Icon Awards at London Indian Film Festival

- **Filmmakers Aparna Sen and Nandita Das have been awarded the Icon Award at this year's London Indian Film Festival for their contribution to Indian and global cinema**. Running over two weeks and across four cities of London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, the London Indian Film Festival (LIFF) concluded last week with a series of screenings, in conversation sessions, cinema discussions and an awards ceremony.

Maharashtra Gov presents Mother Teresa Memorial Award to Dia Mirza & Afroz Shah

- **The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) National Goodwill Ambassador Ms Dia Mirza, and Environmental Activist Mr Afroz Shah were felicitated with the prestigious Mother Teresa Memorial Awards for Social Justice 2021**. The award is given by the Governor of Maharashtra Bhagat Singh Koshiyari at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai. Both were awarded for their commendable and notable achievements in Environmental Sustainability.
- **Ms Dia Mirza was awarded for her astounding and notable efforts in leading pivotal environmental campaigns across India as the Goodwill Ambassador of UNEP, India**. **Mr Afroz Shah was awarded for his impeccable and seminal efforts to lead one of the world's largest beach clean-up movements in India that have inspired people around the world**.

68th National Film Awards: Actor Ajay Devgan and Suriya jointly bags best actor award

- **Bollywood actor Ajay Devgan and Tamil actor Suriya have jointly bagged the National Film Award for the year 2020 for best actor for their roles in Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior and Soorarai Pottru. Aparna Balamurali won the award of best actress for her role in the Tamil film Soorarai Pottru. The 68th National Film Awards were announced by Information and Broadcasting Ministry.**
- **The awards in different categories including Non - Feature Films and Feature Films were announced by Chairperson, Non-Feature Jury Chitrartha Singh, Chairperson, Best Writing on Cinema Jury Anant Vijay, and Feature Film Jury Member Dharam Gulati in presence of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Neerja Shekhar in New Delhi. The award for Best Hindi film went to Toolsidas Junior and award for Best Feature Film was given to Soorarai Pottru. Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior won the Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment. Testimony of Ana bagged the Best Non-Feature Film award.**
- **Vishal Bhardwaj bagged the Best Music Direction award for ‘1232 Kilometers Mareng To Wahin Jaakar’. Best film on Social Issues award went to ‘Justice Delayed but Delivered’ and Three Sisters. The award of Best Female Playback Singer was won by Nanchamma for the film AK Ayyappanum Koshiyum and Rahul Deshpande was adjudged as Best Male Playback Singer.**

Boris Johnson gives Churchill Leadership Award to Ukraine’s Zelenskyy

- **British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson has presented Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with the Sir Winston Churchill Leadership Award, drawing comparisons between the two leaders in times of crisis. Zelenskyy accepted the award by video link during a ceremony at Johnson’s London office that was attended by members of the Churchill family, Ukrainian Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko and Ukrainians who have received training from British soldiers. The Ukrainian leader received a standing ovation in the British Parliament in March when he invoked one of Churchill’s most famous speeches and vowed to fight Russian troops in the air, sea and on the streets.**

Puneeth Rajkumar to be conferred Karnataka Rathna

- **Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai announced that the State’s highest civilian honour, ‘Karnataka Rathna’ will be conferred on Puneeth Rajkumar posthumously, on November 1, Kannada Rajyotsava.**

Dalai Lama honoured with Ladakh’s highest civilian award

- **Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama was honoured with the ‘dPal rNgam Duston’ award — the highest civilian honour of Ladakh — for his immense contribution to humanity, especially towards the union territory.**
- **The sixth award was conferred by Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh which celebrated the ‘dPal rNgam Duston’ with great fervour on the occasion of its foundation day at Sindhu Ghat.**
- **The Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, and the US Congressional Gold Medal in 2006. Time magazine named the Dalai Lama one of the “Children of Mahatma Gandhi” and Gandhi’s spiritual heir to nonviolence.**
- **The 14th Dalai Lama (spiritual name Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, known as Tenzin Gyatso known as Gyalwa Rinpoche to the Tibetan people, is the current Dalai Lama. He is the highest spiritual leader and former head of state of Tibet. Born on 6 July 1935, or in the Tibetan calendar, in the Wood-Pig Year, 5th month, 5th day. He is considered a living Bodhisattva; specifically, an emanation of Avalokitesvara in Sanskrit and Chenrezig in Tibetan.**
- **On 29 April 1959, the Dalai Lama established the independent Tibetan government in exile in the north Indian hill station of Mussoorie, which then moved in May 1960 to Dharamshala, where he resides. He retired as political head in 2011 to make way for a democratic government, the Central Tibetan Administration**

Shashi Tharoor to receive France’s highest civilian award

- **Congress leader Shashi Tharoor set to be conferred with France’s highest civilian award Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur. The French government is honouring him for his writings and speeches and French Ambassador here Emmanuel Lenain has written to Tharoor informing him about the award. In 2010, Tharoor had received a similar honour from the Spanish government, when the King of Spain had bestowed upon him the Encomienda de la Real Order Espanola de Carlos III.**

- **Shashi Tharoor is a two-term Lok Sabha MP representing the Thiruvananthapuram constituency and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs. He has previously served as Minister of State for Human Resource Development and Minister of State for External Affairs in the erstwhile UPA government.** Tharoor is also a former diplomat with a **23-year-long career in the United Nations**. He is also a celebrated author with several fiction and non-fiction books under his belt.

The 13th edition of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) began

- **The 13th edition of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) began on August 12** and will conclude on August 30. The in-person event ends on August 20, beyond which the festival continues virtually for another ten days. On Sunday, August 14, the festival's awards night was held at the Palais Theatre. Hosted by Rithvik Dhanjiani, **the event saw big wins for Kabir Khan's sports drama 83 and its star Ranveer Singh, as well as the Prime Video web series Mumbai Diaries 26 and the film Jalsa. The two films that had the most nominations—Jai Bhim and Gangubai Kathiawadi—failed to win a single award.**
- The full list of winners from the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne 2022 awards:
- **Best Film:** 83
- **Best Director:** Shoojit Sircar (Sardar Udham) and Aparna Sen (The Rapist)
- **Best Actor:** Ranveer Singh (83)
- **Best Actress:** Shefali Shah (Jalsa)
- **Best Series:** Mumbai Diaries 26/11
- **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Kapil Dev

Bangladesh-born Fahmida Azim wins 2022 Pulitzer Prize in Illustrated Reporting, Commentary category

- **Bangladesh-born Fahmida Azim working for the Insider online magazine of United States has been selected for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize under the category of Illustrated Reporting and Commentary.**
- **She is among the four journalists including Anthony Del Col, Josh Adams and Walt Hickey of Insider being published from New York,** selected for their work on the Chinese oppression of the Uyghurs. The work 'I escaped a Chinese internment Camp' has illustrations by Fahmida Azim.

Liberty Medal to be awarded to Ukrainian President Zelenskyy

- **The 2022 Liberty Medal will be awarded this fall to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The National Constitution Center announced that Zelenskyy will be honored in a ceremony in October for what it called "his heroic defense of liberty in the face of Russian tyranny."**
- **Zelenskyy, who has served as the nation's president since May 2019, has also been the recipient of awards such as the Ronald Reagan Freedom Award and the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award as well as honors from the governments of the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia.**
- **The Liberty Medal, established in 1988 to mark the U.S. Constitution's bicentennial, is presented to individuals who strive to secure the blessings of liberty for people around the globe. Recent recipients have included Supreme Court justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Anthony Kennedy, Sen. John McCain, Rep. John Lewis and Malala Yousafzai.**

G. Persons & Appointments

India's Praveen Sinha, elected as Delegate for Asia on Executive Committee of INTERPOL

- **India's candidate, Praveen Sinha, Special Director of Central Bureau of Investigation was elected as Delegate for Asia on the Executive Committee of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).** India running against four other contestants for two posts. The four contestants were China, Singapore, South Korea and Jordan.

The **International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO)**, commonly known as the **Interpol** is an international organization that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control. Headquartered in **Lyon, France**, it is the world's largest international police organization, with seven regional bureaus worldwide and a National Central Bureau in all 195 member states. It was **founded in September 1923** as the **International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC)**, adopting many of its current duties throughout the 1930s. **The Secretariat is led by the Secretary-General, currently Jurgen Stock**, the former deputy head of Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office.

Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam launches the Indian music industry's first-ever NFT series

- **After Amitabh Bachchan and Salman Khan, the latest Bollywood celebrity to join the crypto frenzy is Sonu Nigam, who is embracing non fungible tokens (NFTs) in partnership with new age digital entertainment and technology company JetSynthesys.**
- **NFTs allow artists to create unique digital works, in whatever form can be imagined, and sell these direct to fans and collectors via Blockchain. The NFT collection was launched in London to appeal to the thriving diaspora looking to stay connected to their roots, featuring the popular music icon's journey and work. The NFT series will include Nigam's single 'Hall of fame'.**

Admiral Hari Kumar takes charge as new Indian Navy chief

- **Admiral R Hari Kumar took charge as the new chief of the Indian Navy, replacing Admiral Karambir Singh who superannuated after serving over 41 years.**
- **Admiral Hari Kumar is the twenty fifth Chief of the Naval Staff.** Admiral Hari Kumar is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Indian Navy on January 1, 1983.

Indian-origin USAF doctor Anil Menon among 10 chosen by NASA for as astronauts future missions

- **Indian-origin physician Anil Menon, a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force, has been selected by NASA along with nine others to be astronauts for future missions, the American space agency has announced.**
- **SpaceX's first flight surgeon, helping to launch the company's first humans to space during NASA's SpaceX Demo-2 mission and building a medical organisation to support the human system during future missions.**

Shaktikanta Das started his extended 3-year tenure as RBI governor

- **Shaktikanta Das has started his extended three-year tenure as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor. The decision for this extension was taken by the appointments committee of the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**
- **He is the fifth governor to get tenure this long as RBI governors are usually given a five-year term. If completed, Shaktikanta Das will be the longest-serving governor of the central bank after Sir Benegal Rama Rau, who was in office for 7 years and 197 days between July 1, 1949, and January 14, 1957.**

US' Victor Vescovo Becomes first person to touch All Four World's Deepest Ocean Trenches

- **Victor Vescovo, a former US Navy commander touched the bottom of the Kermadec Trench in the South Pacific Ocean, which is the fourth deepest ocean trench. Vescovo reached a depth of 10,012 meters in an expedition that lasted for nine hours. With this achievement, the ex-officer is officially the first person to have touched all four deepest points in the ocean.**
- **With the Kermadec Trench being his newest achievement, Vescovo has also visited the Earth's deepest point- Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench (10,925 metres), Horizon Deep in the Pacific's Tonga Trench (10,817 metres), and the Emden Deep in the Philippine Trench (10,045 metres), the third deepest point.**

Andhra Pradesh girl becomes first Indian to complete Nasa programme

- **Jahnavi Dangeti, a second-year engineering student from Palakollu of West Godavari, has been intrigued by the mysteries of the space and the distant planets since her childhood. But it is her grandmother, who sparked her interest further with her bedtime stories.**
- **An aspiring astronaut, Jahnavi, created history by being the only Indian to undergo International Air and Space Program (IASP) at Nasa Launch Operations' Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US.**

Ambassador Atul Keshap appointed head of US-India Business Council

- **Atul Keshap, former US envoy to India, has been appointed as President of the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC),** announced the US Chamber of Commerce.
- **Atul Keshap most recently served in New Delhi as United States Chargé d’Affaires to India, leading the US Embassy team.** The Indian-origin Keshap has held a number of senior US government positions and is a 28-year veteran of the US Department of State.

British Sikh Army officer becomes first woman of color to ski solo to the South Pole

- **British-born Sikh army officer Preet Chandi has become the first woman of color to complete a solo expedition to the South Pole.** Chandi, who has spent the past few months skiing solo and unsupported across Antarctica, announced on January 3 that she’d completed the 700 mile trek in 40 days.

Sidney Poitier, Oscar-winning actor and Hollywood’s first Black movie star, dies at 94

- **Sidney Poitier, whose elegant bearing and principled onscreen characters made him Hollywood’s first Black movie star and the first Black man to win the best actor Oscar, has died.**

Alka Mittal becomes the first woman to head ONGC

- **Alka Mittal becomes the first woman to head the Energy major,** informed Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister as she gets entrusted with additional charge of ONGC CMD.

Pakistan to get its first woman Supreme Court judge - Justice Ayesha Malik

- **Pakistan is set to get its first woman Supreme Court judge - Justice Ayesha Malik of the Lahore High Court.** The Judicial Commission of Pakistan approved the elevation of Justice Ayesha Malik as a judge of the country’s Supreme Court. She is now set to become Pakistan’s first woman Supreme Court judge.

Veteran Chinese diplomat appointed SCO secretary-general

- **China’s outgoing ambassador to the European Union, Zhang Ming, has taken over as the new secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), an eight-member security bloc that includes India.**
- **Zhang, who served for four years as the head of the Chinese mission to the EU, assumed office on January 1.** Zhang will be based at the SCO secretariat in Beijing and took over from Vladimir Norov, a former diplomat from Uzbekistan who had held the office since 2019.

S Somanath appointed tenth chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation

- **S Somanath appointed the tenth chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).** Sivan has been on a year’s extension since January last year. Somanath, whose appointment will be for three years, is a seasoned scientist in system engineering of space launch vehicles. **Somanath also served as the Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Thiruvananthapuram and Director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), Thiruvananthapuram.**

Kylie Jenner becomes the first woman in the world to reach 300 million followers on Instagram

- **Kylie Jenner has become the first woman in the world to reach 300 million followers on Instagram.** Kylie is the first woman to reach the Instagram milestone. The 24-year-old Kylie Cosmetics mogul is only the second person, **after soccer pro Cristiano Ronaldo (at 388 million) to reach such a high follower count.**

Daler Mehndi to be first Indian singer to have a metaverse virtual concert on Republic Day

- **India’s very own Metaverse, ‘PartyNite’ is all set to launch India’s 1st party focussed virtual concert with iconic pop star Daler Mehndi this Republic day.** Digital India is charting the metaverse route with this virtual concert, to be held on January 26. Being deeply connected with the Indian soil, **Daler Mehndi was the go-to choice for PartyNite to showcase its Indian metaverse to the world.**

Indian-origin professor appointed Oxford University business school Dean

- **The University of Oxford has appointed Indian-origin academic Professor Soumitra Dutta as the new Dean of its Saïd Business School.** Professor Dutta, currently Professor of Management at the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business at Cornell University in New York, will take up his new UK post on June 1 this year.
- Professor Dutta also serves on the boards of listed international corporations, has founded several successful start-ups, **co-chaired the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on Innovation Ecosystems and created major global technology and innovation indices.**

Legendary Kathak dancer Birju Maharaj passes away

- The Kathak exponent, one of India's best known artistes, had been suffering from a kidney ailment and was under dialysis treatment. **Legendary Kathak dancer Birju Maharaj died at his home. Maharaj-ji, as he was popularly known, died surrounded by his family and disciples.**

Noted environmentalist M K Prasad passes away

- **Noted environmentalist Prof M K Prasad**, a prominent figure in the historic **grassroot level movement to save the evergreen tropical rain forests in Kerala's Silent Valley from destruction**, passed away. Prasad was a guiding force behind the national movement against the state government's move to set up a hydro-power project in Silent Valley in Palakkad district in the 1970s.

Justice Umar Ata Bandial to be next Chief Justice of Pakistan

- **Justice Umar Ata Bandial**, one of the judges who declined to retake their oaths in 2007 when former Pakistani military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf proclaimed a state of emergency in the country, will be the new Chief Justice of Pakistan. Pakistan President Arif Alvi formally appointed Justice Bandial, the senior most judge of the Supreme Court, as the next Chief Justice of the country.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas becomes first Indian actor to feature across 30 international magazine covers

- Ever since her foray into Hollywood, **Priyanka Chopra Jonas has been featured across over 30 international magazine covers, becoming the first Indian actor to do so.** Appearing across all the worldwide major magazine conglomerates throughout the years, Priyanka Chopra has conquered geographical borders and been published globally across publications like Allure, Marie Claire, Elle, Vogue, InStyle, Cosmopolitan and Complex, amongst others.

Vikram Dev Dutt to head Air India

- **The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet appointed Vikram Dev Dutt as Chairman and Managing Director of Air India.** Mr Dutt is is a 1993-batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre.

In a 1st for India, Hindustan Zinc CEO Arun Misra takes helm as Chairperson of International Zinc Association

- **Arun Misra**, the CEO of Hindustan Zinc Limited, has been elected as the new acting Chairman of the International Zinc Association (IZA). Mr. Misra is the first Indian and Asian to hold a position of acting Chairman of the IZA.
- **Hindustan Zinc is India's largest and the world's second largest zinc-lead miner. Hindustan Zinc is an industry leader with over five decades of mining and smelting expertise.** The company is a fully integrated player that emphasizes providing holistic value to its stakeholders. Because of its keen strategic approach of constant evolution in an ever-changing business environment, the company has a powerful advantage that drives its growth and expansion.

Daler Mehndi Makes History; Becomes the First Indian Performer on the Metaverse

- **The very first Metaverse Concert was a huge success**, thanks to the **aura created by the sound and style of Daler Mehndi which drew in 20 million viewers from all over the world.** Mehndi is recognised for masterfully engaging audiences in his wonderful universe by brilliantly mesmerising them with his high-octane performance flair and trendsetting approach to music. **He was invited to perform at the first-ever Indian Metaverse Concert on the 73rd Republic Day**, which commemorated India's digital debut on the metaverse.

V Anantha Nageswaran becomes new chief economic adviser

- **Dr V Anantha Nageswaran** has been appointed as the chief economic advisor after former CEA **Krishnamurthy Subramanian returned to academia completing his three-year term.** Dr Nageswaran has taken the charge.
- The prestigious post of the **chief economic advisor had also been held by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and former central bank governor Raghuram Rajan.** From 2019 to 2021, Dr Nageswaran remained a part-time visiting member of the economic advisory council to the Prime Minister of India.
- **Every year, the chief economic advisor presents the economic survey** which is presented by the finance minister in Parliament just before the Union Budget. It is an annual document of the ministry.

Pingali Venkayya: 141st birth anniversary of designer of Indian National Flag observed

- **141st birth anniversary of freedom fighter and designer (architect) of Indian National Flag Pingali Venkayya was observed on August 2, 2018. Venkayya had published book in 1916 offering thirty designs of what could make Indian flag.** Throughout all Congress sessions between 1918 and 1921, he relentlessly put forward idea of having flag of our own in every session of the Congress. Back then, he was working as lecturer in Andhra National College in Machilipatnam.
- **He met Gandhiji once again in Vijayawada** and showed him his publication with various designs of flag. Acknowledging need for national flag, **Gandhiji then asked Venkayya to design fresh one at national congress meeting in 1921.** Initially, he came up with saffron and green colours, but it later evolved with spinning wheel at centre (representation wheel of dharma and law) and third colour-white. **This modified flag design was approved Gandhiji and later officially adopted by Indian National Congress in 1931.**
- **India's National Flag (tricolor or तिरंगा) is based on Swaraj flag of Indian National Congress designed by Pingali Venkayya. It was adopted during by Constituent Assembly on the 22 July 1947, a few days before India's independence from the British.** The national flag is horizontal rectangular tricolour of India saffron, white and India green, with Ashoka Chakra (24-spoke wheel) in navy blue at its centre. Usage of national flag is governed by Flag Code of India and other laws relating to the national emblems

India gets its first national maritime security coordinator

- **In a long-pending reform almost 14 years after the deadly Mumbai terror attacks,** the government has now **appointed the country's first national maritime security coordinator (NMSC)** to ensure effective coordination and cooperation among multiple central and state authorities dealing with the domain from the coast to the high seas. **Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar, who retired as the Navy vice chief** in July last year after over 39 years of service, will be **the NMSC in the National Security Council Secretariat** under national security advisor Ajit Doval.

Gurugram sisters chosen as 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' brand ambassadors

- **International chess player woman FIDE master – a high ranking chess title – Tanishka Kotia and her sister Riddhika Kotia have been announced as brand ambassadors from Gurugram for the centre's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme.** Tanishka is a student of SRCC, while her sister studies in Suncity School.

Rakesh Sharma again appointed as MD & CEO of IDBI Bank

- **Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI Bank) has informed the stock exchanges that its board has approved the reappointment of Rakesh Sharma as the managing director and chief executive officer of the bank** for a period of three years, effective March 19, 2022. Sharma's reappointment as the MD&CEO of the bank has received the banking regulator, Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) nod.

Veteran industrialist, Padma Bhushan awardee Rahul Bajaj passes away in Pune

- **Veteran industrialist and former Bajaj Auto chairman Rahul Bajaj passed away** at a private hospital in Pune, doctors treating him said. **Bajaj took over the group in 1965 before stepping down as non-executive chairman of Bajaj Auto.**

Legendary Bollywood music composer and singer Bappi Lahiri passes away in Mumbai

- **Music composer and singer Bappi Lahiri passed away** at a Mumbai hospital. Bappi Lahiri, whose real name was Alokesh, was known for delivering popular songs in several films of the late 1970s-80s like Chalte Chalte, Disco Dancer, and Sharaabi.
- **Bappi Lahiri ruled the music industry for several years and had given many hits. Bappi da as he was fondly called by film fraternity can be called as the father of Disco music in India.** Foot tapping music of Bappi Lahiri ruled the airwaves of India in the 70s and 80s. Although most of his songs were written for discotheques and dance numbers, yet to his credits, there are several melodious songs as well from a list of movies like Chalte Chalte.

Revolutionary Sachindra Nath Sanyal death anniversary

- **On February 8, 2022, the 80th death anniversary of Sachindra Nath Sanyal was marked. He was the co – founder of Hindustan Republican Association. He was the mentor of Bhagat Singh, Sukdev and Rajguru. Also, he faced imprisonment in "Kakari Train case". He was incarcerated in cellular jail. Incarceration means the state of being confined to prison.**

Odisha's first tribal CM Hemananda Biswal passes away

- **Odisha's first tribal Chief Minister as well as last Congress chief minister of the state, Hemananda Biswal passed away** at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar after a brief illness.

US President Biden nominates Indian-origin political activist Shefali Razdan as his envoy to Netherlands

- **US President Joe Biden** has announced his intent to **nominate Indian-origin political activist Shefali Razdan Duggal as his envoy to the Netherlands**, according to the White House.
- An immigrant to the US from Kashmir, **Duggal, has been raised in Cincinnati, Chicago, New York and Boston**. The White House made the announcement along with several other key administrative and diplomatic positions.

The Kashmir Files film

- **The Kashmir Files** is a 2022 Indian Hindi-language drama film written and directed by Vivek Agnihotri. Produced by Zee Studios, the film is **based on the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits during the Kashmir insurgency, which it portrays as genocide with a fictional storyline**. It stars **Anupam Kher, Darshan Kumar, Pallavi Joshi and Mithun Chakraborty**. The film was theatrically released on 11 March 2022.

Ketanji Brown Jackson set to be US Supreme Court judge

- **President nominated Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to serve as the next Justice on the Supreme Court**. Judge Jackson is one of our nation's brightest legal minds and has an unusual breadth of experience in our legal system, giving her the perspective to be an exceptional Justice. **Federal judge Ketanji Brown Jackson faced down a barrage of Republican questioning about her sentencing of criminal defendants, as her history-making bid to join the Supreme Court** veered from lofty constitutional questions to attacks on her motivations on the bench.

Poland's Karolina Bielawska crowned Miss World 2021

- **At the grand finale of Miss World 2021, Karolina Bielawska of Poland was crowned the winner, while Shree Saini of USA and Olivia Yacé of Cote D'Ivoire emerged as the first and second runners-up, respectively**. The contest, conducted in two parts, one in December and again in March, was hosted at the Coca-Cola Music Hall in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- **Karolina succeeded and was crowned by the outgoing queen, Miss World 2019 Toni-Ann Singh, who had the longest reign in the pageant's history**. This year marked the 70th edition of the prestigious pageant, and gorgeous delegates from over 90 countries competed for the coveted crown.

Pakistan to get its first woman Supreme Court judge - Justice Ayesha Malik

- **Pakistan is set to get its first woman Supreme Court judge - Justice Ayesha Malik of the Lahore High Court**. The Judicial Commission of Pakistan approved the elevation of Justice Ayesha Malik as a judge of the country's Supreme Court. **She is now set to become Pakistan's first woman Supreme Court judge**.

Former Chief Justice of India R C Lahoti dies

- **Former Chief Justice of India Ramesh Chandra Lahoti passed away** at a hospital in New Delhi. **Appointed as the 35th chief justice of India on June 1, 2004**, Justice Lahoti also served as the former independent director on the board of directors of the Press Trust of India.
- **He was appointed as arbitrator by the Government of India in the Rs 20,000 crore high-profile tax dispute case with telecom major Vodafone**. Born on November 1, 1940, he joined the Bar in Guna district in 1960 and enrolled as an advocate in 1962. He was recruited directly to the bench in April 1977, from the Bar to the State Higher Judicial Service and was appointed as a district and sessions judge.

Madeleine Albright, first woman to serve as US Secretary of State dies

- **Madeleine K Albright, a child of Czech refugees who fled from Nazi invaders and Communist oppressors** and then landed in the United States, where she flourished as a diplomat and the **first woman to serve as secretary of state, died in Washington**.

Deepika Padukone is the first Indian to be honoured twice by TIME Magazine

- **Deepika Padukone joined world leaders including scientists and CEOs, artists and activists, pop stars and politicians as 2022's TIME100 Impact Awardee**, a recognition of leaders who, through sustained effort, have done extraordinary work to shape the future of their industries and the world at large. Arising from

her personal journey with anxiety and depression, **Live Love Laugh**, was founded by Deepika in 2015. The Foundation aims to create awareness about mental health and provide credible mental health resources. **This is Deepika's second tryst at the Time 100 Awards.**

New Director-General of the International Labour Organization elected

- **The International Labour Organization's (ILO) next Director-General** will be **Gilbert F. Hounbo from Togo**. Hounbo is currently President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The ILO Governing Body has elected Gilbert F. Hounbo as the Organization's 11th Director-General, who will take office in October 2022.
- The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** is a **United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards**. Founded in **October 1919** under the **League of Nations**, it is the **first and oldest specialised agency of the UN**. The **ILO has 187 member states: 186 out of 193 UN member states plus the Cook Islands**. It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- **In 1969, the ILO received the Nobel Peace Prize for improving fraternity and peace among nations**, pursuing decent work and justice for workers, and providing technical assistance to other developing nations.

Arooj Aftab becomes 'first Ever Female Pakistani' To Win Grammy

- **Brooklyn-based Pakistani vocalist Arooj Aftab has won a Grammy Award for her song "Mohabbat"** in the best global music performance category. Aftab's song "Mohabbat" from the album 'Vulture Prince' has featured on former US president Barack Obama's 2021 summer playlist.
- A **"neo Sufi" version of Hoshiyarpuri's ghazal, 'Mohabbat karne wale kam na honge, teri mehfil mein lekin hum na honge'**, which has been earlier sung by musicians such as Mehdi Hassan, Farida Khanum, Ghulam Ali, and Jagjit Singh, brought the 37-year-old Pakistani musician the award in the Best Global Music Performance, a category added by the Recording Academy for the first time this year.

Manoj Pande is India's New Army Chief

- **Army Vice Lieutenant General Manoj Pande was appointed as the new chief of the Indian Army**. Pande is the **first engineer to hold the top military post**. Lt Gen Manoj Pande, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, was **commissioned in December 1982 in the Corps of Engineers (The Bombay Sappers)**.
- He has **commanded 117 Engineer Regiment during Operation PARAKRAM** in the sensitive Pallanwala Sector of Jammu and Kashmir, along the Line of Control. Pande is a graduate of Staff College, Camberley (United Kingdom) and attended the Higher Command (HC) and National Defence College (NDC) Courses.

Raghav Chadha, Ukrainian minister Fedorov in WEF's Young Global Leaders list

- **Aam Aadmi Party leader Raghav Chadha, Edelweiss Mutual Fund CEO Radhika Gupta and Ukrainian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Digital Transformation Mykhailo Fedorov were named by the World Economic Forum in its 2022 list of Young Global Leaders**.
- The list also includes **Professor Yoichi Ochiai, musician and composer Wissam Joubran, health justice advocate Jessica Beckerman and NGO founder Zoya Lytvyn**. His fellow Indians on the list include **athlete Manasi Joshi, Innov8 Coworking founder Ritesh Malik, BharatPe CEO Suhail Sameer, Sugar Cosmetics CEO Vineeta Singh and Global Himalayan Expedition CEO Jaideep Bansal**.
- The 2022 list also includes **Imperial Logistics Limited's Esha Mansingh, Abu Dhabi Growth Fund's Mayank Singhal, Indorama Ventures Public Company's Yashovardhan Lohia and The Patrick J McGovern Foundation's Vilas Dhar**.

Dr. Suman K Bery appointed new vice chairman of NITI Aayog

- **Dr. Suman K Bery has been appointed new Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog**. He will **take charge as Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog** from the 1st of next month. **Dr. Suman K Bery had earlier served as Director-General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) in New Delhi**.
- **NCAER is one of the country's leading independent non-profit policy research institutions**. He also served as a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, National Statistical Commission and Reserve Bank of India's Technical Advisory Committee on Monetary Policy.

Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari takes oath as Pakistan's Foreign Minister

- **Scion of Pakistan's leading political dynasty, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, took oath as the foreign minister in the government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at a crucial juncture as he faces**

multiple challenges such as fixing strained ties with the US and finding a way to restart the peace process with neighbouring India.

- He is the **son of former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto and former President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari**. Bilawal became a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan on 13 August 2018.

John Lee, the former Hong Kong security chief is the new Chief Executive

- **John Lee Ka-chiu, the sole candidate for Hong Kong's leadership election**, has been **confirmed as the city's next chief executive and will replace Carrie Lam**. A former security minister who **oversaw the crackdown on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement**, Lee will be the **first security official holding the Chief Executive position of a city** which witnessed years of political unrest and recent debilitating pandemic controls.

Priyanka Mohite becomes first Indian woman to scale five peaks above 8,000 m

- **Priyanka Mohite from Satara in western Maharashtra has become the first Indian woman to scale five peaks above 8,000 metres**. In April 2021, she had **scaled Mt Annapurna (8,091 m), the 10th highest mountain peak in the world and had become the first Indian woman climber to achieve the feat**.
- **Priyanka has also climbed the world's highest peak Mount Everest (8,849 m) in 2013, Mount Lhotse (8,516 m) in 2018, Mount Makalu (8,485 m) and Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 m) in 2016.**

Pope appoints India's first Dalit Christian cardinal

- **Pope Francis appointed Archbishop of Hyderabad, Anthony Poola, as one of the two new cardinals from India**. He is the **first Dalit Christian in India to get the title** and will be an elector for the future Pope elections. "Poola is also the first Telugu in the history of the Catholic Church to be appointed as cardinal, the second biggest title after Pope, in the world and the first Dalit to get the position.

Indian-origin businessman Sunil Chopra elected as mayor in UK

- **Indian-origin businessman Sunil Chopra has been elected as the mayor of London Borough of Southwark for the second time**. Chopra was the mayor of the London Borough of Southwark in 2014-2015, and deputy mayor in 2013-2014, **the first Indian-origin person to hold the prestigious office in the Borough**.

Capt Abhilasha Barak becomes Indian Army's first woman combat aviator

- **Captain Abhilasha Barak became the first woman officer to join the Army Aviation Corps as a combat aviator** after completing the combat army aviation course. **Captain Barak hails from Haryana and was commissioned into the Army Air Defence Corps in 2018. She is the daughter of Col S Om Singh (retd).**

Indian diplomat Amandeep Singh Gill appointed as UN Chief's envoy on technology

- **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed senior Indian diplomat Amandeep Singh Gill as his envoy on technology to coordinate programmes for international digital cooperation**. Amandeep Singh Gill has been India's permanent representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva from 2016-to 2018.

Music maestro A R Rahman named ambassador of Indo-UK culture platform

- **Music great A R Rahman has been named the ambassador of the British Council's 'India-UK Together Season of Culture'**, which aims to boost collaboration among emerging artists. **The 'Season of Culture' that marks the 75th anniversary of India's independence was officially launched**. The 'Season of Culture' aims to build on the British Council's work in India and strengthen India-UK collaboration in the areas of arts, English and education.

North Korea appoints its first female foreign minister

- **North Korea has named a top nuclear negotiator as the nation's first female Foreign Minister**. This comes amid warnings from the US that Pyongyang is preparing to conduct a nuclear test.
- **Career diplomat Choe Son Hui was appointed at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea from June 8-10, overseen by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.**

Former Punjab DGP Dinkar Gupta is new NIA chief

- **Former Punjab DGP and 1987-batch IPS officer Dinkar Gupta has been appointed as the new chief of the National Investigative Agency**. Gupta will hold the post till March 31, 2024, that is the date of his retirement, or till further orders by the government, whichever takes place earlier.

Ruchira Kamboj appointed next Permanent Representative of India to the UN

- **Senior Diplomat Ruchira Kamboj** has been **appointed as the next Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations**. A 1987 batch Indian Foreign Service officer, Ruchira Kamboj is presently serving as Ambassador of India to Bhutan. **She will succeed TS Tirumurti as the Indian ambassador to the United Nation**. Ministry of External Affairs said, Ruchira Kamboj is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

Gita Gopinath becomes first woman and 2nd Indian to feature on IMF's 'wall of former chief economists'

- **India-born Gita Gopinath** became the **first woman and second Indian to feature on the 'wall of former chief economists' of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**. The first Indian to achieve the honour was Raghuram Rajan who was Chief Economist and Director of Research of IMF between 2003 and 2006.
- **Gopinath was appointed as IMF Chief Economist in October 2018** and was later promoted as the IMF's First Deputy Managing Director in December last year. **Gopinath had served as the first female chief economist of the Washington-based global lender for three years.**
- Gopinath's research has been published in many top economics journals. **Prior to her appointment as IMF Chief Economist, she was the John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and Economics in the economics department of Harvard University.**

Parameswaran Iyer takes over as new Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog

- **Mr. Parameswaran Iyer** took charge as the **new Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog**. A 1981-batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, Mr. Iyer has worked with both the public and private sectors. He was Secretary in the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in New Delhi from 2016 to 2020. **Mr. Iyer spearheaded the implementation of the country's flagship Swachh Bharat Mission, which successfully delivered access to safe sanitation to 550 million people.**

Indian-American Naureen Hassan named President of UBS Americas and CEO of UBS Americas Holding

- A prominent Indian-American finance executive, **Naureen Hassan, has been appointed President of UBS Americas and CEO of UBS Americas Holding, according to the Switzerland-based financial giant.** Currently, Hassan is the **first vice president and chief operating officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRBNY)**. She will also be serving on UBS Group's Executive Board, according to a press release by UBS Americas. Hassan will join in the leadership role in October this year and will succeed Tom Naratil, the Zurich and Basel-headquartered company.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the country's first woman envoy at the world body's headquarters in New York

- **Ruchira Kamboj, a 1987 batch Indian Foreign Service officer, was in June appointed India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, succeeding Ambassador T S Tirumurti.**
- **Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj presented her credentials to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as she took charge as India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the country's first woman envoy at the world body's headquarters in New York.**
- **India's tenure at the Council will end in December this year** when the country will also preside as President of the powerful UN organ for the month. **Ms Kamboj had also previously served as a Counsellor at India's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York from 2002-2005.** Ms Kamboj was the all-India women's topper of the 1987 Civil Services batch and the topper of the Foreign Service batch of that year.

N Kalaiselvi from Karaikudi becomes the first woman director general in CSIR

- **Senior scientist Nallathamby Kalaiselvi** was **appointed as director general of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the first woman to lead the consortium of 38 research institutes across the country.**
- **Known for her work in the field of lithium ion batteries, Kalaiselvi is at present director of the CSIR-Central Electrochemical Research Institute at Karaikudi in Tamil Nadu.** She succeeds Shekhar Mande, who superannuated in April. Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, was given the additional charge of CSIR upon Mande's retirement.

Rakesh Jhunjhunwala Dies at 62

- **Rakesh Jhunjhunwala** has dominated the Indian business world and his death came as a shock to many across industries.

Centre appoints Rajkiran Rai as NaBFID managing director for nearly 5 years

- **The Centre and the board of National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)** has appointed **Rajkiran Rai G** as its managing director (MD) for nearly five years. The board of NaBFID approved Rai's appointment on July 30 based on clearance by the RBI, centre and the DFT's nomination and remuneration committee.

Former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launches a book 'New India' on death anniversary of Arun Jaitley

- **Former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu** released a book titled **'New India'** - a compilation of selected articles of former Union Minister and Padma Vibhushan **Arun Jaitley** on his death anniversary in New Delhi.

Vikram Doraiswami appointed as next High Commissioner of India to UK

- **Mr. Vikram Doraiswami** has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom. Mr. Doraiswami is presently the High Commissioner of India to the Bangladesh. The External Affairs Ministry of India in a statement said that he is expected to take up the assignment shortly. Mr. Doraiswami is an Indian Foreign Service officer of the 1992 batch.

H. Books & Authors

Shuttler's Flick: Making Every Match Count

- **Ahead of the launch of his autobiography 'Shuttler's Flick'**, badminton coach and former player **Pullela Gopichand** reveals how he channelled his hurt to devise a winning strategy and bounce back stronger.
- **The seeds for the book were sown in 2016 when Gopichand served as the official Indian Olympic badminton team coach.** P V Sindhu won her first Olympic silver at Rio.

Vice President releases the book 'Srimadramayanam' in Hyderabad

- **Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu** called upon youth to draw inspiration from Lord Rama's life in fulfilling their duty towards motherland.
- **The book 'Srimadramayanam'** is written by **Sasikiranacharya** in Hyderabad.

'Indian Innings: The Journey of Indian Cricket from 1947'

- It is no surprise that the very best of cricket writing moves into the realm of literature. **In the anthology Indian Innings: The Journey of Indian Cricket from 1947, veteran sports writer Ayaz Memon curates some of the finest pieces that tell the remarkable tale that Indian cricket has largely been.**
- **Cricket lends itself to the apt turn of phrase, droll humour, simmering anger and the realisation that it will throw up surprises.** It offers its chroniclers enough drama to chew on and for them to mull about styles to adopt — elegant prose, poetic flourishes, may be some rhetoric and also weave in those threads that bind the willow game with life.

Smriti Irani turns author with 'Lal Salaam', novel pays tribute to 76 CRPF personnel martyred in 2010 Dantewada attack

- Bollywood actress-turned-politician, **Smriti Zubin Irani** has turned author with her debut novel **'Lal Salaam'**. The Union Minister's debut novel is based on the lives of the **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers serving the country in violence-hit areas.** The novel's plot revolves around the **massacre that unfolded on April 2010 in Dantewada in which 76 CRPF personnel were martyred.**

The Monk Who transformed UP: Book on Yogi Adityanath's journey released

- **A new book chronicles how Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath transformed the state in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, and overall growth.**
- **Written by author Shantanu Gupta, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour",** is published by Garuda Prakashan.

Arundhati Bhattacharya turns author

- Former State Bank of India (SBI) Chairperson **Arundhati Bhattacharya** turned author with her autobiography - **'Indomitable - A Working Woman's Notes on Life, Work and Leadership'**. Published

by HarperCollins India, the book tracks the life and career of the 65-year-old banker, who broke the glass ceiling and stood out in a male-dominated industry. It shares a glimpse into how she got into the challenging banking job and left her mark as an exceptional leader.

Biography to tell hitherto untold stories of Netaji

- A new biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose attempts to bring a fresh perspective on a host of issues, including his thoughts on independent India's development, the problem of communalism, geopolitics, his own political ideology and how he negotiated with the political parties, revolutionary societies and the government.
- "Bose: The Untold Story of An Inconvenient Nationalist", authored by researcher and founder of pressure group Mission Netaji, Chandrachur Ghose, will be released in February by Penguin Random House India under its Viking imprint.
- "The book throws light on Bose's intense political activities around the revolutionary groups in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and the United Provinces; his efforts to bridge the increasing communal divide and his influence among the splintered political landscape; his outlook on and relations with women; his plunge into the depths of spirituality; his penchant for covert operations; and his efforts to engineer a rebellion among the Indian armed forces,".

Former finance secretary Subhash Garg turns author

- Former finance secretary Subhash Chandra Garg will soon make his debut as an author with upcoming book, "The \$10 Trillion Dream", which claims to explore the critical policy issues that India faces today and suggests reforms for it to become a USD 10 trillion economy by the mid-2030s. The book, scheduled to release towards the end of next month, is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).

MoS Culture Meenakshi Lekhi releases pictorial comic book 'India's Women Unsung Heroes'

- Minister of State for Culture Meenakshi Lekhi has released the pictorial comic book 'India's Women Unsung Heroes' in New Delhi. The book has been prepared by Culture Ministry in partnership with Amar Chitra Katha. The book portrays the tales of valour of our forgotten women freedom fighters.
- Ms. Lekhi said that the book is a fitting tribute to the forgotten heroes of our freedom struggle as it celebrates the lives of women who lit the flame of rebellion throughout the country. The minister said that it contains stories of queens who battled imperialism & dedicated their lives for Maa Bharati.

Shashi Tharoor's latest book "The Battle of Belonging" launched by Prabha Khaitan Foundation

- Author Shashi Tharoor shared details of his inspiration for writing "The Battle of Belonging" and made a passionate plea to read this deeply-researched work. This book is the culmination of a lifetime's thoughts, readings and arguments on issues of nationalism and patriotism which are not just theoretical or academic but intensely personal too. The book was prompted by the rise of a fundamental challenge to the very essence of Indian nationalism.
- The book offers one observer's note towards an understanding of nationalism in the world against specificity in India. India's own anti-colonial nationalism converted itself into a 'civic nationalism' encoded in a democratic Constitution and then the conflict over contemporary attempts to convert that into a religious-cultural nationalism.

Kiran Bedi's new book released

- Based on the ground-realities of nearly five years of service as the 24th Lt Governor of Puducherry, Kiran Bedi has penned down her journey of governance in the book 'Fearless Governance'. It was launched by Indra Nooyi (former chairperson & CEO of PepsiCo) and Prof Debashis Chatterjee (director, IIM Kozhikode).

Lilly Singh's new book 'Be a Triangle', focusing on her personal struggles

- Comedian-actor Lilly Singh will come out with a new book in April in which she shares her personal struggles with identity, self-sabotage and negative thought patterns, how she has learned to heal, and the guidelines she has adopted in her daily life to create a sense of peace within.
- "This book captures the personal journey I went on to dive deeper into my life and what I want from it and the result is something I think everyone can learn and benefit from in their lives," she said about "Be a Triangle: How I Went from Being Lost to Getting My Life into Shape", which is being published by Pan Macmillan India.

'Mind Master': New edition of Viswanathan Anand's memoir

- **Ahead of the 44th FIDE Chess Olympiad**, Hachette India announced the expanded paperback edition of five-time world chess champion **Viswanathan Anand's** widely acclaimed memoir **"Mind Master: Winning Lessons from a Champion's Life"**.
- **The book, featuring a bonus chapter on how to navigate uncertainty and rapidly changing realities in the wake of the pandemic. It is written by Anand with author-journalist Susan Ninan. Viswanathan "Vishy" Anand is an Indian chess grandmaster and a five-time world chess champion.** He became the first grandmaster from India in 1988, and is one of the few players to have surpassed an Elo rating of 2800, a feat he first achieved in 2006.

The Light We Carry Book by Michelle Obama

- **Former First Lady of the United States of America and author Michelle Obama** had earlier hinted about exciting news" earlier on social media. Michelle Obama announced that after releasing her debut book **'Becoming'** in 2018, she is now all set to release her second book!. Michelle's upcoming book is titled **'The Light We Carry'** and it will be published by Crown later this year.

I. Important Days

The Nation celebrates birth anniversary of tribal freedom fighter Bhagwan Birsa Munda as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas on 15th November

- The Nation celebrated the **birth anniversary of tribal freedom fighter Bhagwan Birsa Munda as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas on 15 November 2021.** The Government of India has declared 15th November as the 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' which also coincides with the **146th Birth Anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda.** The Bhagwan Birsa Munda Tribal Freedom Fighter Museum has been built in association with the State Government of Jharkhand at the Old Central Jail location in Ranchi, where the legendary Birsa Munda had sacrificed his life.

World Children's Day 20 November

- **World Children's Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day** and is celebrated on 20 November each year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare.
- **2021 Theme: A Better Future for Every Child.**

National Milk Day

- **National Milk Day is observed across India on November 26** in memory of the father of the white revolution, Dr. Verghese Kurien. **This year, milk day falls on the 100th anniversary of revolutionary personality, Dr. Kurien.** He played a significant role in 'Operation Flood', which made the dairy farm the largest self-sustaining industry in India.

Constitution Day in India

- **Constitution Day, also known as "National Law Day", is celebrated in India on 26 November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adapted to the Constitution of India, and it came into effect on 26 January 1950.**
- **Since 2015 was the 125th birth anniversary year of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (14 April 1891 – 6 December 1956), who is known as the father of the Indian Constitution,** the government decided in May 2015 to celebrate this year "in a big way". **The Government of India declared 26 November as Constitution Day on 19 November 2015 by a gazette notification.**

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

- **In 1977, the General Assembly called for the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.** On that day, in 1947, the Assembly adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine.
- **The resolution on the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People also encourages Member States to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the observance of the Day of Solidarity.**

World AIDS Day 1 December

- **Every year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day.** People around the world unite to show support for people living with and affected by HIV and to remember those who lost their lives to AIDS. This World AIDS Day, UNAIDS is highlighting the urgent need to end the inequalities that drive AIDS and other pandemics around the world.
- **The Theme of World's AIDS Day 2021 is “End inequalities. End AIDS”.**

Human Rights Day

- **Human Rights Day is celebrated annually around the world on 10 December every year.** The date was chosen to honor the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation, on 10 December 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the first global enunciation of human rights and one of the first major achievements of the new United Nations.
- The United Nations has announced that the **theme of Human Rights Day this year will be “equality”.** It has taken the theme from Article 1 of the UDHR, which says: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Vijay Diwas 2021

- **Vijay Diwas is celebrated on December 16 every year to honour the victory of Indian armed forces over Pakistan in the 1971 war. On December 16, 1971, India had won the war against Pakistan after fighting for 13 days.** The chief of the Pakistani forces, **General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi** surrendered to the joint forces of Indian Army and Bangladesh's Mukti Bahini, along with 93,000 Pakistani troops. It was also the biggest-ever military surrender after World War II. The 1971 India-Pakistan War culminated on this day 50 years ago as East Pakistan ceased to exist. This day is remembered for the bravery of Indian and Bangladeshi troops.

National Consumer Day observed

- **National Consumer Day is observed on 24 December annually to highlight the importance of the consumer movement** and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer. On this day the **Consumer Protection Act, 1986** was enacted.
- **This year's theme of National Consumer Day is “Tackling Plastic Pollution”.** India was plagued by exploitations of consumers. The problems were further aggravated by inflation and poor technology. To solve these problems, the Consumer Protection Bill was passed in 1986. December 24 was marked as the National Consumer Day under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Since then, December 24 has been observed as the National Consumer Day. The Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation, such as defective goods, deficiency in services and unfair trade practices.

World Braille Day 4 January

- **Every year on January 04, World Braille Day is observed to raise the importance of Braille,** which serves as a communication medium for blind and partially sighted people. **This day is marked as the birth anniversary of Louis Braille,** who was the **inventor of Braille, born on January 04, 1809, in France.**
- **World Braille Day, celebrated since 2019,** is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launches theme of National Science Day 2022

- Union Science and Technology Minister, **Dr Jitendra Singh** launched the theme of National Science Day 2022. The theme of this year is ‘Integrated Approach in Science and Technology for Sustainable Future’. The National Science Day is observed every year on 28th February to mark the discovery of the Raman Effect.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed on 9 January by the Republic of India to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915.**
- **Established in 2000, it is sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Confederation of Indian Industries and the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.**
- **A celebratory event is held on 7-9 January every other year in an Indian city: a forum for issues concerning the Indian Diaspora is organised and the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards are given.**

National Youth Day

- **National Youth Day**, also known as **Vivekananda Jayanti**, is celebrated on **12 January**, being the birthday of **Swami Vivekananda**. In 1984 the Government of India declared this day as **National Youth Day** and since 1985 the event is celebrated in India every year.
- **Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission**. He is perhaps best known for his speech which began with the words **“Sisters and brothers of America ...,”** in which he introduced **Hinduism at the Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago in 1893**.

World Hindi Day

- **January 10** is celebrated as **World Hindi Day** every year to **spread awareness about Hindi as an international language across the world**. The day is especially observed by Indian embassies abroad.
- In the year **1975**, the first-ever **World Hindi Conference** took place in **Maharashtra’s Nagpur on January 10**. The conference was **inaugurated by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi** and saw participation from a total of **30 countries**.

‘Veer Baal Diwas’ to be observed on December 26 as tribute to Guru Gobind Singh’s sons

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** declared that **December 26** shall henceforth be marked as **“Veer Baal Diwas”** to pay homage to the courage of the **“Sahibzades”**, four sons of **Guru Gobind Singh**, the last Sikh guru. **December 26** was marked as **‘Veer Baal Diwas.’** This is a fitting tribute to the courage of the Sahibzades and their quest for justice.”

Death anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri

- **Lal Bahadur Shastri** was the **second Prime Minister of Independent India**. He popularised the slogan **‘Jai Jawan Jai Kisan’**. He actively participated in India’s freedom struggle. **Due to cardiac arrest, he died on 11 January, 1966.**

Army Day is celebrated on 15 January every year

- **Army Day** is celebrated on **15 January** every year in India, in recognition of **Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa’s** taking over as the first **Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army** from **General Fransis Bucher**, the last **British Commander-in-Chief of India**, on **15 January 1949**.
- **The Indian Army’s theme for the year 2022, “In Stride with the Future”**, is an acknowledgement of the increasingly critical role played by niche and disruptive technologies in modern warfare.

National Girl Child Day

- **The National Girl Child Day** is celebrated in India every year on **January 24th**. It was initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the government of India, in order to spread public awareness about inequities that girls face in Indian society.
- The theme is different every year. **In the year 2021, the theme for the National Girl Child Day was ‘Digital Generation, Our Generation.** The government has not announced any theme for this year’s girl child day.

National Voters’ Day

- In order to encourage more young voters to take part in the political process, **Government of India has decided to celebrate January 25 every year as “National Voters’ Day”**. It has been **started from 25 January 2011** to mark **Commission’s foundation day**.
- **The theme for this year’s NVD, ‘Making Elections Inclusive, Accessible and Participative’**, envisages focus on ECI ‘s commitment to facilitate active participation of voters during the elections and to make the complete process hassle free and a memorable experience for all categories of voters.

National Tourism Day

- **National Tourism Day** is celebrated on **January 25 every year across the country**. This day is observed by the government to encourage tourism and explain the essential role of tourism in the growth of the country. **This year’s theme for National Tourism Day is ‘Rural and Community Centric Tourism’**.

Netaji Jayanti, also known as “Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti”

- **Netaji Jayanti**, also known as **“Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti”** or officially **“Parakram Divas”** or **“Parakram Diwas”**, is a national event celebrated in India to mark the birthday of a prominent Indian freedom fighter **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**. **It is celebrated annually on 23 January.**

International Day of Education 24 January

- **International Day of Education is an annual international observance day held on January 24 and is dedicated to education.** The right to education is enshrined in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. **International Day of Education 2022 will be celebrated under the theme “Changing Course, Transforming Education.”** The celebration, led by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), aims to showcase the most important transformations that have to be nurtured to realize everyone’s fundamental right to education and build a more sustainable, inclusive and peaceful futures.

International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

- **International Holocaust Remembrance Day or the International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, is an international memorial day on 27 January** that commemorates the victims of the Holocaust, which **resulted in the murder of one third of the Jewish people, along with countless members of other minorities by Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945.** 27 January was chosen to commemorate the date that Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated by the Red Army in 1945.

Lala Lajpat Rai Birth Anniversary

- **Lala Lajpat Rai was an activist who played an important role in the Indian Independence movement.** His ideologies and contribution in making India an independent country is what **earned him the title of Punjab Kesari or the Lion of Punjab.**
- **Born on January 28, 1865, he was a part of the triarchy political institution Lal Bal Pal,** who advocated the Swadeshi movement, by boycotting all imported items and promoting the use of Indian made goods in 1907.

World Leprosy Eradication Day

- **World Leprosy Day is observed internationally every year on the last Sunday of January** to increase the **public awareness of leprosy or Hansen’s disease.**
- This date was chosen by French humanitarian Raoul Follereau as a **tribute to the life of Mahatma Gandhi who had compassion for people afflicted with leprosy.**
- **The theme of World Leprosy Day 2022 is “United for Dignity.”** We want everyone to know that people who experience leprosy have the right to a dignified life free from disease-related stigma and discrimination.

Nation remembers Mahatma Gandhi on his 74th death anniversary

- The nation is paying homage to **Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 74th death anniversary.** The day is also **observed as Martyrs’ Day. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on this day in 1948.** President Ram Nath Kovind laid a wreath at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in the national capital. Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tributes.

World Wetlands Day 2 February

- On 30 August 2021, **the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2 February as World Wetlands Day to raise awareness of the urgency of reversing the accelerating loss of wetlands and to promote their conservation and restoration.**
- The day marks the date of the adoption of the **“Convention on Wetlands of International Importance” held in 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea.**
- **“Wetlands Action for People and Nature” is the theme for 2022 highlighting the importance of actions to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands for human and planetary health.**

World Cancer Day

- **World Cancer Day is an international day marked on 4 February to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.** World Cancer Day is led by the Union for International Cancer Control to support the goals of the World Cancer Declaration, written in 2008.
- **The theme for World Cancer Day 2022 is ‘Close the Care Gap’.** Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally. The day aims to prevent millions of deaths each year by raising awareness and education about cancer.

National Deworming Day

- **National Deworming Day is observed on February 10,** to make people aware of the importance of deworming, particularly for children from 1 to 19 years of age, who are the most vulnerable. The objective of the day is to raise awareness on intestinal worms, their types, their prevention techniques in **growing children and to attain complete eradication of Soil-Transmitted Helminths in children, particularly from 1 to 19 years of age.**

International Day of Women and Girls in Science, 11 February

- In order to achieve full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls, and further achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, **the United Nations General Assembly declared 11 February as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science in 2015.**
- **The theme for International Day of Women and Girls in Science** this year is **'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Water Unites Us'**.

World Radio Day 13 February

- Proclaimed in 2011 by the Member States of UNESCO and adopted by the **United Nations General Assembly in 2012 as an International Day, February 13 became World Radio Day (WRD).**
- **The theme for World Radio Day 2022 is "Radio and Trust".**

International Mother Language Day

- **International Mother Language Day is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February** to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism. **International Mother Language Day was approved by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO in 1999.** The day is celebrated every year since 2000.
- **The theme for 2022 is "Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities."**
- **This year's event also comes at the start of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages, which runs until 2032.** During the decade, the UN intends to draw attention to indigenous languages. In 2020, it said that while 7,000 languages are spoken in the world, 90% may be extinguished by 2100.

National Science Day

- **National Science Day is celebrated in India on 28 February each year to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by Indian physicist Sir C. V. Raman on 28 February 1928. For his discovery, Sir C.V. Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.**
- The National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) proposed to the central government that National Science Day should be celebrated on February 28 every year to mark this discovery. After that, the Government of India accepted that proposal, and the first National Science Day was celebrated on February 28, 1987. **The theme of National Science Day 2022 is 'Integrated Approach in Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future'.**

International Women's Day

- **International Women's Day is a global holiday celebrated annually on March 8 to commemorate the cultural, political, and socioeconomic achievements of women.**
- **For 2022, the UN given theme is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow",** which aims to recognise women who are working to build a more sustainable future. However, the International Women's Day website diverted from the UN given theme and announced: "Break The Bias" as this year's concept.

Pi Day 2022

- Pi Day is an annual celebration of the mathematical constant π (pi). **Pi Day is observed on March 14 (3/14 in the month/day format) since 3, 1, and 4 are the first three significant figures of π .**
- **The theme for the 2022 International Day of Mathematics is "Mathematics Unites".**

World Consumers Rights Day

- **Every year 15th March is celebrated as the World Consumer Rights Day. World Consumer Rights Day was inspired by President John F Kennedy,** who sent a special message to the US Congress on 15th March 1962, in which he formally addressed the issue of consumer rights. He was the first world leader to do so. The consumer movement first marked that date in 1983 and now uses the day every year to mobilise action on important issues and campaigns.
- **The theme for World Consumer Rights Day 2022 is "Fair Digital Finance".** The reason behind deciding on this idea is to achieve a transparent and fair system when it comes to dealing with digital financial services.

International Day of Happiness 20 March

- **The General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution of 12 July 2012 proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness,** recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives.

- **“Build Back Happier” is the theme for 2022**, and is aimed at achieving global recovery from the **COVID-19 pandemic**. Families and friends have been unable to be together for long periods of time due to lockdowns and pandemic-related norms.

International Forest Day celebrated

- **Under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations -75th years of Independence - International Forest Day was celebrated at the National Zoological Park**, New Delhi by planting 75 native trees by media personnel, employees of the Environment Ministry and others.
- **The theme of this year’s International Forest Day is ‘Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption.**

World Tuberculosis Day

- **The day is observed on 24th March every year to raise awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of Tuberculosis (TB)** and to step up efforts to end the global epidemic.
- **The day is observed to commemorate the anniversary of Dr. Robert Koch’s discovery of the TB bacteria in 1882.** TB remains one of the world’s deadliest infectious killers. Each day, nearly 4000 lose their lives to TB and close to 28,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease. Global efforts to combat TB have saved an estimated 63 million lives since the year 2000.
- This year, World Tuberculosis Day 2022, **the theme of World Tuberculosis Day is “invest to End TB. Save Lives.”** The theme focuses on the need for investments and resources that are required to eradicate this disease.

World Water Day 22 March

- **World Water Day, held on 22 March every year since 1993**, focuses on the importance of freshwater. World Water Day celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water.
- It is about taking action to tackle the global water crisis. **A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.** This 2022, the focus is groundwater, an invisible resource with an impact visible everywhere.
- **The theme of World Water Day this year is “Groundwater, making the invisible visible”.** New Delhi: World Water Day is observed on March 22 to raise awareness about the importance of water and educate people to conserve it.

International Day of Happiness 20 March

- **The General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness**, recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives.
- **The theme for this year’s conference is ‘Build Back Happier,’** and it will focus on the global recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Odisha Foundation Day

- **Odisha Day, also Utkala Dibasa, is celebrated on 1 April in the Indian state of Odisha** in memory of the formation of the state as **a separate state out of Bihar and Orissa Province with addition of Koraput and Ganjam from the Madras Presidency on 1 April 1936.**
- After losing its political identity completely in 1568 following the defeat and demise of the **last king Mukunda Dev, efforts resulted in the formation of a politically separate state under British rule on a linguistic basis on 1 April 1936.**

World Health Day

- **World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated every year on 7 April**, under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization, as well as other related organizations.
- In 1948, the WHO held the First World Health Assembly. It was the **first time celebrated in 1950. In the face of the current pandemic, a polluted planet, and an increasing incidence of diseases, the theme for World Health Day 2022 is Our Planet, Our Health.**

International Day of Human Space Flight 12 April

- **The General Assembly, declared 12 April as the International Day of Human Space Flight.” 12 April 1961 was the date of the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen.** This historic event opened the way for space exploration for the benefit of all humanity.

- **The first human-made satellite was launched into orbit by the Soviet Union in 1957.** Sputnik I was the name of the satellite. Another momentous occurrence occurred four years later. **Yuri Gagarin made the first human space journey on April 12, 1961. Gagarin was a Soviet citizen who also served as a pilot and cosmonaut. Vostok 1, his space spacecraft, was the first to complete an orbit around the Earth.**

World Creativity and Innovation Day 21 April

- **The United Nations designated 21 April as World Creativity and Innovation Day** to raise the awareness of the role of creativity and innovation in all aspects of human development. **The theme of World Creativity and Innovation Day 2022: Collaboration.**

Civil Services Day 2022

- **The National Civil Service Day is observed on 21 April every year in India and is dedicated to the nation's civil servants. Civil Services Day is celebrated on April 21 to commemorate the day when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of Independent India addressed probationers of Administrative Services Officers at Delhi's Metcalf House in 1947.**

World Malaria Day observed

- **World Malaria Day is celebrated and observed on 25 April every year.** It is an occasion to highlight the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment for malaria prevention and control. World Malaria Day was instituted by WHO Member States during the World Health Assembly of 2007. **This year the theme is 'Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives'.**

International Labour Day is being celebrated to commemorate labour movement

- **International Workers' Day or Labour Day is celebrated on May 1 in most countries.** Labour Day is observed to commemorate the struggles and sacrifices of the workers' and labours' movement.
- **The date had been chosen by the American Federation of Labor** to continue an earlier campaign for the eight-hour day in the United States, which had been the **cause of a general strike beginning on 1 May 1886, and culminated in the Haymarket affair, which occurred in Chicago four days later. May Day subsequently became an annual event".**

World Intellectual Property Day – April 26, 2022

- **World Intellectual Property Day is celebrated on the 26th of April** to learn about the role that intellectual property (IP) rights play in encouraging innovation and creativity. The day recognizes the huge potential of young people to find new and better solutions that support the transition to a sustainable future.
- This year, the **World Intellectual Property Day 2022's theme focuses on 'IP and Youth innovating for a Better Future'.** We explore how these innovative, energetic and creative minds are driving positive change.

World Press Freedom Day 3 May

- **The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 to be World Press Freedom Day or just World Press Day, observed to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and marking the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration,** a statement of free press principles put together by **African newspaper journalists in Windhoek in 1991.**
- **This year's World Press Freedom Day theme "Journalism under digital siege,"** spotlights the multiple ways in which journalism is endangered by surveillance and digitally-mediated attacks on journalists, and the consequences of all this on public trust in digital communications.

International Nurses Day

- **International Nurses Day is celebrated worldwide on May 12 to mark the contribution made by nurses to the society,** in a health care set up and in a community.
- For 2022, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) **launched the theme Nurses: A Voice to Lead – Invest in nursing and respect rights to secure global health,** focusing on the need to protect, support and invest in the nursing profession to strengthen health systems around the world.

Commonwealth Day in India

- **Commonwealth Day, a day observed by people in all Commonwealth countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe, is celebrated on the second Monday of March every year.** However, in India and some other countries, **Commonwealth Day is observed on May 24.** Each year on

Commonwealth Day, the queen of the United Kingdom sends a special message to the youth of the Commonwealth through a radio broadcast.

- **The theme for Commonwealth Day 2022 is 'Delivering a Common Future'** Previously known as Empire day, **Commonwealth Day is celebrated by the collection of 54 commonwealth countries every year.**

World Metrology Day

- **World Metrology Day is an event occurring on 20 May celebrating the International System of Units.** The date is the **anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875.** The World Metrology Day project is currently realized jointly by the BIPM and the OIML.
- **The 2022 theme for World Metrology Day, 'Metrology in the Digital Era,'** was selected to reflect the advances brought about by digital technologies and how it has helped metrology.

International Day for Biological Diversity

- **The term Biodiversity refers to the diversity and variability of life on Earth.** The United Nations General Assembly **designated May 22 as International Day for Biological Diversity in December 2000.**
- The day is celebrated to raise awareness about the environment and all species that live on this planet. **The theme of this year's International Day for Biological Diversity is –'Building a shared future for all life'.**

World No Tobacco Day

- **World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is observed around the world every year on 31 May.**
- The Member States of the World Health Organization created World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes. **The theme for 2022 is Tobacco: Threat to our environment.**

World Environment Day 5 June

- **Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and held annually on 5 June since 1973,** World Environment Day is the largest global platform for environmental public outreach and is celebrated by millions of people across the world. **This year it is hosted by Sweden. Fifty years later, Sweden is hosting Stockholm+50 from 2 to 3 June, and World Environment Day on 5 June.**
- **Every year World Environment Day is celebrated with a different theme. It was observed for the first time in 1974 with the theme of 'Only One Earth' and the theme for World Environment Day 2022 is again "Only One Earth"** which will work to promote worldwide activism to safeguard our planet with the focus of living sustainably in harmony with nature.

World Day against Child Labour 12 June

- **The World Day Against Child Labour, which is held every year on June 12, is intended to foster the worldwide movement against child labour.** The 2022 theme of the world day calls for increased investment in social protection systems and schemes to establish solid social protection floors and protect children from child labour.
- While significant progress has been made in reducing child labour over the last two decades, progress has slowed over time, and it has even stalled during the period 2016-2020. 160 million children still engaged in child labour – some as young as 5. **2022 Theme: "Universal Social Protection to End Child Labour".**

Eighth International Day of Yoga being celebrated across the world today

- The 8th edition of International Day of Yoga is being celebrated. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the mass Yoga demonstration at Mysuru in Karnataka. The theme of this year's International Day of Yoga is 'Yoga for Humanity'.**
- **As the International Day of Yoga is falling in the year of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', Yoga Day is being celebrated in 75 iconic places across the country.** As part of the Guardian Ring initiative, the movement of the Sun from east to west will be celebrated through Yoga. Indian Missions in different countries will organise Yoga programmes at sunrise according to the local time there.

Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, 27 June

- **The United Nations General Assembly designated 27 June as "Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day" to raise awareness of the tremendous contributions of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).** MSMEs account for 90% of businesses, 60 to 70% of employment and 50% of GDP worldwide. **The**

theme of World MSME Day 2022 announced by the United Nations is- **Resilience and Rebuilding: MSMEs for Sustainable Development.**

International Day of Cooperatives

- **International Day of Cooperatives is marked annually on the first Saturday of July. This year, the day is being observed on 2 July** to highlight the contributions of the cooperative movement. The occasion also spreads awareness about how cooperatives work in harmony for social, cultural, and economic development.
- This year all the cooperatives across the globe will be celebrating the International Day of Cooperatives under the **theme of ‘Cooperatives Build a Better World.’** The International Day of Cooperatives is commonly known as Coops Day.

World Population Day 11 July

- **World Population Day is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues.** The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989.
- **The theme for World Population Day 2022 is “A world of 8 billion: Towards a resilient future for all – Harnessing opportunities and ensuring rights and choices for all”.** The World Population has already touched the mark of 8 billion and it is increasing day by day at a very scary rate.

Malala Day

- **Malala Day is celebrated every year on July 12 to celebrate the birthday of activist Malala Yousafzai.** Malala Day was designated by the United Nations to **honor the young woman who has been advocating for women’s education for years.**
- **Malala Day 2022 is also a reminder of the courageous Malala Yousafzai who at a young age stood up against Taliban forces. She was shot as she protested against Talibani forces for stopping young girls from going to school.** Even after the attack, the young activist refused to stay home and raise her voice for the education being provided to the young girls.
- **Malala Yousafzai at the age of 17 years was the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize** since the prize came into existence in 1901. **An asteroid was named in the honour of Malala Yousafzai in 2015.**

World Youth Skills Day 15 July

- **In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly declared 15 July as World Youth Skills Day,** to celebrate the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. Since then, World Youth Skills Day has provided a unique opportunity for dialogue between young people, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, firms, employers’ and workers’ organizations, policy-makers and development partners.
- Every year, World Youth Skills Day is marked with a certain theme set by the United Nations. **The theme for 2022 is ‘Transforming youth skills for the future’.**

Nelson Mandela International Day 18 July

- **Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela, celebrated each year on 18 July, Mandela’s birthday.** The day was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009, with the first UN Mandela Day held on 18 July 2010.
- **The theme for Nelson Mandela International Day 2022 is “do what you can with what you have and where you are,”** according to the United Nations and on this occasion, the Nelson Mandela Foundation will focus on its food and nutrition program.

National Flag Day

- **Every year, India celebrates the National Flag Day on July 22** as it was on this day that the tricolour was adopted in its **present form in 1947 as India’s national flag.** When the members of the Indian Constituent Assembly **met in the Constitution Hall in Delhi on July 22, 1947,** the first thing they discussed was reportedly a motion by Jawaharlal Nehru to adopt the national flag for free India.
- **The design of the Indian national flag is largely attributed to the Indian freedom fighter Pingali Venkayya. Venkayya is said to have first met Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa** during the second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). He was then part of the British Indian Army.

Kargil Vijay Diwas

- On the occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 26, 2022 saluted the brave sons of the country who achieve the height of valour in the defence of the motherland. The day is observed as 'Kargil Vijay Diwas' to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in the war. "Kargil Vijay Diwas is a symbol of pride and glory of Maa Bharati.

Global Tiger Day

- Global Tiger Day, often called International Tiger Day, is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July. It was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia. This year theme is "India launches Project Tiger to revive the tiger population".

Earth Overshoot Day

- Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year. In 2022, Earth Overshoot Day lands on July 28. This year's theme is #PowerOfPossibility.

8th National Handloom Day celebrated on August 7

- In 2015, the Union government had declared August 7 as National Handloom Day to commemorate the Swadeshi Andolan that began in 1905 on the same day. The movement was aimed at encouraging Indians to wear clothes that were handwoven by indigenous communities instead of foreign-made apparel. This year theme of National Handloom Day 2022 is "Handloom, an Indian legacy".

Quit India Day

- The Bharat Chhodo Andolan, popularly known as the Quit India movement, had begun on 8 August 1942. The All India Congress Committee under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had come to a decision to launch the movement at the Bombay session. Quit India Movement Day is observed on 8 August which is also known as August Kranti.

World Elephant Day

- World Elephant Day is an international annual event on August 12, dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants. The first World Elephant Day was held on August 12, 2012.
- Elephants are the largest land animals of the world. The approximate life span of an elephant is 60-70 years. Elephants are facing the threat of extinction and their number has significantly reduced especially in the continents of Asia and Africa. Elephants are an endangered species in India too.

Nagasaki day

- Every year, August 9 is observed as the black day of Japan or Nagasaki Day. It marks the day when the US military dropped an atomic bomb named Fat Man on the city of Nagasaki.
- It was the second city that was bombed in Japan after Hiroshima. The nuclear attack led to the mass killing of around 74,000 people.

World Biofuel Day

- World Biofuel Day is commemorated on 10 August every year to raise awareness about the use of non-fossil fuel as an alternative to conventional fossil fuel.
- Any fuel that is derived from the biomass, like plants, agricultural wastes, crops, algae, or animal wastes, is known as biofuel. During this day, the government and private organisations come together to spread awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as a different source of energy. There are plenty of reasons why biofuels should be used instead of fossil fuels. And one of the top reasons is that it can help in the reduction of carbon emission. The theme of World Biofuel Day 2022 is "Biofuels towards a Carbon Neutral World".

International Youth Day 12 August

- International Youth Day is an awareness day designated by the United Nations. The purpose of the day is to draw attention to a given set of cultural and legal issues surrounding youth. The first IYD was observed on 12 August, 2000.
- The theme of International Youth Day 2022 is "Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages". To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world needs to leverage the full potential of all generations. Solidarity across generations is key to sustainable development.

World Water Week 2022

- **World Water Week 2022 takes place from 23 August to 1 September. The theme for World Water Week 2022 is “Seeing the Unseen: The Value of Water.”** The theme will look at three main areas, which are, the value of water among people and for development; the value of water with respect to nature and climate change; and the economic and financial value of water.

National Sports Day

- **India celebrates National Sports Day on 29th August to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend, Major Dhyan Chand.** The day is also dedicated to the nations’ sports heroes and champions, honoring their contribution and dedication towards bringing laurels to the country. With the aim to raise awareness about the values of sports: discipline, perseverance, sportsman spirit, teamwork, and to encourage public in large to take up sports and make it an integral part of their lives while emphasizing on the importance of being fit and healthy.

J. Miscellaneous

CROWN to be India’s first ever female superhero 3D film

- **Superheroes are popular in India but little does a woman get that part to play, actually bringing up a female super hero to light.** But, with the changing narrative of Indian cinema, women oriented films are getting popular. **Director Narein Praneas Rao, along with producers Abhay Kumar and Dr. Aravind K are all set to join the league of this reformation.** They are coming up with this woman centric film, titled CROWN.

PM Modi launched NCC alumni association, become first member in Jhansi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Cadet Corps (NCC) Alumni Association in Uttar Pradesh’s Jhansi on November 19. He will also become the first member of the alumni association.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Kashi Corridor project

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kashi Vishwanath Temple Corridor project in Varanasi, his parliamentary constituency, alongside families of those who had been displaced due to the project.**

Boita Bandana 2021

- **Boita Bandana is a traditional Odia festival celebrated annually throughout Odisha, India. The name could be translated as “to float ritual boats and worshipping with lighted lamp” and comes from the tradition of making decorated boats, which are then floated on a river as a symbolic gesture of their ancestors’ voyage.**
- **Boita Bandana takes place in the early morning of Kartik Purnima which is the full moon day in the month Kartika in the traditional Odia calendar.**

Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw announces theme-based tourist circuit trains, Bharat Gaurav

- **Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw has announced the introduction of Bharat Gaurav. It will be run, by both private sectors and IRCTC, in theme-based circuits.** The trains will take tourists to all the magnificent historical places.

World Sangeet Tansen festival held in Madhya Pradesh

- **World Sangeet Tansen festival is held in Madhya Pradesh. The festival was organised till December 30th in Gwalior. This is the 97th edition of the festival. The stage of the program has been constructed on the theme of Siddhanath temple situated in Omkareshwar.**

Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis

- **Kiwis of Ziro Valley — located in Lower Subansiri district — were certified as organic following a standard three-year-process.**
- **In October, Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain an organic certification for its kiwis.**

Justice CT Selvam to head TN fourth police commission

- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin announced the constitution of the fourth police commission under retired judge of the Madras High Court Justice C T Selvam.**

Kerala delivers India's first great superhero film

- **Kerala has delivered India's first great superhero movie.** With Basil Joseph's new Malayalam film **Minnal Murali**, streaming on Netflix, India has finally cracked the superhero formula.
- **Set in a semi-rural Kerala town, Minnal Murali follows Jaison (Tovino Thomas) who develops superpowers after getting struck by lightning.** All is well until Jaison finds his nemesis in Selvan (Govind Somasundaram), another man in the town who was struck by lightning on the same night.

World's first Om shaped Shiva temple being built in Rajasthan

- **World's first Om shaped Shiva temple being built in Rajasthan. A grand Om shaped temple is being built in Jadan village of Pali district of Rajasthan.** The grandeur and shape of this temple can be seen by satellite or by drone. **The temple is being constructed by Yoga Guru Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranand.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated first state-of-art Airport Terminal in Northeast

- **PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the first state of art airport terminal in Northeast.** Tripura will have its first integrated terminal building of MBB showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the state. According to the Airport Authority of India, **the airport terminal has been built at a cost of about Rs 450 crores.**

First waterbird census on in Bihar

- **The first-ever count of water birds in the wetland areas is being conducted in Bihar** from February 16 to 26. State forest, environment and climate change department and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) are jointly conducting the 'Asian Water bird Census', an annual survey of water bird species, in order to ascertain the exact number of varieties of indigenous and migratory water birds in the state.

World's first Om shaped Shiva temple being built in Rajasthan

- **World's first Om shaped Shiva temple being built in Rajasthan.** A grand Om shaped temple is being built in Jadan village of Pali district of Rajasthan. The grandeur and shape of this temple can be seen by satellite or by drone. The temple is being constructed by Yoga Guru Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranand.

International Film Festival of Kerala to come to close in Thiruvananthapuram

- **Twenty-sixth edition of the International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) has come to close in Thiruvananthapuram.** Minister KN Balagopal inaugurated the valedictory function, while Cultural Affairs Minister Saji Cherial announced the winners of the IFFK awards.

Tamil Nadu: CM Stalin Declares Ambedkar's Birth Anniversary As 'Equality Day'

- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin announced in the Assembly that the birth anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar on April 14 would be celebrated as 'Equality Day' from this year onwards.** The Tamil Nadu government has already declared September 17, the birth anniversary of social reformer E.V.S. Periyar, as "Social Justice Day".

Fertility rate decreases to 2 from 2.2

- **India's fertility rate declined from 2.2 to 2.0 since the last health ministry survey,** indicating significant progress in population control measures. **Bihar (2.98), Meghalaya (2.91), Uttar Pradesh (2.35), Jharkhand (2.26) and Manipur (2.17),** however, still had figures over the replacement-level of fertility of 2.1.

India's first rural tribal technical training in Bhopal

- Managing Director, Crisp Dr. Shrikant Patil informed that **in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill and Entrepreneurship and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), "Parliamentary Sankul Project" is being launched for tribal youths.** In this project technical training will be provided to the rural tribal youths. **This training programme is being conducted first in Madhya Pradesh on an experimental basis.** After successful operation of this pilot project in Madhya Pradesh, this project will be implemented all over India.

PM releases Ram Bahadur Rai's book 'Bhartiya Samvidhan: Ankahi Kahani'

- **The Prime Minister released Ram Bahadur Rai's book 'Bhartiya Samvidhan: Ankahi Kahani'.** The Prime Minister noted Mr Ram Bahadur Rai's life-long quest for searching for new ideas and desire to bring something new before the society. He hoped that the book will be in the tradition of New India's effort to remember the forgotten thoughts to ensure that in the India of the future, consciousness of the past remains strong.

IISc among top 50 in THE Asia University Rankings, three others in top-100

- **The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) continued to be the best institute from the country, being ranked at 42nd place in the latest Asia University Rankings 2022 by Times Higher Education (THE).**
- **Following IISc in the top 100 institutions from Asia were JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research debuting at 65th place, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar at 68th rank and IIT Indore at 87th place.**
- **China is home to the continent's top two universities for the third consecutive year, with Tsinghua and Peking universities holding on to first and second place, respectively. Japan is the most-represented nation again this year, with 118 institutions, up from 116 last year.**

CM Dharami launches book on temples of Uttarakhand

- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dharami has launched a book titled Beyond the Misty Veil – Temple Tales of Uttarakhand by Aradhana Johri, which seeks to create awareness about the temples and promote tourism in the State. The book titled “Beyond the Misty Veil”, contains over 300 pages on the Hindu temples in Uttarakhand, and is written by former IAS officer Aradhana Johri who had earlier served as the Nainital District Magistrate (DM). The book talks about the temples of Uttarakhand, their significance and the tales associated with them.**

‘Yaanam’, world’s first science-Sanskrit film on ‘Mangalyaan’

- **The first science-Sanskrit film in the history of world cinema, ‘Yaanam’ that revolves around India’s successful Mangalyaan mission, is all set to reach audiences. The much-awaited science documentary in the classical language, revolving around the success story of India’s historic ‘Mars Orbiter Mission’ (MOM) alias ‘Mangalyaan’, would be premiered before a selected audience on August 21 in Chennai.**
- **MOM was successfully launched in 2013 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). ISRO Chairman S Somanath would launch the premier at Chennai in a function, which would also be attended by former chairman of the space agency K Radhakrishnan and the present VSSC Director S Unnikrishnan Nair.**

Delhi is world’s most polluted city, says report; Kolkata takes second spot

- **New Delhi has topped the chart as the most polluted city in the world as per the global analysis of air quality. While Delhi took the top spot, another Indian city, Kolkata, was number 2 according to the report, Air Quality and Health in Cities, released by US-based Health Effects Institute.**
- **The report analyses pollution and its health effects from it in more than 7,000 cities around the globe. The analysis was done focusing on two of the most harmful pollutants, fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The report assimilates data on associated health impacts caused by these pollutants from exposure to pollution in 7,239 cities between 2010 to 2019. Out of them, 1,503 are from South Asia.**

Assam govt launches first drone school of Northeast

- **As a part of the Central government’s quest to make India a hub for drone technology, the northeast has got its first remote pilot training school in Guwahati. The Assam Electronics Development Corporation Ltd (AMTRON) has joined hands with EduRade, a start-up incubated at IIT-Guwahati, and IIM-Calcutta Innovation Park for the project.**
- **The facility has been set up at the ‘Tech City,’ with its flying ground at the Assam Forest School in Jalukbari. The first DGCA-approved drone training school in India was inaugurated in Haryana last year.**

Parsi New Year Navroz being celebrated in different parts of the country on 16th August

- **Navroz or the Parsi New Year is the most widely celebrated festival of the Parsi community. This is seen as a harbinger of peace and prosperity. In Mumbai and its suburbs, which host a considerable population of Parsi community, the festival is celebrated with grand lunch and dinner with the best and finest variety of Parsi cuisine.**
- **Parsis see this festival as the great occasion to get together, eat and mingle. On this day, the Parsis visit the Agyaris or the fire temples to offer prayers. They feed the poor on this day, as the New Year has to start on a good note.**

Maharashtra declares ‘Dahi Handi’ an official sport

- **Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde declared that the popular entertainment event of “Dahi Handi” would be officially recognised under the state’s sports category. “Dahi Handi”, meaning “curd in an earthen pot”, is a popular event in the state associated with Lord Krishna’s birthday, Janmashtami. This traditional spectacle emulates the legend of baby Krishna’s attempts to steal “makhhan” or butter from neighbouring kitchens, which would be kept out of reach at a height.**

2. International and National Organizations their heads and headquarters

S.No.	Name of the organization	Headquarter	Head of the Organization/(Designation)
1	United Nations	New York, USA	Antonio Guterres (Secretary-General)
2	UNICEF	New York, USA	Catherine Mary Russell (Executive Director)
3	UNESCO	Paris, France	Audrey Azoulay (Director General)
4	FAO	Rome, Italy	Qu Dongyu (Director General)
5	WHO	Geneva, Switzerland	Tedros Adhanom (Director General)
6	ILO	Geneva, Switzerland	Guy Ryder (Director General)
7	ICJ	The Hague, The Netherlands	Ronny Abaraham (President)
8	UNCTAD	Geneva, Switzerland	Rebeca Grynspan (Secretary-General)
9	ADB	Manila, Philippines	Masatsugu Asakawa (President)
10	OECD	Paris, France	Mathias Cormann (Secretary General)
11	OPEC	Vienna, Austria	Haitham Al Ghais (Kuwait) (Secretary General)
12	EU	Brussels, Belgium	Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen (President of the European Commission)
13	NATO	Brussels, Belgium	Jens Stoltenberg (Secretary-General)
14	IAEA	Vienna, Austria	Rafael Mariano Grossi (Director General)
15	SAARC	Kathmandu	Esala Ruwan Weerakoon (Secretary General-2020) Member countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
16	IBSA	Political Forum	India+ Brazil+ South Africa
17	New Development Bank	Shanghai, China	Marcos Troyji (President)
18	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	Beijing, China	Jin Liqun (President) Dr. D.J. Pandian to the position of Vice President, Chief Investment Officer
19	World Bank	Washington D.C	David Malpass (President)
20	IMF	Washington D.C	Ms. Kristalina Georgieva (Managing Director)
21	WTO	Geneva, Switzerland	Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
22	European Central Bank	Frankfurt, Germany	Christine Lagarde (President)
23	Bank for International Settlements	Basel, Switzerland	Agustín Carstens (General Manager)
24	Federal Reserve Bank of America	Washington D.C	Jerome Powell (Chairperson of Board of Governors)
25	Financial Action Task Force (FATF)	Paris	T. Raja Kumar (President)

S.No.	Name of the organization	Headquarter	Head of the Organization/(Designation)
26	RBI	Mumbai	Shaktikanta Das (Governor)
27	NABARD	Mumbai (Maharashtra)	Suchindra Misra (Chairman)
28	SEBI	Mumbai (Maharashtra)	Madhabi Puri Buch (Chairman)
29	IRDA	Hyderabad	Debasish Panda (Chairman)
30	SIDBI	Lucknow	Sivasubramanian Ramann (CMD)
31	TRAI	New Delhi	P D Vaghela (Chairman)
32	Competition Commission of India (CCI)	New Delhi	Ashok Kumar Gupta (Chairman)
33	NITI Aayog	New Delhi	Narendra Modi (Chairman) Suman Bery (Vice Chairman)
34	IDFC FIRST Bank	Mumbai	Mr. V. Vaidyanathan (MD & CEO)
35	EXIM BANK	Mumbai	Harsha Bangari (CMD)
36	ICICI	Mumbai	Sandeep Bakhshi (MD & CEO)
37	CAG	New Delhi	Girish Chandra Murmu
38	CEC	New Delhi	Rajiv Kumar
39	15 th Finance commission	—	N. K. Singh (Chairman)
40	Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)	New Delhi	Union Finance Minister (Chairman)
41	GST Council	New Delhi	Union Finance Minister (Chairman)
42	BIMSTEC	Dhaka	Tenzin Lekphell (Secretary-General) Member countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand
43	BRICS	—	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
44	International Solar Alliance	Gurugram	Ajay Mathur (Director General)
45	G7 Countries	—	Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States

3. Countries and their heads of Governments

S.No.	Country	President	Prime Minister
1	Afghanistan	Hibatullah Akhundzada (Head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan)	Mohammad Hasan Akhund
2	Argentina	Alberto Fernández	
3	Australia	Charles III (Monarch)	Anthony Albanese
4	Bangladesh	Abdul Hamid	Sheikh Hasina
5	Bhutan	Jigme Kheysar Namgel Wangchuck (Monarch)	Lotay Tshering
6	Canada	Charles III (Monarch) Mary May Simon (Governor General of Canada)	Justin Trudeau
7	Egypt	Abdel Fateh el-Sisi	Mostafa Kemal Madbouly
8	France	Emmanuel Macron	Elisabeth Borne
9	Greece	Katerina Sakellaropoulou	Kyriakos Mitsotakis
10	India	Droupadi Murmu	Narendra Modi
11	Indonesia	Joko Widodo	
12	Iran	Ebrahim Raisi	Supreme Leader – Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
13	Iraq	Barham Salih	Mustafa Al-Kadhimi
14	Israel	Isaac Herzog	Yair Lapid
15	Italy	Sergio Mattarella	Mario Draghi
16	Japan	Naruhito (Monarch)	Fumio Kishida
17	Jordan	Abdullah II (Monarch)	Bisher Al Khasawneh
18	Kazakhstan	Kassym-Jomart Tokayev	Alihan Smaiylov
19	Kyrgyzstan	Sadyr Japarov (President)	
20	Libya	Mohamed Yunus al-Menfi	Abdul Hamid al-Dbeibeh
21	Malaysia	Abdullah (Monarch)	Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob
22	Mexico	Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador	
23	Myanmar	Myint Swe (Acting President)	Min Aung Hlaing (Chairman of the State Administration Council)
24	Nepal	Bidhya Devi Bhandari	Sher Bahadur Deuba
25	Nigeria	Muhammadu Buhari	
26	North Korea	Kim Jong Un	
27	Pakistan	Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi	Shehbaz Sharif
28	Palestine	Mahmoud Abbas	Mohammad Shtayyeh
29	Philippines	Bongbong Marcos	
30	Russia	Vladimir Putin	Mikhail Vladimirovich Mishustin
38	Saudi Arabia	Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (King)	Mohammad bin Salman
31	Singapore	Halimah binti Yacob	Lee Hsein Loong
32	South Africa	Cyril Ramaphosa	
33	South Korea	Moon Jae-in	Kim Boo-kyum
34	Sri Lanka	Ranil Wickremesinghe	Dinesh Gunawardena

S.No.	Country	President	Prime Minister
35	Syria	Bashar Hafez al-Assad	Hussein Arnous
36	Turkey	Recep Tayyip Erdogan	
37	United Arab Emirates	Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (President)	Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (Prime Minister)
38	USA	Joseph Robinette Biden Jr.	
39	UK	Charles III (Monarch)	Liz Truss
40	Venezuela	Nicolas Maduro disputed with Juan Gerardo	
41	Yemen	Rashad al-Alimi	Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed
42	Zimbabwe	Emmerson Mnangagwa	

4. Banks their heads, headquarters and punch lines

(A) Nationalized Indian Banks and their Heads

S.No.	Name of the bank	Head/Chairman	Headquarter	Punchline
1	Bank of Baroda	Hasmukh Adhia (Chairman)/ Shri Sanjiv Chadha (MD & CEO)	Mumbai	India's International Bank
2	Bank of India	Shri Atanu Kumar Das (MD & CEO)	Mumbai	Relationship beyond banking
3	Bank of Maharashtra	A. S. Rajeev	Pune	Ek Parivar Ek Bank
4	Canara Bank	Chairman: T.N. Manoharan, MD & CEO: Shri Lingam Venkata Prabhakar	Bangaluru	Together we can
5	Central Bank of India	Chairman and Managing Director: Mr. Matam Venkata Rao	Mumbai	"CENTRAL" to you since 1911
6	Indian Bank	Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer: Shanti Lal Jain	Chennai	Your own Bank
7	Indian Overseas Bank	Partha Pratim Sengupta (MD&CEO)	Chennai	Good people to grow with
8	Punjab National Bank	MD & CEO: Atul Kumar Goel	New Delhi	...the name you can BANK upon!
9	Punjab & Sindh Bank	Chairman and Mangaing Director: Swarup Kumar Saha	New Delhi	where service is a way of life
10	UCO Bank	MD & CEO: Soma Sankara Prasad	Kolkata	Honours your trust
11	Union Bank of India	A. Manimekhalai: Managing Director & CEO	Mumbai	Good People to Bank With
12	State Bank of India	Chairperson: Shri Dinesh Kumar Khara	Mumbai	The Banker to every Indian

Note: State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT), besides Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB), merged with SBI with effect from April 1, 2017.

1. Mega Bank Merger List 2020

1. Punjab National Bank (PNB) has taken over Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) and United Bank of India (UBI) to become India's largest lender after State Bank of India (SBI) in terms of business. **It is the second largest public sector bank in the country with assets of ₹17.95 lakh crore (US\$220 billion)** and 11,437 branches. **Atul Kumar Goel** is presently the MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank.

2. Canara Bank has subsumed Syndicate Bank;

Syndicate Bank was one of the oldest and major commercial banks of India. It was **founded by Upendra Ananth Pai, T. M. A. Pai and Vaman Srinivas Kudva**. On 1 April 2020, the bank was **merged into Canara Bank**. **T. N. Manoharan is presently the chairman of Canara Bank** and Shri Lingam Venkata Prabhakar is the current Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer in Canara Bank.

3. Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank have merge with Union Bank of India.

Reserve Bank of India has notified the Amalgamation of Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank into Union Bank of India Scheme, 2020 ("Amalgamation Scheme"). After the amalgamation with Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank, which came into effect on 1 April 2020, the amalgamated entity became the one of the largest PSU bank in terms of branch network with around 9500 branches. **A. Manimekhalai** is presently the MD & CEO of Union Bank of India.

4. Allahabad Bank has become part of Indian Bank.

Allahabad Bank was an Indian nationalised bank with its headquarters in Kolkata, India. Founded in Allahabad in 1865 and nationalized by the government of India in 1969, the bank provided banking and financial services for 155 years until it was merged with Indian Bank in 2020. **Shanti Lal Jain** is the current Managing Director and CEO of Indian Bank.

(B) Private Indian Banks and their Heads

Sr No.	Bank	Head	Head Office	Punch line/Motto
1.	HDFC Bank	Sashidhar Jagdishan, MD & CEO	Mumbai	We Understand Your World
2.	ICICI Bank	Sandeep Bakhshi, MD & CEO	Mumbai	"Khayal Aapka"
3.	Axis Bank	Amitabh Chaudhry, MD & CEO	Mumbai	Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi
4.	Yes Bank	Prashant Kumar is the new CEO of the Yes Bank and Sunil Mehta is the current Non-Executive Chairman	Mumbai	Experience our expertise
5.	Kotak Bank	Uday Kotak, MD	Mumbai	Lets make money simple
6.	Bandhan Bank	Chandrashekhhar Ghosh, MD & CEO	Kolkata	"Aapka Bhala, Sabki Bhalai"
7.	Indusind Bank	Mr. Sumant Kathpalia, MD & CEO	Mumbai	We Make You Feel Richer
8.	IDFC FIRST Bank	Mr. V. Vaidyanathan (MD & CEO)	Mumbai	Banking Hatke
9.	Karur Vysya Bank	B Ramesh Babu, MD & CEO	Karur	Smart way to Bank
10.	IDBI Bank Ltd.	MD & CEO : Rakesh Sharma	Mumbai	Banking for All, Aao sochein Bada

(C) Foreign Banks and their countries of origin

Name of the Bank	Country of their origin
Australian banks	1. Australia and New Zealand Banking Group 2. Commonwealth Bank of Australia 3. National Australia Bank 4. Westpac Banking Corporation
Bahraini bank	1. Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait
Bangladeshi banks	1. AB Bank 2. Sonali Bank
Belgian bank	1. Antwerp Diamond Bank
Canadian bank	1. Bank of Nova Scotia
Chinese bank	1. Industrial & Commercial Bank of China
French banks	1. BNP Paribas 2. Credit Agricole 3. Societe Generale
German banks	1. Deutsche Bank

Name of the Bank	Country of their origin
Indonesian bank	1. Bank Internasional Indonesia
Japanese banks	1. Mizuho Corporate Bank 2. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking 3. Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi
Mauritian bank	1. State Bank of Mauritius
Dutch bank	1. Rabobank
Qatari bank	1. Doha bank
Russian banks	1. Sberbank 2. VTB
Omani bank	1. HSBC Bank Oman
Scottish bank	1. Royal Bank of Scotland
Singaporean banks	1. DBS Bank 2. United Overseas Bank
South African bank	1. FirstRand Bank
South Korean banks	1. Shinhan Bank 2. Woori Bank
Sri Lankan bank	1. Bank of Ceylon
Swiss banks	1. Credit Suisse 2. UBS AG
Taiwanese bank	1. Chinatrust Commercial Bank
Thai bank	1. Krung Thai Bank
UAE banks	1. Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank 2. Mashreq Bank
UK banks	1. HSBC 2. Barclays Bank 3. Standard Chartered Bank 4. The Royal Bank of Scotland(RBS N.V)
US banks	1. American Express 2. Bank of America 3. Citibank 4. J.P. Morgan Chase Bank

5. Name of G-20 nations, stock exchange and official currency

S.No.	Country	Stock Exchange	Official Currency
1	Argentina	Buenos Aires Stock Exchange (BCBA)	Argentine Peso
2	Australia	ASX (Australian Securities Exchange)	Australian Dollar
3	Brazil	BM&F BOVESPA	Brazilian Real
4	Canada	TSX (Toronto Stock Exchange)	Canadian Dollar
5	China	Shanghai Stock Exchange & Shenzhen Stock Exchange	Renminbi (Yuan)
6	France	Euronext Paris	Euro
7	Germany	Frankfurt Stock Exchange & DAX	Euro
8	India	BSE & NSE	Rupee
9	Indonesia	IDX (Indonesia Stock Exchange)	Indonesian Rupiah
10	Italy	Borsa Italiana	Euro
11	Japan	Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE)	Yen
12	Mexico	Mexican Stock Exchange (BVM)	Mexican Peso
13	Russia	Moscow Exchange	Ruble
14	Saudi Arabia	Tadawul (Saudi Stock Exchange)	Saudi Riyal
15	South Africa	Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE)	South African Rand
16	South Korea	Korea Exchange (KRX)	South Korean Won
17	Turkey	Borsa Istanbul	Turkish Lira
18	United Kingdom	London Stock Exchange	Pound sterling
19	United States	NYSE & NASDAQ	US Dollar

6. Brand and their tagline (India and World)

Brand (Indian)

Tagline	Brand (Indian)
The taste of India/ Utterly Butterly Delicious	Amul
Daag Acche hain	Surf Excel
Har Ghar Kuchch Kahta hein	Asian Paints
Simplifly Deccan	Air Deccan
The Complete Man	Raymond
Born Tough	CEAT
Tyres with Muscle	MRF
An Idea can Change your life	Idea
The King of Good Times	Kingfisher
Express Yourself	Airtel
Desh ki Dhadkan	Hero Motocorp
Total health Total water purification	Aquaguard
Is se sasta aur accha kahin nahi	Big Bazaar
Connecting India	BSNL
Building India	DLF
Creating tomorrow today	GMR
No dream too big	Jaypee
Growth is life	Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)
Flying for everyone	Spicejet
Experience certainty	TCS
Moving Forward	Toyota
Applying thoughts	Wipro
Do you have it in you?	Indian Army
Isko laga dala to life to life zinga lala	Tata Sky
Zindagi ke Saath bhi, zindagi ke baad bhi	LIC
Desh ka namak	Tata Salt
The Power of Knowledge	The Economic Times
Jiyo sar utha ke	HDFC Std Life
The Indian Multinational	Videocon
Jio Digital Life	Reliance Jio
Wah Taj!	Taj Mahal Tea
Tedha Hai Par Mera Hai	Kurkure
India ka Dil India ka AC	Voltas
Fly the good times	Kingfisher Airlines
Journalism of Courage	The Indian Express
Stay ahead of times/India's National Newspaper since 1878	The Hindu
Let the Truth Prevail	Times of India
Jiyo befikar	Bajaj Allianz
Taking India to the World	Aditya Birla Groups
BE 100% Sure	Dettol

Brand (World)

Tagline	Brand (World)
Better by Adobe.	Adobe
The road will never be the same.	Acura
We know money.	AIG
Something special in the air.	American Airlines
Don't leave home without it.	American Express
Do more.	American Express
My life. My card.	American Express
"For fast, fast, fast relief."	Anacin
Think different.	Apple Computer
The power to be your best.	Apple Computer
Think outside the box.	Apple Computer
Never follow.	Audi
We try harder.	Avis
Higher standards.	Bank of America
Sheer driving pleasure.	BMW
The ultimate driving machine.	BMW
Better sound through research.	BOSE
The way to fly.	British Airways
The world's favourite airline.	British Airways
Wassup?!	Budweiser
The king of beers.	Budweiser
Inspiration comes standard.	Chrysler
Empowering the Internet generation.	Cisco Systems
Live richly.	Citi
The most trusted name in news.	CNN
Coca-Cola refreshes you best.	Coca-Cola
The pause that refreshes.	Coca-Cola
Have a coke and smile.	Coca-Cola
"Healthy, beautiful smiles for life."	Crest
"Look, Ma, no cavities!"	Crest
A diamond is forever.	DeBeers
Easy as Dell.	Dell Computer
You'll love the way we fly.	Delta Airlines
We love to fly and it shows.	Delta Airlines
We move the world.	DHL
Yellow. The new Brown.	DHL
Competition. Bad for them. Great for you.	DHL
Time to make the doughnuts.	Dunkin Donuts
The miracles of science.	DuPont
Better living through chemistry.	DuPont
The power of all of us.	eBay
The world's online marketplace.	eBay
Nothing sucks like an Electrolux.	Electrolux

Tagline	Brand (World)
"It keeps going, and going, and going..."	Energizer Batteries
Quality in everything we do.	Ernst & Young
Don't just travel. Travel right.	Expedia.com
"Relax, it's FedEx."	FedEx
The world on time.	FedEx
"When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight."	FedEx
Built for the road ahead.	Ford
Ford has a better idea.	Ford
Quality is job one.	Ford
Fair and balanced.	Fox News
Extinct is forever.	Friends of the Animals
Imagination at work.	General Electric
We bring good things to life.	General Electric
Celebrate the moments of your life.	General Foods
"Look sharp, feel sharp."	Gillette
The best a man can get.	Gillette
Never let 'em see you sweat.	Gillette Dry idea
The best tires in the world have Goodyear written all over them.	Goodyear
American by birth. Rebel by choice.	Harley Davidson
Hertz puts you in the driver's seat.	Hertz
57 varieties	H.J. Heinz
Invent.	Hewlett Packard
The power of dreams.	Honda
We're behind you every step of the way.	Huggies
Solutions for a small planet.	IBM
Intel Inside.	Intel
Finger-lickin' good!	Kentucky Fried Chicken
Nobody does chicken like KFC.	KFC
Share moments. Share life.	Kodak
It's time for clarity.	KPMG
Betcha can't eat just one.	Lay's Potato Chips
Because I'm worth it.	L'Oréal
"Melts in your mouth, not in your hands."	M & Ms
Come to Marlboro Country.	Marlboro
There are some things that money can't buy. For everything else there's MasterCard.	Master Card

7. Important Books and Authors

1	Arundhati Roy	The God of Small Things; Power Politics; War Talk; Public Power in the Age of Empire; An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire; The Algebra of Infinite Justice; Capitalism: A Ghost Story; The Hanging of Afzal Guru; 13 December; and The Ministry of Utmost Happiness
2	Chetan Bhagat	Half Girlfriend ; What Young India Wants; Revolution 2020; 2 States ; The 3 Mistakes of my Life ; One Night @ the Call Center; and Five Point Someone.
3	V.S. Naipaul	An Area of Darkness; Mr Stone And The Knights Companion; A Flag on the Island, The Loss of El Dorado: A Colonial History, Finding the Center; The Mystic Masseur; In a Free State ; India: A Wounded Civilization ; India: A Million Mutinies Now; Half a Life; Magic Seeds; A House for Mr Biswas; A Bend in the River; and The Enigma of Arrival
4	Amitav Ghosh	Sea of Poppies ; River of Smoke; The Glass Palace; and The Circle of Reason
5	Anita Desai	Fasting, Feasting ; The Village by the Sea; Fire on the Mountain; Games at Twilight; and The Village by the Sea
6	Kiran Desai	The Inheritance of Loss ; Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard; India Pack – 2003; and Generation 1.5
7	A P J Abdul Kalam	Ignited Minds: Unleashing the Power within India ; Turning Points: A Journey through Challenges; India 2020: A Vision for The New Millennium ; My Journey: Transforming Dreams into Actions; Indomitable Spirit; Inspiring Thoughts; The Scientific Indian: A Twenty-first Century Guide to the World around Us; Mission India: A Vision for Indian Youth; You Are Born To Blossom: Take My Journey Beyond ; You are Unique: Scale New Heights by Thoughts and Actions; Forge your Future ; The Luminous Sparks; Spirit Of India; India My Dream ; Transcendence My Spiritual Experiences with Pramukh Swamiji ; Scientist to President; The Righteous Life: The Very Best of A.P.J. Abdul Kalam; Wings of Fire: An Autobiography ; The Family and The Nation
8	Salman Rushdie	Midnight's Children ; The Satanic Verses ; The Ground beneath Her Feet; Shame; Haroun and the Sea of Stories; Shalimar the Clown; The Jaguar Smile: A Nicaraguan Journey; Joseph Anton, Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights ; and The Golden House
9	Taslima Nasareen	Lajja ; Amar Meyebela; Utal Hawa ; Dwikhondito ; Oporpokkho (The Opponent); Shodh; Nimontron (Invitation); Phera (Return); Bhromor Koio Gia (Tell Him The Secret); Forashi Premik (French Lover); and Nirbasan
10	Jhumpa Lahiri	Hell-Heaven; Brotherly Love; The Lowland ; Improvisations: Rice; Unaccustomed Earth ; The interpreter of maladies; The Namesake ; and The Third and Final Continent
11	Vikram Seth	A Suitable Boy ; An Equal Music: A Novel; A Suitable Girl ; The Golden Gate ; Three Chinese Poets; The Humble Administrator's Garden; The Rivered Earth; and All You Who Sleep Tonight
12	Aravind Adiga	The White Tiger ; Last Man in Tower; and Between the Assassinations

Wish you all the very best!

Team CL



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